MI Excel Statewide System of Support: 2016-17

Progress and findings of the second year of the program evaluation, recommendations, and planned future analyses.

Prepared by:

Lauren Shaw
David Stuit
Jeff Springer
Anna Nicotera
Grant Alphenaar

Basis Policy Research conducts applied public policy research, primarily in the field of K-12 education; provides technical assistance to state departments of education, districts, and schools; and supports policy-makers by providing the data they need to make sound decisions.

October 2017

This report was prepared for the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) as part of an Independent Contracted Services Agreement. The content of the publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the MDE or the U.S. Department of Education.

Shaw, L., Stuit, D., Springer, J., Nicotera, A., & Alphenaar, G. (2017). *MI Excel Statewide System of Support: 2016-17*. Grand Rapids, MI: Basis Policy Research.

Contents

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Executive Summary

The MI Excel Statewide System of Support (MI Excel) year two report presents project progress and program and policy feedback to the Michigan Department of Education and program leads at Calhoun Intermediate School District (ISD). Basis Policy Research (Basis) conducted the program evaluation using methodology finalized in January 2017. A full summary of Basis's year two accomplishments begins on page 6.

The MI Excel program defines rapid turnaround as "dramatic improvement in student and teacher performance in a short amount of time" (Chandler & Huan-Frank, 2015). To achieve these goals, MI Excel offers a variety of initiatives focused on instructional enhancements, including the Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround (Blueprint). Key takeaways from the second year of the program evaluation are provided below.

Priority schools implementing the Blueprint had a higher average math SGP than non-Blueprint Priority schools.

This difference is statistically significant and suggests the Blueprint is related to a measurable improvement in student growth in math. However, the effect is not yet seen in math proficiency, or in ELA growth or proficiency. Overall, the MI Excel Priority schools are still performing well below the state average on ELA and math, regardless of Blueprint status.

Blueprint-implementing districts are using more of the services of MI Excel consultants than non-Blueprint districts.

For the second year in a row, consultants working in Blueprint districts reported working more hours across all service types (district, building, and program support) than their non-Blueprint counterparts. The difference in hours at the district level is statistically significant, likely due to the Blueprint's emphasis on building district systems in the early stages.

Consultants reported less time spent at the building level and more at the district level and program support, compared to 2015-16.

Examining hours reported across the last two years reveals that consultants' hours worked at the building level dropped by 42 percent in 2016-17. Most of those hours were reallocated into district level work, which showed a statistically significant increase from 2015-16 to 2016-17. This is large shift in how the program is implemented and, if not intended, should get close attention from the MDE and CISD.

Consultants identified issues related to district and school leadership as their biggest challenges.

The System Challenges Survey, administered twice annually to DIFs and ISs, identified five key challenges: staff turnover and transitions at the district level; district and school leadership networks; district staff commitment; district administrator prioritization; and school administrator prioritization. This is an opportunity for greater support from the MDE and CISD to develop buy-in from leadership.

Achievement of the Scope of Work

This section describes the progress made towards the MI Excel program evaluation. Basis and its contractors have achieved the majority of the goals identified in the Scope of Work (SOW) for the second year of the contract. In instances where the goal could not be fully completed, details are provided below.

Goal 1: Revise Evaluation Plan

Using feedback to the year one evaluation report and guidance from the MDE, Basis proposed revisions to the evaluation plan for year two. A particular focus was utilizing multiple years of data to understand how trends in program implementation might change over time (for example, comparing Work Log hours in 2015-16 to 2016-17). The MDE approved the revisions in January 2017. The revised evaluation plan informed the analyses conducted for this report. However, the main goal of the evaluation remains understanding the implementation and effectiveness of MI Excel.

Goal 2: Improve and Expand Profile and Outcome Data Acquisition and Management

Basis worked with multiple contractors, including Regional Educational Media Center 1 (REMC1), Take Flight Enterprises, and Double Line Partners, to establish and maintain data acquisition, transfer, and management processes. This has resulted in a secure file transfer process to send aggregated data from the Data Hubs to the MDE, and then to the dashboard database. This linkage between the Data Hubs and the dashboard also enables user credentials for accounts established in the Hubs to have access to the dashboard website.

Work to include these data in the dashboard is ongoing due to difficulties with quality of data provided by the districts. Staff at the Data Hubs and Double Line Partners continue to work with the student information systems to improve the completeness and accuracy of data.

Goal 3: Improve and Support Program Data Collection

Basis worked with the MDE and Calhoun ISD to collect and analyze Service Plans and Work Logs for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years. Service Plans were collected using the Qualtrics survey tool in 16-17 and will be collected in Google Drive in 17-18, in order to improve the user experience of filling out the plans. Work Logs were collected in both Google Drive and Dropbox in 16-17 but have been migrated entirely to Google Drive in 17-18. The improved Work Logs template, used in both years, utilizes locked cells and dropdowns to standardize the collection of information. This facilitates aggregating the data for use in the dashboard and program evaluation.

The System Challenges Survey was administered twice in year two by Calhoun ISD, with Basis compiling and analyzing the results. There are now three survey administrations that can be used to understand trends over time, and particularly to isolate potential effects of the Blueprint.

Goal 4: Develop Dashboard Version 2.0

Basis designed and created a functioning version of the dashboard hosted at miexcelwww.remc1.net. This included building and linking all data tables in the SQL database, developing a row-level security model, linking the user accounts established by the Data Hubs to the dashboard workspace, and planning and executing the User Acceptance Testing process. This work resulted in a functioning Power BI dashboard that is accessible by the MDE and MI Excel consultants. All data received by Basis has been incorporated into the dashboard.

Basis also worked with Maria Thomas at the DTMB to address ADA and accessibility issues with Microsoft. In June 2017 Microsoft released a software update that addressed some of these concerns; the update has been fully incorporated into the dashboard. Resolving the remainder of the accessibility issues is an ongoing effort that is primarily handled by Ms. Thomas due to the broader discussions the DTMB is currently having with Microsoft regarding accessibility.

Due to delays in the compiling and transfer of Data Hub data, monthly discipline and attendance data has not been incorporated into the dashboard.

Goal 5: Submit Year Two Evaluation Report

Preliminary results for the MI Excel program evaluation are presented in the “Evaluation Findings” section of this document. This primarily consists of information about the districts and schools participating in the MI Excel program, and data on how the program was implemented in 2016-17. It also includes information about the relationships between program implementation and the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP). Due to delays in the compiling and transfer of Data Hub data, monthly discipline and attendance data has not been incorporated in the program evaluation.

Background on MI Excel

The MI Excel program is Michigan's Statewide System of Support for Priority and Focus schools that receive Title I funds and/or School Improvement Grants. The goal of the MI Excel program is to create sustainable systemic improvement in the participating districts and schools. Past research suggests school turnaround relies on strong leadership, focus on instruction, celebration of quick wins, and building a committed staff (Herman et al., 2008). The program is designed to develop these qualities in districts and schools and consists of a series of interventions and programs, some of which are mandatory and some that are optional. Table 1 on page 10 identifies the MI Excel program components and whether the component is mandatory. The Calhoun Intermediate School District (ISD) provides training and leadership for MI Excel program staff, collectively called consultants, in partnership with the MDE.

Key Terms

Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround (Blueprint). The Blueprint was developed to provide a sequential plan for rapidly improving schools' academic performance. It consists of 28 components, which are installed at the district level to create the necessary systemic change for school turnaround.

Consultant. A collective term for program staff who work directly with districts and schools to implement the MI Excel program. This includes Intervention Specialists, District Improvement Facilitators, and School Improvement Facilitators.

District Improvement Facilitator (DIF). DIFs work with districts with Focus schools to implement the MI Excel program. They work for a minimum of 40 hours within each assigned district over the course of the school year.

Focus School. Schools that rank in the top ten percent of achievement gaps on the state's accountability rankings are designated as Focus schools. They remain Focus schools until meeting the exit criteria, as determined by the MDE.

Instructional Learning Cycles (ILC). ILCs gather teacher teams together in a series of short term cycles to focus on the quality of classroom instruction, with cycles lasting 2-4 weeks and focused on a specific goal. The overall aim is to improve instruction and foster a sense of collective responsibility.

Intervention Specialist (IS). ISs work with districts with Priority schools to implement the MI Excel program. They work for a minimum of 50 days in each assigned district over the course of the school year.

Michigan Statewide System of Support (MI Excel). The MI Excel program is a federally-funded initiative to rapidly improve Michigan's lowest performing schools. Program participants are Priority and Focus schools that receive Title I funding.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). MTSS is an integrated, multi-tiered system of instruction, assessment, and intervention designed to meet the achievement and behavioral health needs of all learners. Students may be identified for higher tiers of support based on behavioral or academic needs.

Priority School. Schools in the bottom five percent of the state's accountability rankings are designated as Priority schools. They remain Priority schools until meeting the exit criteria, as determined by the School Reform Office.

School Improvement Facilitator (SIF). SIFs work directly with Priority schools to implement the MI Excel program. They work for a minimum of 40 days in each assigned school over the course of the school year.

School Improvement Grant (SIG). SIG is a funding program that provides grants to state educational agencies; the state agencies then give competitive sub-grants to local educational agencies based on need of funds and commitment to using funds to improve the achievement of students in low-performing schools.

Superintendent's Dropout Challenge (SDC). SDC programming provides both academic and behavioral supports to students to keep them on track for graduation. At minimum, 10-15 students at highest risk of dropping out, regardless of grade level, are selected to receive extra support. In 2016-17 this was removed as a required program component of MI Excel, though districts may still choose to participate.

Title I. Federal funding provided to schools to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students. This funding can be targeted to specific students most at risk of failing, or used for school-wide programming if at least 40% of the students are economically disadvantaged.

Work Logs. MI Excel consultants complete monthly Work Logs at the district level. These logs report their hours worked, how the hours were distributed among district, building, and program support, and whether the consultants met with the district superintendent and/or building principals.

Table 1. MI Excel Services and Use Requirements, 2016-17

MI Excel Services	Required for Priority	Required for Focus
District Service Plan	Yes	Yes
ERS Resource Check / School Diagnostic	Yes	No
Instructional Learning Cycle	Yes	No
Intervention Specialist	Yes	N/A
School Improvement Facilitator	Yes	N/A
Surveys of Enacted Curriculum	Yes	No
School Service Plan	Yes	No
District Improvement Facilitator	N/A	Yes
District Improvement Plan Revision	No	Yes
School Improvement Plan Revision	No	Yes
Teaching and Learning Priorities	No	Yes
Data Dialogs	No	No
District Improvement Framework 2.0	No	No
Instructional/Content Coaches and Coaching 101	No	No
Leadership Mentors / Networking	No	No
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support	No	No
Professional Learning Communities	No	No
School Improvement Framework 2.0	No	No
Superintendent's Drop-Out Challenge	No	No

2016-17 MI Excel Participants

Table 2 on the next page describes the number of schools, districts, and ISDs/Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) participating in the MI Excel program by academic year and type (Priority only, Focus only, or both). The year two evaluation includes all schools that participated in the program during the 2016-17 academic year.

The MI Excel program serves a nearly even distribution of Priority (162) and Focus (165) schools. However, because Priority schools are more geographically concentrated, there are more districts and ISDs with Focus schools. The majority of districts and ISDs have only one type of school, with a small number of large districts with both Priority and Focus schools.

Table 2. Number of Schools, Districts, and ISDs Participating in the MI Excel Program by Academic Year and Type

Year	Schools			Districts				ISDs/RESAs			
	Priority	Focus	Total	Priority Only	Focus Only	Both	Total	Priority Only	Focus Only	Both	Total
2015-16	166	127	293	51	91	12	154	3	21	18	42
2016-17	162	165	327	50	110	16	176	3	23	40	46

Note: Directories of participating schools were provided to Basis by the Michigan Department of Education. Table includes schools released from Priority or Focus status during the academic year.

During the 2016-17 academic year, 122 MI Excel schools were released from Priority or Focus status. Because the schools received MI Excel services for the 2016-17 school year, they are included in this evaluation. Of the exited schools, 75 were Priority and 47 were Focus; 14 schools (all Priority) were released in August 2016, and 108 schools (61 Priority and 47 Focus) were released in January 2017. These determinations were based on student achievement data from the 2015-16 academic year.

Throughout this document, "n" is used to describe the number of observations used in the specific analysis. Depending on the analysis, observations may be districts, schools, or measures of program implementation, such as Work Log hours. Due to missing or incomplete data, the reported n may not always match the number of schools or districts reported in Table 2.

Program Evaluation Strategy

This program evaluation was conducted using the revised Evaluation Plan approved by the MDE in January 2017. The evaluation addresses the eight questions identified by MDE in its Request for Proposals, which are:

1. To what extent are components for the Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround being implemented by Priority Schools? Focus Schools?
2. To what extent are Title I Priority and Focus schools using the services provided by Intervention Specialists (ISs), District Improvement Facilitators (DIFs), and School Improvement Facilitators (SIFs)?
3. To what extent are Title I Priority and Focus schools using other MI Excel program components?
4. To what extent do schools receiving services through the SSoS improve students' academic achievement and leading indicators (i.e., attendance, graduation) of academic achievement?
5. To what extent is there a correlation between the successful implementation of the Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround and a school's ability to improve students' academic achievement?
6. What are the major system challenges and constraints that influence the effectiveness of the MI Excel Statewide System of Support?
7. To what extent does the Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround influence systemic operation?
8. The Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround is the work of MI Excel, the Statewide System of Support. To what extent does it contribute to system coherence within the intermediate school district service providers? To local districts?

The evaluation first addresses the implementation of the MI Excel program. Past research has shown that accurate understanding of program implementation is critical to accurate program evaluation, particularly for programs like MI Excel that allow for adaptation (O'Donnell, 2008). The impact of the program on a number of outcome indicators is then examined using a variety of analytic methods, including descriptive statistics, pairwise correlations, and regression models. These analyses will be augmented throughout the second year of the evaluation as more data becomes available.

When possible, the results of the evaluation have been contextualized using other published studies on school turnaround. Priority and Focus schools are considered separately, with the evaluation of Priority schools considering students' overall achievement and the evaluation of Focus schools considering achievement gaps. Schools in districts implementing the Blueprint are also examined separately from their non-Blueprint counterparts, in order to isolate the potential effects of that aspect of the program.

Data Sources

The MI Excel program evaluation and dashboard utilize multiple sources of data. The measures generally fall into the categories of profile, implementation, and outcomes. Profile data provides basic information about the participating schools, including location and student demographics. Implementation data describes the aspects of the MI Excel program in which schools are participating, as determined by Calhoun ISD and MDE. Outcomes data is used to determine the potential effects of the program, and includes leading indicators like student mobility and attendance, as well as longer-term outcomes like graduation rates and academic achievement.

Much of the data is not yet available for 2016-17. As these data files are released, Basis will incorporate the data into the dashboard and program evaluation.

Data sources are described in greater detail below.

Profile

MI Excel Schools Directory. Provided to Basis by MDE, the Directory identifies schools that are participating in the MI Excel program.

Student Enrollment. Downloadable from mischooldata.org, the file provides enrollment data for schools and districts, including demographic breakdowns and the number of students who are economically disadvantaged, are English learners, or have special education needs.

Financial Deficit. Downloadable from mischooldata.org, the file provides a list of districts that are in deficit, which is known to impact district and school performance (Guthrie et al., 2007).

Implementation

Work Logs. MI Excel program consultants submit monthly reports of their work. The Logs include the number of hours worked, broken down at the district, building, and program support level, the Blueprint systems that received the most work in that month, and whether the consultants met with the district superintendent or building principal. Work Logs from October 2015 – August 2017 are used in this analysis.

The number of hours worked (across district-level, building-level, and program support) is missing for 6.2 percent of DIF observations, 11.1 percent of SIF observations, and 2.8 percent of IS observations. Additionally, much of the data regarding which Blueprint systems received the most attention in a given month is missing (41 percent) or incomplete (36 percent).

Service Plans. Schools participating in the MI Excel program submit Service Plans at the beginning of the academic year. The Plans describe the program components the school intends to use that year, giving insight into implementation patterns. In 2015-16, 90 percent of Priority

schools were included in the coding of Service Plans; district-level plans were not included as part of the year one evaluation. In 2016-17, 100 percent of Priority schools were included in the analysis of Service Plans.

MI Excel Services Checklist. MDE and Calhoun ISD collect information on which schools use which MI Excel program services, including the Superintendent's Dropout Challenge (SDC), Instructional Learning Cycles (ILC), and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

As Basis has not received updated data for participation in 2016-17, usage of these programs is not discussed in this report.

Outcomes

Staff and Systems

Educator Effectiveness. Downloadable from mischooldata.org, the file reports the number of teachers in each effectiveness category (ineffective, minimally effective, effective, and highly effective). Because the 2016-17 data is not yet available, educator effectiveness is not considered in this analysis.

System Challenges Survey. Developed by Basis, this survey reports ISs and DIFs perceptions of the district-level challenges that may impede program implementation. This report utilizes data from the May 2016, November 2016, and June 2017 administrations. The May 2016 administration is missing 21 percent of expected responses, the November 2017 administration is missing 2.5 percent of expected responses, and the June 2017 administration is missing 32 percent of expected responses.

Students

Attendance. Downloadable from mischooldata.org, this file reports the overall attendance rate for districts and schools, as well as the chronic absentee rate.

Discipline. In the future, the program evaluation will utilize information from the Data Hubs for participating schools to report on the percentage of students suspended and the average length of suspension. As this data has not yet been released by any participating districts, it is not used in this analysis.

Mobility. Downloadable from mischooldata.org, this file reports the counts of stable, mobile, and incoming students, which can be used to calculate a mobility rate.

Graduation. Downloadable from mischooldata.org, this file reports graduation and dropout rates for schools serving 12th grade, including four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates.

Academic Achievement. Downloadable from mischooldata.org, this file reports proficiency rates and mean scale scores on the M-STEP and MI-Access. Data for English language arts and

math are used for this analysis; the dashboard includes data on these subjects, as well as science and social studies.

Academic Growth. This file reports mean student growth percentiles (SGP) in English language arts and math.

Achievement Gaps. This file, not yet released, will report schools' relative achievement gaps in English language arts and math. This file will be used to evaluate the impact of the program in Focus schools.

Evaluation Findings

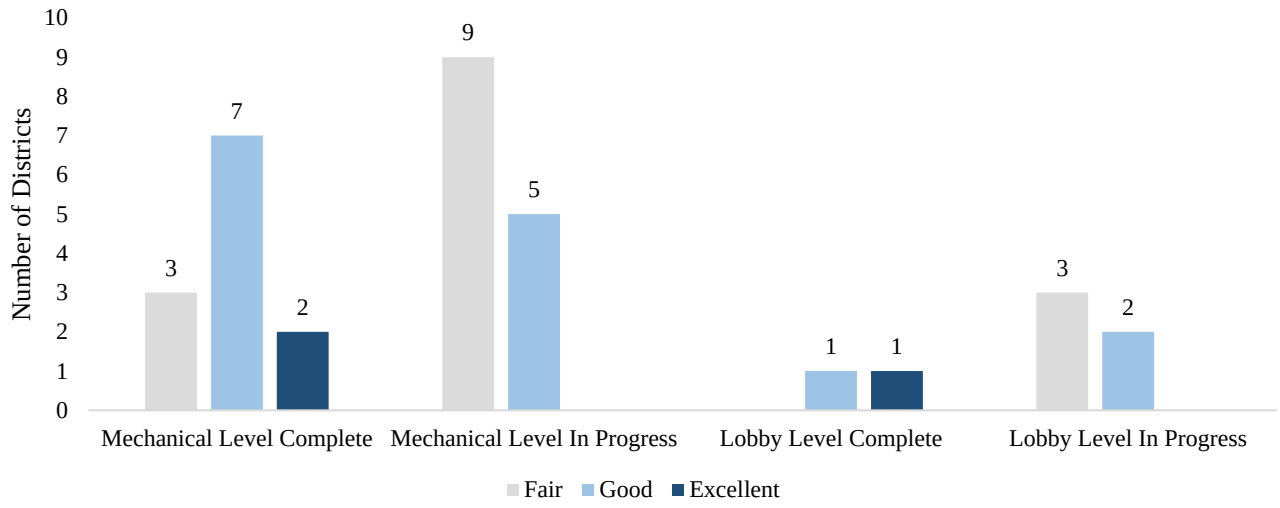
This section of the report contains the findings of the year two program evaluation. The findings are organized by the eight evaluation questions identified by the MDE, with analysis using the methodology approved by the MDE in January 2017.

To what extent are components of the Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround being implemented by Priority Schools? Focus Schools?

A total of 54 MI Excel schools in 26 districts participated in the Blueprint in 2016-17, compared to 45 schools in 24 districts in 2015-16.[1] Of the 54 Blueprint schools, 23 were Focus and 31 were Priority, representing 14 percent and 19 percent of MI Excel Focus schools and Priority schools, respectively. Most districts installing the Blueprint have five or fewer schools in the MI Excel program, with a notable exception being Warren Consolidated Schools; with 11 schools in MI Excel, Warren had 20% of the Blueprint-installing schools last year.

Forty-six percent of installing districts have completed the first installation phase, the Mechanical Level, and 17 percent have completed the second phase, the Lobby Level. A graphic explaining the Blueprint Levels is included in the Appendix. The extent to which districts have implemented the Blueprint, and the quality with which they have done so, was determined by the CISD team. Figure 1 below shows the quality ratings for the Mechanical and Lobby Levels by installation status.

Figure 1. Number of Districts Receiving Quality Rating, by Blueprint Level

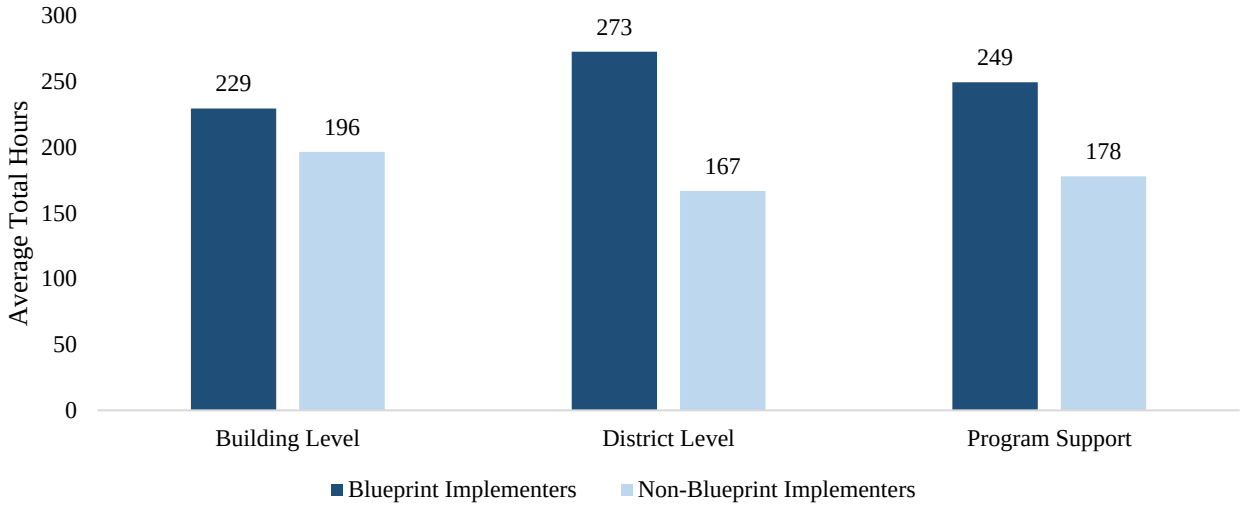


Note: District n = 26. Based on data provided to Basis by CISD in September 2017.

[1] An additional 10 districts are installing the Blueprint, but do not have any schools participating in MI Excel. Those districts are therefore excluded from the analyses in this report.

We can also use the consultants' monthly Work Logs to understand how the Blueprint is being implemented. Overall, as shown in Figure 2, consultants in Blueprint implementing districts reported working more hours in 2016-17 than consultants in non-implementing districts. This is true at all service levels, and the difference in district level hours between Blueprint and non-Blueprint districts is statistically significant. This is likely due to the Blueprint's focus on building systems in districts, particularly in the early stages. This is the second consecutive year that consultants in Blueprint districts have reported working more hours than their non-Blueprint counterparts, suggesting that this trend may continue over time.

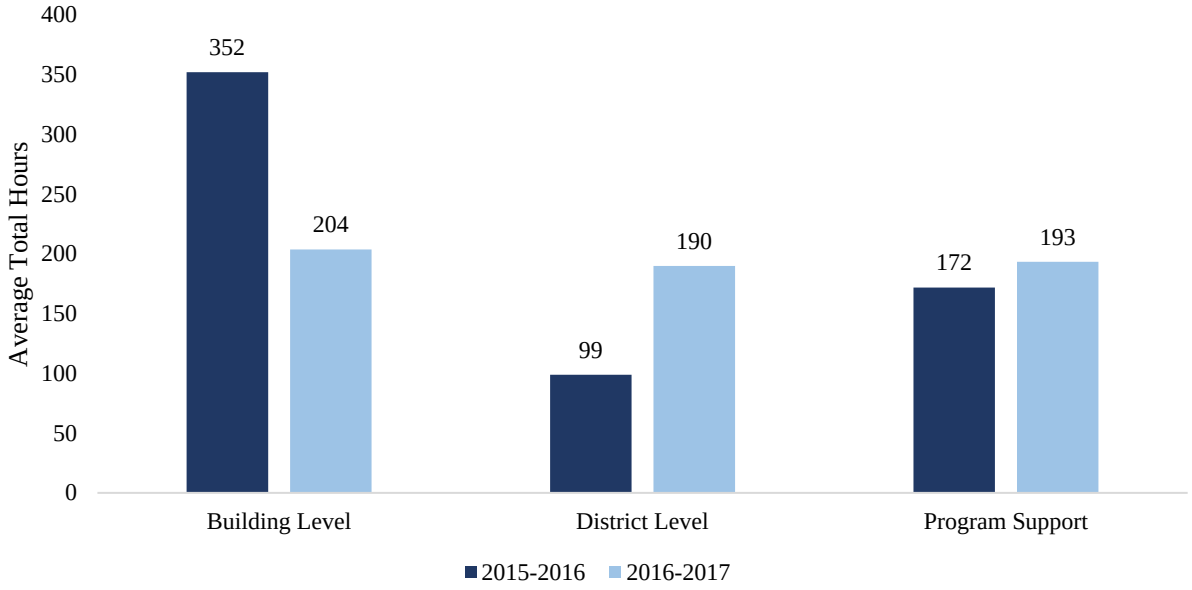
Figure 2. Average Total Hours in 2016-17 by Type of Service and Blueprint Status



Note: Blueprint Implementers n = 53. Non-Blueprint Implementers n = 191. Authors' analysis of monthly Work Log data collected by CISD through June 2017.

Figure 3 below displays changes in Work Log hours over time. Comparing average total hours from 2015-16 to 2016-17 reveals a sharp decrease in hours at the building level. The majority of those reallocated hours went to work at the district level, while some went to program support. The increase in district level hours is statistically significant, indicating a non-random change in the program's implementation over the past two years. Given the Blueprint's emphasis on building district systems, there may be an additional increase in district hours in 2017-18 as more districts begin installing the Blueprint. However, as the later stages of the Blueprint place more emphasis on working directly with schools, this shift should reverse once districts reach that stage of installation.

Figure 3. Average Total Hours by Service Type and Year



Note: 2015-16 n = 252. 2016-17 n = 244. Authors' analysis of monthly Work Log data collected by CISD through June 2017.

To what extent are Title I Priority and Focus schools using the services provided by Intervention Specialists (ISs), District Improvement Facilitators (DIFs), and School Improvement Facilitators (SIFs)?

Reported Work Log hours are presented in Table 3 and represent the average monthly hours in building-level, district-level, and program support reported by consultants between October 2016 and August 2017. Work Logs are collected at the district level and are aggregated to district level, building level, and program support hours prior to compilation.

Table 3. Average Monthly Hours by Role and Blueprint Implementation Status

	DIF	IS	SIF
Non-Blueprint Districts			
District-Level	3.3	11.4	23.6
Building-Level	3.2	9.9	34.3
Program Support	2.7	2.0	32.4
Total Hours	*9.2*	*23.3*	*90.3*
Blueprint Districts			
District-Level	8.4	24.3	12.1
Building-Level	9.6	8.4	27.1
Program Support	3.2	8.0	31.7
Total Hours	*21.2*	*40.7*	*70.9*

Table 4 on the next page presents total hours worked at the ISD level, broken down by work focus. Total hours worked generally correlates to the number of MI Excel schools in the ISD, with some exceptions. For example, Berrien ISD has only nine schools in the program, but reported significantly more hours than Oakland (23 schools) and Kent (21 schools). Four out of the 37 ISDs did not submit any Work Log hours. All four of these ISDs have a single district with a single building receiving MI Excel services.

Table 4. Total Hours Reported at the ISD Level

ISD Name	District-Level Hours	Building-Level Hours	Program Support Hours	Total Hours	Total Districts	Total Buildings
Wayne RESA	17,821	101,941	129,004	248,765	32	71
Macomb ISD	7979	10,259	10,600	28,838	12	33
Ingham ISD	6998	14,161	7313	28,472	10	22
Berrien ISD	5645	4314	4865	14,824	6	9
Kalamazoo RESA	6093	3624	3933	13,649	3	16
Oakland Schools	5165	3043	3377	11,586	13	23
Jackson ISD	6438	1349	1544	9330	3	8
Saginaw ISD	2116	1121	1841	5078	5	7
Calhoun ISD	1013	1878	678	3568	5	9
Washtenaw ISD	1063	672	948	2683	5	8
Kent ISD	583	515	871	1970	10	21
Muskegon ISD	994	410	355	1759	6	7
Tuscola ISD	1224	431	0	1655	2	3
Hillsdale ISD	278	1261	0	1539	2	3
St. Clair ISD	564	296	260	1119	2	3
Wexford-Missaukee ISD	277	366	235	877	2	5
Genesee ISD	219	367	281	867	5	5
Monroe ISD	495	52	27	574	2	5
Traverse Bay Area ISD	435	21	25	480	5	6
Cheb-Otsego-Presque Isle ESD	379	43	43	465	2	2
Bay-Arenac ISD	91	220	125	435	4	5
Eaton ISD	197	171	62	429	2	4
C.O.O.R. ISD	282	12	0	294	1	1
Ottawa ISD	273	0	0	273	4	6
Eastern UP ISD	90	93	56	239	2	2
Van Buren ISD	74	46	110	229	3	3
Midland County ESA	26	65	85	176	2	3
Mason-Lake ISD	84	54	36	174	2	2
Gratiot-Isabella RESD	99	0	0	99	3	4
Lenawee ISD	11	24	34	69	2	2
Huron ISD	47	0	0	47	1	1
Allegan Area ESA	31	1	6	37	3	3
Barry ISD	6	5	15	26	1	1
Branch ISD	0	0	0	0	1	1
Clare-Gladwin RESD	0	0	0	0	1	1
Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD	0	0	0	0	1	1
Montcalm Area ISD	0	0	0	0	1	1

Note: ISDs are sorted in order of descending total hours at the ISD level. ISDs with more participating districts and schools may have more consultants than ISDs with fewer participating districts. This, along with the total number of participating districts and schools in an ISD, should be considered when consulting this table.

Figures 4-9 on the following pages display the average distribution of hours by consultant role and work focus, as well as by Blueprint installation status. In 2016-17 DIFs and SIFs reported spending, on average, the most hours focusing on building-level supports while ISs reported working the most at the district-level.

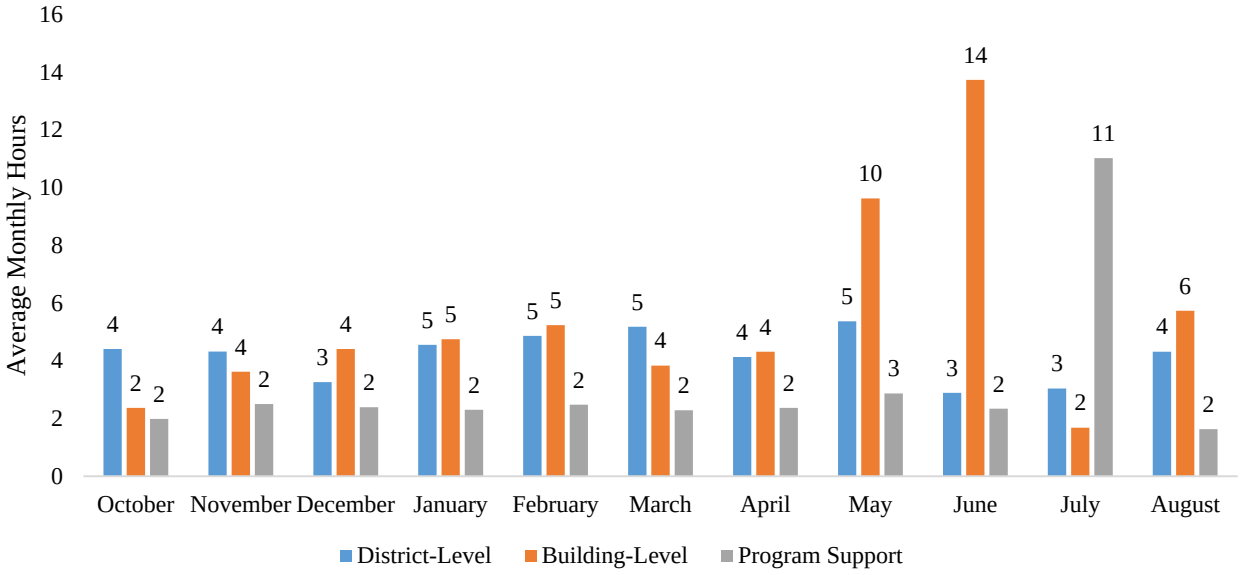
DIFs reported focusing the most at the building level in six out of the eleven months for which Work Log information was available. As most Focus districts tend to have few MI Excel schools, it may be that time is divided relatively equally between district-level hours and building-level hours in a few buildings. In May and June, DIFs reported spending a disproportionate amount of time at the building level. As summer Work Log hours are sparse, this is likely due to outliers in the Work Logs having a disproportionate effect on the averages.

In July, both DIFs and ISs reported spending a disproportionate amount of time on program support. As with DIF building-level hours, the effect of outliers on a smaller summer Work Log sample should be taken into account. ISs reported focusing their work at the district-level in ten of the eleven months for which Work Log data was available.

Across all eleven months, SIFs focused more at the building level and on program support, which fits their role as school consultants. SIF hours peaked in February and March, reaching a low point in July. In August, SIF building-level hours started increasing again, likely in anticipation of the starting 2017-18 school year. This is in line with the design and purpose of the MI Excel program, with DIFs and ISs focusing in installing and supporting district systems and SIFs focusing on building supports.

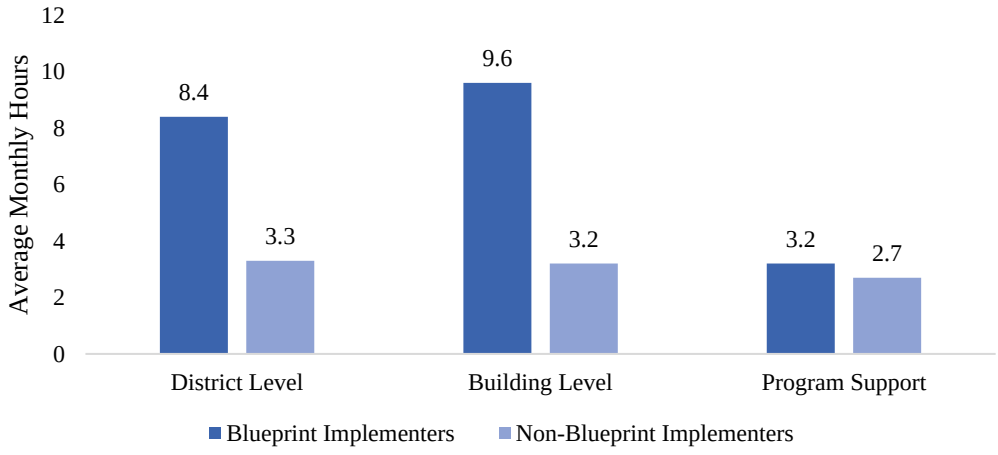
In Blueprint-installing districts, DIFs reported focusing more on all types of work, while ISs reported only spending more time at the district level compared to their counterparts in non-Blueprint-installing districts. Conversely, SIFs in Blueprint-installing districts reported spending slightly more time focusing on all types of work compared to SIFs in non-Blueprint-installing districts. As most districts installing the Blueprint are still in the early stages of installation, where the focus is primarily on district-level components, seeing a disproportionate focus at the district-level from DIFs and ISs is to be expected. As more districts move to later phases of Blueprint installation, where the components are primarily at the building level, we expect to see SIFs in those districts working more at the building-level than their non-Blueprint-installing counterparts and a likely decline in district-level hours for Blueprint-installing DIF and IS colleagues.

Figure 4. Average Hours and Support Type for District Improvement Facilitators



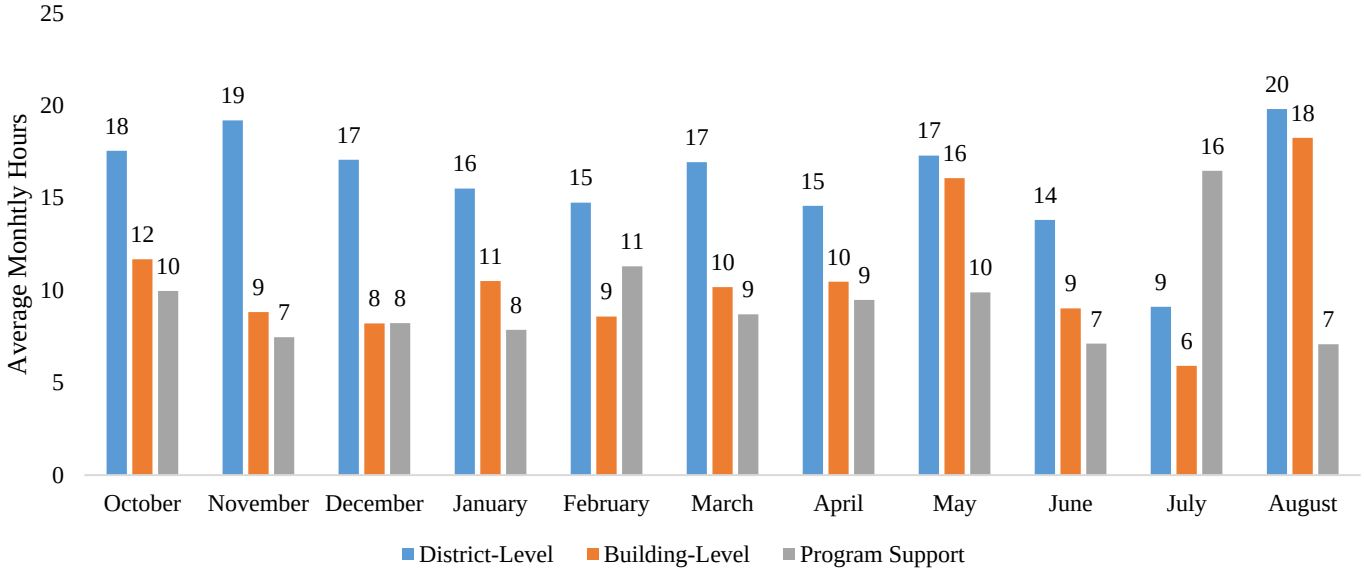
Note: District-Level n = 1,544. Building-Level n = 505. Program Support n = 536. Observations are defined as each unique month in which a district reported hours worked. The number of observations varies due to missing data in the Work Logs.

Figure 5. Average Monthly Hours by Support Type and Blueprint Implementation Status for District Improvement Facilitators



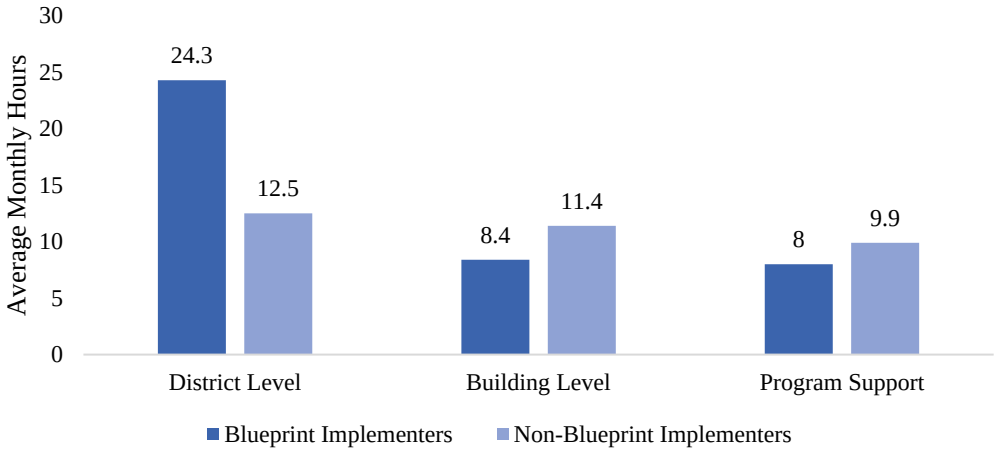
Note: n = 289 for Blueprint-installers, 1,579 for non-Blueprint-installers. Observations are defined as each unique month in which a district reported hours worked. The number of observations varies due to missing data in the Work Logs.

Figure 6. Average Hours and Support Type for Intervention Specialists



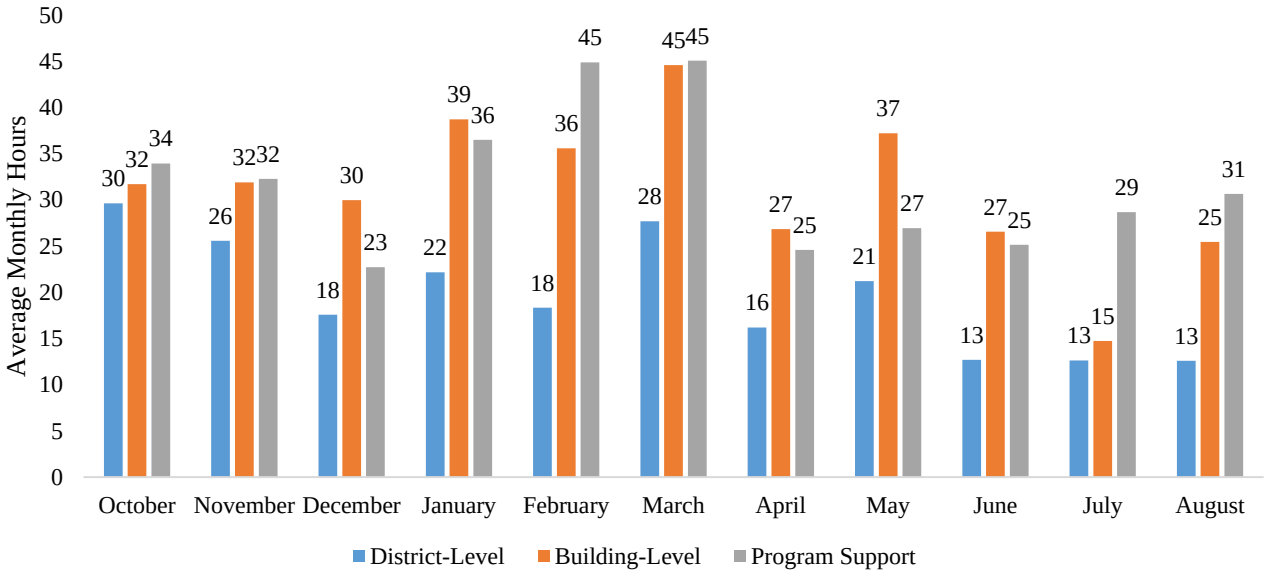
Note: District-Level n = 1,516. Building-Level n = 610. Program Support n = 656. Observations are defined as each unique month in which a district reported hours worked. The number of observations varies due to missing data in the Work Logs.

Figure 7. Average Monthly Hours by Support Type and Blueprint Implementation Status for Intervention Specialists



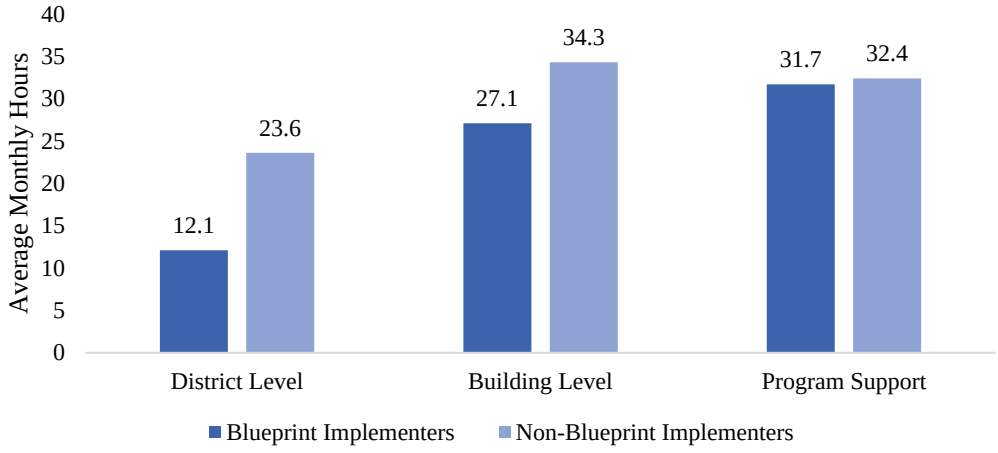
Note: n = 450 for Blueprint-installers, 1,364 for non-Blueprint-installers. Observations are defined as each unique month in which a district reported hours worked. The number of observations varies due to missing data in the Work Logs.

Figure 8. Average Hours and Support Type for School Improvement Facilitators



Note: District-Level n = 1,090. Building-Level n = 1,375. Program Support n = 1,447. Observations are defined as each unique month in which a district reported hours worked. The number of observations varies due to missing data in the Work Logs.

Figure 9. Average Monthly Hours by Support Type and Blueprint Implementation Status for School Improvement Facilitators



Note: n = 1,033 for Blueprint-installers, 2,061 for non-Blueprint-installers. Observations are defined as each unique month in which a district reported hours worked. The number of observations varies due to missing data in the Work Logs.

To what extent are Title I Priority and Focus schools using other MI Excel program components?

Data from the 2016-17 Priority School Service Plans is provided in Table 4 on the next page. Priority school services requested are divided into general and content-specific instructional supports, culture and climate interventions, and coaching supports. According to the Service Plans, the majority of Priority schools planned to focus on research-based instructional support and professional learning communities. This aligns with the design and goals of the MI Excel program. Interestingly, very few schools requested content specific support, especially compared to requests in 2015-16. Culture and climate intervention support in some form was requested by the majority of Priority schools. Content coaching was requested more frequently than instructional coaching, and 18 schools requested both types of coaching. When considering these counts and percentages, it is important to remember that they reflect only submitted Service Plans requesting these services – a given Priority school may not actually implement a certain activity, while another Priority school that did not request services may implement an activity from the table below.

Compared to the 2015-16 school year, requests for support in research-based instructional support and professional learning communities decreased while requests for support implementing multi-tiered systems of support increased. Requests for coaching supports decreased by roughly twenty percentage points compared to the 2015-16 school year. Interestingly, requests for content-specific instructional supports decreased dramatically between 2015-16 and 2016-17. However, it should be noted that a new format for Service Plan collection was utilized for the 2016-17 school year that allowed consultants to leave requests blank, neither requesting nor not requesting a service. This is reflected in the Service Plans data, as over 90 percent of Service Plans are missing information regarding content-specific instructional supports.

Table 5. Priority School Activities in 2016-17, as Documented in the Service Plans

Program	Pct. of Schools	
	2016-17	2015-16
General Instructional Supports		
Research-Based Instructional Support	64%	71%
Professional Learning Communities	58%	72%
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support	44%	38%
Other*	15%	21%
Content-Specific Instructional Supports		
Reading	7%	74%
Science	7%	44%
Social Studies	4%	36%
Math	3%	70%
Writing	3%	59%
*Culture and Climate Interventions***	65%	63%
Coaching		
Content Coaching	48%	67%
Instructional Coaching	19%	38%

Note: 2016-17 n = 162. 2015-16 n = 150.
*Other requested general instructional supports contain various services requested by Priority schools that do not fit into the RBIS, PLCs, or MTSS categories.
**Percent and total for culture and climate interventions includes culture and climate services and supports provided by the ISD, an external vendor, or other approved sources.

To what extent do schools receiving services through the SSoS improve students' academic achievement and leading indicators (i.e., attendance, graduation) of academic achievement?

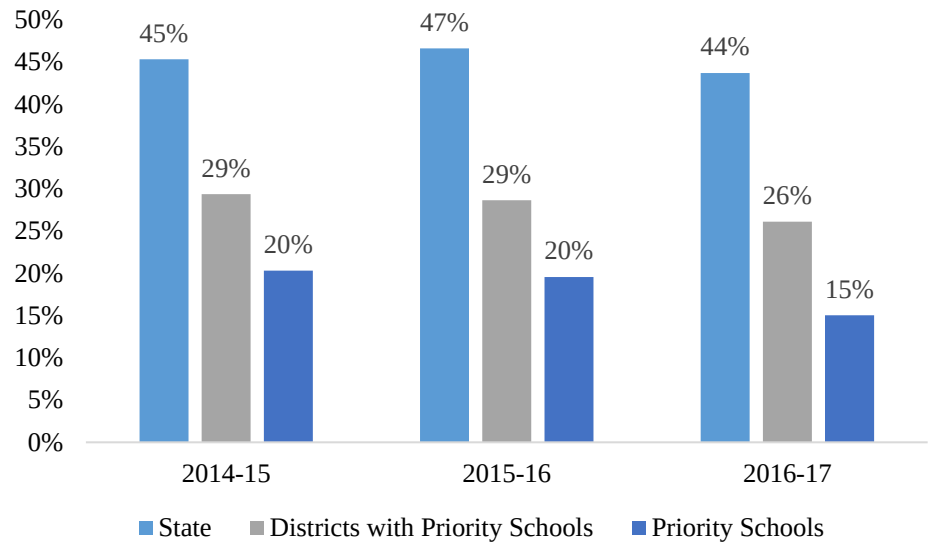
The analyses for this evaluation question are organized by measures of academic achievement (proficiency rates and student growth percentiles) and measures of leading indicators of academic achievement (attendance, mobility, and graduation). In each of the analyses, we compare the information for Priority schools participating in the MI Excel program with averages for the state and averages for districts with Priority schools. We also disaggregate information for MI Excel Priority schools by Blueprint implementation status and by whether the schools have exited the program.

Academic Achievement

To understand whether Priority schools participating in the MI Excel program have made improvements in academic achievement, we examined proficiency rates for three years (2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17) and student growth percentiles for one year (2015-16).

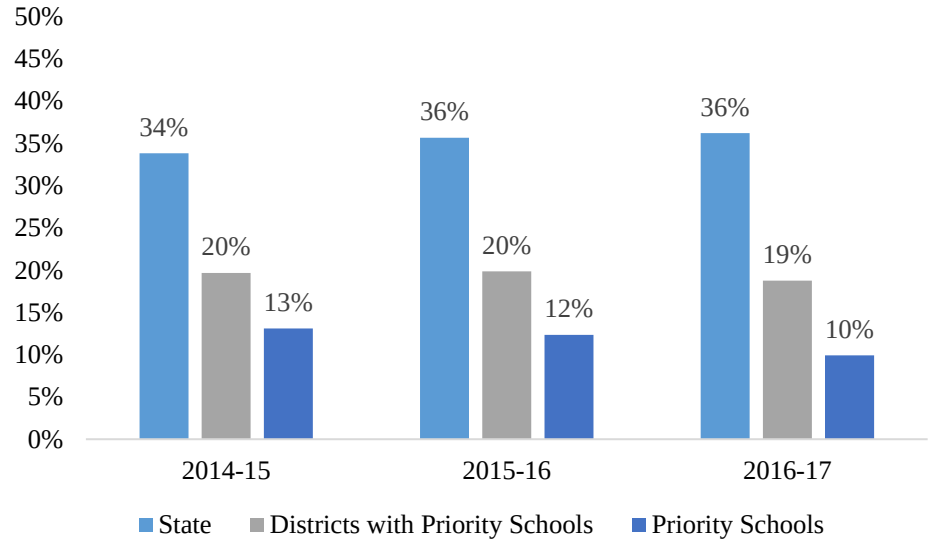
Figures 10 and 11 present average proficiency rates for three years for the state, districts with MI Excel Priority schools, and MI Excel Priority schools in English language arts (ELA) and math. In each of the three years, average proficiency rates for all schools in districts with MI Excel Priority schools lagged the state average by roughly 15 points in ELA and math. The average proficiency rates for MI Excel Priority schools were lower than the average rate for all schools in the districts by roughly nine points in every year in ELA. In math, the difference between MI Excel Priority schools and all schools in the districts was roughly six points in 2014-15 and 2015-16, and increased to nine points in 2016-17. In the aggregate, there has not been a large improvement in overall ELA or math proficiency among MI Excel Priority schools.

Figure 10. Average ELA Proficiency Rate



Note: State 2014-15 n = 2,927, 2015-16 n = 2,962, and 2016-17 n = 2,223. Districts with Priority schools 2014-15 n = 538, 2015-16 n = 549, and 2016-17 n = 420. Priority schools 2014-15 n = 191, 2015-16 n = 188, and 2016-17 n = 138.

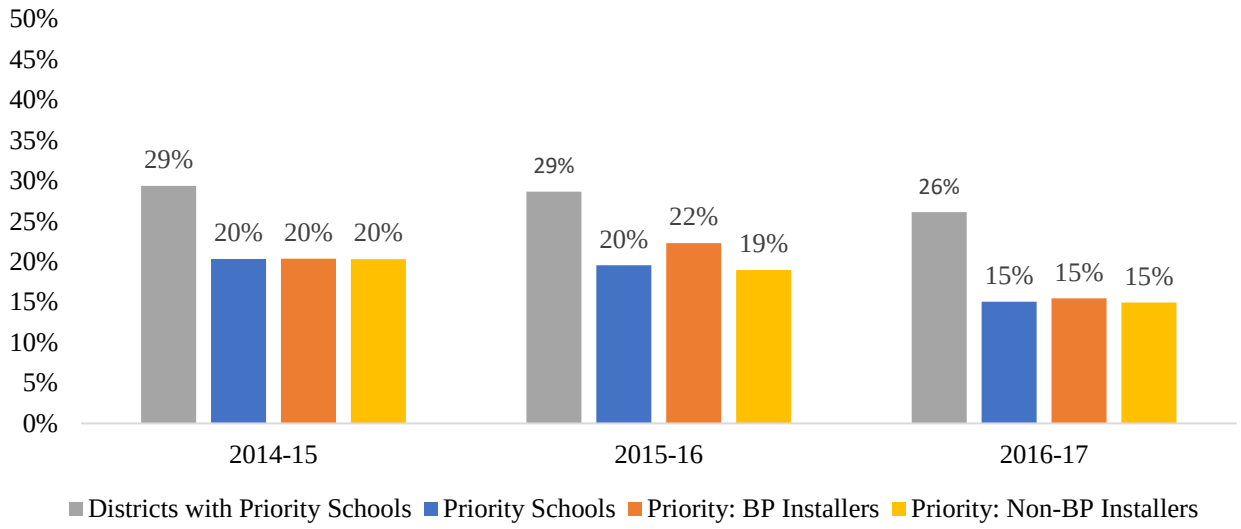
Figure 11. Average Math Proficiency Rate



Note: State 2014-15 n = 2,926, 2015-16 n = 2,874, and 2016-17 n = 2,234. Districts with Priority schools 2014-15 n = 539, 2015-16 n = 525, and 2016-17 n = 422. Priority schools 2014-15 n = 191, 2015-16 n = 180, and 2016-17 n = 139.

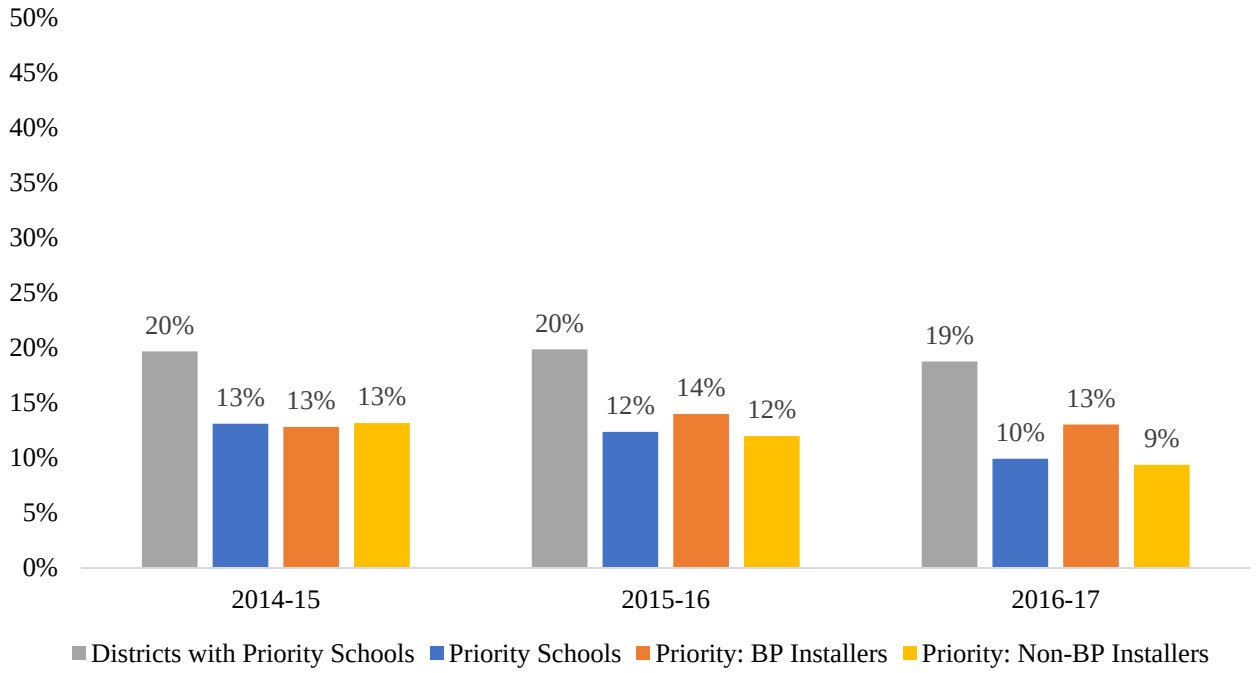
Figures 12 and 13 present average proficiency rates for three years in ELA and math, respectively, for districts with MI Excel Priority schools, MI Excel Priority schools, and MI Excel Priority schools by whether the schools implemented the Blueprint. In each of the three years, there were no statistically significant differences in the average proficiency rates in ELA or math between Priority schools that were Blueprint installers and non-installers.

Figure 12. Average ELA Proficiency Rate for MI Excel Priority Schools, by Blueprint Installation Status



Note: Districts with Priority schools 2014-15 n = 538, 2015-16 n = 549, and 2016-17 n = 420. Priority schools 2014-15 n = 191, 2015-16 n = 188, and 2016-17 n = 138. Priority schools, BP Installers 2014-15 n = 34, 2015-16 n = 34, and 2016-17 n = 22. Priority schools, Non-BP Installers 2014-15 n = 157, 2015-16 n = 154, and 2016-17 n = 116.

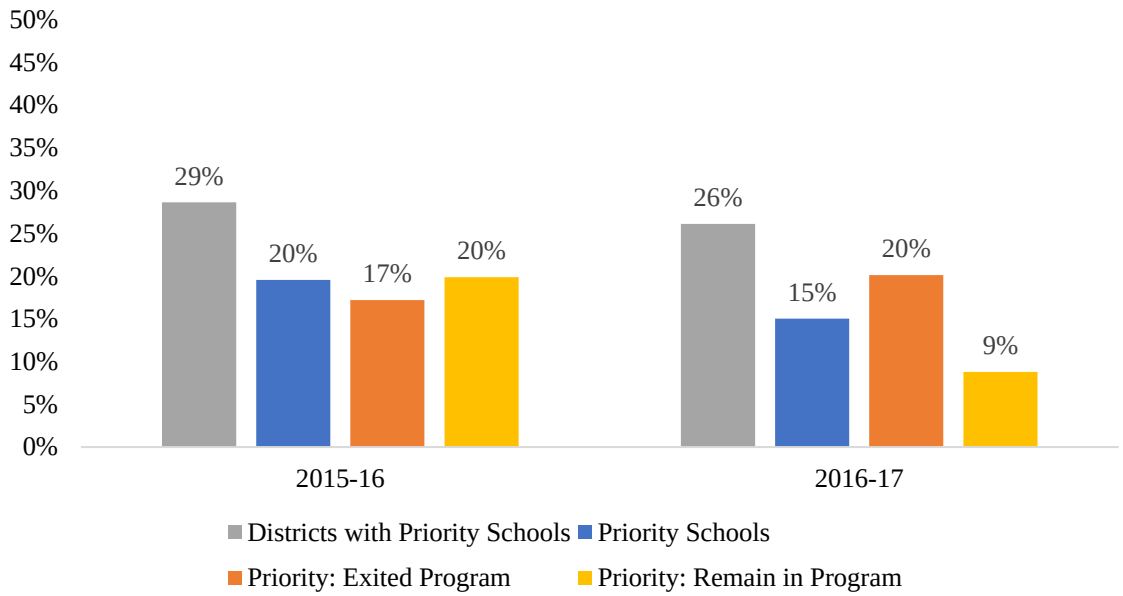
Figure 13. Average Math Proficiency Rate for MI Excel Priority Schools, by Blueprint Installation Status



Note: Districts with Priority schools 2014-15 n = 539, 2015-16 n = 525, and 2016-17 n = 422. Priority schools 2014-15 n = 191, 2015-16 n = 180, and 2016-17 n = 139. Priority schools, BP Installers 2014-15 n = 34, 2015-16 n = 34, and 2016-17 n = 22. Priority schools, Non-BP Installers 2014-15 n = 157, 2015-16 n = 146, and 2016-17 n = 118.

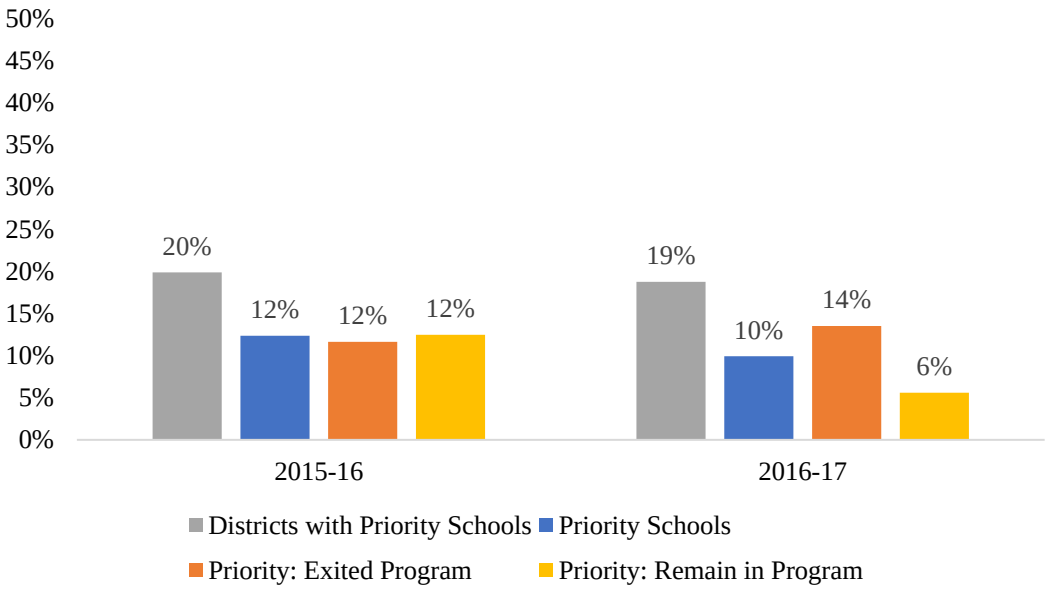
Figures 14 and 15 present average proficiency rates for two years in ELA and math, respectively, for districts with MI Excel Priority schools, MI Excel Priority schools, and MI Excel Priority schools by whether the schools exited the MI Excel program. A total of 121 Priority schools have exited the MI Excel program over the last two years. The number of Priority schools with proficiency data that exited the program in 2015-16 was 23. In 2016-17, 98 Priority schools exited the program. However, out of the total of 121 schools that exited, only 76 had proficiency data in 2016-17. In 2015-16, the Priority schools that exited the program had slightly lower proficiency rates in both ELA and math, but the difference was not statistically significant. In 2016-17, the Priority schools that exited the program had higher proficiency rates in both ELA and math, and the differences were statistically significant.

Figure 14. Average ELA Proficiency Rate for MI Excel Priority Schools, by Exit Status



Note: Districts with Priority schools 2015-16 n = 549 and 2016-17 n = 420. Priority schools 2015-16 n = 188 and 2016-17 n = 138. Priority schools, Exited Program 2015-16 n = 23 and 2016-17 n = 76. Priority schools, Remain in Program 2015-16 n = 165, and 2016-17 n = 62.

Figure 15. Average Math Proficiency Rate for MI Excel Priority Schools, by Exit Status



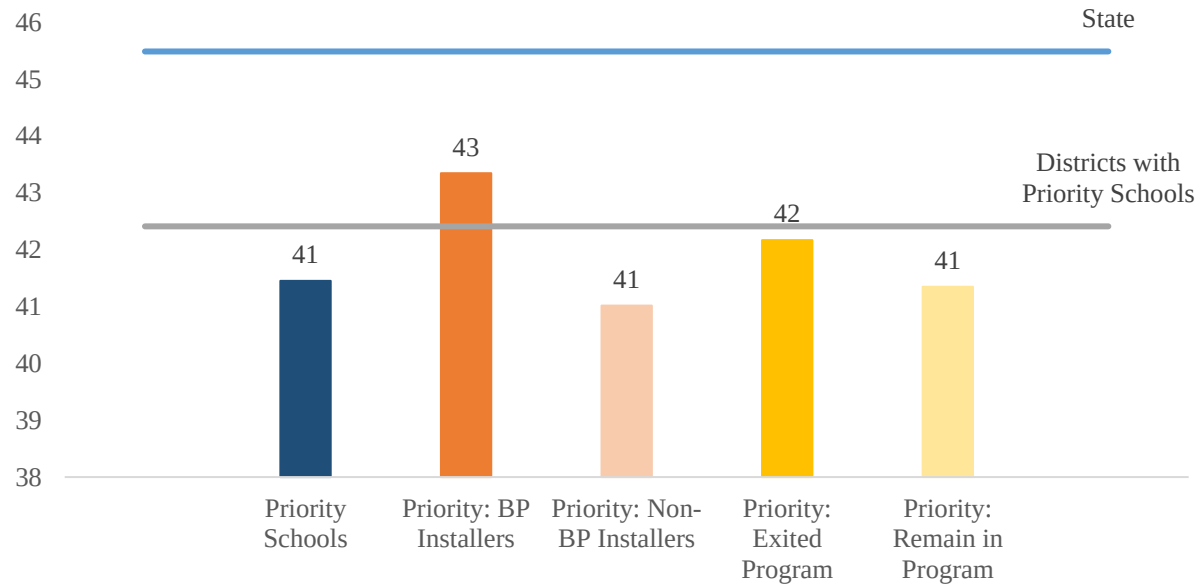
Note: Districts with Priority schools 2015-16 n = 525 and 2016-17 n = 422. Priority schools 2015-16 n = 180 and 2016-17 n = 139. Priority schools, Exited Program 2015-16 n = 23 and 2016-17 n = 76. Priority schools, Remain in Program 2015-16 n = 157 and 2016-17 n = 63.

Overall, the ELA and math proficiency rate data suggests that MI Excel Priority schools did not make substantial improvements in 2015-16 or 2016-17. The MI Excel Priority schools performed lower than state and district averages. When breaking out the MI Excel Priority schools by Blueprint implementation status and whether the schools have exited the program, there were some differences in performance. MI Excel Priority schools that exited the program in 2015-16 or 2016-17 outperformed schools that remained in the program in 2016-17 in ELA and math, and the differences in proficiency rates were statistically significant.

Academic growth data is available for the change in student performance between 2014-15 and 2015-16. Figures 16 and 17 present average student growth percentiles (SGP) for ELA and math, respectively. The two figures display the average SGP for the state and for all schools in districts with MI Excel Priority schools as a line. The average SGP for MI Excel Priority schools, MI Excel Priority schools by Blueprint implementation status, and MI Excel Priority schools by whether schools have exited the program are presented as columns. In the prior figures, we showed that there are large gaps in ELA and math proficiency rates between Priority schools and the averages for the state as well as all schools in districts where Priority schools are located. If Priority schools are to make improvements in closing the academic gap, then the schools need to demonstrate higher average SGP than the state or district averages. In 2015-16, the average SGP in ELA and math was lower for all Priority schools compared with the average state and district SGP. The one area where a portion of Priority schools had higher average student growth than the district in ELA and math was Priority schools that implemented Blueprint.

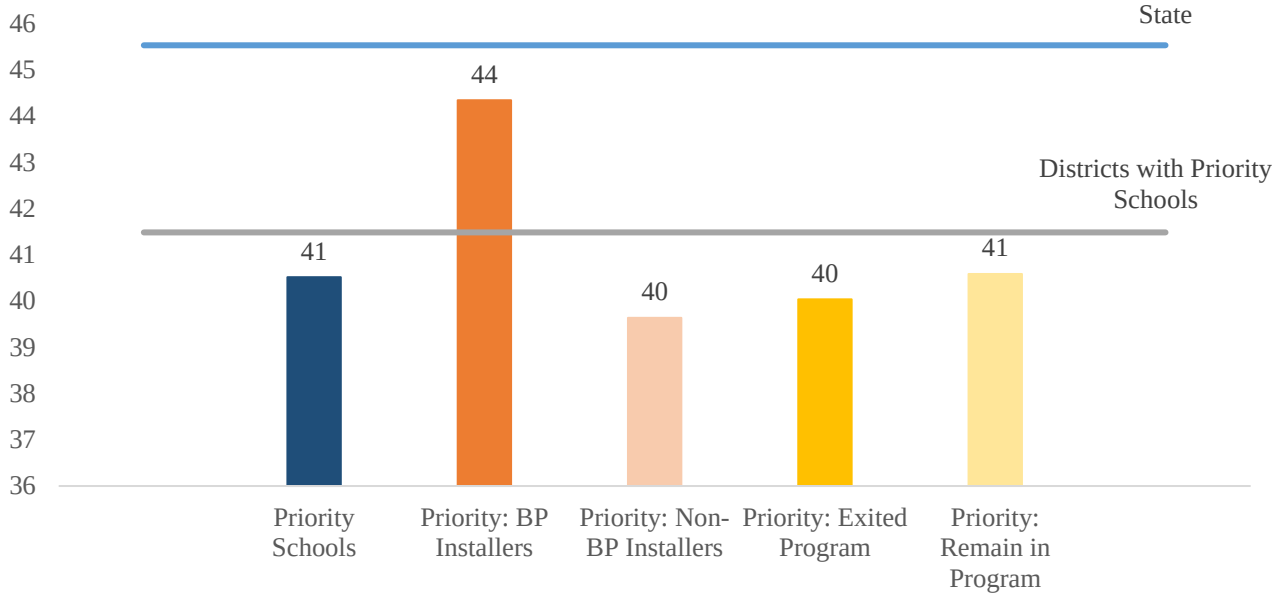
A notable finding is the difference in math growth between Priority schools that are implementing the Blueprint and those that are not. Schools implementing the Blueprint had a higher average math SGP than schools that are not, with the result being statistically significant. This suggests the Blueprint is related to a measurable improvement in student growth in math, though the effect is not yet seen in math proficiency, or in ELA growth or proficiency.

Figure 16. Average ELA Student Growth Percentiles, 2015-16



Note: State n = 3,122, Districts with Priority schools n = 551, Priority schools n = 182, Priority schools BP Installers n = 34, Priority schools Non-BP Installers n = 148, Priority schools Exited Program n = 23, Priority schools Remain in Program n = 159.

Figure 17. Average Math Student Growth Percentiles, 2015-16



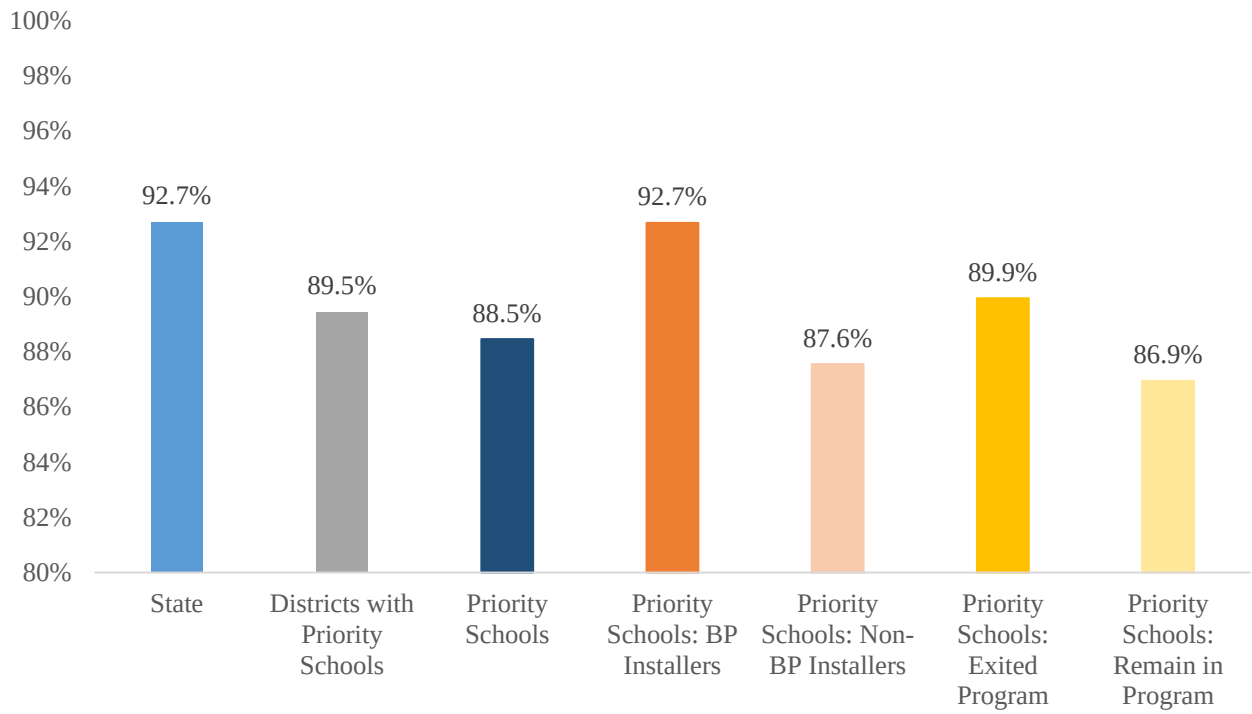
Note: State n = 3,122, Districts with Priority schools n = 550, Priority schools n = 182, Priority schools BP Installers n = 34, Priority schools Non-BP Installers n = 148, Priority schools Exited Program n = 23, Priority schools Remain in Program n = 159.

Leading Indicators of Academic Achievement

Priority schools have received the support of the MI Excel program for two years, which may not be sufficient time to see substantial improvements in proficiency rates or academic growth. In addition to academic achievement data, we examined 2015-16 attendance rates, mobility rates, and graduation rates to determine if there are areas where the Priority schools can focus efforts to foster improvements in academic achievement.

Figure 18 presents 2015-16 attendance rate data for the state, districts with MI Excel Priority schools, MI Excel Priority schools, and MI Excel Priority schools disaggregated by Blueprint implementation status and whether schools have exited the program. The average attendance rate for the state was 92.7 percent and for districts with MI Excel Priority schools it was 89.4 percent. The attendance rate for all Priority schools was lower than the state and district averages at 88.4 percent. Priority schools that were Blueprint installers had attendance rates the same as the state average. Priority schools that exited the MI Excel program in 2015-16 had higher attendance rates than the district average.

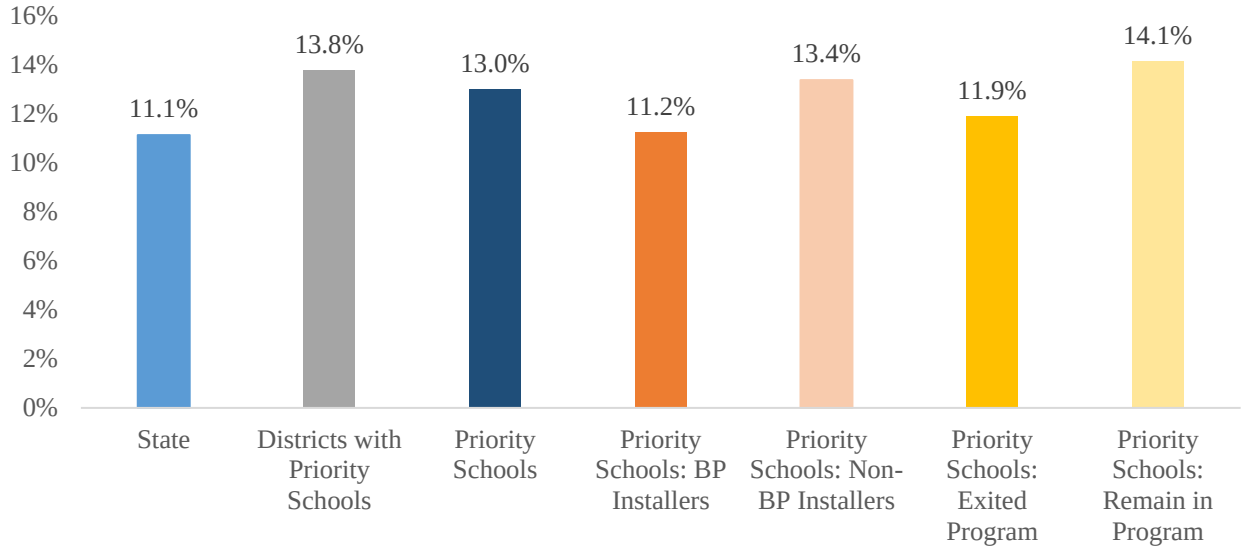
Figure 18. Average Attendance Rate, 2015-16



Note: State n = 3,463, Districts with Priority schools n = 615, Priority schools n = 192, Priority schools BP Installers n = 34, Priority schools Non-BP Installers n = 158, Priority schools Exited Program n = 97, Priority schools Remain in Program n = 95.

Figure 19 presents 2015-16 mobility rate data for the state, districts with MI Excel Priority schools, MI Excel Priority schools, and MI Excel Priority schools disaggregated by Blueprint implementation status and whether schools have exited the program. With mobility rate data, the goal is for the rate to get lower with fewer students experiencing the disruption associated with changing schools. The average mobility rate for the state was 11.1 percent and for districts with MI Excel Priority schools it was 13.8 percent. The mobility rate for all Priority schools was higher than the state average, but lower than the district average at 13.0 percent. Priority schools that were Blueprint installers had mobility rates that were similar to the state average. Priority schools that exited the MI Excel program in 2015-16 had lower mobility rates than the district average.

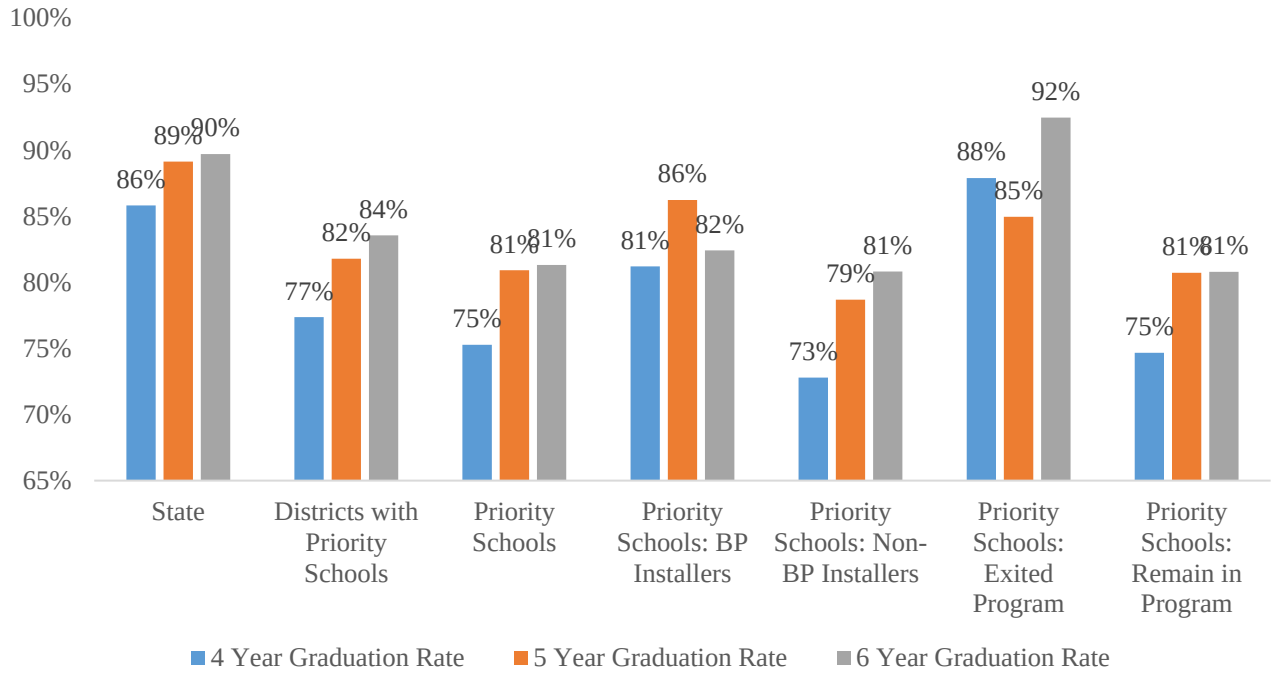
Figure 19. Average Mobility Rate, 2015-16



Note: State n = 3,409, Districts with Priority schools n = 608, Priority schools n = 192, Priority schools BP Installers n = 34, Priority schools Non-BP Installers n = 158, Priority schools Exited Program n = 97, Priority schools Remain in Program n = 95.

Figure 20 presents four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates from 2015-16 for schools identified as "General Education" in the Educational Entity Master file. Average graduation rates are presented for the state, districts with MI Excel Priority schools, MI Excel Priority schools, and MI Excel Priority schools disaggregated by Blueprint implementation status and whether schools have exited the program. The graduation rates for all Priority schools were lower than the state and district averages. Priority schools that were Blueprint installers had higher graduation rates than the district averages. Priority schools that exited the program in 2015-16 had higher four-year and six-year graduation rates than the state and district averages, and higher five-year graduation rates than the district average.

Figure 20. Average Graduation Rates, 2015-16



Note: 4 Year Graduation Rate: State n = 671, Districts with Priority schools n = 79, Priority schools n = 44, Priority schools BP Installers n = 13, Priority schools Non-BP Installers n = 31, Priority schools Exited Program n = 2, Priority schools Remain in Program n = 42. 5 Year Graduation Rate: State n = 678, Districts with Priority schools n = 80, Priority schools n = 44, Priority schools BP Installers n = 13, Priority schools Non-BP Installers n = 31, Priority schools Exited Program n = 2, Priority schools Remain in Program n = 42. 6 Year Graduation Rate: State n = 673, Districts with Priority schools n = 80, Priority schools n = 45, Priority schools BP Installers n = 14, Priority schools Non-BP Installers n = 31, Priority schools Exited Program n = 2, Priority schools Remain in Program n = 43.

To what extent is there a correlation between the successful implementation of the Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround and a school's ability to improve students' academic achievement?

As discussed in the previous section, there is a statistically significant relationship between Blueprint implementation and higher SGPs in math for Priority schools. However, there is not any relationship between the Blueprint and math proficiency, or between the Blueprint and ELA proficiency or growth.

To better understand possible relationships between the MI Excel program and student outcomes, we analyzed relationships between MI Excel implementation data and students' academic outcomes in participating Priority schools.

Table 5 on the next page displays the correlation between program implementation and academic outcome metrics including ELA and math student growth percentiles (SGP), attendance rates, mobility rates, and three graduation rates. This data is broken out by Blueprint implementation status, and is also presented for all MI Excel Priority schools collectively.

Across the various academic outcome metrics, the MI Excel program component that had the strongest positive relationship was the number of consultants' program support hours, particularly for Priority schools installing the Blueprint. Among Priority schools installing the Blueprint, higher program support hours were strongly correlated with higher ELA and math SGP, higher attendance rates, lower mobility rates, and higher graduation rates. There was also positive correlations between program support hours and higher ELA and math SPG and lower mobility rates for all Priority schools and schools not installing the Blueprint, but the correlations were smaller in magnitude than the relationship with schools installing the Blueprint.

Table 6. Correlation between Academic Outcomes and Program Implementation in Priority Schools, by Blueprint Status

Metric	Type of Priority School	Building Level Hours	District Level Hours	Program Support Hours
ELA SGP	Blueprint	-0.03	0.08	0.27
	Non-Blueprint	-0.01	-0.03	0.08
	All	-0.01	0.02	0.10
Math SGP	Blueprint	-0.11	0.01	0.26
	Non-Blueprint	-0.03	-0.13	0.05
	All	-0.03	-0.03	0.06
Attendance Rate	Blueprint	-0.45	-0.36	0.16
	Non-Blueprint	-0.02	0.04	-0.00
	All	-0.04	0.04	-0.02
Mobility Rate	Blueprint	0.25	0.17	-0.39
	Non-Blueprint	-0.08	-0.23	-0.14
	All	-0.05	-0.15	-0.14
4 Year Grad Rate	Blueprint	-0.22	-0.46	0.12
	Non-Blueprint	0.02	0.10	0.01
	All	-0.03	0.03	-0.02
5 Year Grad Rate	Blueprint	-0.28	-0.48	0.17
	Non-Blueprint	0.03	0.05	-0.00
	All	-0.02	0.01	-0.03
6 Year Grad Rate	Blueprint	-0.42	-0.55	0.11
	Non-Blueprint	-0.07	0.05	-0.11
	All	-0.10	-0.15	-0.09

What are the major system challenges and constraints that influence the effectiveness of the MI Excel Statewide System of Support?

To answer this question, we analyzed data from two 2016-17 school year administrations of the System Challenges Survey developed during the 2015-16 school year. The initial administration of the 2016-17 school year took place in November 2016. The second administration took place in June 2017. A table of survey items and frequency of responses for the two 2016-17 administrations can be found in the Appendix. Table 6 on the next page presents challenges from all three administrations of the survey and contains only districts for which all three administrations were available. Items are sorted from most challenging to least challenging as reported in the May 2017 administration.

The top five challenges in the May 2017 administration are:

- Staff turnover and transitions at the district level
- District and school leadership networks
- District staff commitment
- District administrator prioritization
- School administrator prioritization

Of these five challenges, three saw a decrease in the percent of districts reporting them as challenges while two saw and increase. Between the Fall and Spring administrations in the 2016-17 school year, eight items were listed more frequently as challenges while nine items were listed less frequently as challenges. Five items had no change.

Table 7. Percent of Districts Reporting System Challenges Survey Items as Challenging

System Challenges Survey Item	May 2016	November 2016	May 2017	Change Within 2016-17*
Turnover and staff transitions at the district level have not negatively influenced effective implementation.	14%	12%	17%	Increased Challenge
District and school implementers are not connected to a leadership network.	26%	20%	17%	Decreased Challenge
District staff are not committed to implementing the program.	29%	14%	15%	Increased Challenge
District administrators do not prioritize the implementation of the program.	32%	17%	14%	Decreased Challenge
School administrators do not prioritize the implementation of the program.	27%	15%	14%	Decreased Challenge
Turnover and staffing transitions at the school level have not negatively influenced effective implementation.	12%	15%	14%	Decreased Challenge
MI Excel consultants do not meet regularly with the designated district representative.	8%	5%	11%	Increased Challenge
District administrators do not perceive that the program can be effectively implemented.	18%	8%	9%	Increased Challenge
District and school implementers are not provided with routine professional development related to the program.	11%	9%	9%	No Change
District administrators do not view the program as important (i.e., they are bought-in).	20%	5%	8%	Increased Challenge
School administrators do not view the program as important (i.e., they are bought in).	20%	6%	8%	Increased Challenge
MI Excel consultants and district representatives do not communicate regularly.	5%	5%	8%	Increased Challenge
District administrators do not perceive that successful program implementation will improve student outcomes.	18%	6%	8%	Increased Challenge
School administrators do not perceive that the program can be effectively implemented.	18%	9%	8%	Decreased Challenge
School administrators do not perceive that successful program implementation will improve student outcomes.	17%	8%	8%	No Change
School administrators do not understand the programmatic components and how they are implemented.	20%	14%	6%	Decreased Challenge
District administrators do not understand the programmatic components and how they are implemented.	14%	6%	5%	Decreased Challenge
School administrators do not understand the purpose of the program.	14%	9%	5%	Decreased Challenge
The district does not have the ability to enhance curriculum and instruction.	8%	2%	2%	No Change
Schools do not have the ability to enhance curriculum and instruction.	14%	2%	2%	No Change
District administrators do not understand the purpose of the program.	11%	0%	0%	No Change
District and school implementers do not have regular access to programmatic expertise.	2%	2%	0%	Decreased Challenge

Note: n = 66 and includes only districts for which all three Systems Challenge Survey administrations are available. *Change over time is measured between the Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 administrations (both 2016-17 school year administrations).

The System Challenges Survey measures the following domains:

- *Contextual Fit.* Buy-in, or the extent to which stakeholders view the importance of using a proposed practice and understand the program.
- *Perceived Value.* A program's priority to implementers, recipients, and stakeholders in achieving important outcomes.
- *Perceptions of Effectiveness.* The extent to which district and school staff perceive their ability to adequately implement the MI Excel program and the program's influence on academic outcomes.
- *Capacity Building.* Access to coaching, technical assistance, and community of practice.

During the November 2016 of the System Challenges Survey, the most challenging domain was Contextual Fit. During the May 2017, however, consultant indicated that the most challenging domain was Perceptions of Effectiveness. These challenges, along with the shift in challenges between the first and second administration, suggest that stakeholders view the MI Excel program as valuable at a high level and have sufficient resources to implement the program, but getting buy-in may be difficult in the beginning, and the implementation of the program may be seen as less effective as the year progresses.

An item-level analysis of the Contextual Fit domain reveals some interesting findings. The results indicate that district-level and building-level administrators have a similar understanding of the purpose and importance of the program in both the first and second administrations. However, it appears that administrators have less understanding of the components of the program and how they are implemented. We do see an improvement in district and building administrator understanding between the November 2016 and May 2017 administrations, but leadership knowledge was still identified as a key problem in May 2017.

Within the Perceived Value domain, an item-level analysis reveals that consultants generally have frequent meeting with district-level administrators and representatives. Despite this regular communication, it appears that both district-level and building-level administrators are generally not committed to and do not prioritize implementation of the program. Taken with the Contextual Fit analysis, this may indicate that administrators who do not have a strong understanding of the program and its components are not as committed to the installation of the program. However, between the November 2016 and May 2017 administrations, we see an increased challenge in getting administrators to recognize the perceived value of the program.

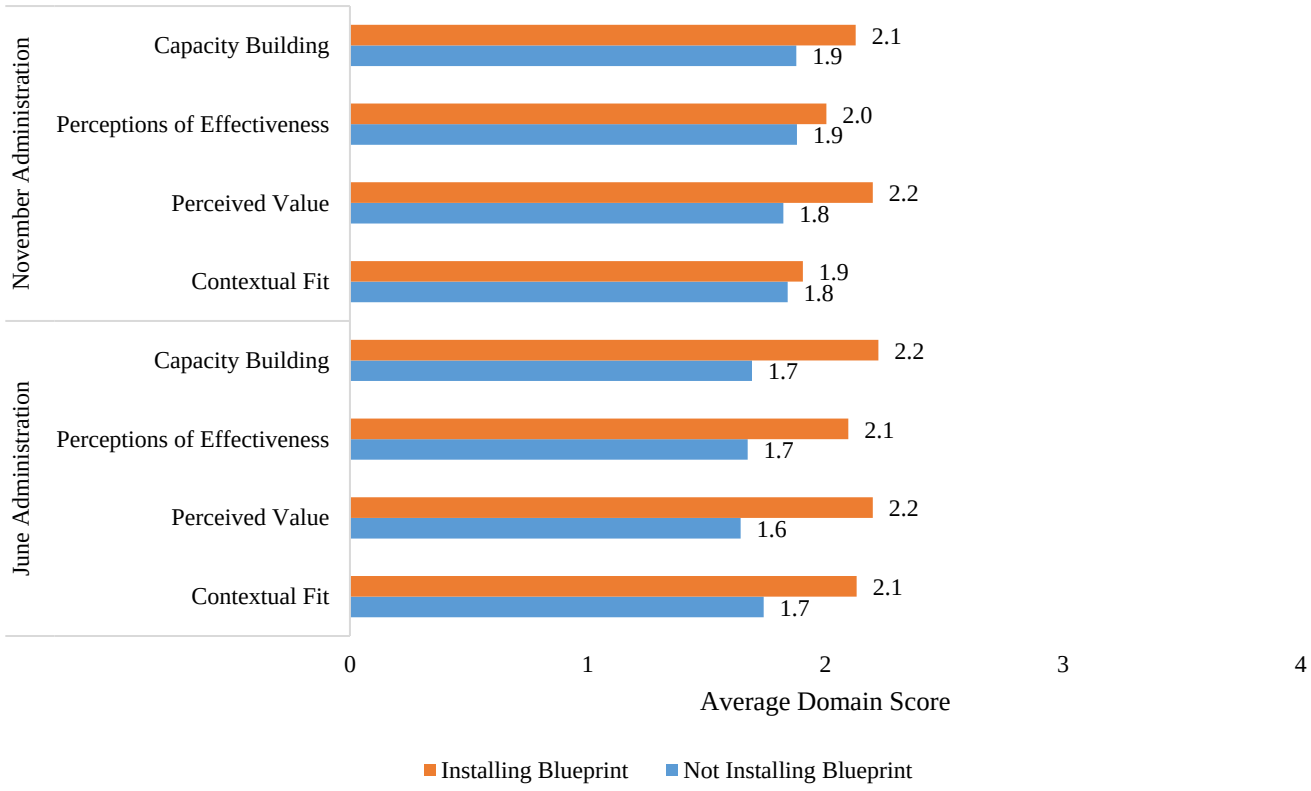
In the November 2016 administration, consultants indicated that staff turnover and transition is a major impediment and that district and school implementers are not connected to an effective leadership network. Between the November 2016 and May 2017 administrations, access to leadership networks increased while challenges associated with staff turnover and transition increased. This may be the result of increased program implementation bringing new opportunities to connect to leadership networks and resources.

To what extent does the Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround influence systemic operation?

To answer this question, we utilized the System Challenges Survey data. Figure 21 highlights the results for both System Challenges Survey administrations for the 2016-17 school year. An average composite score closer to one indicates that the domain is a challenge to the district while an average composite score closer to four indicates that the domain is not challenging.

Blueprint-installing districts had noticeably higher average domain scores on all domains across both administrations, indicating those consultants face fewer systemic challenges than their non-Blueprint counterparts. Between the November 2016 administration and the May 2017 administration, the gap in challenges faced between Blueprint-installing and non-Blueprint-installing districts increased. This means that, on average, Blueprint-installing districts faced fewer challenges as the year progressed while non-Blueprint-installing districts faced more challenges. This may mean that districts with fewer systemic challenges are more likely to install the Blueprint, or that Blueprint-installing districts are better able to mitigate challenges faced.

Figure 21. Average Domain Scores by Blueprint Implementation Status for 2016-17



Note: Blueprint-installing n = 26 in November 2016 and n = 22 in May 2017; non-Blueprint-installing n = 92 in November 2016 and n = 60 in May 2017.

The Blueprint for Rapid Turnaround is the work of MI Excel, the Statewide System of Support. To what extent does it contribute to system coherence within the intermediate school district service providers? To local districts?

To answer this question, we examined the distribution of districts that chose to implement the Blueprint over the last two years. In 2015-16, the 24 Blueprint-implementing districts were spread across 16 ISDs, with only six ISDs having more than one district implementing the Blueprint. Of those six ISDs, five had two districts and one, Wayne RESA, had four. In 2016-17, the 26 Blueprint-implementing districts are spread across 15 ISDs. Of those 15 ISDs, nine have only one district implementing the Blueprint, four have two districts, and two ISDs, Oakland Schools and Wayne RESA, have four districts implementing. This suggests that districts are deciding whether to install the Blueprint independently, regardless of what other districts in their ISD are doing.

Only 33 percent of IDSs with schools in the MI Excel program had at least one district implement the Blueprint in 2016-17; only 15 percent of MI Excel districts, representing 17 percent of MI Excel schools, chose to implement the Blueprint. Due to these low participation rates it remains difficult to ascertain the Blueprint's effect on overall implementation of MI Excel at the ISD and district levels. As more districts begin installing the Blueprint, further analyses will be possible.

Conclusions and Next Steps

The year two program evaluation identifies many successes, but also areas for improvement. These findings are discussed below.

Successes

The statistically significant increase in math SGP among Priority schools implementing the Blueprint is a positive sign, which may ultimately lead to higher proficiency. Academic achievement and growth should be monitored in Blueprint schools to see if the increase persists over time.

Districts installing the Blueprint have maintained or improved their System Challenges Survey scores. This indicates that these consultants are working well with district and school leadership and are facing fewer systemic obstacles to program implementation than they were in May 2016.

We were able to conduct these analyses due to new data collection processes that were designed and implemented in cooperation with CISD, in addition to improvements in processes for compiling collected data. This improved data collection and compilation has contributed greatly to our understanding of MI Excel, and has also streamlined the process of getting program implementation data into the dashboard.

Areas for Improvement

Only 15 percent of MI Excel districts participated in the Blueprint in 2016-17. It is not clear why most districts are opting out of Blueprint participation, but it may be due to misinformation or lack of understanding. Greater attention should be given to understanding why districts choose not to participate.

Additionally, consultants identified the lack of buy-in from district and school leaders as a challenge, particularly in non-Blueprint districts. However, it is not clear why leadership is not committed to MI Excel. Addressing this perception and building strong relationships with leaders in districts where this was identified as a problem may increase program efficacy.

For the second consecutive year, districts not installing the Blueprint received less time from consultants than Blueprint-implementing districts. Schools and districts getting unequal program support is likely to continue to result in unequal outcomes.

Data availability remains a challenge. Monthly attendance and discipline data is not included in this evaluation or the dashboard due to ongoing challenges with the Data Hub data. Program implementation data has high missingness rates (notably spring System Challenges Survey administrations and the “areas of attention” section of the Work Logs), which may bias results. Improving data collection and quality should be an ongoing effort.

Appendix 1: Activities and expenditures by participating organizations

Basis Policy Research

Basis Policy Research (Basis) has served as the primary actor in designing the MI Excel data dashboard and completing the program evaluation. This includes identifying needed data files and performing cleaning and compilation procedures, defining business rules for measure calculations, overseeing the designing and building of the technical infrastructure for the dashboard (including compliance processes), generating new data collection protocols and improving existing processes, designing the data dashboard, managing the user acceptance testing process, setting up dashboard access for MDE, DTMB, CISD, and consultant users, and performing the analysis for this program evaluation. Basis has been in regular contact with MDE, CISD, and DTMB throughout this process. Basis also established scopes of work for the needed sub-contractors and has managed their work throughout the year. Total cost for Basis's work in year two includes $116,156 for labor and $143 for travel.

Regional Educational Media Center 1

Regional Educational Media Center 1 (REMC1) is serving as the dashboard host. This includes building and maintaining the database servers, installing necessary software on database equipment (including SQL and Power BI), and maintaining needed registrations and web connectivity for the user website. Total cost for REMC1's work is $7,090.04 in year two (covering hosting in quarter four).

Take Flight Enterprises

Take Flight Enterprises (Take Flight) has served as a key partner in designing the dashboard and in building the underlying relational database. Take Flight has updated the dashboard's file layouts, which are used to ensure that data is consistently transformed and loaded into the dashboard. Additionally, Take Flight wrote the necessary SQL script to build the relational database. Total cost for Take Flight's work in year two is $19,272.

The Michigan Data Hub

The Michigan Data Hub and its staff have been a key partner in year two. The Data Hub's directory and cockpit application were used to build the sign-on process for the dashboard, and Hub staff provided key information and support throughout this process. Additionally, the needed Power BI Pro licenses were acquired and assigned through the Data Hub's purchasing agreement, ensuring licenses can be assigned to dashboard users. There is no additional cost for their work.

Double Line Partners

Double Line Partners completed two key tasks during year two: federating the Data Hub's active directory with the directory of dashboard users, and modifying the Data Hub's cockpit application for MI Excel users. These activities enable the MDE to establish new accounts for dashboard users who are not already established in the Data Hubs, and for those accounts to successfully access the dashboard. Total cost for Double Line's work in year two is $48,185.

Akea Web Solutions

Akea Web Solutions (Akea) performed web development services for the dashboard, with a particular focus on ensuring the non-Power BI aspects of the dashboard website were accessible. Total cost for Akea's work in year two is $2,500.

Vizion Solutions

Vizion Solutions (Vizion) finalized and launched the dashboard website, including using Power BI's API to embed the dashboard reports into the site. Vizion also provided technical assistance in establishing row-level and user-based security for the dashboard, which ensures that users see only data for which they are authorized. Total cost for Vizion's work in year two is $3,443.

Calhoun Intermediate School District

Calhoun Intermediate School District (CISD) has worked with Basis to build institutional understanding of the MI Excel program, as well as to administer the System Challenges Survey, Service Plans, and Work Logs. CISD's cooperation and support has enabled Basis to accurately understand and report on MI Excel. There is no additional cost for their work.

Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget

Maria Thomas and Simon Wang of the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB) have provided critical guidance and oversight to the technical architecture for the dashboard. They directed Basis through the User Acceptance Testing process and continue to provide information on state standards and best practices. There is no additional cost to Basis for their work, however, the MDE is responsible for associated costs for work performed by the DTMB.

Appendix 2. Supplemental Figures and Tables

Figure A1. Blueprint Installation Timeline, Courtesy of MI Excel Team

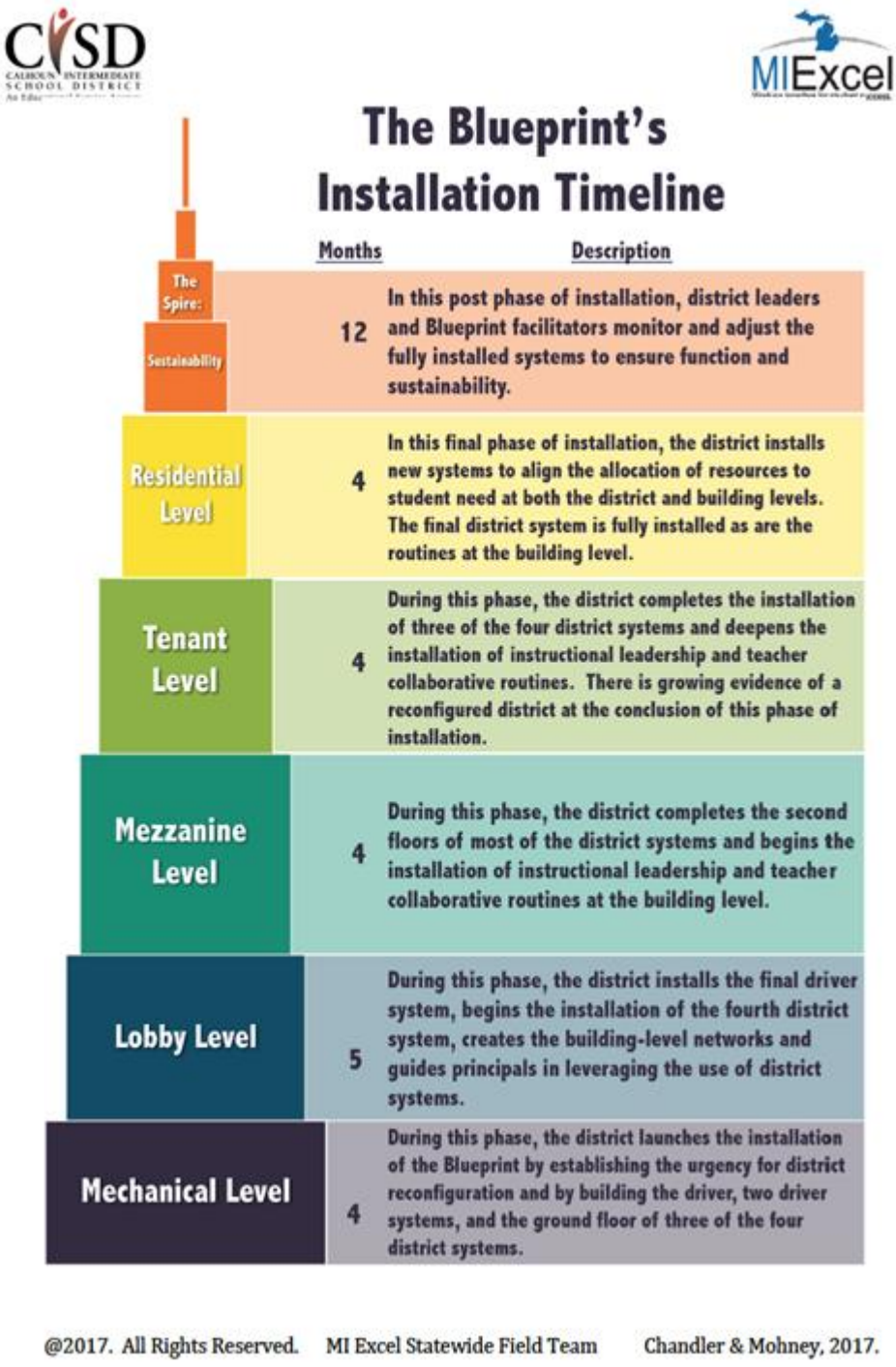


Table A1. Frequency of Consultants' Responses on System Challenges Survey, 2016-17 Administrations

Question	November 2016					June 2017				
	Not True	Somewhat True	True	Very True	Missing	Not True	Somewhat True	True	Very True	Missing
District administrators view the program as important (i.e., they are bought-in).	7%	25%	34%	34%	0%	6%	23%	35%	30%	6%
District administrators understand the purpose of the program.	2%	25%	41%	33%	0%	0%	21%	45%	30%	4%
District administrators understand the programmatic components and how they are implemented.	4%	36%	45%	14%	1%	4%	28%	48%	17%	3%
School administrators view the program as important (i.e., they are bought in).	7%	25%	42%	27%	0%	6%	28%	43%	18%	5%
School administrators understand the purpose of the program.	7%	22%	47%	24%	0%	4%	26%	50%	16%	4%
School administrators understand the programmatic components and how they are implemented.	13%	33%	39%	14%	1%	5%	35%	43%	13%	4%
District administrators prioritize the implementation of the program.	18%	30%	33%	19%	0%	11%	29%	35%	18%	7%
District staff are committed to implementing the program.	14%	29%	36%	19%	2%	12%	33%	37%	15%	3%
MI Excel consultants meet regularly with the designated district representative.	5%	14%	36%	43%	2%	11%	11%	35%	39%	4%
MI Excel consultants and district representatives communicate regularly.	6%	14%	36%	43%	1%	7%	18%	30%	40%	5%
School administrators prioritize the implementation of the program.	14%	27%	42%	16%	1%	11%	39%	32%	15%	3%
District administrators perceive that the program can be effectively implemented.	6%	25%	42%	25%	2%	7%	26%	39%	23%	5%

Question	November 2016					June 2017				
	Not True	Somewhat True	True	Very True	Missing	Not True	Somewhat True	True	Very True	Missing
District administrators perceive that successful program implementation will improve student outcomes.	4%	23%	40%	32%	1%	6%	16%	46%	27%	5%
Turnover and staff transitions at the district level have negatively influenced effective implementation.	11%	11%	22%	55%	1%	16%	12%	17%	51%	4%
School administrators perceive that the program can be effectively implemented.	9%	27%	45%	18%	1%	6%	35%	40%	13%	6%
School administrators perceive that successful program implementation will improve student outcomes.	5%	27%	44%	23%	1%	6%	24%	49%	15%	6%
Turnover and staffing transitions at the school level have negatively influenced effective implementation.	14%	13%	26%	45%	2%	16%	10%	18%	52%	4%
The district has the ability to enhance curriculum and instruction.	1%	22%	44%	32%	1%	1%	24%	50%	21%	4%
Schools have the ability to enhance curriculum and instruction.	1%	32%	43%	23%	1%	1%	34%	46%	15%	4%
District and school implementers have regular access to programmatic expertise.	2%	14%	41%	40%	3%	0%	12%	44%	40%	4%
District and school implementers are provided with routine professional development related to the program.	9%	19%	39%	32%	1%	9%	18%	41%	26%	6%
District and school implementers are connected to a leadership network.	18%	21%	35%	26%	0%	17%	20%	37%	23%	3%
	Note: Respondent n = 118					Note: Respondent n = 82				

References

Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2009). Teacher Preparation and Student Achievement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 31(4)*, 416-440. DOI: 10.3102/0162373709353129.

Chandler, G. A., & Huan-Frank, J. (2015). *Blue Print for Rapid Turnaround*.

City, E. A., Elmore, R., Fiarman, S., & Teitel, L. (2010). *Instructional Rounds in Education: A Network Approach to Improving Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Guthrie, J., Springer, M., Rolle, R. A., & Houck, E. (2007). *Modern Education Finance and Policy*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Greene, J., Maynard, R., Redding, S., & Darwin, M. (2008). Turning around chronically low-performing schools. IES Practice Guide. NCEE 2008-4020. *National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.*

Murphy, J., & Datnow, A. (2003). Leadership Lessons from Comprehensive School Reform Designs. In J. Murphy & A. Datnow (Eds.), *Leadership Lessons from Comprehensive School Reforms* (263-278). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

O'Donnell, C. (2008). Defining, Conceptualizing, and Measuring Fidelity of Implementation and Its Relationship to Outcomes in K-12 Curriculum Intervention Research. *Review of Educational Research, 78 (1)*, 33-84. DOI: 10.3102/0034654307313793.

Reardon, S. & Portilla, X. (2016). Recent Trends in Income, Racial, and Ethnic School Readiness Gaps at Kindergarten Entry. *AERA Open, 2(3)*, 1-18. DOI: 10.1177/2332858416657343.

Reform Support Network. (2015). *Leading Indicators for School Improvement: A Review of State Education Agency Practices.* Retrieved from: http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/leadingindforschoolimprov.pdf