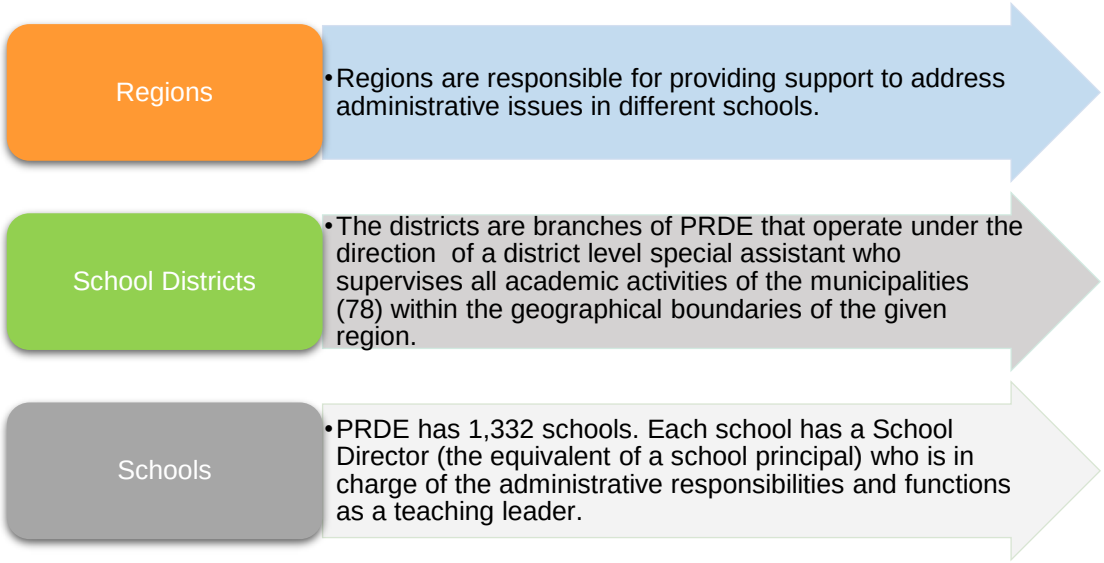
Part B
State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase III

The Associated Secretariat of Special Education (SAEE, by its initials in Spanish) of the Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE), with the collaborative support of the United States Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), as part of the Results Driven Accountability efforts presents its State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase III with the purpose of improving child-level outcomes for students with disabilities. The SSIP is Indicator 17 for the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (IDEA) State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR). As presented during Phase I, PRDE along with its stakeholder group decided to focus on *impacting the proficiency rate of sixth grade students with disabilities taking the Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico (PPAA) in mathematics within the Yabucoa District from the Humacao Region*[1].

PRDE Structure

It is important for the reader to understand PRDE's structure since it is mentioned throughout all this report.

Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) operates as a unitary system with a central level lead by the Puerto Rico Secretary of Education. Under the Secretary of Education are two Special Secretaries. One focuses on academic affairs, while the other is focused on administrative affairs. The central level office leadership also includes a Special Education Secretary who oversees the SAEE. PRDE divides the island geographically into seven educational regions and 28 school districts, which include four districts per educational region. The illustration below summarizes the Regions, Districts and Schools responsibilities.



[1] PRDE has undergone a restructuring process which includes changes in the Puerto Rico Assessment, formerly called PPAA and has instituted the test called META-PR, *Measurement and Evaluation for Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico*.

As part of the district structure, the district level staffing includes academic facilitators for core academic subjects (Spanish, Mathematics, English, History, Science and Special Education) who function as instructional leaders for teachers, serve as coaches, and facilitate professional development regarding curriculum and instructional strategies. The academic facilitator is supervised by a District Academic Superintendent.

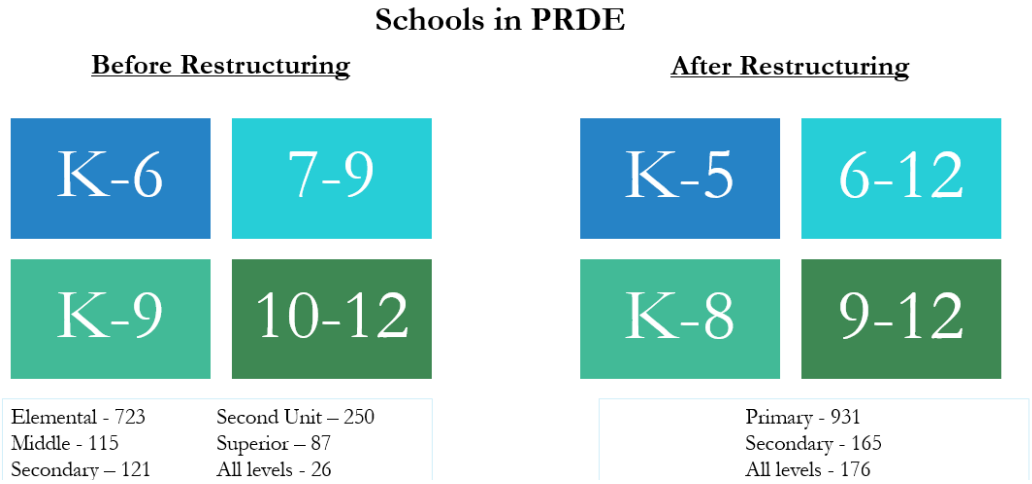
PRDE's structure will help understand the responsibility of each level at the agency, on the implementation of the EBPs and the evaluation activities.

Summary of Phase III

PRDE has established a process to evaluate the alignment of the Theory of Action with components of the Academic Transformation Plan[2] (aligned to ESSA), which has been also aligned with the SSIP. The evaluation process will be discussed throughout the Phase III.

PRDE's State-Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) is aligned in accordance to APR Indicator 3C and focuses on improving the performance of students with disabilities on the PPAA. PRDE made significant changes to the Puerto Rico Assessment system, formerly called PPAA, which was replaced with a test called META-PR, *Measurement and Evaluation for Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico*. This new system evaluates students annually during the second semester of the school year, similarly to the PPAA. The previous system the PPAAs, were one of accountability based on the proficiency of students. The META-PR, is a multilevel system of support and accountability. The changes to state assessment will be discussed in more detail in the *Changes of Puerto Rico Assessment* area.

In addition, PRDE's restructured the grade level organization of elementary and middle schools and resulted in the following shift:



[2] The Academic Transformation Plan is replacing the Flexibility Plan that have been mentioned in previous phases. It is important to note that the Academic Transformation Plan is align to the ESSA Law.

PRDE's SIMR is to increase the percentage (%) of special education students in the 6th grade who score proficient or advanced on the regular assessment for math in the selected schools in the Yabucoa School District. However, due to the grade level changes and other factors within the agency, PRDE was required to modify the SIMR. PRDE's updated SIMR is:

to increase the percentage (%) of special education students in the 5th grade who score proficient or advanced on the regular assessment for math in the selected schools in the Yabucoa School District.

Additional information regarding the required changes to the SIMR is described later in this document under the "Highlight to Changes in Implementation" section.

The table below presents how many schools, municipalities and number of students from special education are included as part of the SiMR.

Table-List of focus schools by grade levels and participating students for the 2015-2016 School Year

Region	District	Municipality	Schools	Schools Grade Levels
Humacao	Yabucoa	Maunabo	Calzada	K - 5
		San Lorenzo	Dra. María T. Delgado de Marcano	K - 8
		San Lorenzo	Eugenio María de Hostos	K - 5
		San Lorenzo	Jorge Rosario del Valle	PK - 8
		San Lorenzo	Luis Muñoz Rivera	PK - 5
		Patillas	Marín Bajo	K - 5
		San Lorenzo	Quemados	K - 5
		San Lorenzo	SU Isidro Vicens	PK - 8
Grand Total				

As presented in the table above, PRDE has included 8 elementary schools from the Yabucoa District that have been impacted as part of the SiMR.

Principal activities employed during the year

During 2015-2016, PRDE implemented these activities in accordance with its Theory of Action and Logic Model.

- Conducting a school specific needs assessment for serving students with disabilities; (addressed in Phase I)
- Providing professional development for both general and special education teachers with regard to serving students with disabilities that will be sure to address concerns identified in the needs assessment (in a coordinated manner between the SAEE, the Differentiated

Support System or *Red de Apoyo Diferenciado*[3] (RAD by its acronym in Spanish) and the school district);

- Assigning additional resources such as ensuring a district level special education facilitator is in place as well as those services provided to the school by the RAD (discussed above); and,
- Implementing an academic monitoring plan carried out by the district to ensure compliance with the Academic Transformation Plan and SSIP.

Inputs	**Outputs**		**Outcomes**	
	Strategies	**Participation**	**Short-Term**	**Long-Term**
Professional development for general education teachers with regard to serving students with disabilities.	1. Provide professional development for increase the capacity of school leadership, improve teaching, and increase student learning. 2. Provide Individual Coaching 3. Provide Group Coaching	1. SAEE 2. Special Education Facilitators 3. RAD's	Teachers will have the tools to offer differentiated instructions.	1. Teachers gain in Knowledge 2. Improved academic achievement of special education students 3. Reduction in academic gaps between the special education subgroup and all students.
Strengthen instructional planning of special education teachers.	1. Provide professional development in instructional planning for special education teachers 2. Provide Individual Coaching	1. SAEE 2. District (Math and Special Ed Facilitators) 3. RAD's	Increase the academic planning skill of Special Education teachers	
Increase communication between the teacher from the general education classroom and the special education teacher.	1. Provide Group Coaching 2. Learning Communities	1. District 2. RAD's	Improved communication between the general education teacher and the special education teacher	
Schools utilizing data based strategies in making educational decisions.	1. Provide professional development (workshops) on Data Driven Decision Making	1. District (Math and Special Ed Facilitators) 2. RAD's	Increase the capacity of schools to use data in decision making	
Have all Special Education Facilitator in the municipalities and	1. Assignment of resources to support academic management/oversight.	1. SAEE 2. Humacao Region	Increase the TA assistance that the Special Education	

[3] RAD are external providers (private companies) that have the responsibility of offering services aimed at school transformation.

Inputs →	Outputs →		Outcomes	
	Strategies	Participation	Short-Term →	Long-Term
the district to support the schools			Facilitator provided to schools	

Summary of coherent improvement strategies

PRDE central level conducted a school specific needs assessment for serving students with disabilities by interviewing general and special education teachers, as well as the school directors. A needs assessment was conducted at each of the eight schools that are a part of the SSIP. As a result, the identified needs led to the establishment of the inputs of the Logic Model, presented in Phase II and below:

Input 1: Professional development for general education teachers regarding serving students with disabilities.

Input 2: Strengthen instructional planning of special education teachers through professional development activities, individual coaching and visits to schools.

Input 3: Increase communication between the teacher from the general education classroom and the special education through professional development activities, group coaching and professional learning communities.

Input 4: Schools utilizing data based strategies in making educational decisions by providing professional development, PRDEs platforms and meetings at the Central Level Math program.

Input 5: Have all Special Education Facilitator in the municipalities and the district to support the schools. (Activity done in Phase II, and sustained in Phase III.)

These activities will be discussed in more detail in the area *Progress in the Implementation of the SSIP.*

Summary of Implemented EBPs

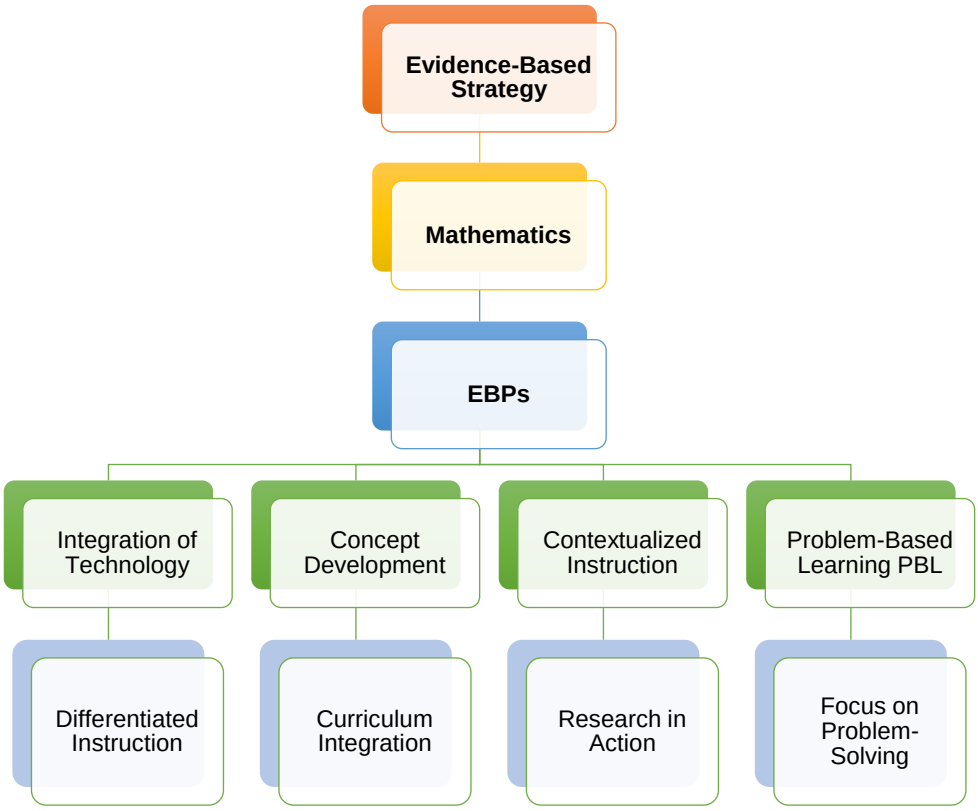
Every focus school has to develop its Authentic Comprehensive School Plan (PCEA by its acronym in Spanish). The PCEA has an online guide that contains the definition and the Evidence Based Practices (EBP) adopted by PRDE, to guide the school director in the drafting of its PCEA[4]. This way PRDE assures that the school PCEA is aligned to comply with its requirements. As defined in the guide the evidence based practices that PRDE selected “are based on scientific research”, which means that when possible, the educational interventions being used must be strongly supported by evidence from well-conducted research studies. Strategies selected should

[4] PCEA is explained in more detail on the *Summary of Coherent Improvement Strategies* area.

be those that strengthen academic programs, increase the amount and quality of instructional time, and address the particular needs of the students.

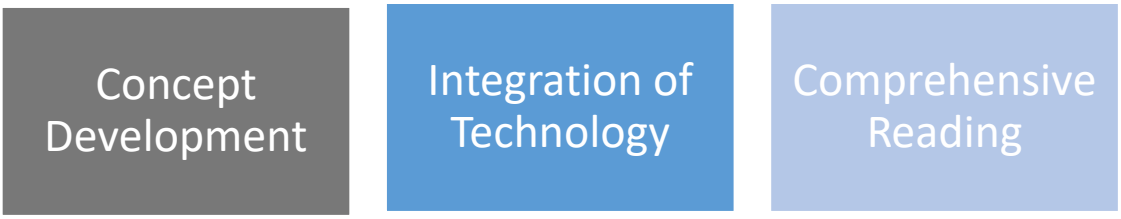
This guide contains the six criteria needed to comply as an EBP. The six criteria are; systematic empirical methods, rigorous data analysis, based on measurement that provides valid and replicable evidence, experimental or quasi-experimental research designs, studies are clearly detailed in order for them to be easily replicable and reviewed and accepted by independent experts.

For **math** which is our main component in the SIMR, PRDE established the following EBPs to address the individual needs for students with disabilities: concept development, integration of technology, contextualized instruction, problem-based learning (PBL), curriculum integration, research in action, differentiated instruction and focus on problem-solving. Other strategies that are included in the participating school's School Intervention Plans (PIEs[5] by the acronym in Spanish)s are: an extended learning time program, job embedded professional development plan, parent and community involvement strategy, and data driven decision making. The chart below present the EBPs that PRDE selected for math:



[5] The PIE is part of the PCEA of each school.

In order to identify the scientifically-based evidence to be included in their PCEA, the schools selected in our SIMR performed a needs study by analyzing the data that included: student performance data (results of the PPAA and PPEA, now META PR, and the study of distribution of grades), demographic data, data on physical and technological infrastructure. Likewise, aspects concerning student behavior and the physical facilities of the school were taken into consideration. Once the priorities were identified, the data reflected the need to work with the following reform strategies:



The description of these EBP Strategies are presented below:

1. **Concept Development**
   A concept is a category that is used to group events, ideas, objects, or similar people. Learning concepts suggests that in our mind we have a prototype, example: an image that captures the essence of a given concept.
   The components of a lesson for teaching concepts are:
   - Examples and counterexamples
   - Relevant and irrelevant attributes
   - Name of the concept
   - Definition of the concept
   - Diagrams or maps

   The concepts significantly facilitate the process of thinking. Instead of labeling and categorizing separately each new object or event, simply existing concepts are incorporated. The concepts allow you to group objects or events that share common properties and respond in the same way to each example of the concept.

2. **Technology Integration (TI)**
   This technique incorporates technology into the classroom as an additional tool that will help enrich the teaching-learning process. The technology will be used for individualized teaching and as a strategy of inclusion. It is a tool that will also be used in offering tutorials, practice and troubleshooting using educational material previously evaluated. If the cultural paradigm is used in the design of educational activities mediated by digital technology, the student learns to handle and appropriate knowledge, whether in the area of Natural and Social Sciences, Mathematics, Geography or Spanish.
   When the teacher uses digital technology, you can get students interested in their own learning and problem solving applied to subject matter or desired. For students, technology is a tool of their choice and commonly used. The Internet is used as a tool to approach knowledge that the teacher doesn't have on hand.

This is the more traditional approach, which views Internet and TI as tools to implement the usual educational practices. The goal is to work directly on the network, building activities and energizing conversations that move the classroom to the Internet. This includes active work of students in blogs, social bookmarking, social media campaigns, collaborative subtitling videos, etc.

3. **Comprehensive Reading**

   Teaching strategy based on the work of David Pearson and his colleagues, who studied the processes of competent readers, and then looked for ways to teach readers with difficulties. While there is debate about the relative importance of different strategies, most researchers and practitioners agree on a basic set of seven strategies:

   - activation of prior knowledge to make connections between new and known information;
   - question the text;
   - make inferences;
   - determination of importance;
   - the creation of mental images;
   - repair of understanding when the meaning is broken down and synthesize information.

   To improve reading comprehension of students, the following are recommended:

   1. Permanently practice reading.
   2. Repeat the readings: select a short text.
   3. Simultaneous reading: the teacher or a good reader read the text aloud, at moderate pace, respecting the pauses, students still have the text before their eyes. The simultaneity of the personal reading and the reading of the guide is an exercise that causes greater reading comprehension of the text.
   4. Reading Echo: is that a teacher or reader reads a short piece (One or two sentences) and the student repeats, in turn, reading aloud. In this way, a model of reading is transmitted, which, as it is exercised, becomes a habit. This technique can only be used with very short but significant texts.
   5. The REPO Procedure: known in English as Cloze, which consists of delivering a full-text text in which some words have been deleted leaving a blank space for the student to complete.
   6. Comment the text together. Through the Technique of the Socratic Seminary.

One of the EBPs identified by PRDE for all subjects is coaching. This strategy is used to reinforce the skills and knowledge of teachers to improve the teaching-learning process. It is implemented through the support of the external supplier or RAD (by its acronym in Spanish). Each RAD provides coaches who have the expertise experience to provide instruction by core subject area, including mathematics and special education. Some of the activities provided by the RAD are:

- Visits to the special education teacher to provide coaching regarding the use of standards, and curricular framework.

- Coaching to the school director to strengthen didactic leadership and deepen their knowledge of the curriculum frameworks of academic programs.
- Coaching to support the school director in the use of data for decision making.
- Assist the teacher in the design of varied assessment methods based on public policy and performance tasks.
- The provision of Group Coaching to support teachers in the development of practice exercises on a continuous basis so that students have the experiences of content related to the mechanics of the assessment tool.
- Coaching to the Math Teacher in order to reinforce the understanding and application of academic standards, the use of curricular frameworks and curricular materials to develop an effective teaching-learning process.

It is important to mention that as part of the Coaching process, the RADs conducts follow-up visits with the purpose of ensuring the implementation of the strategies or tools provided to the teachers during the initial visit.

Summary of evaluation activities, measures, and outcomes

At all levels of PRDE, different interventions are carried out aimed at implementation, monitoring and evaluation, to ensure compliance with the activities established for the Academic Transformation Plan and SSIP.

With the purpose of evaluating the alignment of the theory of action and other components of the Academic Transformation Plan, PRDE has established internal and external evaluation processes.

Internal Evaluation

1. **Accountability System – PRDE Assessment**

The PRDE student assessment (PPAA) ensures coverage of the depth and breadth of academic content standards and employs multiple approaches within the specific combinations of grade and content to meet this goal. Until the school year 2015, DEPR assessment for grades 3 through 8 and 11 is called PPAA. The results of our assessment system are used to ensure accountability and provide support and feedback to schools. Puerto Rico administers yearly high quality, aligned assessment that measures student growth in reading, language arts and math in grades 3 through 8 and in high school with high academic rigor standards.

As we mentioned in Phase I, the PRDE SAEE analyzed data to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions in the District of Yabucoa. This was evaluated using the database of 2015 assessment results (PPAA), as well as analysis of periodic academic evaluations and student progress reports that are issued at the 10 week, 20 week, 30 week, and 40 week points throughout the school year.

2. School Level

In order for the school to assure compliance with its PCEA, they have to create a Planning Committee. This planning committee is composed of a representative of each a teacher from each grade and their primary responsibility is to assure that the PCEA is being implemented in accordance with the requirements of the Puerto Rico Department of Education.

The committee has to meet at least once a month and provide evidence to the district, region and central level. The evidence of the meetings is uploaded at the Platform of the PCEA. The platform requires evidences of these meetings such as: meeting minutes, attendance sheets and agenda to accept the meeting as done. The results/report from this meeting must be aligned with the objectives and strategies goals of the PCEA. At the district level the Academic Superintendent is in charge of monitoring these meetings.

3. District Level

At the district level, monthly meetings are held with district staff including school directors to ensure the system's ability to meet grade level requirements. During these meetings, the district also facilitates discussions between schools to share best practices and develop intervention strategies. The district level staff provides support through technical assistance to the school director.

As part of the requirements of the Academic Transformation Plan, each district had to complete the Support System for Effective Leadership for Academic Personnel[6] (including teachers and school directors[7]). The purpose of the System is to strengthen the competencies of the teacher and the school directors to achieve the transformation of the schools. One of the main goals of PRDE is to implement an effective system of academic personnel evaluation that is rigorous, and transparent, that results in the growth of the student's academic performance. In addition, this system has the purpose of ensuring, that teachers and school directors receive high quality professional development to improve their educational practices, with basic skills and knowledge focused on the students' needs.

This evaluation system starts at the school level with the school director who had to meet with all the teachers and evaluate their performance and needs areas. After the meeting with the teacher, the school director completes a summary of the intervention required for each teacher and discusses the document with every teacher. Then, the Superintendent of Academic Support refers the teacher to the academic facilitator for them to provide focused technical assistance and continuous support. The evaluation will be received through the evaluation platform (SALEPD). Specifically, at the Yabucoa District each academic and special education facilitator has to complete an individual action plan for the teachers that are referred because a weakness was

[6] This is better known as the system of evaluation of teachers and school directors.

[7] This system was developed in FFY 2015 as a pilot project. For the beginning of the school year 2016-2017 the Support System for Effective Leadership for Academic Personnel was formally implemented island-wide.

identified. The individual action plan is a cycle of targeted academic technical assistance with a minimum of 2 visits per teacher.

The Superintendent of Academic Support oversees the monitoring of the technical assistance visits of the academic facilitators. In this monitoring visit, the superintendent ensures that the district facilitators were providing adequate technical assistance to the school teachers. As part of the monitoring process, the superintendent completes the "*Hoja de Monitoria Administrativa y Visitas a las Sala de Clases" (Administrative Monitoring and Classroom Visits Worksheet)*. This is a worksheet that is used as an evaluation tool. At the end of the visit, this evaluation is discussed with the academic facilitators as a mechanism to reinforce those areas of deficiencies, if identified.

4. Central Level

As we mentioned in Phase I, to support the school's compliance with PRDE's Academic Transformation Plan and the SSIP, PRDE has developed a series of platforms that benefit both schools and external suppliers. The Undersecretary of Academic Affairs and the Associate Secretary of Special Education (SAEE) at Central Level use these platforms RAD and SAMA to ensure and evaluate the implementation of interventions that are being developed at the school and district level.

Is important to establish that at the SAEE the Compliance Officer and all Technical Assistance Facilitators have access to those platforms and continuously monitor the progress of the participating schools. In addition, SAEE working group has regular meetings with the Yabucoa District staff to ensure and evaluate the progress of the district initiatives that impact the participating schools. The SAEE working group is composed of the SAEE Compliance Officer, SAEE's TA Facilitator, Yabucoa's Academic Superintendent, and the Yabucoa's District Special Education Facilitator.

External Evaluation

1. Evaluations of External Providers (RAD)

PRDE's criteria for evaluating external suppliers was developed using the Guide to Work with External Providers (Learning Point, 2010). PRDE used this guide to create a conceptual framework to involve, manage and evaluate external providers.

In December 2015, PRDE released a memorandum titled "Visits for the external evaluations of the RADs". Through this memo, PRDE notifies the academic community that an external evaluator has been contracted to perform visits to the schools that receive RAD services such as, priority No-SIG, and focus schools. The visits have the main purpose to evaluate the services provided to the schools by the RADs. From the total of 195 schools that received such services, a representative sample of 74 schools has been selected randomly to receive visits from the external evaluator. Regarding to the Yabucoa District, considering the SSIP initiative, two of our participating schools were part of that sample. The schools are: María T. Delgado and Eugenio M. de Hostos. Both schools were visited on March 14, 2016. The evaluation includes the following process: interview of the school director, teachers, parents, and RAD personnel; classroom

observation; and different types of surveys. PRDE has requested that the external evaluator provides a report by the end of the visit cycle.

Additional methods for evaluating the performance and services from the providers includes an online questionnaire to school staff so they may provide their feedback. Specifically, for the Yabucoa District, all schools participating on our SIMR have reported (via the RAD questionnaire) satisfaction with the performance and services provided by the external supplier . Thus, this evaluation is part of the criteria to consider the extension of the supplier's contract.

In the table below we list the year's evaluation activities (previously mentioned in detail), the associated measures and outcomes.

Year of Implementation	Activities	Evaluation Questions	Data Collection Method	Data Source	Persones Responsable	Timeline
On going activities	Puerto Rico Assessment	1. Are special education students improving their academic achievement?	Through the Planning Unit	Planning Unit at PRDE Central Level	1. PRDE Central Level	Second semester of each school year
	Academic Progress Report (Students A's, B's and C's grades in Math)	1. Are special education students showing progress on math?	Through the School	School	1. District Special Assistant 2. RAD	Every 10 weeks
	Planning School Committee (PCEA Evaluation)	1. The strategies included in the PCEA are being implemented with fidelity?	PCEA-SAMA Platform	School District School	1. District Special Assistant 2. School Director	Monthly
	Support System for Effective Leadership for Academic Personnel (Teachers and School Directors Evaluation System)	1. Does the teacher has the necessary skills to maintain a high quality teaching-learning process? 2. Are the school director demonstrating effective leadership? 3. Can this evaluation process be correlated to the academic growth of the special education students?	SALEPD Platform	School District	1. PRDE Central Level 2. District Special Assistant 3. School Director	Yearly
	Monitoring Visits by the Academic Superintendent	1. Is the support provided to the teacher and school director being effective? 2. Are the observations of the visit discussed with the teacher and school director? 3. How does the academic superintendent assure the effectiveness of its technical assistance?	PCEA-SAMA Platform	School District	1. District Special Assistant	During the school year
	Platforms Monitoring Process by the Central Level	1. Are the coherent improvement strategies being implemented as established at the different PRDE Levels?	PCEA-SAMA Platform RAD Platform SALEDP Platform	School District RAD	1. PRDE Central Level	During the school year
	Professional Development Evaluation Process	1. Are the participants of the professional development provided, demonstrating gain in	Through the Central Level PCEA-SAMA Platform RAD Platform	Central Level School District RAD	1. PRDE Central Level 2. District Special Assistant 3. RAD	During the school year
	Student Pre and Post Test	1. Are special education students showing progress in the general knowledge of their grade?	RAD Platform Through the school	RAD School	1. School Director 2. RAD	2 times a year (at the beginning and at the end of the school year)

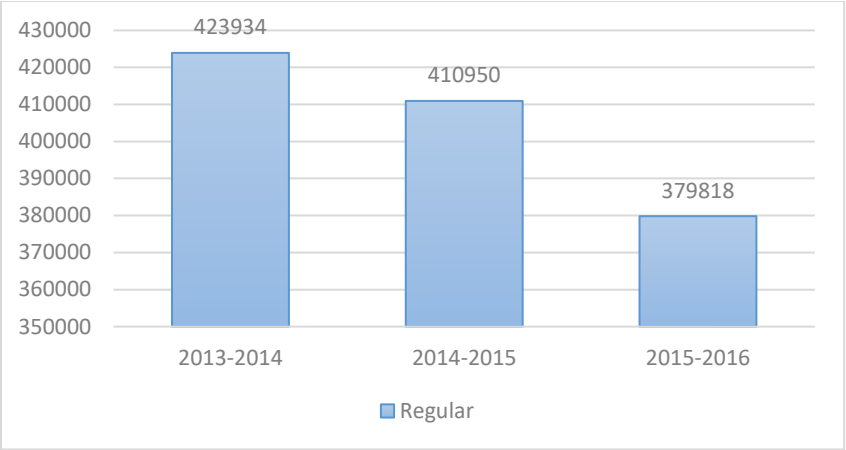
Highlights of changes to implementation

Since the submission of Phase I, PRDE has made significant changes to the educational infrastructure, explained in Phase II, that has directly impacted the first SIMR. Specifically, the restructuring process, as established in the PRDE Circular Letter 20-2016-2017[8] has four priority areas as part of PRDE's efforts to: improve student learning, provide appropriate services, reduce the percentage of student dropouts, and demonstrate fiscal discipline. After the analysis of social and economic factors, PRDE determined to undergo a restructuring process. This decision was made considering the following:

[8] In this Circular Letter is established the public policy for the restructuring process of PRDE in more detail and also explained in Phase II.

1. Decrease in enrollment
2. High costs per student
3. Inadequate distribution of administrative staff
4. Low academic achievement
5. Fiscal crisis

Analysis of PRDE's student enrollment by year



From the analysis made in the graph 1, the global enrollment of students has decreased 10.4% in a three-year period. In addition to this factor, the Federal Government approved the ESSA Law which requires to identify the needs of the schools by developing an accountability system. The transformation that the restructuring process brings is with the main purpose of situating our students and graduates as agents of change in both their active participation in society and in the reenergizing of our economy.

One key restructuring change in terms of impact on PRDE's SSIP is that PRDE elementary schools no longer include grade six, but instead span from kindergarten to fifth grade. The sixth grade was moved to middle school. Students will only have one transition from elementary to middle school which will promote the retention in schools. The impact of this change is discussed in greater detail later in this section.

Changes in Puerto Rico Assessment from PPAA to META-PR

As part of the restructuring and academic transformation with longitudinal view, PRDE has instituted the test called META-PR, Measurement and Evaluation for Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico as the new system for evaluating students. The previous system, the PPAA, was one of accountability based on the proficiency of students. This new system META-PR, is a multilevel system of support and accountability. META-PR academic achievement is measured in the areas of Spanish, Math, English as a second language and science. These tests are aligned with the fundamental concepts and skills contained in the Grade Standards and Expectations from 2014 (Formerly known as the PR Core Standards), established by PRDE. The results of META-PR will allow PRDE to implement effective and relevant pedagogical decisions that help improve our students' authentic learning.

With this new evaluation system, PRDE converts the results which the students obtain in META-PR assessment in another grade that is included in the final academic progress report for each student. This school year, Math is being included as part of the final report for each student. Each subsequent year a new course will be added.

PRDE's New SiMR

PRDE remains focused on increasing the mathematics performance for students residing in the Yabucoa district. However, PRDE has had to modify its SiMR to adjust to public policy changes in the Circular Letter 20-2016-2017, related to elementary grade level. The new SiMR will be implemented during the school year 2016-2017 which will be reported on the next SSIP submission. As mentioned above, PRDE elementary schools no longer include grade six, but span from kindergarten to fifth grade. In the area title, Summary of Phase III a diagram is included for better understanding of the reader. The sixth grade was moved to middle school. Students will only have one transition from elementary to middle school which will promote the retention in schools.

Various meetings were held with the stakeholder group, in which the restructuring process of the Department was discussed and how this affected our SiMR. It is important to mention that, all the decisions made were unanimous. The first decision was made regarding which grade to measure. The stakeholders determined that it would be more effective to select fifth grade since the teachers from the selected elementary schools received the professional development. Also, these teachers have been receiving the interventions from the RADs, their coaches and the continuous technical assistance from the School District. Sixth grade students would now be attending different schools and being taught by teachers who were not being provided the specific interventions. Representatives at the stakeholder group, including the Puerto Rico Secretary of Education, agreed that it would be more meaningful and a better use of the available resources to measure the results in the fifth grade instead of sixth grade.

Below we present a summary of the Data Analysis made to determine the new SiMR.

Analysis of the Proficiency Rates on Math of 5th Grade Students with Disabilities for the FFY 2015[9]

Region	% PB+B	% P+A
ARECIBO	59.8%	40.2%
BAYAMON	65.0%	35.0%
CAGUAS	60.2%	39.8%
HUMACAO	72.1%	27.9%
MAYAGUEZ	63.3%	36.7%
PONCE	61.0%	39.0%
SAN JUAN	68.7%	31.3%

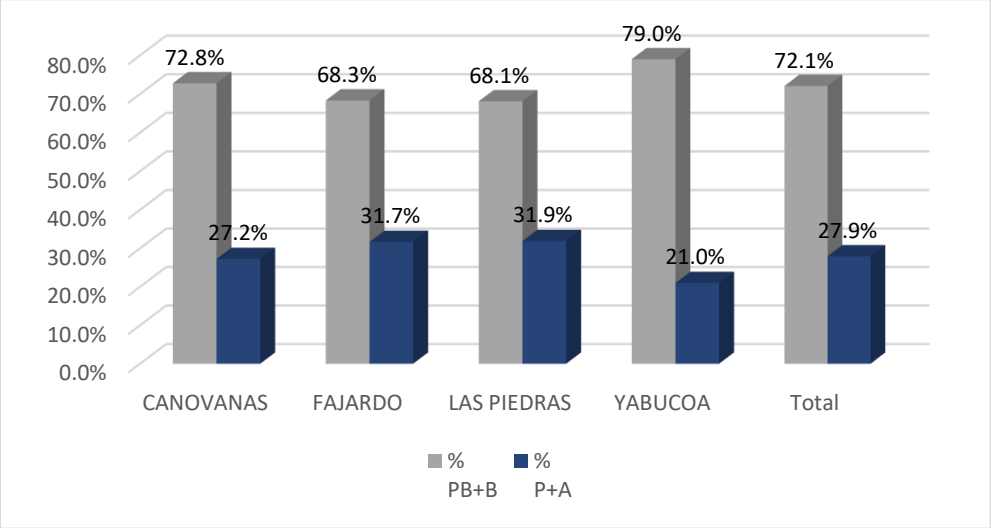
[9] Column PB+B refers to the students performing pre-basic and basic on the PR Assessment. Column P+A refers to the students performing Proficient and Advanced.

Grand Total	**64.0%**	**36.0%**

The above table compares the proficiency rates by region obtained from the results of the META-PR (PR assessment) of the students with disabilities from 5th grade. As reflected by the chart, the Humacao Region has the lowest percentage of its students performing within the rates of Proficient and Advanced (column P+A) as compared to all other regions, which demonstrates that the Humacao Region is the geographic area that needs more assistance.

Another important data analysis made with the stakeholder group that was crucial for the decision in determining the new SiMR was a review of the proficiency rates on Math of the 5th grade students with disabilities by district within the Humacao Region. This confirmed that still the District of Yabucoa was the area within the Humacao Region that needed to be the focus of attention for the SSIP. The chart below reflects the performance results of the 5th grade students with disabilities in the Humacao Region, by district, on the FFY 2015 math assessment. The chart provides the percentage of students scoring in Pre-Basic and Basic (column P+B) as compared to Proficient and Advanced (column P+A) for each district. The results were obtained from the PR Assessment also as the previous table. As reflected in the chart, the Yabucoa District had the lowest percentage of 5th grade students with disabilities scoring at the Proficient and Advanced levels on the Math assessment as compared to all other districts in the Humacao Region.

<u>Analysis of the Proficiency Rates on Math of 5th grade Students with Disabilities by District within the Humacao Region for the FFY 2015</u>



After a data analysis was made with PRDE and its stakeholder group it was determined to proceed and establish the baseline and the proposed targets. As shown in the previous graphs the data that was considered to determine the baseline for the new SiMR, was the performance of the students with disabilities from the 5th grade on the PR Assessment from the Yabucoa District.

Below PRDE presents the amount of students per school that will be impacted by our new SiMR.

Region	District	Municipality	Schools	Participating Students from 5th grade
Humacao	Yabucoa	Maunabo	Calzada	6
		San Lorenzo	Dra. María T. Delgado de Marcano	15
		San Lorenzo	Eugenio María de Hostos	8
		San Lorenzo	Jorge Rosario del Valle	6
		San Lorenzo	Luis Muñoz Rivera	20
		Patillas	Marín Bajo	7
		San Lorenzo	Quemados	6
		San Lorenzo	SU Isidro Vicens	8
Grand Total				**76**

As presented in the table above, PRDE has included 8 elementary schools from the Yabucoa District and 76 students with disabilities that have been impacted as part of the SiMR.

Baseline Data

FFY	2015
Data	27.63%

FFY 2016-FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target	27.6%	28.1%	28.6%

Description of Measure

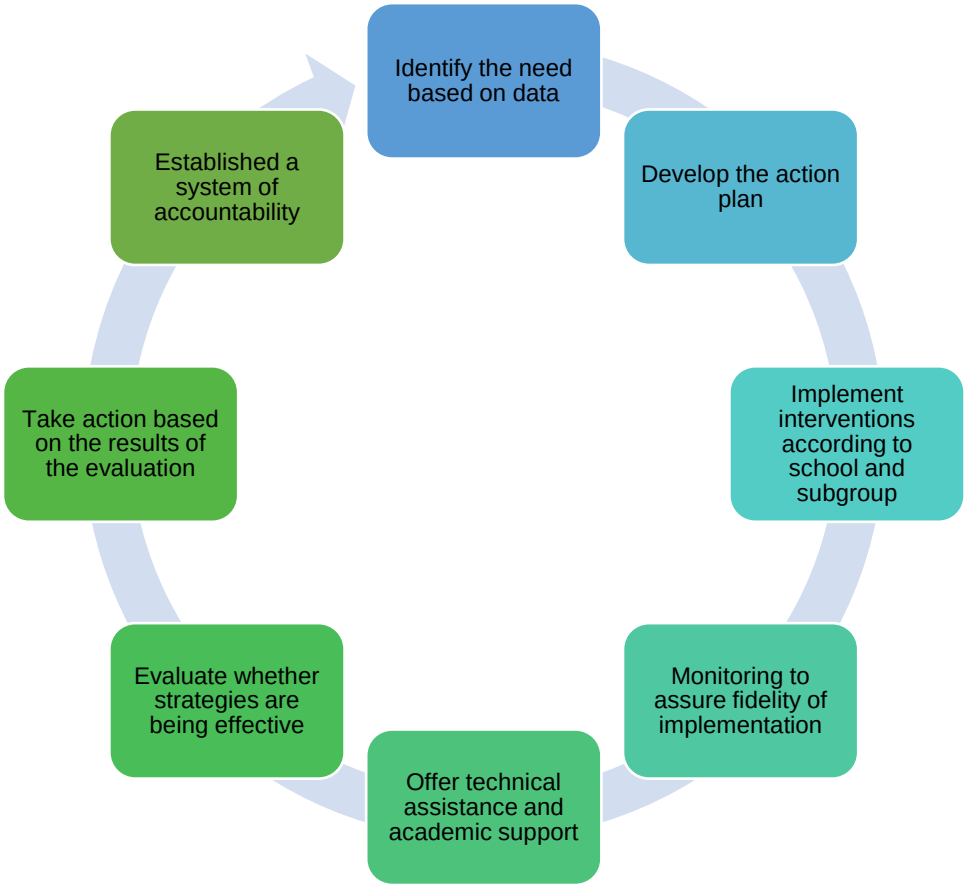
Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs enrolled in fifth grade at the selected schools scoring at or above proficient against grade level) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs enrolled in fifth grade at the selected schools who received a valid score on the META-PR and for whom a proficiency level was assigned, and calculated for math)]. The proficiency rate includes both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

The stakeholders have had a voice and been involved in decision-making regarding the discussion of the data analysis, the selection of the new SiMR and they have been involved in the implementation process. Because various members of the stakeholder group were involved in the data analysis of Phase I, the analysis done to identify how the restructuring of PRDE impacted our SiMR was a smooth process. The stakeholders for Phase III, are more knowledgeable of the development of the SSIP. The Restructuring Circular Letter was discussed with the stakeholder group and in this process was identified the impact of the restructuring in our SiMR.

Targets were broadly discussed with the stakeholder group. They recommended using the same analysis from the Phase I, where PRDE considered the actual baseline and a realistic goal for what it would aim for each year.

Progess in the Implementation of the SSIP

As mentioned in the *Summary of evaluation activities, measures, and outcomes* section, at all levels of PRDE, different interventions are carried out to ensure compliance with the activities established for the Academic Transformation Plan and SSIP. The interventions are carried out continuously according to the following cycle:



PRDE was able to accomplish all of its planned activities. The activities have been worked continuously throughout the SSIP. Also, PRDE to assure fidelity in the implementation of the strategies, follows the cycle presented above. The table below summarizes the activities that PRDE has carried out during the past year of implementation.

Year of Implementation	Activities	Evaluation Questions	Data Collection Method	Data Source	Persones Responsable	Timeline
FFY 2014 and 2015	Professional development for general education teachers in addressing serving students with disabilities.	1. Are teachers gaining knowledge? 2. Are special education students improving their academic achievement? 3. A reduction in academic gaps between the special education subgroup and all students, is reflected?	PCEA-SAMA Platform RAD Platform	School RAD	1. PRDE Central Level 2. District Special Assistant 3. RAD	Continuous
FFY 2014 and 2015	Strengthen instructional planning of special education teachers.		PCEA-SAMA Platform RAD Platform	PCEA RAD	1. PRDE Central Level 2. District Special Assistant 3. RAD	Continuous
FFY 2014 and 2015	Increase communication between the teacher from the general education classroom and the special education.		RAD Platform Through the School	School RAD	1. PRDE Central Level 2. District Special Assistant 3. RAD 4. School Director	Continuous
FFY 2014 and 2015	Schools utilizing data based strategies in making educational decisions.		PCEA-SAMA Platform RAD Platform Through the School	PCEA RAD School	1. PRDE Central Level 2. District Special Assistant 3. RAD 4. School Director	Continuous
FFY 2014	Have all Special Education Facilitator in the municipalities and the district to support the schools.		Through the Central Level and the School Region	Central Level School Region	1. PRDE Central Level 2. District Special Assistant	Second Semester 2014-2015

The following activities discuss in more detail the implementation of the SSIP:

Activity 1: Professional development for general education teachers in addressing serving students with disabilities.

- PRDE provided professional development to increase the capacity of school leadership, improve teaching, and increase student learning. This included employing the following activities.
    - PRDE central level jointly with the District Facilitator for Math provided professional development on the differentiated instruction strategy in math. This activity addressed the teachers' needs to apply properly differentiated education as a strategy to impact their students with disabilities in accordance with the PR Standards. Participants for this training included the school directors, math and special education teachers, and the Special Education District Facilitator. The District Math Facilitator, visited the teachers' classrooms at the participating schools to verify the implementation of the information taught in the training and clarify any doubts. To measure the knowledge acquired by the teachers during this professional development, pre-and post- tests were administered to the participants. The results of the pre- and post- test are discussed in the section *Data on Implementation and Outcomes.*
    - As mentioned in previous phases, PRDE district level is responsible to provide continuous technical assistance to support teachers with professional development in order to maintain high expectations and academic rigor. For the FFY 2015, PRDE district level provided professional development with the purpose of reinforce the leadership skills of school directors. Among other strategies, mentoring, coaching and direct work with teachers and students was offered. This training was provided by the District Academic Superintendent, who oversees the District Facilitators. Also, the Academic Superintendent is responsible for monitoring the provision of the technical assistance to schools.

- The District Special Assistants provided training to school directors on the analysis of the Puerto Rico Assessment results. The purpose was to provide the necessary tools so that the schools can use data for effective decision making. The data analysis made allows the school director to prepare a work plan to address the deficiencies identified in this assessment results.
- Throughout PRDE's Academic Transformation Plan, schools designated as focus schools has assigned an external service provider to serve as their RAD. The efforts are to be focused on increasing the academic achievement of students and teachers' professional development taking into consideration the specific needs of each school including the need of students with disabilities. During the FFY 2015, RADs continued to offer professional development, for the following topics.
    - Differentiated Instruction
    - Item Development
    - Data wall in the teaching and learning process
    - Educational Leadership
    - Use of data for decision making

To measure the knowledge acquired by the teachers during this professional development, offered by the RADs, a pre-and post- test was submitted to the participants. The results of the pre-and-post test will be discussed in the section *Data on Implementation and Outcomes.*

- PRDE has different ways to provide Individual Coaching to teachers. First, the school district provides technical assistance and follow-up visits. As part of the technical assistance provided, the Academic Facilitators visited the school to observed how is the teacher performing in their classroom. At the end of the visit, the Facilitator discuss the strengths and weakness observed and provide recommendations. In the follow up visits, the Facilitator need to assure that the recommendations have been applied by the teacher. In the case that the Facilitator observe that the weaknesses persists, other strategies can be utilized, such as demonstrative classes. Additionally, the RADs provided individual coaching for school directors and teachers that deliver instruction by core subject area, including mathematics and special education. RADs helped teachers develop a deeper understanding of the academic content and make the content accessible to all subgroups. Also, the RADs support the teachers in the development of their class planning and in the implementation of the recommendations made by the Facilitators in their visits.
- PRDE developed professional learning communities founded on scientifically based strategies that lead the curriculum implementation for all focus schools. These communities are known as the Eclectic Model of Professional Learning Communities (MECPA by its acronym in Spanish). The main objective is to improve the educational practices of teachers and increase shared leadership to improve academic achievement of students, using data analysis and continuous reflection. The MECPAs are composed by a group of professionals including: all subject matter teachers, special education teachers, librarian, school counselors, social workers, related services therapists, RAD Coaches, school directors, parents and community. The members of the group may vary depending on the needs identified by the school. Specifically, for the Eugenio Maria de Hostos school, the school identified a need to involve actively parents in the process of teaching and learning of their children. The MECPA

met at least once in a month to discuss the progress of the activities established in their working plan. An example of the activities are: (1) the coordination between peers (teachers) to improve the educational strategies used by the teachers, (2) the use of a blog to share ideas and information between teachers, and (3) integrate the parents through the coordination of two activities during the school year that include the progress and accomplishments of the students. Finally, the MECPA has to submit a results report to the school district.

Activity 2: Strengthen instructional planning of special education teachers.

- PRDE provided professional development in instructional planning for special education and math teachers.
    - The District Math Facilitator provided training on the weekly planning by unit to the special education and math teachers from the participating schools. A variety of themes were discussed such as writing objectives, academic strategies and differentiated instruction in math. To assure the fidelity of the implementation of these strategies, the Math District Facilitator conducted visits to the math elementary teachers at their classrooms in the participating schools.
    - As mentioned in the Input #1, PRDE provides Individual Coaching through the school district and the RADs. Below are the activities carried out for this 2nd input.
        - Once the school district provides the training related to the instructional planning, visits were made to schools in order to assure fidelity on the implementation. During these visits, the classrooms were observed and the planning documents were reviewed. Also, the writing of objectives was reinforced in weekly planning and additional academic strategies were offered. Finally, the district coordinated follow-up visits to ensure that what was discussed during the training is properly implemented in the classroom.

Activity 3: Increase communication between the teacher from the general education classroom and the special education.

- One way PRDE is increasing communication between teachers is through their participation in the MECPA, through which they meet regularly as a team to solve the needs identified in their schools. As mentioned in the Input #1, the MECPA is composed by a group of professionals including: all subject matter teachers, special education teachers, librarian, school counselors, social workers, related services therapists, RAD Coaches, school directors, parents and community. The main objective is to improve the educational practices of teachers and increase shared leadership to improve academic achievement of students, using data analysis and continuous reflection.
- To reinforce the communication between the teachers of the general education classroom and the special education, PRDE central level coordinated professional development to include both groups. The purpose is to provide the same professional development, and to allow general and special education teachers to share and clarify their doubts together, as a team.

Activity 4: Schools utilizing data based strategies in making educational decisions.

- The Yabucoa School District provided professional development to school directors in order for them to use data for decision making. Specifically, the District Special Assistant provided training to school directors on the analysis of the Puerto Rico Assessment results. The purpose was to provide the necessary tools in order that the school can use data for decision making. The data analysis made allows the school director to prepare a work plan to address the deficiencies identified in this assessment results. With the use of these data analysis, each school director prepares their Authentic Comprehensive School Plan (PCEA by its acronym in Spanish), among other plans to address school needs. Each focus school has to establish a PCEA. The PCEA is the organized response to a planning process which will address the needs and goals of each school. The PCEAs highlight the analysis of student needs data to define the interventions necessary to reduce the gaps in all focus schools. The school director in collaboration with the School's Planning Committee (SPC), has the responsibility to determine the activities and interventions that will be developed in their PCEAs according to the specific needs of their students and the interventions that have been proven to be effective.
- Two professional development activities regarding use of data based strategies were provided by the RAD during the FFY 2015. Specifically, the topics were: (1) data wall in the teaching and learning process and (2) the use of data for decision making.
- Also, the Math Program at central level coordinated a meeting with all District Math Facilitators and Academic Superintendents to discuss PR Assessment results. This is an important analysis in the decision making for PRDE to assure the fidelity of implementation of this strategy at the district and school level.

Activity 5: Ensure all Special Education Facilitator positions in the municipalities and the districts are filled to support the schools

- Through the SSIP, Phase I, one of the limitations was that the School District of Yabucoa lacked of a Special Education Facilitator. The Special Education Facilitator is responsible for providing technical assistance at the district/municipality level to schools, teachers, and others in order to ensure students with disabilities are receiving special education and related services in accordance with their IEPs. Within the Phase I and II, and as part of the SSIP efforts, all the Facilitator positions in the School District of Yabucoa, including the four municipalities, were filled. This effort has been sustained through the SSIP Phases I, II and III.

To assure the fidelity of the implementation of the coherent improvement strategies presented in this section, the Yabucoa District along with the Math and Special Education Facilitators, carry out follow-up meetings with the school directors and RAD Coaches to discuss progress in the implementation. As part of the discussion, in these meetings they talked about the progress of the activities proposed in the schools PCEAs, the adequacy of the interventions provided by the RADs and how are the schools applying the knowledge acquired through the activities of professional development.

As a result of the implementation of these activities, PRDE has accomplished the purpose of improving the academic achievement of students with disabilities. Also, it strengthens the educational practices of the teachers by attending the professional development and technical assistance the identified needs during Phase I. In the section *Data on Implementation and Outcomes,* specific results are going to be presented.

Stakeholder involvement in SSIP implementation

It is important to note that PRDE is a unitary system, and the stakeholder group at the central level oversees the implementation process. They also participated on the selection of the coherent improvement strategies for all PRDE levels. Through the meetings held with the this group, they have been informed of the activities done at the district, school level and the support provided by the RAD, for the implementation of the SSIP. With the stakeholder group the evidences of implementation uploaded in the different platforms, such as PCEA, SAMA and RAD, have been analyzed and discussed to determine if they demonstrate fidelity in the implementation. The meetings with the stakeholders are ongoing and have improved as they acquire more knowledge on the SSIP.

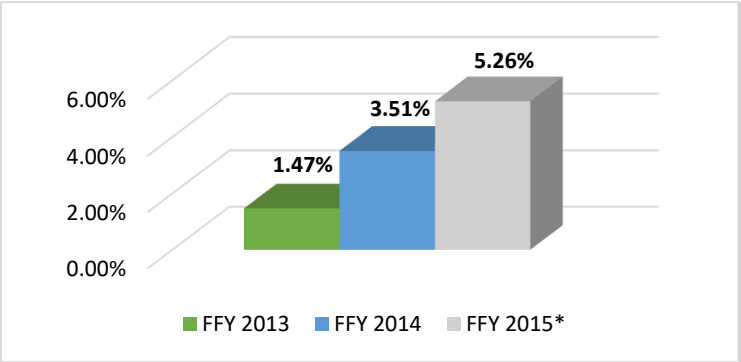
Data on Implementation and Outcomes

PRDE has reviewed key data that provide evidence regarding progress toward achieving intended improvements to infrastructure and the SiMR. The following are the results of the evaluation processes established in our SSIP Phases I and II to measure the implementation of the improvement strategies and how these impact the SiMR. In this section we discuss how the improvement strategies positively influence the proficiency of the students with disabilities within the participating schools.

Progress and Modification towards the SIMR

Analysis of data shows that PRDE met its targets for FFY 2014 and 2015. The Graph below shows the percentage of students with disabilities at the impacted schools who received scores that were considered Proficient or Advanced on the regular 6th grade math assessment.

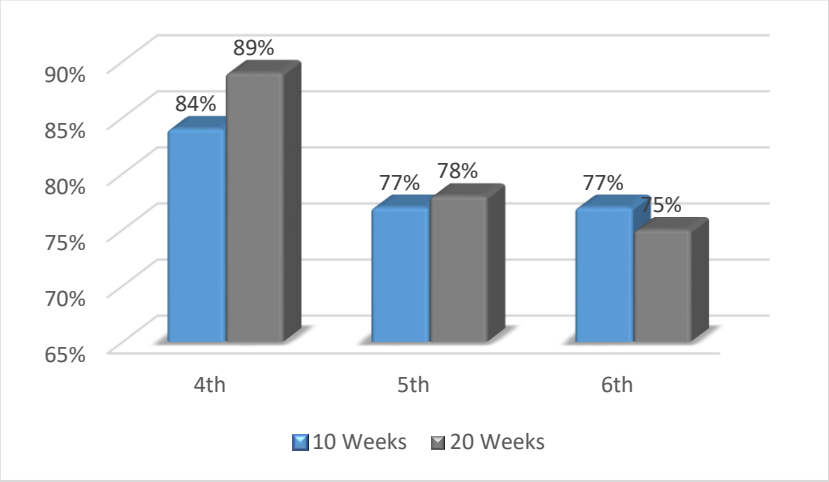
Analysis by Year of the Proficiency Rates of Students with Disabilities on Math from the Selected Schools



The data shows that PRDE exceeded it proposed target for FFY 2014. The FFY 2014 target was 1.5%, and PRDE attained 3.51% for FFY 2014. PRDE implemented its new assessment system, META-PR, for the first time in FFY 2015 as discussed throughout this report. PRDE acknowledges that implementation of a new assessment alters the results such that results on the new assessment cannot properly be compared to results on the prior assessment. PRDE nonetheless is providing the data in the chart above to to show the performance of the 6th grade students with disabilities in the regular assessment for the FFY 2015 from the participating schools. This analysis was conducted for the purpose of calculating the percentage of special education students from the 6th grade who scored proficient or advanced on the regular assessment for math from the selected SIMR schools.

Another evaluation process or additional data source that is indicative of progress toward the SiMR is the student's progress report that are issued every 10 weeks. The academic progress of the students provides information on the individual growth. This gives the opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of the interventions provided and identify any deficiency. The graph below presents the percentage of 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students with disabilities at the participating schools who were scoring in their grades "A's, B's or C's" in math in their 10 and 20 week progress reports.

<u>Analysis of the students "A's, B's and C's" grades in math for FFY 2015</u>

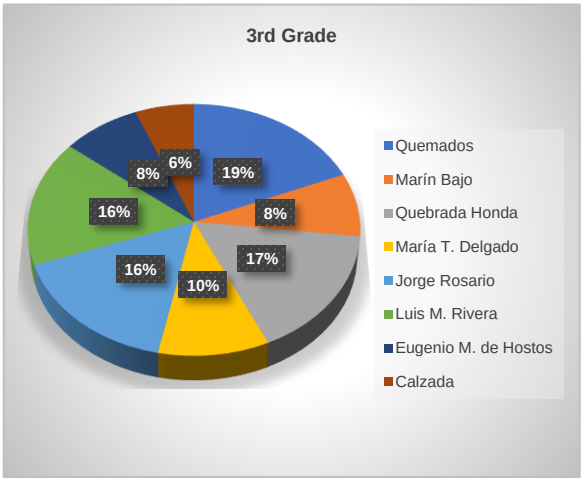


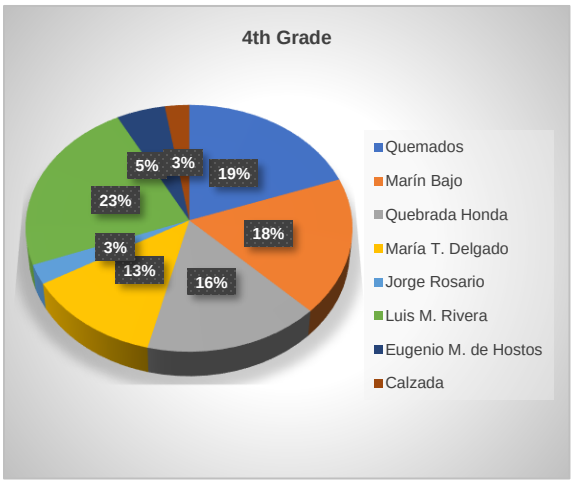
From the graph above, the results show for 4th grade an improvement of 5% from the 10 week progress report to the 20 week progress report. For 5th grade it shows a progress of 1% and for the 6th grade demonstrates a decrease of 2%. This reduction in the academic progress was identified in two of the participating schools, which are Jorge Rosario del Valle and SU Isidro Vicens (Quebrada Honda). To address the particular needs of these two schools, the SAEE and the Yabucoa District determined to increase the technical assistance provided from the district to identify their needs and establish the strategies that will impact their progress.

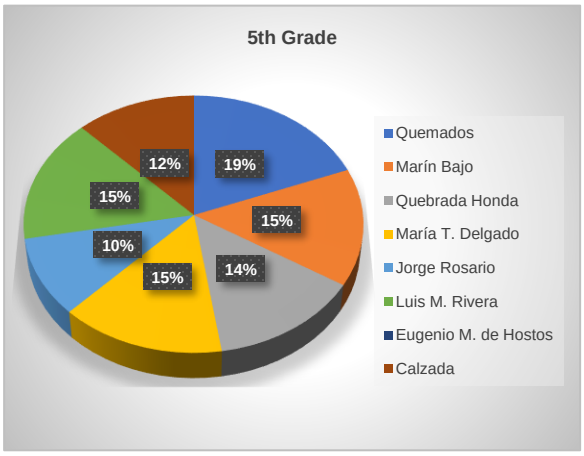
Another of the mechanisms used to measure students' progress and gain in knowledge is with the administration of the pre- and post- tests. The pre-test is administered at the beginning of the school year in order to measure the student's knowledge of the skills to be taken. The post test is

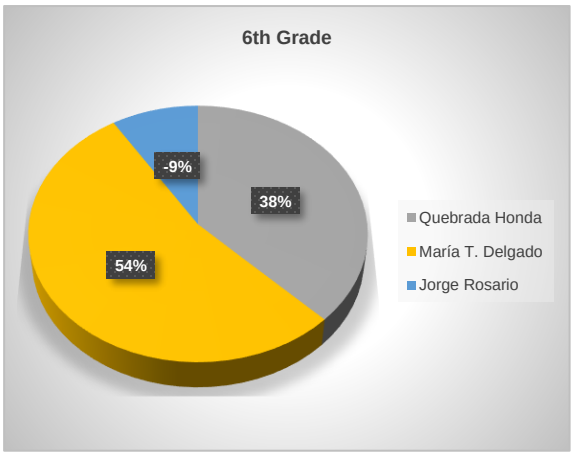
administered at the end of the school year when grade level skills have been discussed. The purpose is to measure whether the students learned the grade level skills. The graphs presented below, show the percentage of the gain in knowledge by grade and school within our SiMR.

Analysis of the percentage of the gain in knowledge from the Pre and Post Test of students with disabilities by grade of the participating schools from the SiMR for the FFY 2015[10]









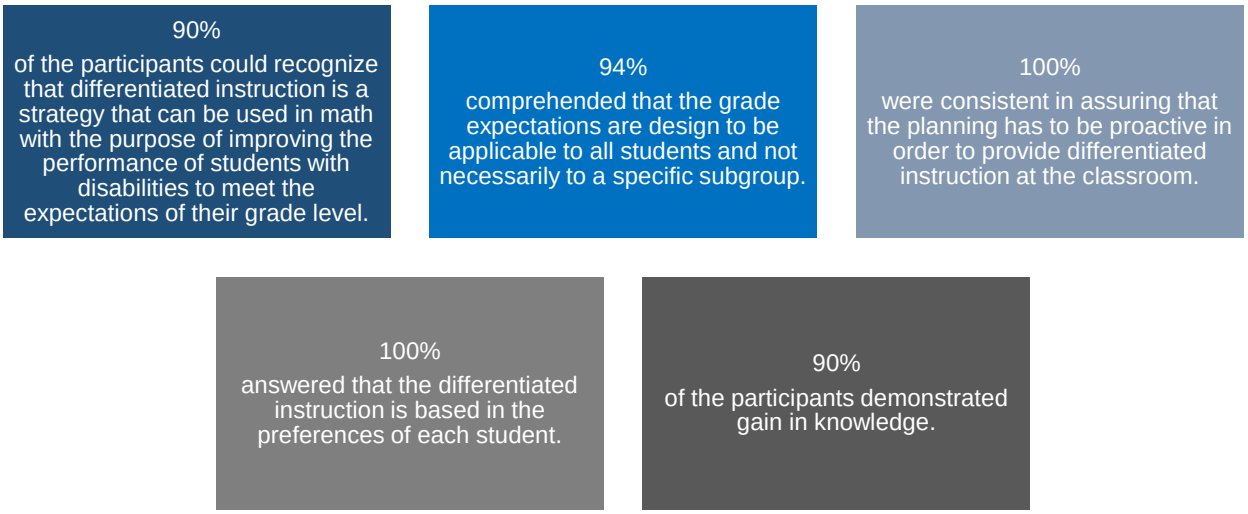
As shown on the graphs presented above, for all grade levels of each of the schools, gain in knowledge was presented, with one exception. That exception was the 6th grade results onteh post-test at the Jorge Rosario del Valle School, which presented a loss of 9%. It is important to note that the District of Yabucoa along with the RAD implemented a work plan to increase the technical assistance to be provided to this school.

One of the improvement strategies, mentioned in Phases I and II, was to provide professional development for both math and special education teachers. This activity addressed the teachers needs to apply properly differentiated education as a strategy to impact their students with

[10] The graph for 6th grade presents only the 3 schools that preserved their 6th grade after the restructuring of the schools.

disabilities. To measure the knowledge acquired by the teachers, a pre- and post-test was submitted to the participants (it is important to note that 100% attendance was achieved). Below we discuss the results.

Summary Analysis of the Pre and Post Test Results of the Professional Development provided by Central Level

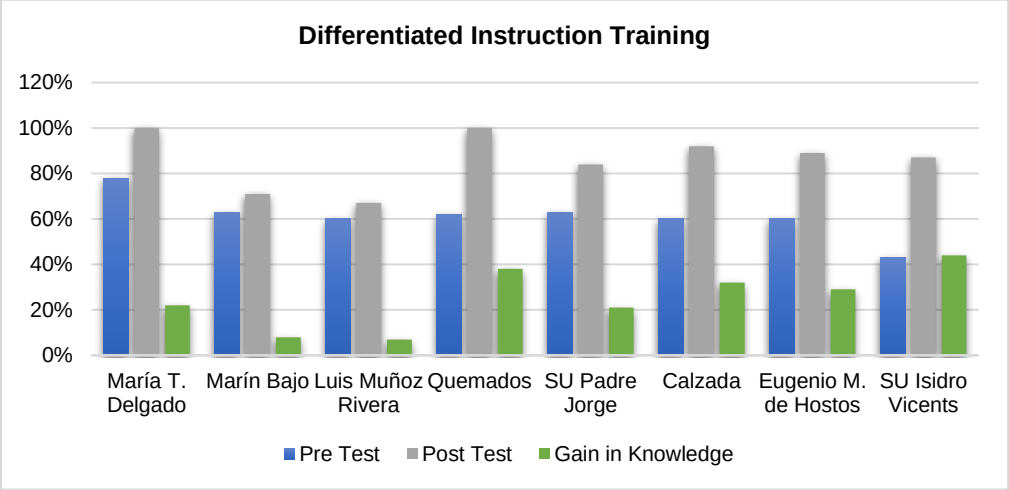


As a summary of the results of the professional development provided to the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade teachers demonstrated that 90% gained knowledge regarding the differentiated instruction as a strategy that can be used in math. Also, that this strategy benefits students with disabilities in order to meet their individual needs and preferences. From the teachers' input, they indicated that the strategy had to be developed in the daily planning of their class and that this planning has to be in accordance with the grade level expectations at the level of performance of their students.

Below, the results of the professional development activities provided by the RADs to the teachers and school directors from the participating schools and who impact the students from to the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade are presented. It is important to note that the RADs are contracted to provide professional development and coaching to the schools within our SiMR.

The next graphic presented the results of the pre and post test administered by the RADs during the training regarding differentiated instruction.

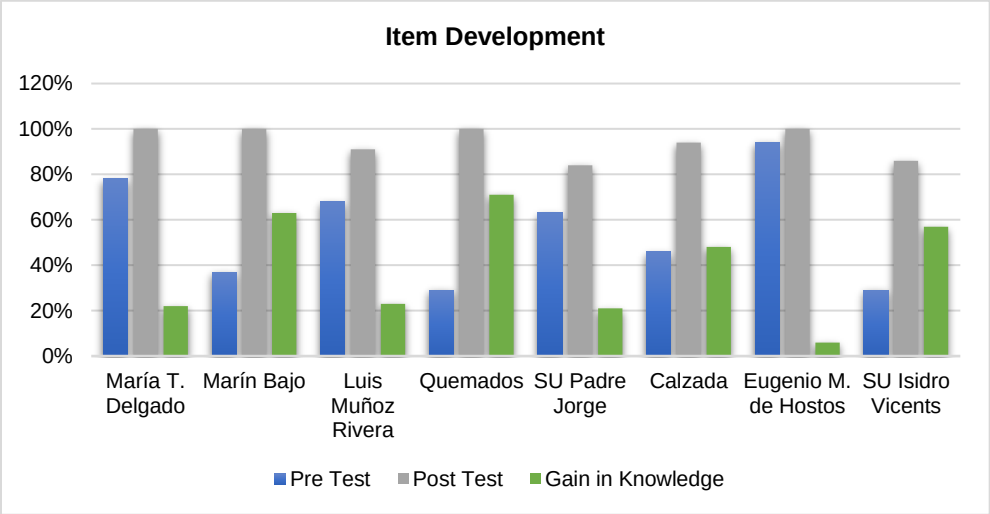
Results of the pre and post test of the Differentiated Instruction Training during FFY 2015



Teachers indicated satisfaction with the differentiated instruction training. From the evaluation of this professional development, PRDE can conclude that in the participating schools the teachers demonstrated a gain in knowledge of 25 percent.

Another professional training provided by the RAD to the teachers was the development of items. The main focus of the training was to assure that the teachers in the participating schools improve the items that they include in the instruments. The training aims to assure construct reliability in the instruments used at the classroom to measure the student's academic progress. In other words, PRDE wants to assure that the instruments developed by the teachers are measuring if the knowledge acquired by the student reflects the instruction received.

Results of the pre and post test of the Item Development Training during FFY 2015

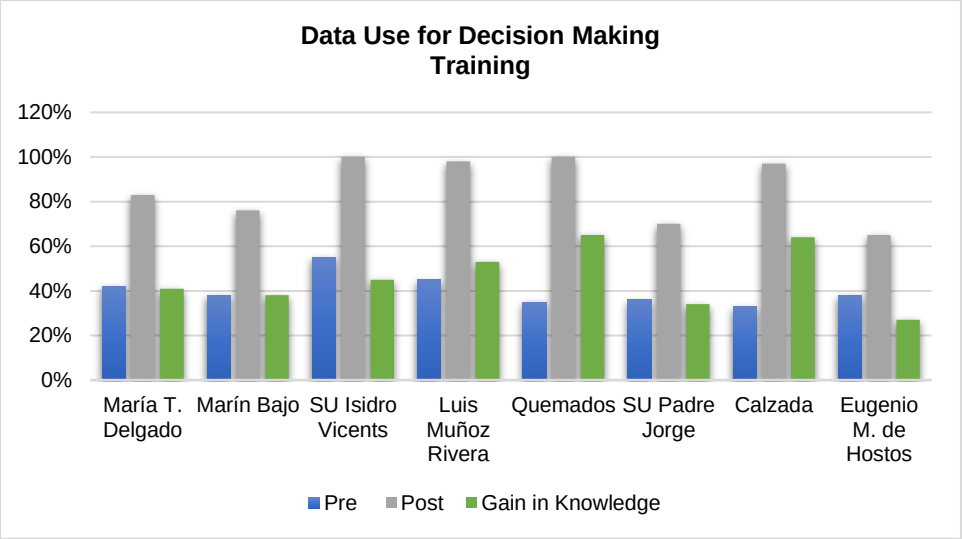


From the evaluation of professional development regarding the item development, PRDE can conclude that in the participating schools the teachers demonstrated gain in knowledge of 39%.

The next professional development activity is related to the use of data for decision making. This activity was offered by the RAD and a pre and post test was administered with the purpose of

measuring the knowledge acquired. This training impacted general education teachers, special education teachers, and school directors within our SiMR. For PRDE, it is very important that all personnel including the focus schools move to a culture of data-driven decision making. This exercise is more important for the focus schools because it helps them identify their needs areas with data that sustains it. Also, it is the main key for the development of the PCEA for each school. Below, PRDE presented the graph with the results of the pre and post test.

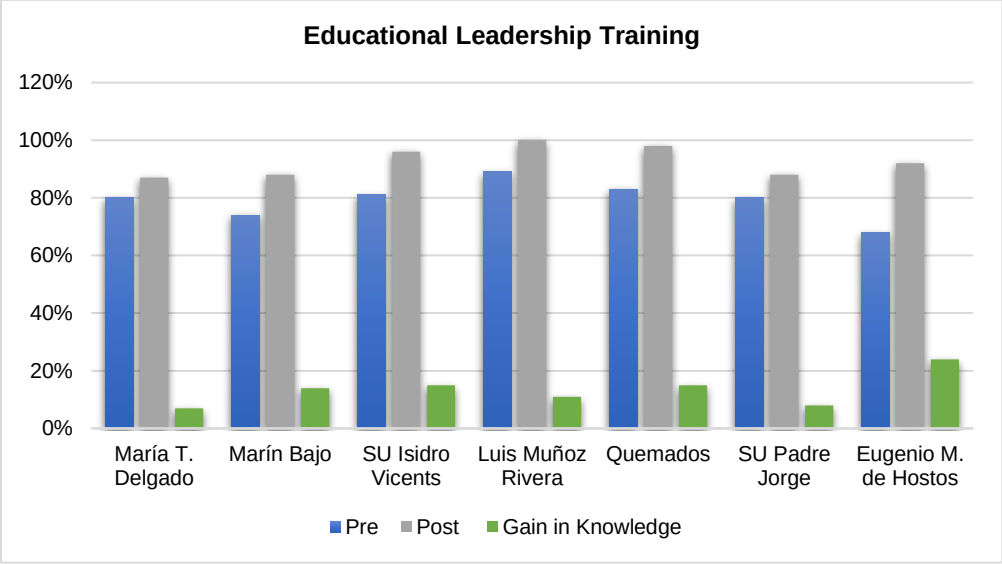
Results of the pre and post test of the Use of Data for Decision Making Training during FFY 2015



From the evaluation of the training regarding the data use for decision making, PRDE can conclude that the teachers and school directors demonstrated gain in knowledge of 46%.

One of the needs identified by the focus schools within our SiMR is the leadership development between school personnel. With this in mind the RAD coordinated the training related to educational leadership. The information in this training has the purpose of providing the necessary tools to the teachers and school directors to identify their skills as effective leaders. PRDE wants to assure that at the school level the personnel has strengthens its competencies in order for them to provide the academic services of the highest quality.

Results of the pre and post test of the Educational Leadership Training during FFY 2015



PRDE can conclude that from the training provided to the teachers and school directors, there was a gain in knowledge of 13%. This shows the impact of the tools provided to the teachers in order to be applied at the classroom.

PRDE can summarize that the data shows gains in knowledge in the professional development provided to the teachers. PRDE recognizes that there are differences between schools related to the results on the pre and post tests. In other words, various schools obtained higher scores than others. However, all of the schools demonstrated gain in knowledge.

PRDE contracted a private company to carry out an external evaluation to the RADs with the purpose of assessing the fidelity of implementation to each external provider. It is important to note that a sample of the focus schools was selected. This exercise evaluated and explored the programmatic and administrative compliance with the implementation arrangements of the RAD program. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to: the service providers (RADs) and school directors, focus groups with teachers and parents. The external evaluation included parent interviews and administration of questionnaires to teachers, parents, and students.

The analysis categories of the data collected include, but are not limited to, (a) areas associated with implementation of changes for school transformation, (b) use of data for decision making, (c) integration between the family and the school; (d) strategies to promote academic achievement and student retention; and (e) leadership development.

As part of the evaluation process, a data triangulation was carried out with the following:

- compliance with the provisions of the RAD program for the population under study,
- integration and support of program components,
- community integration,
- development of learning communities,
- leadership development,

- targeting Interventions to address issues related to academic gaps,
- effective implementation of the professional development component,
- alignment of strategies with the School Intervention Plan (PIE),
- sustainability of transformation initiatives and,
- use of data for decision making.

The most significant findings according to the research questions included in the report of the external evaluator, is that the average of the points awarded to the service providers (according to the comparative analysis of the results of the questionnaires) by the teachers was 45% while scores given by parents and students were considerably higher (85% and 78%, respectively). In addition, less than 50% of teachers surveyed felt that RAD interventions have led to significant changes in academic achievement. However, 83% of parents and 89% of students understand that there is a positive relationship between the RAD Program and academic achievement.

Another core finding concerns the analysis of the increase in the academic achievement with the implementation of the RAD program. The report of the external evaluation showed an increase of 2.3 percentage points in the students' academic achievement for the period considered (2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years vs. 2014-2015 school year). However, the external evaluator found a net increase in utilization and that there was no direct correlation between the implementation of the project and student learning after the first year of the RAD program. It should be noted that there are external variables that influence the perception. One of the variables that might answer the difference in the perception percentage, could be due to the fact, that teachers and school personnel receive significant support from the district and from the central level. It should be considered that 100% of students' academic progress cannot be awarded only to the RAD interventions, but there should be also considered interventions provided by the school district and the central level as well.

Stakeholder involvement in the SSIP evaluation

PRDE SAEE held various meetings with its stakeholder group and received their input regarding this Phase, including the evaluation processes. They, collaborated in the analysis made of the results of the PRDEs regular assessment and also the comparison of the growth on student's achievement on the 10 and 20 weeks of classes. These group also oversee the evidences of the monitoring visits at the district level in which PRDE developed a guide called: *Guía de Apoyo al Monitoreo Académico Basado en Intervenciones de Alta Calidad* for all district facilitators to use during this process.

Data Quality Issues

As presented in Phase II, in order to support the management of academic transformation and maintain compliance with PRDE's Academic Transformation Plan and the SSIP, PRDE has developed a series of platforms to benefit the schools, the district and the central level. PRDE uses these platforms to ensure implementation of interventions carried out by the RAD, school districts and schools. Specifically, these platforms are important regarding the general supervision system (PRDE is a unitary system), and as the key holder of the evidence that demonstrates the

fidelity of implementation. These technology makes easier for the different levels of supervision within PRDE to assure compliance with the working plan established by each school. The information below comes from SSIP Phase II in which was discussed in more detail these platforms.

1. SIS - The Student Information System (SIE by its acronym in Spanish) of the PRDE is the system that collects, handles and stores all data related to students and academic offerings in schools. This manages a universal database that stores among others; student demographic information, academic information, school organization, discipline incidents, enrollment, attendance, and student grades.
2. PCEA Live - This is an online platform that supports the development of the PCEA for each school. The platform delineates specific interventions for schools according to their rankings under to the Academic Transformation Plan.
3. SAMA – PRDE developed the Support and Academic Monitoring System platform (SAMA by its acronym in Spanish) to enable central level staff and district personnel to provide monitoring and feedback to schools as they implement their plans. In addition, central level staff members use SAMA to hold meetings with district staff to assess progress, identify support needs and provide ongoing technical assistance to ensure that all schools within the district are served.
4. RAD Platform– The online platform called RAD (Differentiated Support System) was developed by PRDE to evidence electronically the services provided at the school level. Also, the RAD is also used to ensure fiscal and contractual compliance. The staff of the Office of Federal Affairs works with the Transformation Unit staff to ensure that all services specified in the system are align with the PCEA of the school.
5. Dashboards – PRDE's dashboard is the technological tool that contains comparative tables and graphical summaries of key data related to schools, students and staff. PRDE dashboards include accountability indicators that are aligned with the classification criteria of accountability as well as other data necessary for making decisions based on data. The Office of Information Systems and the Auxiliary Secretary of Transformation, Planning and Performance share responsibility for a) ensuring that the dashboard contains data that are accurate and reliable, b) data is presented in a simple and easy way to be interpreted, c) and ensure that schools, districts, and central level have access to this information for data decision making.

These platforms are part of the initiatives that the agency has developed in recent years to collect and provide accurate and reliable data to account for the performance of multiple actors in the public education system and to develop public policies that result in the provision of better quality education. These platforms also permit that each higher level supervises the lower level. For example, the district supervises school and the central level supervise districts.

Although, PRDE has various technological platforms that improve our general supervision system and evidences the fidelity of implementation, some data issues have been identified. One of these issues is the responsibility of each user to populate the platform in a timely manner. Also, regarding the SSIP reporting, in order for central level to discuss with the stakeholders and analyze all evidences it is necessary to access various segments inside the platforms. In other words, not all information needed for the report is placed in one platform.

As part of the PRDE restructuring, it developed a longitudinal data system (LDS) accessible to school communities that allows the collection of all intra and inter-agency data for decision making. The LDS is an initiative, promoted by the federal government, which creates a portal that compiles all the most important data of the education system. The portal offers the opportunity to take a broad look at the Department through data from students, schools, staff, finance, and other data collected from 2010. The mission of the LDS is to collect and provide accurate and reliable data that facilitate justified decision making that benefits the education of Puerto Rico. The general objectives of this system are:

- Implement a longitudinal data system that allows decision-making based on reliable and high-quality data.
- Identify the data needed for systemic strategic planning.
- Promote the use of data provided by the System in 100% of school communities.

In order for PRDE to address the issues presented above, PRDE is looking forward to have in place a fully implemented longitudinal system. In which a student can be tracked since their enrollment in PRDE and through their academic life.

Progress Towards Achieving Intended Improvements

The data presented through the results section demonstrates the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategies selected in our SSIP. First, the data shows that, the percentage of special education students from the 6th grade who scored proficient or advanced on the regular assessment for math from the selected schools was exceeded, reaching 3.51%. If we compare this number with the proposed goal for the year 2014 (1.5%), it is shown that in the first year of implementation, the target was reached and even exceeded.

Likewise, the results of the pre and post tests for professional development activities carried out during school year 2015-2016, generally showed gains in the knowledge acquired by our teachers and school directors, which is reflected in the growth in the academic achievement of our students.

Given these results, PRDE continues to implement the same strategies previously selected, presented in the previous phases and discussed through this report.

Plans for Next Year

For the next SSIP implementation, the schools will continue to receive the support of the external service provider (RAD). The RAD will continue providing at the school level:

- Professional Development
- Individual Coaching
- Group Coaching

The District will continue holding monthly meetings between Special Education Academic Facilitators, Mathematic Facilitators, and the RAD coordinators / ‘coaches’, with the goal of coordinating efforts to assure the effectiveness in the implementation of all strategies discussed through this report. Also, district facilitators will continue to provide the technical assistance visit to the schools.

PRDE will continue with the professional learning communities founded on scientifically-based strategies that lead the curriculum implementation for all focus schools. These communities are known as the Eclectic Model of Professional Learning Communities (MECPA by its acronym in Spanish). The SAEE will continue implementing the Professional Development Plan to impact math teachers and special Education teachers at focus schools who teach third through fifth grade. Also to receive continuously the recommendations from different points of views, the SAEE will work directly with its stakeholder group.