



PART B PUERTO RICO STATE SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SSIP) PHASE III - YEAR 3 (17-18)

April 1, 2019

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Introduction

The Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE), presents its State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase III year 3 with the purpose of improving child-level outcomes for students with disabilities. These efforts were aligned with the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Education Act (IDEIA) and the Elementary and Secondary Educational Act as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). As presented during previous phases, PRDE along with its stakeholder group, decided to focus on impacting the proficiency rate of fifth grade students with disabilities taking the Puerto Rico Assessment system called META-PR, (*Measurement and Evaluation for Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico*), in mathematics within the Yabucoa District from the Humacao Region.

After a broad analysis during the Phase I, PRDE along with the stakeholder group selected that the SSIP would begin with a focus on impacting the proficiency rate of sixth grade students with disabilities taking the META-PR¹ in mathematics within the Yabucoa District. PRDE remains focused on increasing the mathematics performance for students residing in the Yabucoa District. However, PRDE modified its SiMR in 2016-2017 to adjust to public policy changes related to elementary grade levels, changing from kindergarten to grade 6 to now only kindergarten through grade 5. After a data analysis, and discussion with the stakeholder group, the determination was made to focus on impacting the proficiency rate of fifth grade students with disabilities on the PR Assessment (META) from the participating schools in the Yabucoa District.

Since the beginning, stakeholders have been very involved in decision-making regarding the discussion of the data, the selection of the new SiMR grade-level focus and have been involved in the SSIP implementation process. Stakeholder, specifically educators leaders such as Academic Superintendent of the Yabucoa School District, PRDE Director of the Mathematics Program, a School Director, and a Special Education Teacher, also participated on the selection of the coherent improvement strategies for all PRDE levels. Through ongoing stakeholder meetings activities done at the district, school level and the support provided by the Differentiated Support Network (RAD by its acronym in Spanish), for the implementation of the SSIP. The meetings with the stakeholders

¹ PRDE changed its statewide Assessment, formerly called PPAA, and since has instituted the test called META-PR, Measurement and Evaluation for Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico.

are ongoing, at least once monthly and have become increasingly more meaningful as they acquire more knowledge on the SSIP. As a result, the stakeholders for Phase III year 3, are more knowledgeable of the development of the SSIP and have provided better feedback.

As we mentioned in last year's submission, various factors impacted the implementation of the SSIP during FFY 2017. The ESSA Plan of Puerto Rico was submitted to the Federal Government in September 2017 and approved in January 2018. It establishes important aspects of the public education policy of Puerto Rico and replaces the Transformation Plan with Longitudinal Vision. The ESSA Plan of Puerto Rico is a new model of accountability that seeks to generate better results and greater transparency in the educational system of Puerto Rico. Another aspect that had a significant impact on the 2017 SSIP implementation were hurricanes Irma and Maria during September 2017. On September 4, 2017, hurricane Irma impacted the Island, and as a result, approximately 800 households were without electricity. Two weeks later, on September 20, 2017, hurricane Maria made landfall on the island of Puerto Rico as a high-end Category 4, nearly Category 5, hurricane with winds of 175-190 mph. The eye of the hurricane entered the island through Yabucoa in the Region of Humacao on the eastern side of the Island, where our SSIP is being executed, and thus had a direct impact in the SSIP implementation. Flooding affected all of Puerto Rico, with water levels reaching as high as six feet in some areas and numerous buildings losing their roofs. Hurricane Maria significantly damaged infrastructure, disabling radar and cell towers, severely impacting communications within the island, and completely knocking out electricity. The electricity slowly started coming back in late November 2017, two months after the hurricanes, and power was established in more than 70% of the island by late February 2018.

In the aftermath of hurricane Maria, a large number of PRDE public schools served as shelters for families and individuals. This saved the lives of those Puerto Ricans whose homes were not safe or inhabitable. Schools were serving not only as shelters but also as community points of access for food, health clinics, and as centers for children. Additionally, several schools were closed and unable to serve these key roles for their communities following the hurricanes due to the significant levels of damages to their structure. It was over a month after hurricane Maria, that the first group of PRDE schools officially re-opened to once again provide academic services. A total of 119 schools, just 11% of PRDE schools that existed at the start of the 2017-2018 school year, re-opened

on October 23, 2017. PRDE continued to re-open schools as aggressively as safely possible. By November 7, 2017, PRDE had been able to re-open approximately half of the schools that existed at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. The last schools to re-open were from the Humacao Region, on December 14, 2017, nearly two months after the Hurricane made landfall in Puerto Rico. A total of approximately 20 schools that existed at the start of the 2017-2018 school year never re-opened due to severe damages as a result of the hurricanes. Throughout the report, how those factors impacted the SSIP implementation will be presented in detail. Specifically, on page 11, Progress of the Implementation area we will discuss how the hurricanes affected the SSIP schools.

I. Summary of Phase 3 Year 3

A. Theory of action or logic model for the SSIP, including the SiMR

PRDE's Theory of Action was established during phase I. As we described in the Phase I submission, Stakeholders were involved in the development of the Theory of Action. Multiple meetings were held with the Stakeholder Group where the specific needs assessment study conducted by PRDE central level were discuss and the principal roots cause or assumptions of the low academic achievement were identified. Then the group discussed and proposed the strategies for improving student academic achievement. Figure 1 shows the rationale of how implementing the coherent set of improvement strategies described throughout this document will lead to achievement of improved results for children with disabilities. PRDE's Theory of Action is presented as follows;

PRDE believes that if it implements the combination of the following interventions:

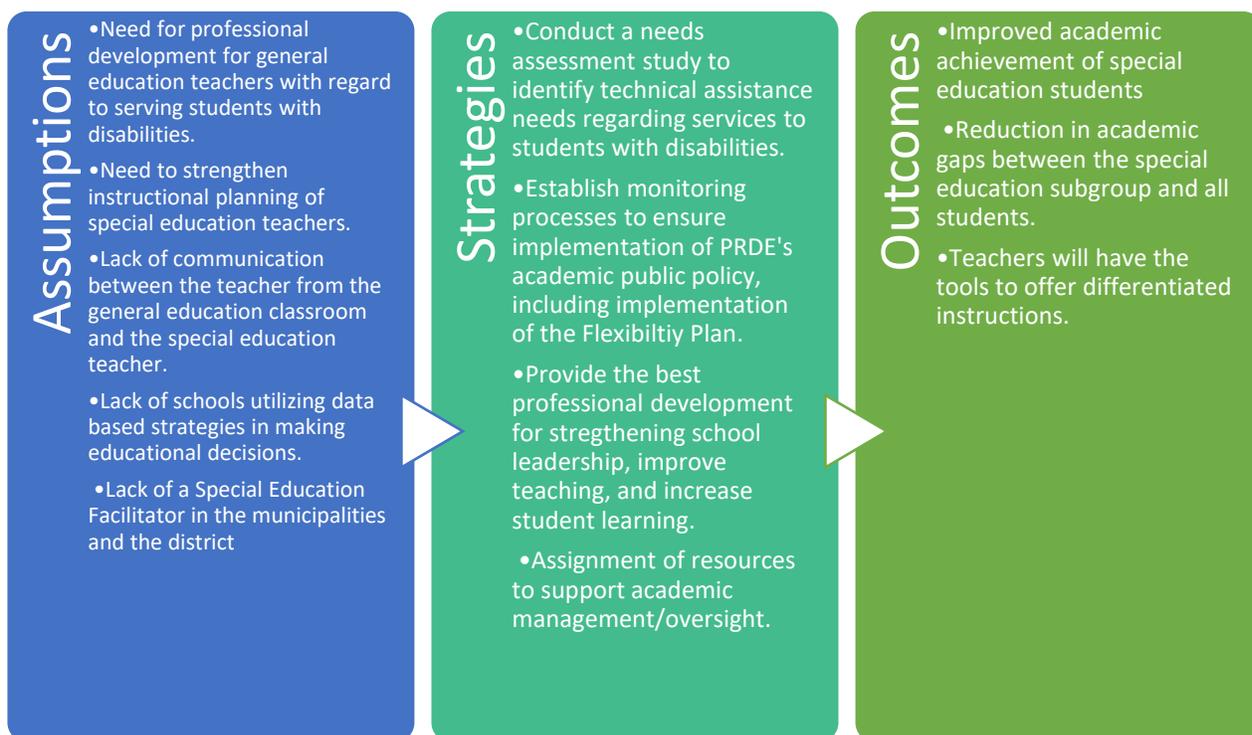
- Conducting a school specific needs assessment study for serving students with disabilities;
- Providing professional development in mathematics for both general and special education teachers with regard to serving students with disabilities that will be sure to address concerns identified in the need's assessment study (in a coordinated way between the SAEE, the RADs and the school district);

- Assignment of 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,
- An Academic Monitoring Plan carried out by the district to ensure compliance with the PRDE Academic Transformation Plan,

THEN, the result will be an improved performance of fifth-grade students with disabilities taking the META-PR at the participating schools. As such, with the interventions being implemented in 3rd through 5th grade, those teachers receiving more professional development will improve the quality of the teaching in their classroom. This will directly impact the proficiency of their students. As such, stakeholders believe this theory of action has a high likelihood of leading to a measurable improvement in mathematics scores for fifth grade students with disabilities.

The below graphic illustration shows the rationale of how implementing the coherent set of improvement strategies described throughout this document will lead to achievement of improved results for children with disabilities.

Figure 1: Theory of Action



A.1 State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)

PRDE's State-identified measurable Results (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 elementary schools from the Yabucoa School District. PRDE's SIMR is aligned in accordance to APR Indicator 3C and focuses on improving the performance of students with disabilities on the Puerto Rico Assessment System, called *Measurement and Evaluation for Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico (META-PR)*. Table 1 shows the SSIP schools that currently serve a total of 58 students in special education, receiving math instruction within general education.

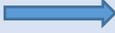
Table 1: Participating Schools in the SSIP during FFY 2017

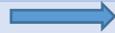
Region	District	Municipality	Schools	Schools Grade Levels
Humacao	Yabucoa	Maunabo	Calzada	K - 5
		San Lorenzo	Dra. María T. Delgado de Marcano	K - 8
		San Lorenzo	Eugenio María de Hostos	K - 5
		San Lorenzo	Jorge Rosario del Valle	PK - 8
		San Lorenzo	Luis Muñoz Rivera	PK - 5
		Patillas	Marín Bajo	K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

B. [The coherent improvement strategies or principle activities employed during the year, including infrastructure improvement strategies](#)

PRDE central level conducted a school specific needs assessment study for serving students with disabilities by interviewing general and special education teachers, and school directors during the first year of the SSIP (2013-2014). This study was conducted at each participating SSIP school. As a result, the identified needs led to the establishment of the inputs of the Logic Model, presented in Phase II. The *logic model outlines the short and long term outcomes that will be reached by implementing the coherent improvement strategies*. See table 2 below.

Table 2: PRDE's SSIP Logic Model

Inputs	Outputs 		Outcomes	
	Strategies 	Participation	Short-Term 	Long-Term
Professional development for general education teachers with regard to serving students with disabilities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide professional development for strengthening school leadership, improve teaching, and increase student learning. 2. Provide Individual Coaching 3. Provide Group Coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAEE • Special Education Facilitators • RAD's 	Teachers will have the tools to offer differentiated instructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teachers gain in Knowledge ➤ Improved academic achievement of special education students ➤ Reduction in academic gaps between the special education subgroup and all students.
Strengthen instructional planning of special education teachers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide professional development in instructional planning for special ed teachers 2. Provide Individual Coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAEE • District (Math and Special Ed Facilitators) • RAD's 	Special Education teachers will strengthen their academic planning skills	
Increase communication between the teacher from the general education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide Group Coaching 2. Learning Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District • RAD's 	Have better communication between the teacher	

Inputs	Outputs 		Outcomes	
	Strategies 	Participation	Short-Term 	Long-Term
classroom and the special education teacher.			from the general education classroom and the special education teacher.	
Schools utilizing data based strategies in making educational decisions.	1. Provide professional development (workshops) on Data Driven Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District (Math and Special Ed Facilitators) • RAD's 	Increase the capacity of schools to use data in decision making	
Have all Special Education Facilitator in the municipalities and the district to support the schools	1. Assignment of resources to support academic management/oversight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAEE • Humacao Region 	Increase the TA assistance that the Special Education Facilitator provided to schools	

The logic model has served as a basis for establishing the strategies implemented during the different SSIP phases. Related to these strategies during the 2017-2018 school year, and as mentioned in the introduction, Puerto Rico has faced unique challenges. The eye of hurricane María entered the island through Yabucoa, where our SSIP is being implemented. Even though the hurricanes directly impacted the SSIP schools, we present the strategies employed during this school year:

- Professional development for teachers who served students with disabilities - PRDE continued to partner with external providers, known as Differentiated Support Network (Red de Apoyo Diferenciado or RAD by its acronym in Spanish). The RADs continued offering administrative and academic support individualized to address the specific areas of need for each school. The RADs also continued offering professional development services such as **workshops and coaching** to schools throughout the academic school year.

At the school level, each school also provided professional development activities for both general and special education teachers with regard to serving students with disabilities that will be sure to address concerns identified in their need's assessment study.

- Strengthen instructional planning of special education teachers – The RADs also continued helping schools in planning and implementation of the interventions designed to result in school transformation. As part of the coaching service provided by the RAD, the coaches worked on the topic: *Planning of teaching including math (writing objectives, developing performance tasks among others)*.
- Increase communication between general education teachers and special education teachers – As mentioned in previous phases, PRDE continued with the initiative of professional learning communities. 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. They also contribute to improve communication between teachers.

- Schools using data-based strategies in making educational decisions - Two professional development activities regarding use of data-based strategies were provided by the RAD during FFY 2017. Specifically, the topics were:
 - Analysis of Progress Indicators META-PR and students grades (A, B, C's) for Decision Making
 - Design of Rubrics for the Use of Data in PBL
- Also, as part of the coaching service provided by the RAD, the coaches worked on the topic: Assist the teacher with the analysis of students data to implement interventions based on effective strategies according to data analysis.
- Have all Special Education Facilitators in the municipalities and the district to support the schools - All the Special Ed 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 (year 1 to 3) of implementation.

Because of the impact of the Hurricane Maria in the Humacao Region, PRDE conducted a new school specific assessment (during 2017-2018) to be addressed during the 2018-2019 school year, with the school directors of the participating schools. This was done with the purpose of identifying the possible new needs of the schools. With this assessment the school directors had the opportunity to present the strengths and weaknesses of their math and special education teachers and provide ideas on the ways PRDE can offer assistance to support these teachers and their needs. The school directors concurred and indicated that the teachers needed: individual coaching, demonstrative classes including the use of Evidence Based Practices (EBP's) in math, workshops (with practice exercises) and TA on data-driven decision making.

B.1 Other PRDE Initiatives implemented during 2017-2018 school year that impacted SSIP

As part of other initiatives, PRDE seeks to manage inappropriate behaviors that affect school climate, to foster an environment conducive to learning and to increase student achievement. As part of the PRDE Consolidated State Plan², to improve school climate,

² That is a requirement of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

PRDE implemented a Professional Development Program for supervisors, teachers and school's directors of elementary schools in order for them to properly implement the *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support System (PBIS)*, including the elementary schools of the Yabucoa Districts. PBIS is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students.

During the 2017-2018 school year, PRDE implemented another strategy, Response to Intervention (RTI), in the Humacao Region (the same region in which the SSIP is being implemented) as a pilot project. Through the implementation of the RTI framework, the PRDE seeks to improve the academic achievement of all students, including students with disabilities or special needs, who are at risk of not reaching goals and expectations of the degree they are studying. The RTI initiative has the focus of the school as a model to identify and provide instruction and early intervention for all students who perform below the parameters expected by the PRDE in the subjects of Spanish and Mathematics. The activities carried out as part of the initiative during the year 2017 included seminars, workshops, coaching and demonstration classes on RTI to school and leadership staff of all schools in the Humacao region.

C. [The specific evidence-based practices that have been implemented to date](#)

During Phase II, the selected Evidence Based Practices (EBP) were presented and discussed. As mentioned in the previous phases, PRDE established a guide that contains the definition and the Evidence Based Practices (EBP) adopted by the state. These EBPs “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 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 to be implemented in PRDE. 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 for them to be easily replicable and
- reviewed and accepted by independent experts.

For math, which is our focus 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 and research in action, differentiated instruction and focus on problem-solving. Other strategies that were used by the schools are: an extended learning time program, job embedded professional development plan, parent and community involvement strategy, coaching and data driven decision making.

At the school level, the EBPs that the school will implement are established in the School Improvement Plan (DEE, per its acronym in Spanish)³. In this plan the school establishes the activities and interventions that will be developing during the school year in order improve the academic achievement of its students.

One of the main strategies used by PRDE based on its ESSA Plan as part of PRDE's EBPs in its implementation of the SSIP is 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 schools needs assessment. These professional development activities are designed to provide educators with evidence-based tools and resources that promote effective instruction. In the 2017-2018 school year, special emphasis was placed on differentiated instruction, use of technology and project-based learning. The knowledge and skills gained through these opportunities will strengthen the

³ This plan was previously known as the Authentic Comprehensive School Plan (PCEA by its acronym in Spanish)

quality of the teaching and learning process in the classroom to result in improved student achievement. These professional development activities are focused on educators' and students' specific needs to improve student academic achievement. As a result, PRDE expects increases in student performance, as evidenced by results of the state assessment. To ensure the implementation of best practices, PRDE has provided professional development, mentoring, coaching, communities of practice, and data analysis activities.

Another EBP 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. Each RAD has coaches who have the expertise to provide instruction by core subject area, including mathematics and special education. Some of the activities given 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 and 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. It is also a way for teachers to be better connected as they share information amongst participants; share knowledge and experiences.
- 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 conduct follow-up visits with the purpose of ensuring the implementation of the strategies or tools provided to the teachers during the initial visit are been used with fidelity.

D. Brief overview of the year's evaluation activities, measures, and outcomes

Establishing an evaluation matrix is the biggest challenge for PRDE since the initial Phase II submission. However, during 2017-2018 school year, PRDE integrated different evaluation components to gauge the effectiveness of the coherent improvement strategies. The first component is the PRDE Assessment (META-PR), which is used to measure the SIMR proposed target. Annually, Puerto Rico administers META-PR to measure the proficiency and academic growth of students in the content areas of Spanish, math and English as a second language in third through eighth and eleventh grade. The results of PRDE's evaluation system are used to guarantee the accountability and provide support and feedback to schools on student achievement in relation to the curriculum. Through the development of standards and assessment PRDE ensures that all students have access to high-quality education.

In 2015, as a result of the changes previously mentioned in this report, PRDE had to establish a new baseline and new targets. The analysis of data shows that PRDE met its targets for FFY 2016 and 2017. Table 3 reflects SAE's SIMR baseline data for (FFY 2015) and targets for FFY 2016-2018.

Table 3: PRDE SSIP Baseline Data

FFY	2015
Data	27.63%

Table 4: FFY 2016- FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2016	2017	2018
Target	27.6%	28.1%	28.6%
Data	30.6%	30.8%	

Description of Measure -

A formula is used to calculate the percent of proficiency. The formula is:

Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs enrolled in fifth grade at the selected schools scoring advanced or 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)].

- **Advanced (4)** - Students at this level show an optimal academic performance in the subject assessed in META-PR and demonstrate a profound level of understanding and conceptual reasoning, as well as the development of skills that are, in both cases, complex and abstract.
- **Proficient (3)** - Students at this level show competent academic performance in the subject that is assessed in META-PR and demonstrate a significant level of conceptual understanding and reasoning, as well as skill development.

The proficiency rate includes all children with IEPs enrolled during that academic year.

Another component of the evaluation plan and an additional data source used to measure progress toward the SIMR is the student's progress report 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 deficiencies. Further discussion of this data source will be described in more detail in Section V, *Progress Toward Achieving Intended Improvements*.

One of the improvement strategies, mentioned in all Phases, was to provide professional development for both general education math teachers and special education teachers. This activity addressed the teachers needs to apply properly differentiated education as a strategy to impact their students with disabilities. To measure the knowledge acquired by the teachers, a pre- and post-test was submitted to the participants. In Section III, *Data on Implementation and Outcomes*, we discuss the results of the pre- and post-test of each professional development activity realized during this year. In this section we also presented the summary of the domain of the pre and post test of mathematics of the extended learning time program and the evaluation of the coaching services.

To evaluate the services provided by the RAD, PRDE contracted a private company to carry out an external evaluation. This with the purpose of assessing the fidelity of implementation of their work. This exercise evaluated and explored the programmatic and administrative compliance with the implementation arrangements of the RAD program. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 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.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented as part of the SSIP in the performance and execution of the teachers, we decided to use the results of the evaluations made to the third, fourth and fifth grade teachers at the SSIP schools conducted through the PRDE Teacher Evaluation System. This system has strengthened the process of annually identifying effective teachers and provides a support system to increase the teacher's professional skills, knowledge and effectiveness. In the 2017-2018 academic year, as part of the ESSA Consolidated State Plan, PRDE had reviewed the Teacher Evaluation process. It is a three-step process consisting of two visits from the school director and then the evaluation, which documents, through observation, the areas of strength and opportunity of the teacher, as well as the next steps to receive academic support and technical assistance. Through this system, PRDE seeks to use the results of the formative evaluation results to analyze, plan and improve educational practice. This way PRDE can formalize the efforts and support that will be offered to teachers to make changes in their professional practice to benefit all students. The Teacher Evaluation System is designed to ensure the continuing professional development of educators and to enrich the quality of teaching in schools and student learning.

The system has been designed to provide fair and uniform evaluations offering valuable information regarding professional growth needs to develop professional development opportunities for both effective and less effective teachers that will result in **improved student achievement**. The outcome data related to the results of the Teacher Evaluation process is presented in the Section 3, Data on Implementation and Outcomes.

E. Highlights of changes to implementation and improvement strategies

Since the submission of Phase I, PRDE has made changes to the educational infrastructure, explained in previous SSIP submissions. As a result of the decreased student enrollment figures, in 2017-2018 PRDE decided to close around 200 schools around the island, consolidating them with other schools within the same municipality. As mentioned in last year's report, during 2017-2018 school year the, Quemados School was consolidated in to the Luis Munoz Rivera School, reducing the number of participating schools to 7. This did not affect the number of students impacted by the initiative since they became part of the enrollment of students from another SSIP participating school.

After the passage of hurricanes Irma and María during the month of September 2017, due to the damage caused to the structures and the lack of basic services, many families decided to leave the island moving to the United States. This resulted in a reduction in the number of students impacted by the SSIP during 2017-18 compared to previous years.

During the 2017-2018 school year ESSA Plan of Puerto Rico was submitted to the federal government and approved. It establishes important aspects of the public education policy of Puerto Rico and replaces the Transformation Plan with longitudinal vision. The ESSA Plan of Puerto Rico is a new model of accountability that seeks to generate better results and greater transparency in the educational system of Puerto Rico. Under this Plan, three types of schools are established: "Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)"; "Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI)"; and "Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)": Under this Plan, the type of interventions that will be carried out in these schools (CSI, ATSI and TSI) is established, as is a new model for teacher evaluation, among other changes. PRDE is working on revising strategies and evaluation components to ensure that the SSIP is aligned to the ESSA Plan.

Finally, in 2018, PRDE established a new administrative structure, which eliminates the previously existing 28 School Districts, but maintains and works to strengthen the seven previously existing educational regions, which are based on geography. The regions are

headquartered at the seven Educational Regional Offices (OREs by its acronym in Spanish): Arecibo, Bayamón, Caguas, Humacao, Mayagüez, Ponce, and San Juan. Each Regional Office is composed of the following positions and units:

- **Regional Director** is in charge of all matters of the ORE and responds to the Puerto Rico Secretary of Education and Associate Secretary for Special Education.
- **Chief Academic Officer** is in charge of all Academic Facilitators (including academic facilitators for Special Education), school improvement, academic support, basic curriculum: Spanish, English, Math, and Science. Also, they are in charge of the complementary curriculum, for example: Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, Arts, Vocational Studies and Special Education.
- **Student Services Officer** is in charge of the direct services for students and social support such as: counselors, nurses and social workers.
- **Student Services Unit** also oversees the adult education program, at-risk students' education, and special education (including the corresponding Special Education Service Centers).
- **School Officer** is in charge of providing support to the School Directors, i.e., Principals.
- **Accountability Unit** is responsible for work related to the Puerto Rico Academic Assessments, Monitoring, and Data Coaching.
- **Chief Operating Officer** is responsible for federal funds, fiscal issues, and information systems.
- **Auxiliary Services** oversees the school cafeterias, school maintenance, all school transportation, security and others. Human Resources personnel hiring, professional development and personnel evaluation.
- **Legal Division Unit** oversees and manages legal issues and complaints, including and special education complaints.

Is important to note that these changes did not have a direct impact in the implementation of the SSIP during 2017.

II. Progress in Implementing the SSIP

A. Description of the State's SSIP implementation progress

During 2017-2018 PRDE was not able to accomplish all of its planned activities as a result of hurricane Irma and Maria entering the island through Yabucoa in the Region of Humacao on the eastern side of the Island, where our SSIP is being executed. Consequently, many SSIP schools had to be used as shelters. Around 40,000 residents of Yabucoa had no electricity or communication. The damage in Yabucoa was of such magnitude that still in the mid-October of 2017, there was scarcity of water and food. As of June 12, 2018, 9 months after the passage of the Hurricanes, more than 30% of Yabucoa residents were still without electrical power.

As also mentioned in the introduction, several schools were closed and unable to serve key roles for their communities following the hurricanes due to the significant levels of damages to their structure. PRDE continued to re-open schools as aggressively as safely possible. Specifically related to the seven SSIP schools officially re-opened between November and December 2017. The last school to re-open was Luis M. Rivera, on December 14, 2017, nearly two months after the Hurricane made landfall in Puerto Rico. The table below provides information on the dates in which each of the participating schools of the SSIP, re-opened after hurricane Maria. This provides a perspective of the school time that was lost.

Table 5: Dates in which each of the participating schools of the SSIP re-opened after Hurricane Maria

School	Date Opened	Days
1. Maria T. Delgado	11/6/2017	47
2. Jorge Rosario Del Valle		
3. SU Isidro Vicens		
4. Eugenio Ma De Hostos	11/10/2017	51
5. Calzada	11/17/2017	58
6. Marin Abajo	11/21/2017	62
7. Luis M. Rivera	12/14/2017	85

As a result of the foregoing, it was not possible for the SAEE to implement all the planned strategies because of the time that was taken away from the 2017-18 school year to open the participating schools, so PRDE's priority was to provide educational and related services to special education students. However, PRDE continued to partner with external providers, RADs (Differentiated Support Network). The RADs continued offering administrative and academic support individualized to address the specific areas of need for each school. Through the RAD, PRDE was able to continue with the implementation of the coherent improvement strategies. These strategies are:

1. Professional development activities for teachers who served students with disabilities- During FFY 2017, the RADs continued to offer professional development to the impacted schools. The professional development activities offered by the RAD were based on the need's studies carried out by the schools. During 2017 the RAD carried out the following workshops as part of the professional development activities:
 - Project Based Learning
 - Design of Rubrics for the Use of Data in PBL
 - Analysis of Progress Indicators for Decision Making

At the school level, PRDE also provided professional development activities for both general and special education teachers. Some of the workshops provided in the participating schools were:

- Eugenio María de Hostos School - Differentiated instruction as an educational strategy to improve academic achievement by attending to the needs of all students
 - Quebrada Honda School - The ABCs as a teaching and curricular integration strategy
 - Calzada School - Project-based learning as an educational strategy to improve student academic achievement
2. Strengthen instructional planning of special education teachers – During the 2017-2018 school year, the RAD also continued helping schools in planning and implementation

of the interventions designed to result in school transformation. As part of the coaching service provided by the RAD, the coaches worked on the topic: *Planning of teaching (writing objectives, developing performance tasks among others)*.

3. Increase communication between the teachers from the general education classroom and special education - To increase communication between the teachers from the general education classroom and special education, PRDE developed professional learning communities founded on scientifically based strategies within curriculum implementation for all participating 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. They also contribute to improve communication between teachers. The MECPA's 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. During FFY 2017, due to the passage of the mentioned hurricanes, the MECPA's did not begin to meet until the second semester. The goal is for each MECPA to meet at least two times in the spring semester.

4. Schools utilizing data-based strategies in making educational decisions – One of the strategies established for the PRDE what was previously mentioned in the EBP's section is data driven decision making. The purpose of this strategy 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 plans to address the deficiencies identified in this assessment results. Two professional development activities regarding use of data-based strategies were provided by the RAD during FFY 2017. Specifically, the topics were:
 - Analysis of Progress Indicators for Decision Making
 - Design of Rubrics for the Use of Data in PBL

Also, as part of the coaching service provided by the RAD, the coaches worked on the topic: Assist the teacher with the analysis of student data to implement interventions based on effective strategies according to data analysis.

5. Ensure all Special Education Facilitator positions in the municipalities and the districts are filled to support the schools – as we anticipated in last year's report, the rehiring process for school year 2017 of the Special Education Facilitator was affected by various factors such as the impacts of Hurricane Irma and Maria. The Special Ed Facilitator for the Yabucoa district was finally on place on December 2017.

In addition to these strategies, and as discussed with and evaluated by the Stakeholder Group, during 2017-2018, PRDE continued to impact the selected schools in the additional following ways:

6. The RADs continue provided individual coaching by core subject area for school principals and teachers, including math and special education. The purpose of these services was focused on reinforcing the effective leadership of the school principal and rigorous teaching based on standards and expectations. For this reason, some of the topics covered in the coaching services and follow-up to the director were the following:
 - Development and monitoring of goals and objectives for the school and how to use the data for decision making.
 - Guarantee the use of data in administrative decision making.
 - Assistance in the implementation and execution of the Teacher Evaluation System, encouraging compliance with the visiting calendar, the regulations and the rubric for this purpose.
 - Complete the official template with the data of the academic achievement of the students by grade and subject.

RADs helped teachers develop a deeper understanding of the academic content and how to make it accessible to all subgroups. Also, the RADs support the teachers in the development of their class planning. The topics that were worked on as part of the individual coaching during FYY 2017 were:

- Support to the teacher in the implementation in the classroom of the activities described to implement project-based learning as revealed by the DEE.
- Assist the teacher with the analysis of student data to implement interventions based on effective strategies according to data analysis.
- Support to attend special education populations and Spanish learners and immigrants located in the regular room.
- Use of curricular alignment, scope and sequence document, curricular sequence calendars, curricular unit planning, maps and curricular frameworks.
- Planning of teaching (writing of objectives, performance defects among others).
- Raise levels of depth of knowledge by supporting the design and implementation of teaching-learning strategies that allow students to master the standards by grade and level with special emphasis about mathematics, Spanish, English and science.

As part of the RAD services, they also provide group coaching around the areas of analysis, discussion and identification of students with problems of academic delay in some of the subjects to select strategies that all teachers can use to increase the academic performance of these students.

7. Extended Learning Time Program for the core subject areas with an emphasis on Spanish and Mathematics – Each RAD, along with the school director, designed a program that provides this extended learning time for students for enrichment and the instruction necessary to meet academic standards. Extended Learning Time began on January 29, 2018. The use of pre-tests aligned to the priority expectations of each grade and subject provided by the RAD was implemented and teachers planned the learning activities based on the test standardized results, academic performance in the classroom and the data obtained in the pre-test administered.

As previously mentioned, during FFY 2017, PRDE conduct a new school specific needs assessment to be addressed during 2018-2019, with the school directors at the SSIP schools. This was established because of the impact of the hurricanes, which could bring to new needs to light. With this needs assessment the school directors had the opportunity to present the strengths and weakness of their math teachers and provide ideas how PRDE could support these teachers and their needs. The school directors indicated that the teachers needed: individual coaching, demonstrative classes including the use of EBPs in math, workshops (with practice exercises) and data driven decision making. In the **Plans for Next Year** section we include the Work Plan for the 2018-2019 school year in which we wanted to address the needs presented by the school Directors.

A.1 Alignment to Existing Current State Initiatives

During 2017-2018, PRDE implemented various initiatives related to improve the academic performance of students and measure the impact of implementation of the SSIP. These initiatives are:

- 1. Project Based Learning (PBL)** - In the 2017-2018 school year, special emphasis is being placed on Project Based Learning strategy. This is a strategy that allows students to acquire the key knowledge and skills in the 21st century by developing multidisciplinary projects that answer a question or problems in real life. All schools should work on at least one PBL project during the second semester of 2017. As part of the design of the strategy, the projects should be interdisciplinary and include a minimum of three (3) subjects. When designing PBL, it is important that each school identify the skills, concepts and knowledge that students need to learn. Learning objectives should be derived from content standards and curricular maps. As part of the implementation of the strategy, project-based learning can be combined with other methods of instruction such as direct instruction, and teaching materials including textbooks, exams, etc. The important thing is to look for ways to facilitate student's understanding of new content using interactive and engaging techniques.

- 2. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** - During the 2017-2018 school year, PRDE determined one area of focus would be the implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PRDE seeks to manage inappropriate behaviors that affect school climate, to foster an environment conducive to learning and to increase student achievement. To improve school climate, PRDE implemented a Professional Development Program for teachers and school directors from elementary schools, in order for them to properly implement the PBIS system. PBIS is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. This program allows participants to learn how to implement a Positive School Behavior Support System to achieve a Positive and Creative School Climate. Likewise, through this professional development program, PRDE engaged the collaborative involvement of parents, students, the community adjacent to the campus, and all school staff to creatively address behavioral problems and violence faced in schools.

PBIS system is an important resource for the progress of the SSIP. Teachers and other school personnel works to manage inappropriate behaviors that affect the classroom climate. As they implement evidence-based behavioral interventions it should be reflected in the student's achievement due to a better learning environment.

While PBIS is a PRDE system-wide initiative, the SAEE has been a key stakeholder in the planning and implementation processes. After all the initial planning, including the establishment of a PBIS work plan, implementation was delayed due to the impacts of Hurricane Maria. The work plan was established for 856 schools which include the primary grades PK-8th grade. The schools from the SSIP impacted by PBIS implementation during FFY 2017 are: Luis Muñoz Rivera and Calzada.

- 3. Response to Intervention (RTI)** - During 2017-2018 school year PRDE implemented another strategy, Response to Intervention (RTI) in the Humacao Region a pilot project. Through the implementation of the RTI model, the PRDE seeks to improve the

academic achievement of all students, including students with disabilities or special needs, who are at risk of not reaching goals and expectations of the degree they are studying.

It is important to note that the Humacao Region was selected due to the Region with the most needs in infrastructure, personnel, and has the lowest PR Assessment results, and was most affected by the hurricanes. After an RFP process, a company was selected to provide the TA in the Humacao Region schools and Included: Innovative Classroom Response Systems (“Clickers”) which is a classroom response system or student response system, with a set of hardware and software that facilitates teaching activities such as the following:

- a. **A teacher poses a multiple-choice question to his or her students** via an overhead or computer projector.
- b. **Each student submits an answer to the question using a handheld transmitter (a “clicker”)** that beams a radio-frequency signal to a receiver attached to the teacher’s computer.
- c. **Software on the teacher’s computer collects the students’ answers and produces a bar chart** showing how many students chose each of the answer choices.
- d. **The teacher makes “on the fly” instructional choices in response to the bar chart** by, for example, leading students in a discussion of the merits of each answer choice or asking students to discuss the question in small groups.

The work plan for RTI started on March 2018, started with various meetings with the Humacao Regional Director, Humacao CSEE Personnel, District Special Assistants. The meetings with the District personnel included data analysis to discuss and analyze the results of the students from the PR assessment and students’ performance.

B. Stakeholder involvement in SSIP implementation

It is important to note that PRDE is a unitary system, and the PRDE Special Education Stakeholder Group oversees the implementation process. They also participated on the

selection of the coherent improvement strategies for all PRDE levels. They share in the decision making since Phase I of the SSIP and provide their expertise and recommendations on the selection of the coherent improvement strategies. The Special Education Stakeholder Group is constituted by:

- Two (2) people with disabilities, of which (1) is a young person with disabilities.
- Six (6) parents of children and youth with disabilities, of which two (2) represent the conditions due to physical impediments; two (2) to the conditions of neurological nature; and two (2) to the conditions derived from mental or behavioral disorders.
- One (1) private citizen of recognized interest in the problems that affect people with disabilities.
- Three (3) scientists recognized as experts in the subjects, will represent each of the conditions described above, that is, one (1) to the physical conditions, one (1) to the mental and one (1) to the neurological, in addition to a school psychologist.
- One (1) representative of the state university.
- Two (2) teachers, one special education and one regular education
- One (1) school principal
- One (1) regional director
- One (1) supervisor designated by the Secretariat
- One (1) representative of the Secretary of Health
- One (1) representative of the Secretary of the Department of Recreation and Sports
- Two representatives of the Department of the Family, one of which is from the Administration of Families and Children.
- From the Department of Labor and Human Resources: one (1) representative of the Secretary and one (1) representative of the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration
- One (1) representative of the Secretary of the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation
- One (1) representative of the president of the University of Puerto Rico

As mentioned in the phase III year 2, during FFY 2016, an internal interest group was created for the SSIP that allowed us to hold more frequent meetings at the central level, so that decisions could be made immediately about the activities that were being implemented as part of the project. For the FFY 2017 this group includes the Auxiliary Secretary of Academic Affairs, who is responsible for the implementation of the RAD, the Director of the Mathematics Program and Special Education SSIP Implementation Team. This group began to meet in April 2016 and had an important role in the selection of the professional development activities carried out by the central level during this year.

Following is a summary of the different stakeholder groups involvement on SSIP implementation for this year:

- During June 2017, in the meeting with the PRDE Special Education Stakeholder Group, the Phase III year 2 activities to be implemented were discussed and co-planned to assure that they are aligned with our theory of action. Also, the discussion of the work plan for the implementation of the SSIP for the FFY 2017 was developed.
- In January 2018, the Internal Interest Group for SSIP had a meeting to discuss the difficulties implementing the improvement strategies planned by SAEE as a result of the passage of the hurricanes Irma and María. The PRDE understood that it could continue with the implementation of the SSIP through the support of the external providers, RAD's (Differentiated Support Network).
- In March 2018, the Internal Interest Group for SSIP had a meeting to discuss the results to be presented in the SSIP Report of Phase III year 2 and established the next steps. As part of these steps, it was determined to realize new school specific assessment with the school Directors of the participating schools. for the 2018-2019.
- During June 2018, in the meeting with the PRDE Special Education Stakeholder Group the results presented in the SSIP Report of Phase III year 2 were discussed. We also discussed the new needs assessment study realized with the school's principals and the different strategies to respond to these needs. As part of the meeting, the Phase III year 3 proposed activities were discussed to assure that they

are aligned with our theory of action. Also, the discussion of the work plan for the implementation of the SSIP for the FFY 2018 was developed.

III. Data on Implementation and Outcomes

A. How the State monitored and measured outputs to assess the effectiveness of the implementation plan

During FFY 2017, PRDE continued to use different 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. This technology makes it easier for the different levels of supervision within PRDE to assure compliance with the working plan established by each school. As mentioned in the previous phases these platforms are:

- 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.
- DEE⁴ - Each school develops a school improvement plan (DEE by its acronym in Spanish), which summarizes its objectives and goals for the school year. This year the school comprehensive plan has been totally redesigned and for the first time is based on current year student data. This has given PRDE a clearer idea of student needs and guided professional development plan. Professional development is being focused on attending those content areas in need of improvement.
- 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

⁴ This platform previously known as PCEA Live

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.

- 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.
- 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. It is important to note that SAEE, as part of the central level, has access to each of these platforms, which allows it to maintain a continuous monitoring to measure to assess effectiveness of the strategies implemented. The specific platforms used by the SAEE as a tool to monitor the SSIP implementation were DEE (previously known as PCEA Live), SAMA and RAD Platform.

B. How the State has demonstrated progress and made modifications to the SSIP as necessary

As previously mentioned in the second section of this report, establishing an evaluation matrix to evaluate the progress toward achieving improvement strategies is the biggest challenge that PRDE has had through all phases. However, using the different platforms mentioned above and the information provided by the schools during 2017-2018 school year, PRDE integrated different components to evaluate the effectiveness of the coherent improvement strategies. Some of these data are:

- Analysis of the Proficiency Rates of Students with Disabilities on Math from the Selected Schools (META-PR results)
- Analysis of the fifth-grade students “A’s, B’s and C’s” grades in math for FFY 2015 to FFY 2017
- The results of pre- and post-test to measure the knowledge acquired by the teachers in the professional development activities
- Evaluation of the instructional coaching services
- Summary of the domain of the pre and post test in Mathematics of the Extended Learning Time
- Teacher Evaluation System results

1. Accountability System

The PRDE Assessment (META-PR), which brings the data to evaluate compliance with the proposed target. The results of PRDE’s evaluation system are used to guarantee the accountability and provide support and feedback to schools on student achievement in relation to the curriculum. Through the development of standards and assessment PRDE ensures that all students have access to high-quality education.

The analysis of data shows that PRDE met its targets for FFY 2017. Table 6, reflects SAE’s SIMR baseline data for (FFY 2015) and the target and outcomes for FFY 2017.

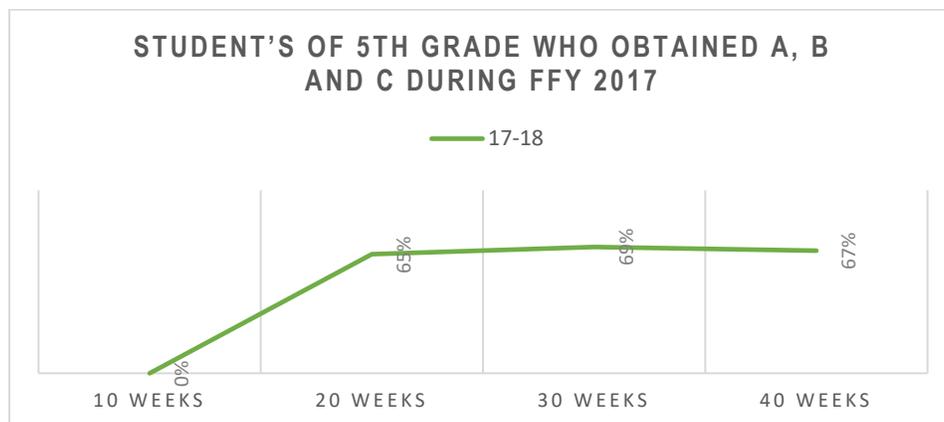
Table 6: FFY 2017 target and outcome

Baseline Data (2015)	FFY	2017
27.63	Target	28.1%
	Data (Outcomes)	30.8%

The table and graph below show in detail the percentage of students with disabilities at the impacted schools who received scores that were considered Proficient or Advanced on the regular 5th grade math assessment.

As presented in the two previous years, another data source that is indicative of progress toward the SiMR is the student's progress report issued every 10 weeks, (it is important to note that because of the passage of the hurricanes the evaluation of students began for school year 17-18 at 20 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. In the graphics below, will be presented the results of the analysis of the students in the 5th grades of the participating schools scoring "A's, B's or C's" in Math.

Graphic 1: Analysis of the average of "A's, B's and C's" of the fifth-grade students in mathematics for FFY 2017



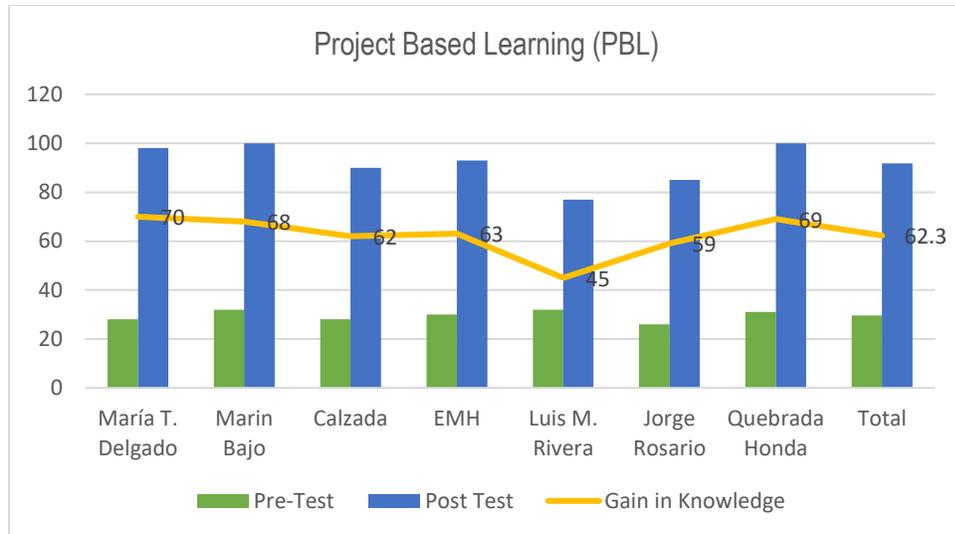
The data show that 65% or more of the student's obtained A, B and C in the progress report issued every 10 weeks. When comparing the data from one period to another, it can be observed that for the 30-week period there was an increase of 4% in the students who obtained A, B and C. For the 40 weeks a reduction of 2% was reflected. However, the percentage of students who obtained A, B and C in this period (67%) was still higher than the percentage of students who obtained A, B and C in the 20 weeks period (65%) that can be considered the line base for this year.

2. Evaluation of the implementation of the Coherent Improvement Strategies

A. Professional Development activities for teachers who served students with disabilities and Schools utilizing data-based strategies in making educational decisions

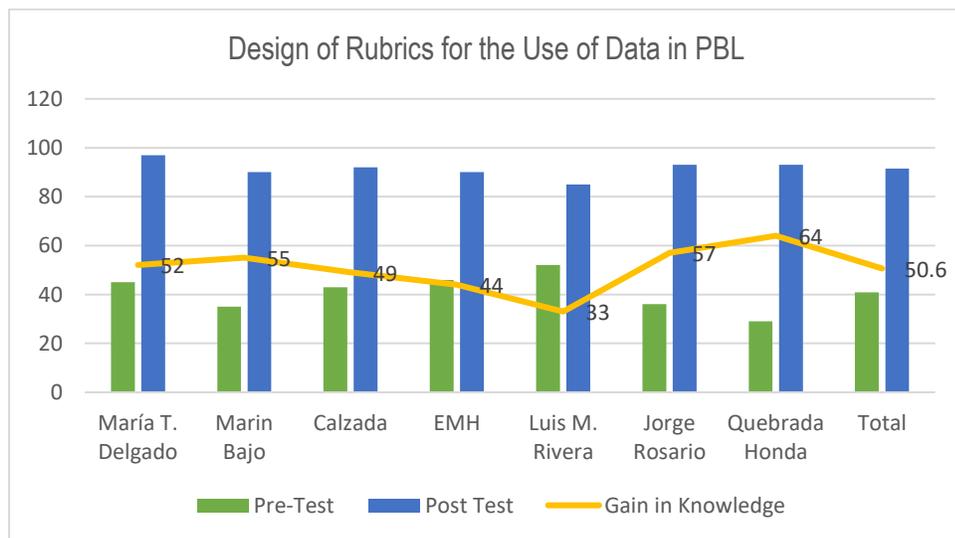
Two of the improvement strategies, mentioned through the Phases, was to *provide professional development for both math and special education teachers and Schools utilizing data-based strategies in making educational decisions*. For both strategies, during FFY 2017, the RAD continued to offer professional development to the impacted schools. The professional development activities offered by the RAD were based on the need's studies carried out by the schools. The topics of the workshop provided by the RAD that impacted both strategies are: Project Based Learning, Design of Rubrics for the Use of Data in PBL and Analysis of Progress Indicators for Decision Making. To measure the knowledge acquired by the teachers, a pre- and post-test was submitted to the participants. Below we presented the results of these pre and post test.

Graphic 2: Summary of the Pre and Post test results of the Workshop Titled: *Project Based Learning*



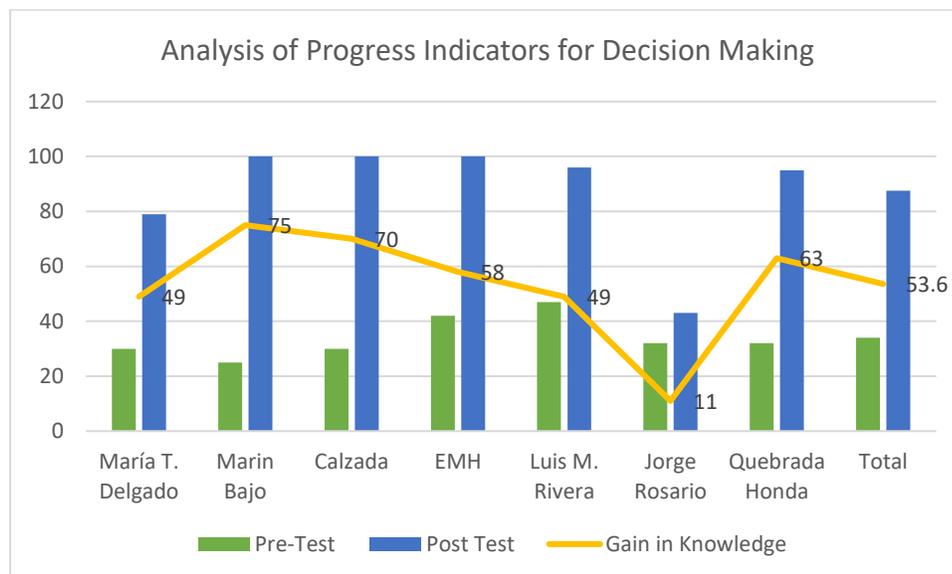
The results in graphic 2 reflect that teachers demonstrated an 62.3% increase in gained knowledge from the pre-test to the post-test regarding *Project Based Learning*.

Graphic 3: Summary of the Pre and Post test results of the Workshop Titled: *Design of Rubrics for the Use of Data in PBL*



The results in graphic 3 reflect that teachers demonstrated an 50.6% increase in gained knowledge from the pre-test to the post-test regarding *Design of Rubrics for the Use of Data in PBL*.

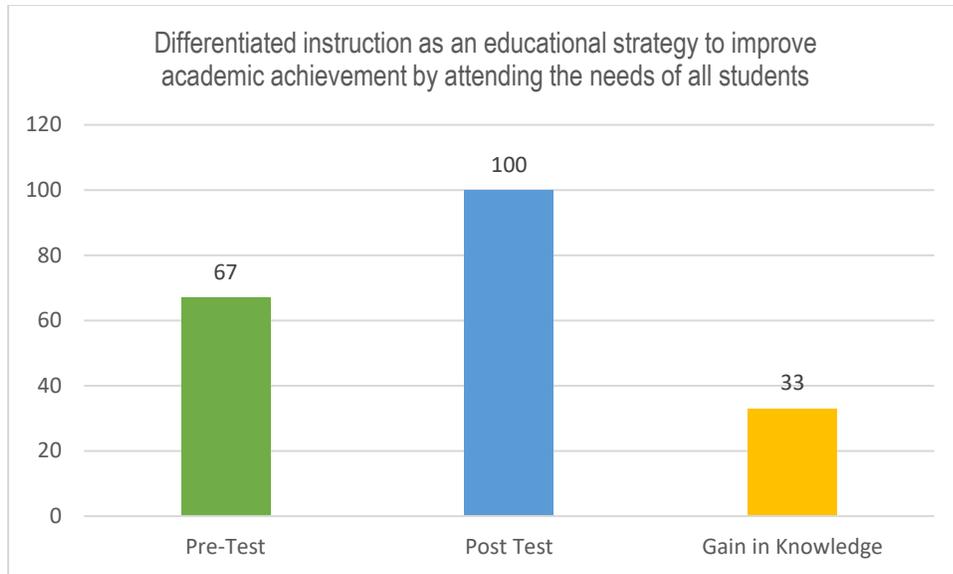
Graphic 4: Summary of the Pre and Post test results of the Workshop Titled: *Analysis of Progress Indicators for Decision Making*



The results in graphic 4 reflect that teachers demonstrated an 53.6% increase in gained knowledge from the pre-test to the post-test regarding *Analysis of Progress Indicators for Decision Making*.

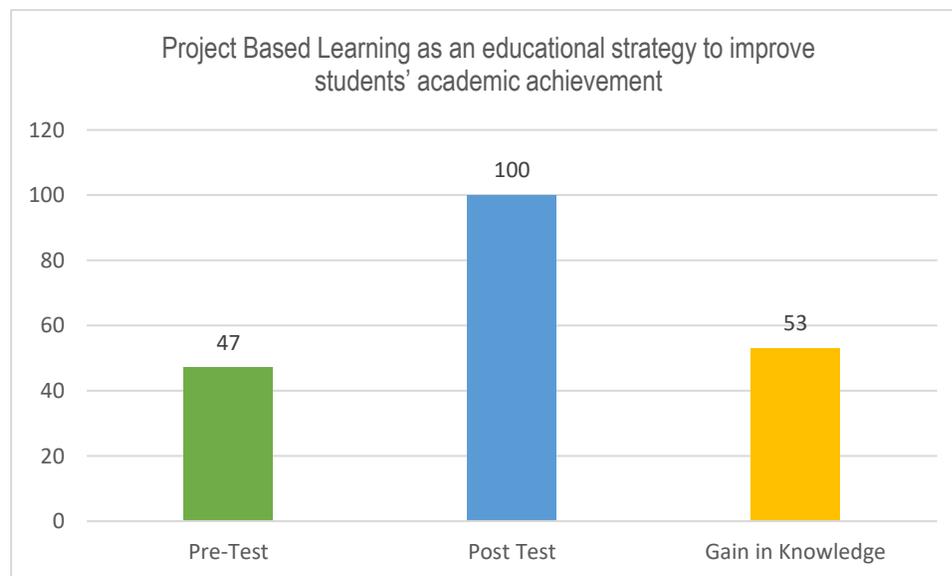
At school level, PRDE also provided professional development activities for both general and special education teachers. Some of the workshop provided by the participating schools were: Differentiated instruction as an educational strategy to improve academic achievement by attending the needs of all students, The ABC as a teaching and curricular integration strategy and Project-based learning as an educational strategy to improve student academic achievement. Below we presented the results of the pre and post test for each workshop.

Graphic 5: Summary of the Pre and Post test results of the Workshop Titled *Differentiated instruction as an educational strategy to improve academic achievement by attending the needs of all students* provided in the Eugenio María de Hostos School



The results in graphic 5 reflect that teachers of EMH school demonstrated an 33% increase in gained knowledge from the pre-test to the post-test regarding *Differentiated instruction as an educational strategy to improve academic achievement by attending the needs of all students*.

Graphic 6: Summary of the Pre and Post test results of the Workshop Titled *Project Based Learning as an educational strategy to improve students' academic achievement* provided in Calzada School



The results in graphic 6 reflect that teachers of Calzada school demonstrated an 53% increase in gained knowledge from the pre-test to the post-test regarding *Project Based Learning as an educational strategy to improve students' academic achievement*.

B. Coaching

As we mentioned previously in this report, the RADs continued offering coaching to schools throughout the academic year. The following coherent improvement strategies are impacted through the coaching service:

- Strengthen instructional planning of special education teachers
- Increase communication between the teachers from the general education classroom and special education (To increase communication between the teachers from the general education classroom and special education, PRDE developed professional learning communities founded on scientifically based strategies that lead the curriculum implementation for all participating schools. These communities are known as the Eclectic Model of Professional Learning Communities (MECPA by its acronym in Spanish)
- Schools utilizing data-based strategies in making educational decisions

With the purpose of evaluate the coaching services, the RAD developed a survey in which the teachers can evaluate the impact of the instructional coaching that they received. The criteria evaluated in the survey of these services were:

1. Each visit from my coach has a supportive approach and is discussed with me during the visits.
2. My coach demonstrates knowledge of the PRDE curricular materials and mastery of teaching and learning strategy.
3. My coach has helped me identify the strengths and challenges of my teaching practice.
4. My coach helps me focus on the impact of my actions as a teacher and how they influence the student's academic achievement.
5. At the end of each visit, my coach help me to establish and discuss what I need.
6. My coach offers to model effective instructional strategies.

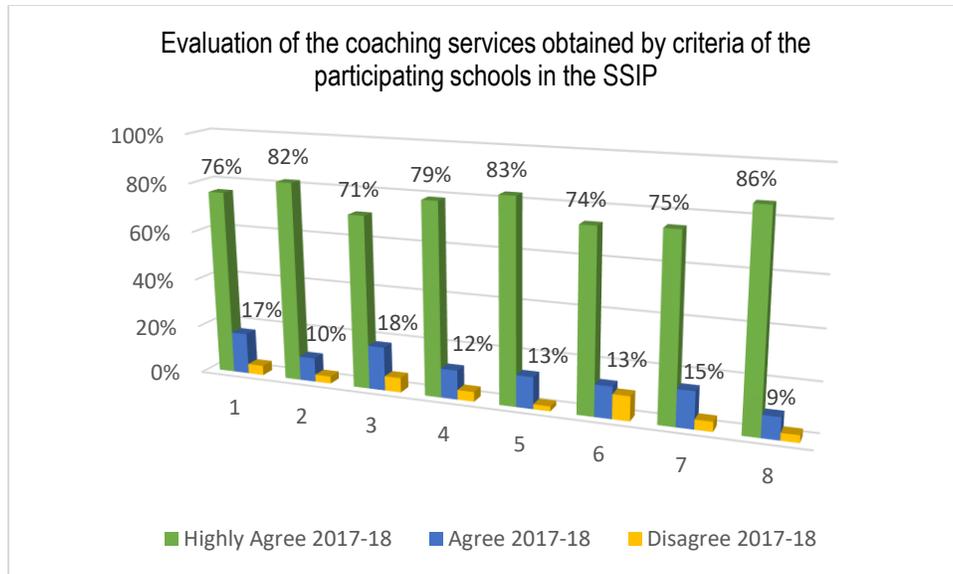
7. My coach helps me use data as a basis for making decisions focused on the academic achievement of my students.
8. My coach has supported me in the implementation of the PBL.

Like the last year, to evaluate the services, the teachers had to assign a score of 1-3 to each of the statements. The scores are:



Once the results of the survey (coaching services evaluation) are obtained and analyzed, the RAD shares and discusses the results with the district. As part of this discussion, decisions are made regarding the results of the evaluation. In the same way, through the RAD Platform, the SAEE at central level saw the results of the evaluation of these services. When the results of the evaluation are not as expected, the central level communicates with the district to know what actions will be taken to address the deficiencies reflected in the evaluation made to these services. The general results, obtained from the coaching services evaluation, of all the teachers from the participating schools in the SSIP are presented below:

Graphic 7: Evaluation of the Coaching Services



Like the past year, the evaluation results positive. The above graph reflects, that 90% or more of the teachers for the participants schools were highly agreed or agree with the criteria statements 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8. The 89% are highly agree or agree with the criteria statement 3 and the remaining 89% are highly agree or agree with the criteria statement 6.

C. Extended Learning Time Program

As mentioned in the section II one strategy implemented by the RAD during the FYY 2017 was the Extended Learning Time Program. At the beginning of the Program, a pre-tests aligned with the expectations of each grade level in Mathematics were administered. Then, when the Program ended, a post test was administered with the purpose of evaluating the domain of the participating students with these expectations. In the following table we presented the results of the domain of the pre and post math test of the Program. The results are presented by school.

Table 7: Results of the domain of the pre and post math test of the Extended Learning Time Program

Schools	Number of students who dominated the pre test	%	Number of students who dominated the post test	%
Eugenio M. de Hostos	0/5	0%	0/5	0%
Luis M. Rivera	0/6	0%	2/6	33%
Quebrada Honda	0/1	0%	0/1	0%
Calzada	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jorge Rosario del Valle	0/8	0%	2/8	25%
Marín Bajo	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
María T. Delgado	0/4	0%	1/4	25%

As shown in the table above, two schools had no participants in the Program (Calzada and Marín Bajo). Of the remaining five, in two there were no students who domain the post test (Quebrada Honda and Eugenio M. de Hostos). In the Luis M. Rivera the 33% of the students dominated the post test. In Jorge Rosario del Valle and María T. Delgado schools the 25% of the students dominated the post test.

D. Evaluation of the other PRDE Initiatives implemented during 2017-2018 school year that impacted SSIP – RTI

The Response to Intervention (RTI) strategy, was implemented in the Humacao Region (the same region in which the SSIP is being implemented). The activities carried out as part of the initiative during the year 2017 included seminars, workshops, coaching and demonstrative classes to school and leadership staff of all schools in the Humacao region. In general, the results of the implementation of the initiative for each of the activities carried out were:

- Seminars - The seminars met the objective in terms of the positive and significant change in the domain of the contents offered in the seminars and conferences of 27% between the pre-test and the post-test

- Workshops - The workshops fulfilled the objective in terms of the positive and significant change in the domain of the contents offered in the workshops and conferences of 27% between the pre-test and the post-test
- Coaching Services - The coaching services met the objectives, in terms of the high level of satisfaction with the services, contents offered and resources support (100% of excellent / satisfactory evaluation).
- Demonstrative classes – There was a positive change in the gain of knowledge of a 33% from the pre-test and the post-test

E. Teachers Evaluation Process

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented as part of the SSIP in the performance and execution of the teachers, we decided to use the results of the evaluations made to the third, fourth and fifth grade teachers of the participating schools conducted through the PRDE Teacher Evaluation System. This System as explained in the SSIP Phase 3 year 2, it is a three-step process consisting of two visits and the final evaluation, which documents, through observation, the areas of strength and opportunity of the teacher, as well as the next steps to receive academic support and technical assistance. Through this system, PRDE seeks to use the results of the formative evaluation to examine, plan and increase educational practice. It is also important to establish that it is designed to ensure the continuing professional development of educators and to enrich the quality of teaching in schools and student learning.

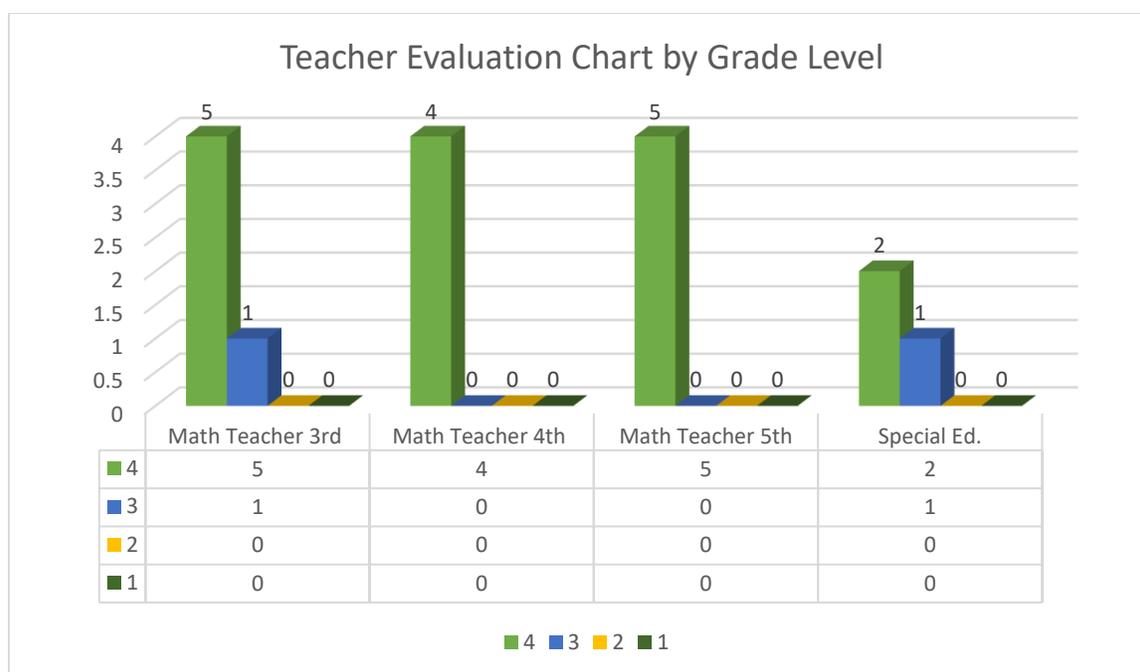
The system has been designed to provide fair and uniform evaluations offering valuable information regarding professional growth needs to develop professional development opportunities for both effective and less effective teachers that will result in improved student achievement. Through this system, PRDE seeks to use the results of the formative evaluation to analyze, plan and improve educational practice. This way PRDE can formalize the efforts and support that will be offered to teachers to make changes in their professional practice to benefit all students.

The main components of the evaluation process have the basic purpose of establishing a fair and uniform system for the development of highly effective teachers.

1. The use of the Professional Standards of the Teachers as reference for the performance of teachers.
2. Use of formative and summative diagnostic evaluation process that direct and improve instruction.
3. Application of a scale of 4 levels for each indicator in the rubric:
 - 4 = meets the expectations
 - 3 = partially meets the expectations
 - 2 = minimally meets the expectations
 - 1 = doesn't comply with the expectations
4. Implementation of the professional development aligned with the results of the evaluation and the level of performance of the teacher.

Bellow you will find the Results of the Teacher Evaluation by grade level. The chart contains the performance of the 3rd, 4th and 5th grade teachers from the participating schools and the special education teachers. Their performance as discussed in the previous page was evaluated by the school director from two different visits with scores ranging from 4 to 1.

Graphic 8: Results by Teachers Evaluation Process



In the graphic above we can see the performance of teachers by grade level. Specifically, we will first discuss the 3rd grade Math teacher performance. For example of the 6 Math teachers from 3rd grade, 5 teachers obtained excellent punctuation on their teacher evaluation whereas 1 teacher obtained 3 points. This teacher had less punctuation because on the 1st evaluation the school director didn't observe in the classroom an organization that promotes differentiated instruction such as: group learning, technological skill center, also didn't demonstrate the use of diverse teaching strategies to promote teacher participation and the use of technology. After the first observation, the school director went on a second observation and the teacher had corrected all the evaluation findings from the first observation.

Regarding the 4th and 5th grade Math teacher evaluation performance all teachers obtained excellent punctuation on both observations of their evaluation process. This demonstrates that the teachers complied with all expectations on the 4 main areas: Planning, Process of Learning and Teaching and the Learning Evaluation.

For the evaluation of the Special Education Teachers 2 of the 3 teachers obtained excellent punctuation. During the first visit the School Director didn't observe that the

teacher presents to the students the standard, objective and the theme to which the class corresponds and also the connection with other areas between the lessons, class, theme and projects. After the first visit, in the second observation the teacher had corrected all the evaluation findings from the first observation.

F. RAD Evaluation

During 2017-2018 school year PRDE also contracted a private company to carry out an external evaluation island wide of the RADs with the purpose of assessing the fidelity of implementation of their work. It is important to note that a sample of schools was selected to participate in this evaluation. The evaluation consisted of 51 schools selected by sampling, following up the external evaluation conducted during 2016-2017. Regarding to Yabucoa District, one of our participating schools, María T. Delgado, was part of this sample.

The external evaluation was summative with a mixed approach that includes qualitative and quantitative methodologies. As part of the qualitative evaluation, questionnaires, interviews and focus groups were conducted with the purpose of evaluating compliance with the programmatic and academic aspects. In terms of the overall results, through the analysis of the qualitative data, the satisfaction of the school directors, teachers, parents and students was evidenced with:

- the support to the directors and the teachers through coaching,
- participation in the workshops,
- processes of use and analysis of data for decision-making in the teaching-learning process,
- the importance of working with effective teaching strategies such as the integration of technology or differentiated instruction,
- the impact of the Extended Learning Time (TLE) on students.

The evaluation report shows that for school directors, the most important aspect of RAD in their school is the administrative support, for teachers it is coaching and for parents it is extended learning time.

C. Stakeholder involvement in the SSIP evaluation

PRDE SAEE understands the importance of having the participation of the stakeholder group to achieve an appropriate evaluation on the implementation of the SSIP. Because of that various meetings with this stakeholder group were held to receive their input regarding this Phase, including the evaluation processes. Considering the difficulty that the PRDE has faced to developing an evaluation matrix, in a meeting with this group the criteria used to evaluate on the implementation of the coherent improvement strategies implemented during this year were validated.

The stakeholder group also collaborated in the analysis of the results of PRDE's regular assessment and in analyzing the comparison of the growth on student achievement at the 10, 20, 30 and 40 weeks. As mentioned in the previous section, during June 2018, in the meeting with the PRDE Special Education Stakeholder Group were discuss the results presented in the SSIP Report of Phase III year 2.

IV. Data Quality Issues

During Phase III- year 3 of implementation, PRDE SAEE had data limitations that affected the collection of the data for the report. Although, this limitation didn't affect the achieving the SIMR.

One of the principal limitations that affected the data collection was the failure of the communication by internet that was not established in some cases until June 2018. Considering this limitation, during May 2018 the directors of the participating schools were summoned to a meeting with the purpose of providing the data and all the evidences related to the implementation of the initiative during 2017-2018 school year, many of them did not bring the required evidence to the meeting and also did not upload it to the platforms developed for these purposes (SAMA, DDE and RAD). This highlights one of the issues presented in the 2015 report (Phase III year 1) when we mentioned that despite PRDE has various technological platforms that improve our general supervision system and evidences

the fidelity of implementation, it was a problem the lack of responsibility of the users to upload or document the data in the different platforms in a timely manner.

It's important to note that the PRDE did not have a full-time coordinator dedicated to overseeing the implementation and evaluation of SSIP and at the same time monitor the schools and through the different platforms to obtain all the data necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of all the strategies implemented as part of the SSIP.

This made it difficult to have for the necessary data to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented in some of the areas, such as teacher's evaluation. It should be noted that the results on the teachers' evaluation process presented in this report do not include the information of all the third, fourth and fifth grade teachers of the participating schools because some of the principals of the schools consolidated, never forwarded the evaluations to the SAEE as requested. For 2018-2019, the teacher evaluation process is being worked through the system, which will allow for a more uniform process and better access to data on the results of this evaluation process.

On the other hand, as indicated earlier in this report during the 2017-2018 the teacher evaluation process experienced some changes including the form used to document the final evaluation. This prevented that the results could be presented in a more comprehensive manner as it was done last year. Likewise, it limited the possibility of making a comparison with last year's results, performing an analysis of progress in this area.

Regarding the external evaluation made to the RADs, as mentioned, they were carried out at the island wide. Likewise, the results were presented in a general way for the 51 schools in the sample, which limited the ability to have data that would indicate if the interaction of the RAD was effective in the SSIP participating schools.

V. Progress Toward Achieving Intended Improvements

The data presented on the Data section demonstrates the effectiveness of the implementation of the coherent improvement strategies selected in our SSIP. First, the data shows that, the percentage of special education students from the 5th grade who scored proficient or advanced on the regular assessment for math from the selected schools was exceeded the target, reaching 30.8%. When evaluating the progress of the established targets during the phases it is shown that in all years of implementation, the target was reached and even exceeded. The table below shows the progress through the phases.

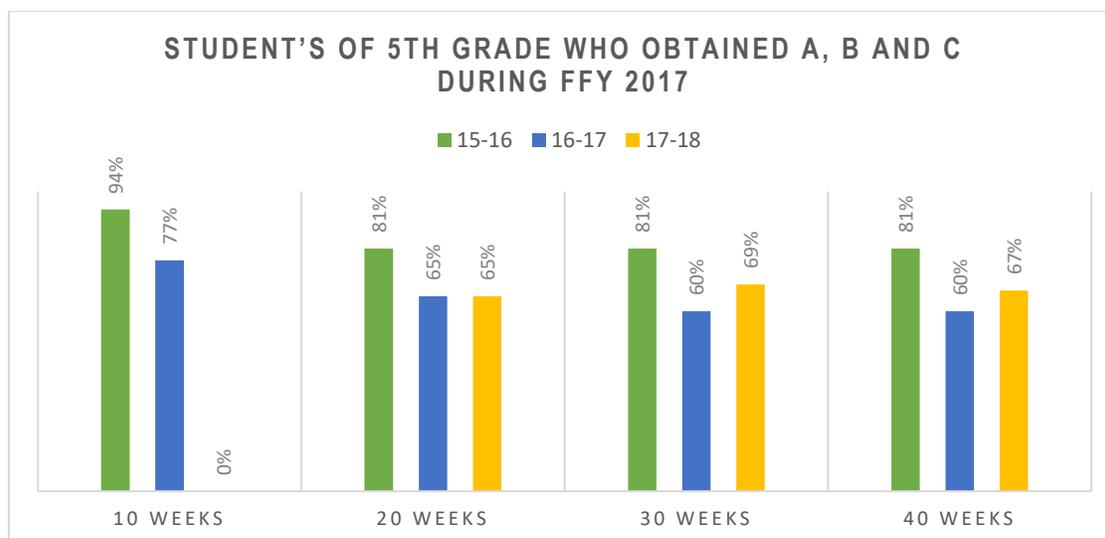
Table 8: Reported progress through the phases to achieving the proposed targets

Baseline Data (2015)	FFY	2016	2017	2018
27.63	Target	27.6%	28.1%	28.6%
	Data	30.6%	30.8%	

As mentioned, the progress made toward achievement of improvement, during 2017-2018 exceeded our proposed target from 28.1% to 30.8%, once again showing the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategies selected in our SSIP. The data shows that, the percentage of special education students from the 5th grade who scored proficient or advanced on the regular assessment for math from the selected schools exceeded the expectation by reaching 3% in FFY 2016 and 2.7% over the target in FFY 2017.

The following graphic presents a comparison of the results of the 5th grade students who scored A, B or C in the 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years.

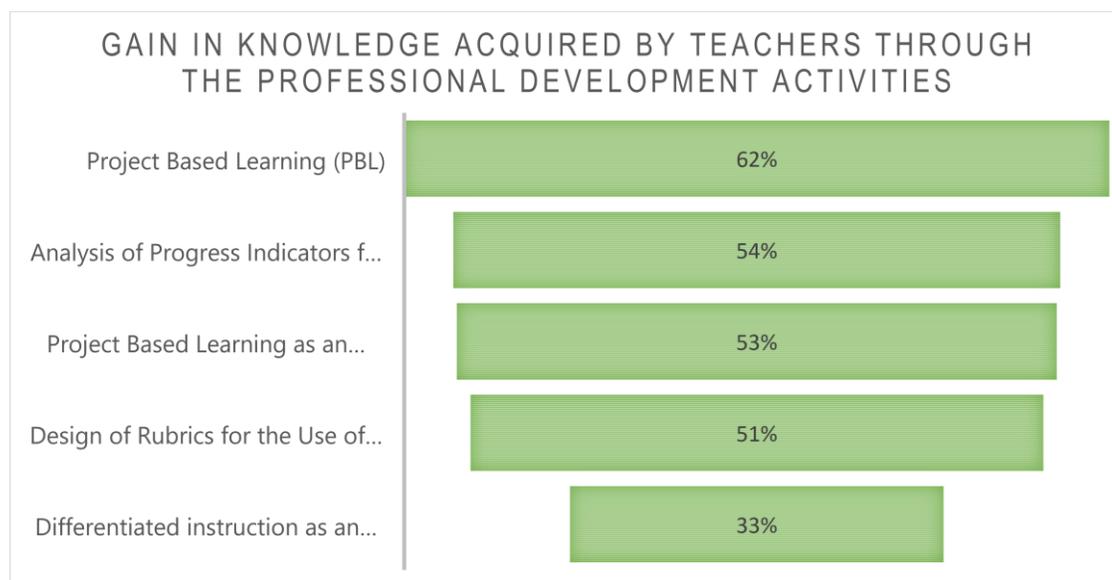
Graphic 9: Progress of the number of students of 5th grade who obtained A, B and C in the 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 school year



By comparing the progress of the grades from one year to another we can identify that in 2016 there was a decrease in the number of students with A, B, and C grades as compared to 2015. Additionally, grades include other factors other than test scores, such as homework and completion of class assignments, that can influence the grade performance of the FFY 2016 and 2017. However, if we compare the performance of the students for the las 2 years, we could see that there was an increase in the performance of the 30 and 40 weeks during FFY 2017. In the 30 weeks there was a 9% increase in the number of students who executed with A, B and C and in the 40 weeks there was a 7% of increase. As previously mentioned, we understand that the lack of direct intervention of the math facilitator with the mathematics teachers also had an impact in the grades obtained in the subject of mathematics during the year 2017-2018.

In the case of the professional development activities, two of the improvement strategies (*provide professional development for both math and special education teachers and Schools utilizing data-based strategies in making educational decisions*) were implemented. The results of the pre and post tests for professional development activities carried out during school year 2017-2018, showed gain in knowledge of the teachers from a 33% to 62% through each PD activities. As established in the theory of action, this have an impact in the growth in the academic achievement of our students. Below is presented the percentage on gain in knowledge by each workshop.

Graphic 10: Gain in Knowledge Acquired by Teachers in the Professional Development Activities



Finally, as mentioned in the Data Quality Issue Section, the fact that the form used in the teacher evaluation process changed during fiscal year 2017, prevented comparative data from being used to analyze progress in this area.

VI. Plans for Next Year

A. Additional activities to be implemented next year

After the passage of Hurricanes Maria and Irma around the island PRDE and SAEE with their stakeholder group determined to have a meeting with the school Directors from the participating schools on May 2018. With the main purpose of identifying new needs for their teachers, considering among other aspects, the consolidation of schools. All of the school directors from the participating schools were eager to present the needs of their math and special education teachers. The dynamic used with the school directors was learned in the NCSI Fall Face to Face meeting. The dynamic helped them organize their thoughts and narrow down to specific needs. It was determined that they need 4 workshops, individual attention (Coaching) more individual than group and mentoring. This was very helpful to determine the Plans for Next Year and how with the support of SAEE we could fulfill all the needs.

Considering the needs identified SAEE, and the limitations presented previously in this report, as first step will identify a part time coordinator for the SSIP. It also will identify a provider for deliver direct services to the participating schools. With the main goal of trying to work aggressively on the Work Plan to be accomplished during the school year 2018-2019 for the remaining 3 participating schools: Luis Munoz Rivera, Maria T. Delgado and Padre Jorge Rosario Del Valle. The table below shows the main activities that are expected to be implemented through the hiring of an external provider during the 2018-2019 school year.

Activity	Title	Timeline	Personnel to be impacted
Provide Workshops	1. The use of technology in the math teaching process	November 2018	30 participants including Math Teachers, Special Education Teachers, School Directors and other personnel as needed
	2. Math thru differentiated instruction	December 2018	
	3. Data decision making with in Math	January 2019	
	4. Reading Comprehension and its relationship with the META assessment in Math	February 2019	
Instructional Coaching (individual or grupal)	6 hours of coaching foe each participant for the 4 workshops = 24 hours of coaching by participant	After each workshop 6 hours by participant	
Mentoring	10 hours of mentoring by participant	After each workshop 10 hours by participant	
Develop an evaluation tool	Develop a document that thru observation of the math and special ed class	March 2019	At least 50% of the participating teachers

With each workshop the acquisition of knowledge will be evaluated with pre and posttests. After each workshop the teachers will receive coaching and mentoring. The

coaches generate for each service provided a document that contains the labor report, needs identified, activities performed, outline of results, findings and recommendations. Also, the teachers evaluate the performance of the services received by the coaches. SAEI is planning to make a document that could evaluate if the teachers in their classroom are implementing the strategies learned in the workshops with fidelity.

PRDE plans through the SSIP Coordinator bring a direct follow up to all the activities proposed for the 2018-2019 school year. As part of this follow up, this coordinator will participate in the workshops and will visit the schools to observe the coaching and mentoring services as part of the monitoring process to assure the fidelity of the implementation. In coordination with the school's social workers PRDE plan to realize a workshop for parents on how to help the students in the learning process.

PRDE plans to execute the work plan as proposed for the next year in an organized manner, reviewing it as many times as necessary. This for the purpose of improving or amending the planned activities with the expectation of meeting or exceeding the established goal.

B. Anticipated barriers and steps to address those barriers

The 2017-2018 year was the last year in which PRDE signed a contract with the RADs to provide support to the schools. This is because the initiative was part of the Academic Transformation Plan with Longitudinal View that was replaced by the ESSA Plan. For this reason, it is necessary to identify a new provider to offer direct services to the participating schools. As we all know, Puerto Rico is going through economic challenges our first challenge would be to identify the funds to hire a company. Once the funds have been identified, the other steps would be to make the contract process as agile as possible so that the activities can be carried out during the school year and we can meet the proposed schedule.

Another anticipated barrier is the number of initiatives that are occurring at the school level simultaneously, such as: PBIS, RTI, SSIP, PBL. All these initiatives point to low performance in the PR Evaluation (META). This could result in an overload of work for the school principal and teacher, which in the end could lead to poor participation or lack of interest in professional learning. To avoid this, we plan to provide more hours of training and tutoring, instead of workshops since they are services that are provided in a more individualized way so that teachers feel that their needs are being addressed in a specific way and at the same time Coaches can work directly with the needs of teachers.

- C. [The State describes any needs for additional support and/ or technical assistance](#)
- PRDE appreciates the TA received by OSEP during the implementation of the SSIP such as on site and TA calls. It has been very beneficial that OSEP was always available to clarify doubts. Also, technical assistance from the NCSI has been very valuable. They have helped us in the development of PRDE SSIP through all Phases. The Math Collaborative and the Face to Face Meetings helps networking with other States and share resources and strategies implemented, that have demonstrated to be effective. NCSI has also provided individualized support to PRDE with SSIP reporting, RTI implementation and other PRDE initiatives. SAEE would like to continue with the technical assistance received as it has shown to be beneficial. We understand that in order to be effective and successful in the next Phases this technical assistance would be significant on the on-going evaluation process. We appreciate all the support received.