

An Evaluation of Michigan Education Corps: Early Learning Corps

ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT



2021-2022



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COLLABORATIVE
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We believe partnerships between researchers, AmeriCorps programs, and communities can transform research and practice, leading to sustainable, community-driven solutions. We value a broad and inclusive definition of “collaboration” because improving societal outcomes is maximized when the tools of science, expertise of communities, and resources of AmeriCorps are deployed in a truly collaborative way.

The Center's portfolio includes projects to evaluate the impact of AmeriCorps programming, projects to advance the existing knowledge base in education, and development projects to bring new and innovative programming to communities across the nation.

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Since 1963, Hope Network has been committed to supporting underserved individuals such as those with mental illness, neurological injuries, and developmental disabilities with a recent focus on children through services including literacy intervention, trauma-informed care, and residential treatment. Hope Network serves 240 plus communities, with 2,800 staff members, and more than 23,000 people annually throughout Michigan.

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Executive Summary

MEC Early Learning Corps (ELC; previously called MEC PreK Reading Corps) is an AmeriCorps program that provides Prekindergarten (PreK) sites with trained Interventionists to support the literacy and numeracy development of children ages three to five. Early Learning Corps (ELC) Interventionists are embedded into a PreK classroom to collaborate with teaching staff to implement literacy and numeracy-rich practices for all students. Interventionists are trained to implement evidence-based, supplemental, class-wide learning activities, targeted small group interventions, and individualized learning opportunities in the preschool classroom under the direction of the Lead Teacher. Interventionists are supported by a multi-level coaching model that includes site-based and external coaches.

A Note of Caution for Evaluation Results Interpretation

It is critical to evaluate this year's MEC ELC outcomes with caution. Due to influences resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the MEC ELC program continued to be delivered with varying dosage and modalities during 2021-2022 across districts and schools. At many sites, tutoring was delayed or not offered when sites closed or students were absent as there was not school-level capacity for support largely due to staffing shortages and staff absence due to illness. Districts and MEC responded as quickly as possible to address these challenges and adapt to maximize service to kids. The continued, intermittent disruptions means that results from this year must be interpreted with caution particularly when comparing to results from prior years.

The MEC Early Learning Corps evaluation addresses these broad questions and requirements with data collected during the 2021-22 school year.

1. What is the scope of the MEC Early Learning Corps program?

Eight Early Learning Corps Interventionists served a total of 147 students across four sites. Black or African American and White were the largest racial/ethnic categories for participating students.

2. To what extent was the Early Learning Corps program implemented as intended?

Early Learning Corps coaches observed Interventionists administering assessments and delivering interventions throughout the school year. These observations allow for coaches to build on the Interventionist's formal training and to help Interventionists improve their implementation of the ELC model. The results of the observations show that assessments and interventions were conducted with high levels of mean fidelity (>90% accuracy) and according to their established evidence base.

On average, students getting targeted intervention received 22 minutes of Intervention per week across 14 weeks. White students tended to receive both more Intervention sessions and more minutes of Intervention per week than non-white students.

3. To what extent did participating students improve their literacy and numeracy skills?

MEC ELC Interventionists administer measures of early literacy and numeracy to develop plans for supporting all students and to select students to receive targeted intervention. The literacy measure corresponds to important early literacy skills including phonemic awareness, phonics, and early vocabulary and language skills while the numeracy measure corresponds to important early numeracy skills including subitizing, object counting, making comparisons, and decomposing and composing numbers.

Of participating students, 37% met the end-of-year target on the PELI (Preschool Early Literacy Indicator) Composite, an overall representation of a student's early literacy and language skills. Of participating students 59% met the end-of-year target on the Early Math Inventory, an overall representation of a student's early numeracy skills. For both measures, a greater percentage of white students met the end-of-year target at spring compared to non-white students.

When asked in a survey about the impact of the program on students, 100% of Interventionist respondents indicated their service in MEC ELC had a positive impact on students and increased students' confidence in reading and/or math.

4. How did serving as an MEC Early Learning Corps Interventionist impact skills and knowledge related to education and their future career goals?

Of respondents to an end-of-year survey, 100% of Interventionists indicated service with MEC ELC had a positive impact on them personally. All respondents also said their service increased their knowledge and skills related to education. Additionally, 50% of respondents answered that they are likely or very likely to pursue a career in education as a result of their service. These results indicate MEC ELC is likely makes a noteworthy contribution to the education career pipeline in the communities where Interventionists serve.

5. MEC will work with participating schools to include aggregate program data in the school improvement planning process and applicable data sets.

MEC provides SIP guidance to every participating school in the winter, and is updated regularly with consultation from School Improvement staff at Kent ISD. The guidance is language schools can use in the SIPs to document MEC ELC, and support the use of MEC ELC data in the school improvement planning process.

6. MEC will work with participating schools to include MEC program data in the school's multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) implementation and

monitoring data sets; and, 7. MEC program staff will work with school districts, intermediate school districts, and MDE staff to refine the role of the MEC program within overall MTSS processes.

The most direct assessment of this outcome is through an annual survey sent to all participating school Principals/Administrators, Internal Coaches, and Classroom Teachers. Specific statements asking the degree to which these stakeholders agree MEC ELC is an integral part of a preschool's MTSS framework are included. Responses are on a Likert scale of Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree or Strongly Agree.

Question 1: Our school uses MEC ELC data to inform and monitor our multi-tier system of supports (MTSS) implementation for reading and math.

Of Administrators who responded, 80% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Of Teachers who responded, 87% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Of Internal Coaches who responded, 82% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

Question 2: MEC ELC is integrated into our MTSS for literacy/math at my school.

Of Administrators, 71% strongly agreed or agreed that ELC is an integral part of their school's MTSS framework. Of Teachers, 79% strongly agreed or agreed that ELC is an integral part of their school's MTSS framework. Of Internal Coaches, 78% strongly agreed or agreed that ELC is an integral part of their school's MTSS framework

There are numerous touchpoints with multiple stakeholders throughout the program year. The individuals involved vary based on the purpose for the meeting; however, the majority of conversations center around student outcomes, ELC fidelity, and how ELC is being integrated in a school's overall MTSS literacy framework.

8. MEC will provide a statement of work, which includes a timeline of the project, a budget summary, and a budget detail for progress monitoring and continuous improvement of program implementation.

These items were provided to Kellie Flaminio, Department Analyst/Early Literacy Grant Coordinator, Office of Educational Supports, on September 18, 2022. Any item is available upon request by contacting Ms. Flaminio or Holly Windram, Executive Director, Hope Network's Michigan Education Corps at hwindram@hopenetwork.org.

9. MEC will provide trainings for newly identified schools as the programs expand.

Trainings were provided throughout the 2021-2022 program year for all new and returning schools. Please see Appendix D for summary.

Introduction

Early Learning Corps (ELC) Overview

MEC is a national replication partner of the Minnesota Early Learning Corps (ELC; previously called PreK Reading Corps), an AmeriCorps program that provides Prekindergarten (PreK) sites with trained Interventionists to support the literacy and numeracy development of children ages three to five. MEC ELC Interventionists serve in a PreK classroom to collaborate with teaching staff to implement literacy and numeracy-rich practices for all students. Interventionists are trained to implement evidence-based, supplemental class-wide learning activities, targeted small group interventions, and individualized learning opportunities. Interventionists are supported by a multi-level coaching model that includes site-based and external coaches.

The ELC model aligns with Response-to-Intervention (RTI) or Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS), which are two descriptions of a framework for delivering education services effectively and efficiently¹. The key aspects of that alignment include the following:

- Clear literacy and numeracy targets at each age level
- Benchmark assessment three times a year to identify students eligible for individualized interventions
- Evidence-based, high dosage interventions

- Frequent progress monitoring during intervention delivery
- High-quality training in program procedures, coaching, and observations to support fidelity of implementation

In an RTI/MTSS framework, data are essential. They are used for screening student eligibility, monitoring student progress towards achieving academic goals (i.e., benchmarks), and ensuring accurate program implementation.

ELC literacy content is focused on intervention in the “Big Five Ideas in Literacy” as identified by the National Early Literacy Panel including phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension². ELC also fosters math development that supports learning throughout students’ education³.



¹ Burns et al., 2016

² National Early Literacy Panel, 2008

³ Watts et al., 2018

Overview of the Evaluation

The MEC ELC evaluation addresses several questions and requirements. The evaluation report is organized around each of these using data collected throughout the program year and recorded by the implementers of ELC. Program administrators collect data about Interventionists and sites, including survey responses. Interventionists collect data about student dosage and literacy outcomes. Coaches collect specific details about Interventionist implementation of interventions and assessments. These data are used to answer the following questions:

1. What is the scope of the MEC Early Learning Corps program?
2. To what extent was the MEC Early Learning Corps program implemented as intended?
3. To what extent did participating students improve their literacy and numeracy skills?
4. How did serving as an Interventionist impact skills and knowledge related to education and their future career goals?
5. MEC will work with participating schools to include aggregate program data in the school improvement planning (SIP) process and applicable data sets.
6. MEC will work with participating schools to include MEC program data in the school's multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) implementation and monitoring data sets.
7. MEC program staff will work with school districts, intermediate school districts, and MDE staff to refine the role of the MEC program within overall MTSS processes.
8. MEC will provide a statement of work, which includes a timeline of the project, a budget summary, and a budget detail for progress monitoring and continuous improvement of program implementation.
9. MEC will provide trainings for newly identified schools as the programs expand.

A Note of Caution for Evaluation Results Interpretation

It is critical to evaluate this year's MEC Early Learning Corps outcomes with caution. Due to influences resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the ELC program continued to be delivered with varying dosage and modalities during 2021-2022 across districts and schools. At many sites, tutoring was delayed or not offered when sites closed or students were absent as there was not school-level capacity for support largely due to staffing shortages and staff absence due to illness. Districts and MEC responded as quickly as possible to address these challenges and adapt to maximize service to kids. The continued, intermittent disruptions means that results from this year must be interpreted with caution particularly when comparing to results from prior years.

1. What is the scope of the MEC Early Learning Corps program?

Sites and Supports

MEC ELC partners with PreK sites and schools to implement the program. MEC ELC program staff and participating sites recruit community members to serve as MEC ELC Interventionists through AmeriCorps. MEC ELC Interventionists commit to serving a set number of hours per week (i.e. full-time AmeriCorps members commit to complete 1,200 hours of service). Interventionists receive a living allowance as well as other benefits and are provided coaching by site staff and a program "Coaching Specialist" throughout their service term. Upon completion of their service, members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award that can be used to pay education costs at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training, or to repay qualified student loans.

Table 1 displays the number of participating sites, MEC ELC Coaching Specialists, and Interventionists that served during the 2021-22 program year.

Table 1. Sites, Coaches, and Interventionists

Sites	Coaching Specialists	Interventionists*
4	1	8

**Defined as having entered Intervention minutes for at least one student in the program data management system.*

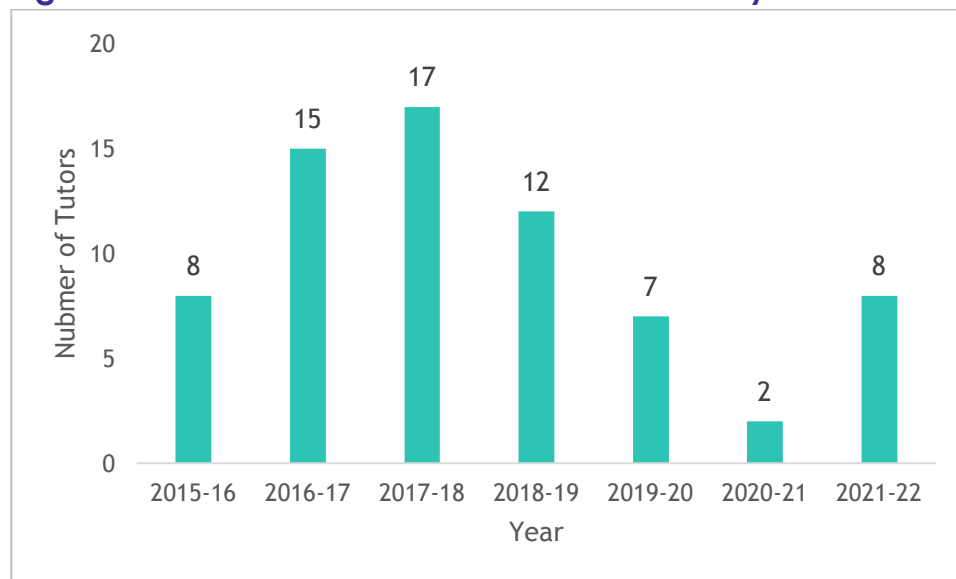
MEC ELC Interventionists receive asynchronous training through an online Learning Management System (LMS), accompanied by synchronous training, guided practice, and coaching. The intensive, information-filled courses on the LMS provide foundational training in the research-based interventions employed by MEC ELC. Throughout the courses, Interventionists learn the skills, knowledge, and tools needed to serve as interventionists and support class-wide instruction. Interventionists are provided with detailed manuals as well as online resources that mirror and supplement the contents of the manual (e.g., videos of model interventions and best practices). Both the manuals and online resources are intended to provide Interventionists with just-in-time support and opportunities for continued

professional development and skill refinement. Additional training is provided throughout the Interventionists' year of service.

In addition to extensive training, MEC ELC provides Interventionists with multiple layers of supervision to ensure integrity of program implementation. Sites or districts identify a staff member, who is typically an early childhood specialist, teacher, or Director, as the Internal Coach, the immediate on-site supervisor, mentor, and advocate for Interventionists. The Internal Coach's role is to monitor Interventionists and provide guidance in the implementation of ELC's assessments and interventions. As the front-line supervisor, the Internal Coach is a critical component of the supervisory structure.

MEC ELC Coaching Specialists provide both Interventionists and Internal Coaches with expert support on literacy and numeracy instruction and ensure implementation integrity of Early Learning Corps program elements. In addition to these two coaching layers, a third layer consisting of AmeriCorps program support helps ensure a successful year of AmeriCorps service. Finally, MEC Program staff provide administrative oversight for program implementation to partner sites. The number of Interventionists serving varies by program year based on a number of factors including Interventionist recruitment, Interventionist types (i.e. full-time or part-time Interventionists), site interest, Interventionist retention, and available public and private funding. Figure 1 displays the number of Interventionists who served each year of the program.

Figure 1. Number of MEC ELC Interventionists by Year



Students Served

All students in a classroom with an MEC ELC Interventionist are served by the program through Tier 1 class-wide

interventions and general educational support.

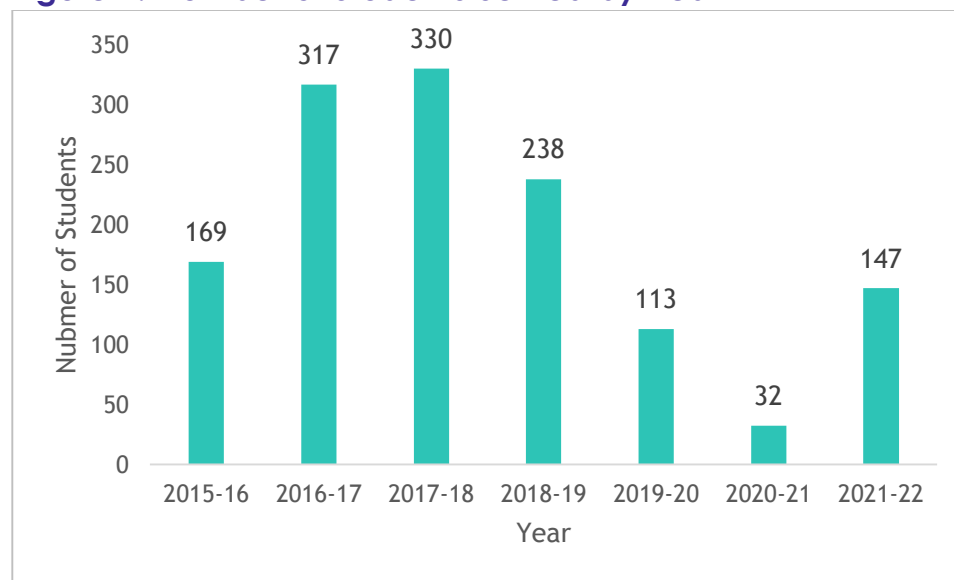
Table 2 displays the number of students served by age across all sites. A student's age category is determined by their age at the beginning of the school year. Students are categorized by age as it generally coincides with the number of school years until the student will enroll in Kindergarten and is used to set benchmark targets (i.e. Age 3 students are usually two years from starting Kindergarten and Age 4 students are usually one year from starting Kindergarten).

Table 2. Number of Students Served

Age	Number of Students
Age 3	14
Age 4	133
Total	147

The number of students served varies by program year based on many factors including Interventionist recruitment and retention, the number of sites interested in the program, and whether Interventionists are serving one group of students in full-day five-day per week classrooms or multiple groups of students such as separate morning and afternoon half-day classrooms. Figure 2 displays the number of students served each year of the program. Note the number of students served in 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22 were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

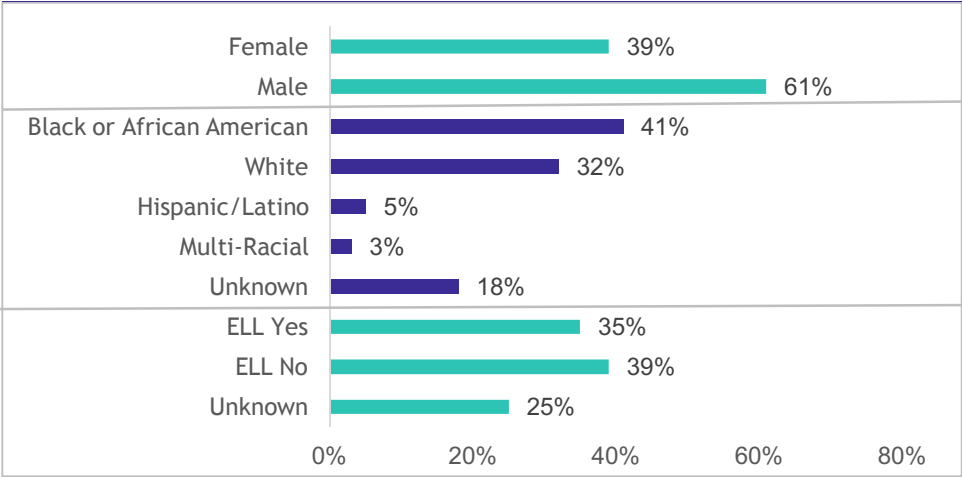
Figure 2. Number of Students Served by Year



MEC ELC Interventionists record demographic information of students they serve, which allows evaluators to disaggregate student outputs and outcomes by important demographics to ensure the program is having an equitable impact. The information is also

used in reports to describe the students participating in ELC. Figure 3 shows Black or African American students were the greatest percentage of students, and a relatively high percentage (>35%) were English Learners.

Figure 3. Student Demographics



2. To what extent was the Early Learning Corps program implemented as intended?

Coaching Observations

Ensuring accurate, effective implementation is a core principle of Early Learning Corps. Both types of coaches—Internal Coaches and Coaching Specialists— provide Interventionists with expert support on literacy and numeracy instruction and ensure implementation integrity of Early Learning Corps program elements through ongoing monitoring and observation.

During coaching sessions, ELC Coaching Specialists and Internal Coaches discuss student selection for targeted Interventions, track student progress for databased decisions, and observe Interventionists administering assessments and delivering interventions. The observations allow coaches to build on an Interventionist's formal training and to help Interventionists improve their implementation of the ELC model.

Coaches are expected to observe Interventionists administering each assessment throughout the year to ensure seasonal benchmark data are collected accurately. These observations usually occur before each seasonal benchmark window. Coaches are also expected to observe Interventionists delivering interventions at least once per month to ensure fidelity to each intervention's effective instructional processes. Table 3 displays the percent of Coaching Specialists and Internal Coaches who observed Interventionists administering assessments and delivering interventions at least one time during the school year. The table also shows the percentage of coaches who met the program's expectation for observations throughout the school year.

Coaches observed Interventionists administering assessments at least once and conducted intervention observations at least once per month to all Interventionists, indicating

Interventionists received consistent coaching and support throughout the year in accordance with program expectations.

Table 3. Assessment and Intervention Coaching Observations by Coach Role

Observation Type	Coaching Specialist		Internal Coach	
	Percent of Interventionists Observed at Least Once	Percent of Interventionists Observed in Accordance with Expectations*	Percent of Interventionists Observed at Least Once	Percent of Interventionists Observed in Accordance with Expectations*
Assessment	100%	62.5%	100%	75.0%
Intervention	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Table includes Interventionists that served for a minimum of two months.

*Coaches are expected to conduct assessment observations before each benchmark window and intervention observations each month.

Interventionist Fidelity

During coaching sessions, coaches complete a fidelity checklist for each assessment or intervention they observe. Each checklist includes the important steps for accurate completion such as starting the timer immediately when child says the first word or letter during an assessment or the Interventionist using appropriate pacing during a vocabulary intervention. After completing each assessment or intervention fidelity observation, coaches enter the number of checklist items that the Interventionist delivered correctly into the online data management system. The percent fidelity is then calculated by dividing the number of items delivered correctly by the total number of items.

If Interventionists do not properly administer an assessment, coaches will provide targeted training and observe the Interventionist delivering the assessment again. Ongoing observation

and coaching continue until the Interventionist achieves at least 90% accuracy. This process helps to ensure assessment data are properly collected and that the results accurately measure each student's skills. Table 4 displays the total number of fidelity checks completed and the average fidelity from assessment and intervention observations.

Table 4. Assessment and Intervention Fidelity

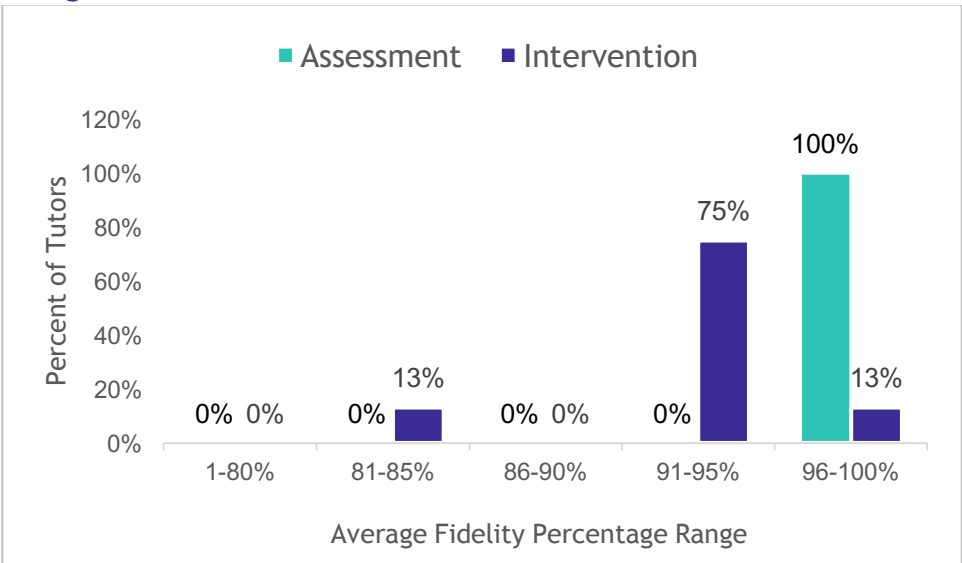
Fidelity Type	Total Checks Collected	Average Fidelity
Assessment	203	96.6%
Intervention	222	93.6%
Total	425	95.1%

For each Interventionist, all observations are combined to calculate their overall assessment and intervention fidelity. An Interventionist's average fidelity can vary throughout the year, with lower scores being more common at the

beginning of the year. Figure 4 shows the distribution of Interventionists by their average fidelity. Fidelity tends to be high for nearly all Interventionists, suggesting

training and coaching helps Interventionists implement key components of the program accurately.

Figure 4. Distribution of Interventionists by Assessment & Intervention Fidelity Range



Interventionist Caseloads

Interventionists administer benchmark assessments in literacy and numeracy to identify students who are eligible for targeted Interventions. After identifying eligible students, the Interventionist works with their coaches to select which students will receive intervention, called the Interventionist's "caseload." Each Interventionist is expected to have at least seven students on their caseload at any given time.

Table 5 shows the average number of students Interventions per Interventionist and the percentage of Interventionists who met or exceeded their caseload expectations for at least 80% of the weeks they served in the program. On average, each Interventionist provided targeted Interventions to a total of 12 students and three-fourths of Interventionists met the caseload expectation of seven students at least 80% of the time.

Table 5. Interventionist Caseloads

Number of Interventionists	Average Total Students Tutored per Interventionist	Percentage of Interventionists Meeting Caseload Expectation*
8	12.0	75%

**Defined as actively tutoring seven or more students for at least 80% of their service term.*

Student Dosage

Interventionists work with students on their caseload every day for 5-15 minutes, depending on the intervention. Interventions focus on one of the program’s targeted skills: vocabulary and oral language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, or early numeracy. Providing intervention can be delivered in small groups, pairs, or one-to-one. Interventionists record each student’s daily minutes in the online data management system.

Table 6 shows the total number of Intervention sessions and the average number of sessions, weeks, and minutes per week students received. The table also disaggregates the data for white and non-white students. Students received a substantial number of intervention sessions, with students averaging 41 sessions. White students tended to receive both more Intervention sessions and more minutes of Intervention per week.

Table 6. Intervention Dosage by Race

Student Race	Students Receiving Intervention	Total Intervention Sessions	Average Intervention Sessions per Student	Average Intervention Weeks per Student	Average Intervention Minutes per Week/Student
White	30	1,678	55.9	16.8	23.6
Non-White	49	1,622	33.1	12.1	18.7
Total	96	3,956	41.2	13.9	21.7

Note: The subtotals do not equal the totals as they exclude students with an Unknown race/ethnicity in the program database.

In addition to recording the number of Intervention minutes, Interventionists also record the reason a scheduled Intervention session was not delivered. Interventionists are able to indicate if a session was missed for each of the following reasons: student absence from the site, Interventionist absence from the site, Interventionist receiving training, Interventionist administering an assessment to the student instead of delivering an intervention, or other for any reason not provided.

Table 7 displays the percentage of days Intervention sessions were delivered along with the rate of each missed Intervention session reason for all students. The table also disaggregates the data for white and non-white students. Student and Interventionist absences were the most common reasons for missed sessions. White students had a greater percentage of sessions delivered than non-white students. All missed reasons except member training were higher for non-white students.

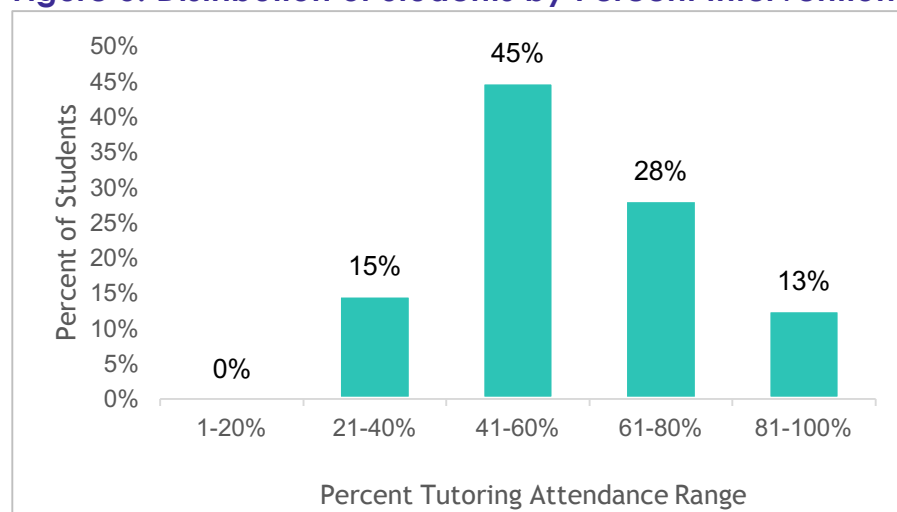
Table 7. Intervention Attendance by Race

Student Race	Session Attended	Interventionist Absent	Student Absent	Assessing Student	Interventionist Training	Other
White	69%	8%	12%	8%	0%	4%
Non-White	53%	13%	16%	12%	0%	5%
Total	58%	13%	14%	10%	0%	5%

MEC ELC tracks Intervention attendance for each student using a 'percent Intervention' metric. A student's percent Intervention is equal to the number of Intervention sessions delivered divided by the number of days Intervention was scheduled to happen (i.e. the metric ignores days there is not school). The program also tracks an Interventionist's percent Intervention by combining their individual student's percent Intervention into an Interventionist average.

The program strives for each student and Interventionist to achieve at least 80% Intervention. Interventionists falling below this target are provided extra support to improve the frequency of Intervention delivery wherever possible.

Figure 5 displays the distribution of students by their percent Intervention range. The majority of students received Intervention 80% or less of their scheduled days, indicating a growth opportunity for the program.

Figure 5. Distribution of Students by Percent Intervention Range

3. To what extent did participating students improve their literacy and numeracy skills?

Measures of Early Literacy and Numeracy

Data for academic outcomes are reported from student performance on measures of early literacy and numeracy. The literacy measure corresponds to important early literacy skills including phonemic awareness, phonics, and early vocabulary and language skills. The numeracy measure corresponds to important early numeracy skills including subitizing, object counting, making comparisons, and decomposing and composing numbers. The specific measures are listed below:

- The Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI)
 - Vocabulary and Oral Language
 - Comprehension
 - Phonological Awareness
 - Alphabet Knowledge
- Early Math Inventory (EMI)

The PELI measures are also combined into two composite scores: the PELI Language Index - a combined score that includes the Vocabulary-Oral Language and Comprehension subtests- and the PELI Composite Score, a combination of all of the PELI subtest scores and is the best estimate of overall early literacy performance. Interventionists individually administer measures to all students in their classroom during each benchmark window, fall, winter, and spring. Student

scores are then compared to research-based seasonal targets that serve as predictors of performance on future Kindergarten assessments. Teachers and coaches use the benchmark scores to develop plans for supporting all students and selecting students for intervention.

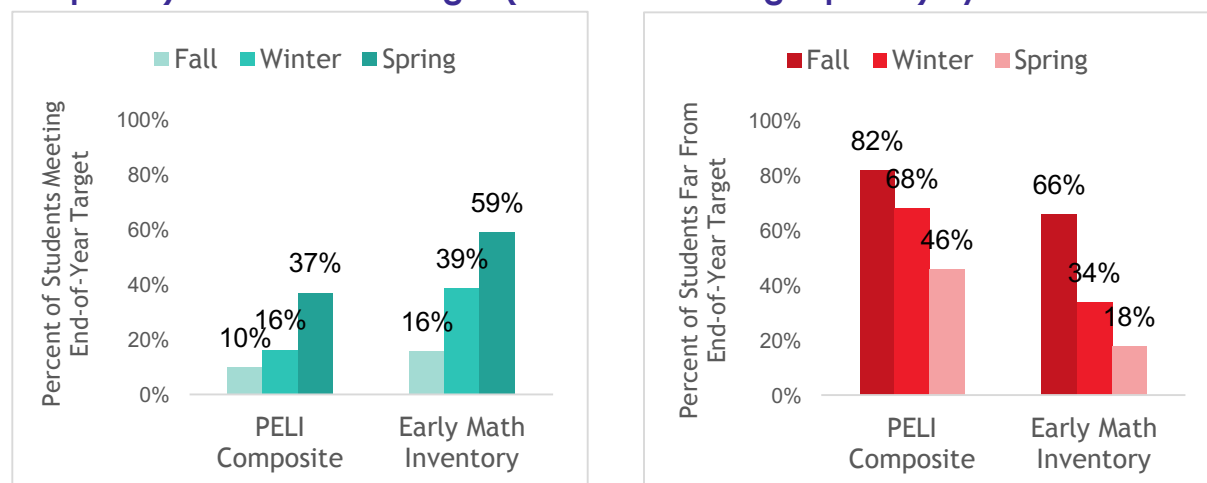
See Appendix A for more information on data collection and criterion-referenced target scores. See Appendix B for the research base for these assessments.

Student Performance

For each measure, student scores can be compared to either the seasonal target (PELI only) or the end of year spring target. Based on the scores and targets used, students are classified as being at or above target ("in the green"), close to target ("in the yellow"), or far from target ("in the red").

Figure 6 shows the percentage of students who met the end-of-year target for each benchmark season on the PELI Composite and the EMI (left panel) and the percentage of students who were far from the end-of-year target on these measures (right panel). In the spring, 37% of students met the PELI Composite target and 59% met the EMI target. The percentage of students scoring far from the target *substantially* decreased for both measures from fall to spring.

Figure 6. Percentage of Students Meeting End-of-Year Target (“in the Green” – left panel) and Far from Target (“in the Red” – right panel) by Season

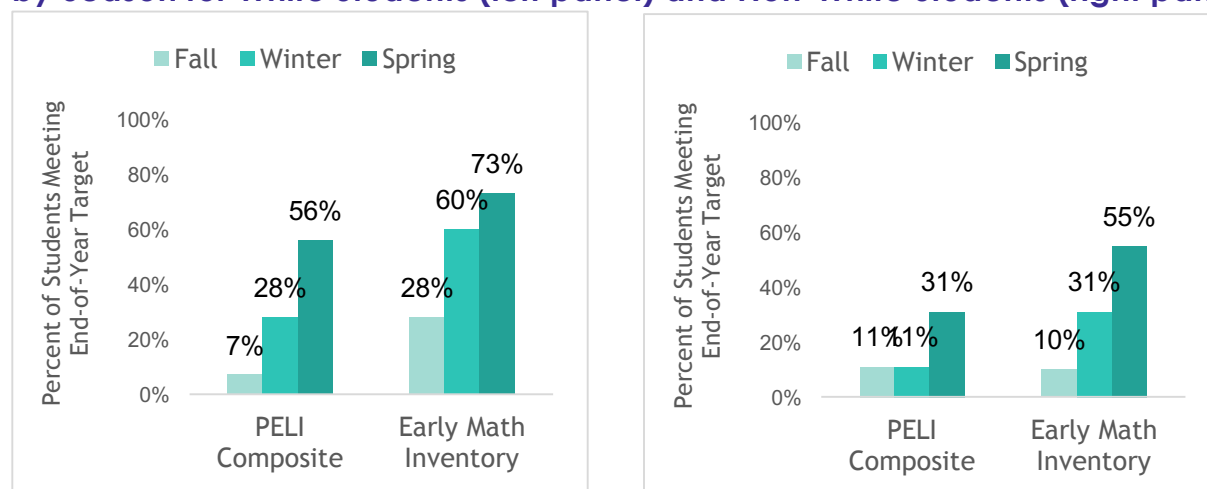


Note: Data displayed for students with assessment scores in all three windows.

Figure 7 disaggregates the above “meeting target” outcome data into white and non-white students in order to better understand program impact across key demographic considerations. For both the PELI Composite and Early Math Inventory, a greater percentage of white students met the end-of-year target at spring compared to non-white students. The differences between the two groups was 25 percentage points on

the PELI Composite and 18 percentage points on the Early Math Inventory. Rigorous comparative research shows that students from various backgrounds make marked improvements during ELC Intervention, as compared to randomly identified peers who do not access the program⁴. However, Figure 7 highlights a need for ensuring students across demographic backgrounds receive equal benefit.

Figure 7. Percentage of Students Meeting End-of-Year Target (“in the Green”) by Season for White Students (left panel) and Non-White Students (right panel)



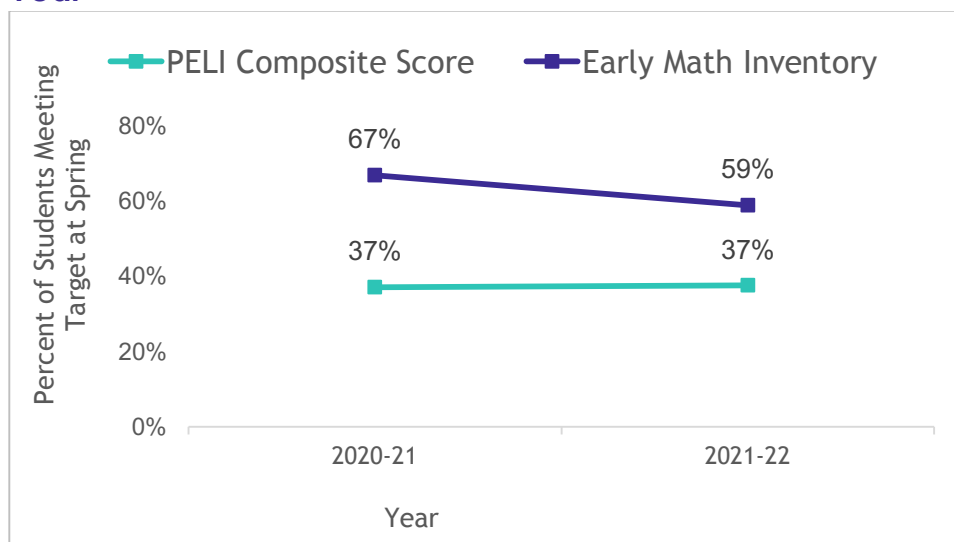
⁴ Markovitz et al., 2015

Note: Data displayed for students with assessment scores in all three windows.

Comparing the percentage of students meeting the spring target across program years is an effective way to track overall program effectiveness and identify potential needs for program improvement. Figure 8 displays the percentage of students meeting the spring target on the PELI Composite

Score and Early Math Inventory for the previous two years. The percentage of students meeting the spring target on the PELI Composite remained constant across the two years while the percentage decreased for the Early Math Inventory.

Figure 8. Percentage of Students Meeting Target (“in the Green”) at Spring, by Year



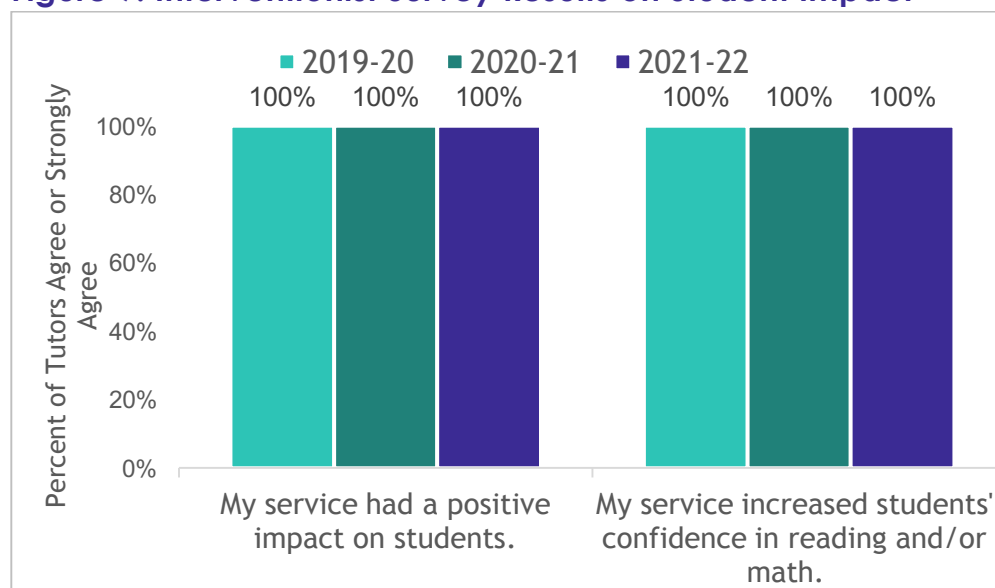
Note: Use caution when comparing outcome data across years as the program was significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Interventionist Perception of Student Performance

In the spring of each program year, MEC evaluators distribute an online survey to Interventionists. The survey asks a wide-range of questions regarding their service in MEC ELC and potential impact of the program. Figure 9 displays the percentage of Interventionists who indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that their service in MEC ELC

had a positive impact on students and increased students' confidence in reading and/or math. The results from these survey questions are presented for each of the previous three program years. The survey results are notably positive with 100% of respondents in each year indicating their service in MEC ELC had a positive impact on students and increased students' confidence in reading and/or math.

Figure 9. Interventionist Survey Results on Student Impact



4. How did serving as an MEC ELC Interventionist impact skills and knowledge related to education and future career goals?

While supporting student literacy and numeracy growth is the primary goal for the program, MEC ELC also strives to provide Interventionists with an overall positive experience and prepare them for any future career they might pursue, especially careers in the education field. As previously described, MEC ELC distributes a survey to Interventionists in the spring of each program year. The survey asks Interventionists a series of questions on their experience in MEC ELC and the impact the program had on their students and site, and to evaluate the program's impact on the Interventionists themselves.

Survey Results

A common practice in surveys is to ask the respondent if they would recommend the program to others, as one's willingness or unwillingness to recommend encompasses the overall experience of serving in MEC ELC. Of respondents, 100% of said they would definitely recommend the programs to others in their network.

The survey also asked Interventionists if serving in ELC had a positive impact on them personally, and 100% of Interventionists strongly agreed demonstrating the positive personal impact of serving.

MEC ELC strives to support Interventionist professional development through the training, coaching, service experience, and other professional development support provided by the program. In particular, MEC ELC aims to increase the teacher and site staff pipeline in communities through its Interventionists pursuing careers in education after their service. To evaluate these outcomes, the spring survey asks Interventionists to respond to questions related to their increased knowledge and skills as well

as any potential plans to pursue a career in education. All respondents strongly agreed that their service increased their knowledge and skills related to education, demonstrating the program is having a positive impact on Interventionists in this area. In addition, half of respondents answered that they are very likely to pursue a career in education as a result of their service. These results indicate MEC ELC likely contributes to the education career pipeline in the communities where Interventionists serve.

5. MEC will work with participating schools to include aggregate program data in the school improvement planning process and applicable data sets.

MEC staff have worked closely with a variety of stakeholders to develop specific guidance for schools on how to include Early Learning Corps in their annual School Improvement Plans. These stakeholders included ISD School Improvement Consultants, the Michigan Department of Education, and building administrators. Guidance is provided to every school and updated regularly. MEC will continue to revise and share guidance with participating schools to support ELC documentation in partner schools' School Improvement Plans, and that MEC ELC data are used in the school improvement planning process. The MEC Executive Director will meet with the KISD Continuous Improvement Consultant in fall of 2022 to begin revising/updating guidance for schools for their 2023-2024 SIPs.

6. MEC will work with participating schools to include MEC program data in the school's multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) implementation and monitoring data sets;

and, 7. MEC program staff will work with school districts, intermediate school districts, and MDE staff to refine the role of the MEC program within overall MTSS processes.

To respond to these, MEC used three information sources: survey results, the School Improvement Plan Guidance, and the number of opportunities MEC staff had meetings or discussions with stakeholders specific to the role of MEC within overall MTSS processes.

Survey Results

The most direct assessment of this outcome is through the annual survey. The annual survey is sent electronically to all school Principals/Administrators, Internal Coaches, and Classroom Teachers who have students who participated in ELC. The survey includes specific statements asking the degree to which these stakeholders agree MEC ELC is an integral part of the school's MTSS. Responses are on a Likert scale of Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree or Strongly Agree.

Question 1: Our school uses ELC data to inform and monitor our multi-tier system of supports (MTSS) implementation for reading and/or math.

Of Administrators who responded, 80% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Of Teachers who responded, 87% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Of Internal Coaches who responded, 82% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

Question 2: MEC ELC is integrated into our MTSS for literacy/math at my school.

Of Administrators, 71% strongly agreed or agreed that ELC is an integral part of their school's MTSS framework. Of Teachers, 79% strongly agreed or agreed that ELC is an integral part of their school's MTSS framework. Of Internal Coaches, 78% strongly agreed or agreed that ELC is an integral part of their school's MTSS framework

We are quite pleased to see that Administrators, Internal Coaches, and Teachers are well-aligned in their responses to both items. This shows that efforts to cascade communication about MEC programming and student progress from Administrators and Internal Coaches to Teachers has had success. We do note this will be a place for on-going work to continue ensuring shared understanding across school staff, particularly teachers, of how ELC is explicitly part of a school's overall MTSS framework.

Interestingly, there appears to be a discrepancy between using the data to inform and monitor aspects of MTSS implementation, and MEC ELC being fully integrated into a school's total MTSS framework. For all respondents, there was a decrease in agreement with these statements. MEC staff will need to continuing working with partner sites to ensure there is clear, shared understanding on what a comprehensive definition of MTSS

implementation fully entails in which data use is a necessary but not sufficient for full MTSS implementation.

School Improvement Plan Guidance

Please see response on page 21.

Coaching Sessions & Other Touchpoints

There are numerous touchpoints with multiple stakeholders throughout the program year. The individuals involved vary based on the purpose for the meeting; however, the majority of conversations center around student outcomes, ELC fidelity, and how ELC is being integrated in a school's overall MTSS literacy framework. For example, Coaching Specialists and Internal Coaches meet with MEC Interventionists monthly to review each ELC progress monitoring graph. They identify strengths and concerns, analyze the reasons for success or lack thereof, develop a plan (may include maintaining the intervention, making an intervention change, or adding an additional intervention), discuss fidelity data, and determine a timeline for next steps. This process is referred to as problem-solving. Further, coaches discuss the impact of core literacy instruction on new, exiting, and returning students, and which students will be referred for intervention. Coaches also discuss factors impacting ELC progress such as attendance and behavior, which may require different, additional intervention.

In 2017-2018, MEC program staff began providing summary progress reports specifically targeted to Principals to better engage them in program effectiveness within their MTSS literacy frameworks: November, February, and April. The reports include program outcomes including Internal Coach involvement, and a SMART goal set in the fall by Coaching Specialists and Internal Coaches for on-going strengthening of program implementation. Most goals focus on conducting fidelity checks and increasing dosage.

All MEC staff have regularly scheduled, in-person visits to schools occurring multiple times throughout the school year. As a result, there is usually an MEC staff person at the school site at least 1-2 times per month in addition to the ELC Coaching Specialist. Depending on the purpose of the visit, staff connect with the Administrator, the Internal Coach, and tutors. They often observe intervention.

All MEC Interventionists are required to have a mid-year evaluation conducted by the AmeriCorps Program Director or Program Coordinator. This person not only collects detailed survey information from Internal Coaches and Interventionists, but also has a lengthy in-person site visit to review the information and discuss any concerns.

MEC staff are frequently asked to present to administrative teams, ISDs, and other large audiences who are not current partners but are interested in implementing MEC programs. It is emphasized that ELC is a tier 1 supplement intervention, as well as providing tier 2/3. ELC programming meets the definition of an evidence-based intervention, and supports the implementation of GELN Essential School-wide and Center-wide Practices in Literacy. By starting the conversation of partnership with schools early and emphasizing what ELC does and does not do (e.g., doesn't supplant core instruction), we significantly increase the likelihood of fidelity and effective integration of ELC into site MTSS literacy and numeracy frameworks.

8. MEC will provide a statement of work, which includes a timeline of the project, and budget summary, and a budget detail for progress monitoring and continuous improvement of program implementation.

This information was provided to Kellie Flaminio, Department Analyst/Early Literacy Grant Coordinator, Office of Educational Supports, on September 18, 2022.

9. MEC will provide trainings for newly identified schools as the programs expand.

Please see Appendix D for a 2021-2022 calendar of MEC Trainings for all participating schools.

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Appendix A: Assessment Measures and Procedures

Students are assessed in all measures during three seasonal benchmark windows. Each assessment tool has empirically derived, criterion-referenced seasonal benchmark goals and cut points for risk that represent adequate early literacy progress for children in preschool. A benchmark goal indicates a level of skill where the child is likely to achieve the next benchmark goal or early literacy outcome. Benchmark goals are based on research that examines the predictive validity of a score on a measure at a particular point in time, compared to later measures and compared to external outcome assessments. If a child achieves a benchmark goal, then the odds are in favor of that child achieving later early literacy outcomes if he/she receives generally effective instructional support and learning opportunities.

The cut points for risk indicate a level of skill below which a child is unlikely to achieve subsequent early literacy goals without receiving additional, targeted instructional support. Children with scores below the cut point for risk are identified as likely to need intensive support. Intensive support refers to interventions that incorporate something more or something different from the core curriculum or supplemental support.

The benchmark goals differ based on student age at the beginning of the school year.

Benchmark Goals and Cut Points for Risk for Age 4 and Age 5

Subtest	Benchmark Goal and Cut Points for Risk	Fall August 16 – October 1	Winter January 3 – January 28	Spring April 25 – May 27
Composite Score	Green	159+	201+	231+
	Yellow	115-158	160-200	195-230
	Red	0-114	0-159	0-194
Language Index	Green	114+	132+	143+
	Yellow	88-113	111-131	124-142
	Red	0-87	0-110	0-123
Vocabulary/Oral Language	Green	18+	21+	23+
	Yellow	13-17	16-20	19-22
	Red	0-12	0-15	0-18
Comprehension	Green	13+	16+	17+
	Yellow	10-12	12-15	14-16
	Red	0-9	0-11	0-13
Phonological Awareness	Green	4+	10+	13+
	Yellow	1-3	4-9	9-12
	Red	0	0-3	0-8
Alphabet Knowledge	Green	6+	17+	23+
	Yellow	2-5	8-16	14-22
	Red	0-1	0-7	0-13
Early Math Inventory	Green	13+	13+	13+
	Yellow	7-12	7-12	7-12
	Red	0-6	0-6	0-6

Benchmark Goals and Cut Points for Risk for Age 3

Subtest	Benchmark Goal and Cut Points for Risk	Fall August 16 – October 1	Winter January 3 – January 28	Spring April 25 – May 27
Composite Score	Green	68+	101+	128+
	Yellow	35-67	59-100	85-127
	Red	0-34	0-58	0-84
Language Index	Green	62+	87+	100+
	Yellow	33-61	50-86	59-99
	Red	0-32	0-49	0-58
Vocabulary/Oral Language	Green	8+	12+	14+
	Yellow	4-7	6-11	8-13
	Red	0-3	0-5	0-7
Comprehension	Green	6+	10+	11+
	Yellow	2-5	5-9	7-10
	Red	0-1	0-4	0-6
Phonological Awareness	Green	-	1+	2+
	Yellow	-	0	0-1
	Red	-	-	-
Alphabet Knowledge	Green	1+	3+	5+
	Yellow	0	1-2	2-4
	Red	-	0	0-1
Early Math Inventory	Green	9+	9+	9+
	Yellow	5-8	5-8	5-8
	Red	0-4	0-4	0-4

Appendix B: Assessment Research Base

Assessment tools were selected for use in Early Learning Corps because of their well-established statistical reliability and validity for screening and progress monitoring purposes. The Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI) is designed to identify children who may be experiencing difficulties acquiring early literacy skills and to inform instructional support for those children in order to improve future reading outcomes. The reliability, validity, and decision utility of the PELI have been investigated in a series of studies from 2009 to 2017.

The information that follows summarizes empirical findings related to the statistical reliability and validity of the measures used in Early Learning Corps.

Preschool Early Literacy Indicators:

- Alternate form reliability of the PELI Composite Score ranges from .85 to .92.
- Alternate form reliability of the PELI subtests ranges from .66 to .95
- Inter-rater reliability of the PELI ranges from .90 to .98.
- Concurrent criterion-related validity of language subtests and the PELI Language Index with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test ranges from .62 to .72.
- Concurrent criterion-related validity of Alphabet Knowledge and Phonological Awareness subtests with the Acadience™ Reading K–6 Composite Score (beginning of kindergarten measures administered at the end of Pre-K) ranges from .66 to .74.
- Sensitivity and specificity of the PELI Composite Score end-of-year benchmark goal with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test as the criterion measure = .61 and .81 respectively (CA = .74; AUC = .81).
- Sensitivity and specificity of the PELI Composite Score end-of-year benchmark goal with the Acadience Reading Kindergarten beginning-of-year benchmark goal as the criterion are .77 and .88 respectively (CA = .77; AUC = .87)

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Appendix C: Intervention Research Base

The interventions used in the Early Learning Corps program are designed to provide additional practice that is supplemental to the core reading instructional program offered by the local school site. The interventions target automaticity and fluency of important reading skills that have been introduced by local classroom teachers. It is important to note that Early Learning Corps participation is in addition to, not in replacement of, a comprehensive core reading instructional program, and that the Early Learning Corps program should in no way be viewed as a substitute for high quality core instruction.

A unique feature of Early Learning Corps is the consistent use of research-based intervention protocols with participating students to provide this additional support. Site-based Internal Coaches select from a menu of research-based supplemental reading interventions for use with participating students as listed below. For each intervention protocol sources of empirical evidence for intervention effectiveness are listed.

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Phoneme Blending

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Phoneme Segmentation

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Appendix D: MEC Training Calendar 2021-2022.

Trainings for ELC are indicated as "PreK" and highlighted in blue. AmeriCorps events are attended by all MEC Interventionists program-wide.

WN	JULY							WN	AUGUST							WN	SEPTEMBER							21
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
26					1	2	3	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	35						PreK & MC Institute 1	4	
27	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	32	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	36	5	6				R3 Institute 2	11	
28	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	33	15	R3 Institute 1					21	37	12	13				PreK & MC Institute 2	18	
29	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	34	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	38	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	35	29	PreK & MC 1						39	26	27	28	29	30			
WN	OCTOBER							WN	NOVEMBER							WN	DECEMBER							22
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
39						1	2	44		1	2	3	4	5	6	48				1	2	3	4	
40	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	45	7	PreK & MC Institute 3				13	49	5	6	7	8	9		10	11	
41	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	46	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	50	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
42	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	47	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	51	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
43	24	R3 Institute 3					30	48	28	29	30					52	26	27	28	29	30	31		
44	31																							
WN	JANUARY							WN	FEBRUARY							WN	MARCH							22
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
52							1	5		1	2	3	4	5		9		1	2	3	4	5		
1	2	R3 Institute 4					8	6	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	10	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
2	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	7	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
3	16	MC Institute 4					22	8	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	12	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
4	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	9	27	28						13	27	28	29	30	31			
5	30	31																						
WN	APRIL							WN	MAY							WN	JUNE							22
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
13						1	2	18	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	22				1	2	3	4	
14	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	19	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	23	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
15	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	20	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	24	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
17	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	22	29	30	31					26	26	27	28	29	30			

K3 LMS Release by number of weeks after institute					K3 Fundamental Dates					Fundamental 1 Programs Can't Be Together				
	5	8	11	14		1	2	3	4	Start Date->	Aug	Sep	Oct/Nov	Jan
Aug 16	9.20	10.11	11.1	11.22	Aug 16	10.15.21	12.10.21			K3	10.15.21	12.3.21	2.11.22	
Sep 7	10.11	11.1	11.22	12.13	Sep 7				3.18.22	PK	11.5.21	1.14.22	x	
Oct 25	11.29	12.20	1.10	1.31	Oct 25	12.3.21	4.8.22			MC	10.22.21	1.28.22	2.25.22	
Jan 3	2.7	2.28	3.21	4.11	Jan 3	2.11.22								
PK LMS Release by number of weeks after institute					PK Fundamental Dates					Fundamental 2 & 3 Programs Can Be Together				
	5	8	11	14		1	2	3	4	Start Date->	Aug	Sep	Oct/Nov	Jan
Aug 30	9.27	10.25	11.15	12.13	Aug 30	11.5.21	12.10.21			K3				
Sep 13	10.18	11.8	11.29	12.20	Sep 13				3.18.22	PK	12.10.21		4.8.22	
Nov 8	12.13	1.3	1.24	2.14	Nov 8	1.14.22	4.8.22			MC				
Math LMS Release by number of weeks after institute					Math Fundamental Dates					Fundamental 4 Programs Can Be Together				
	5	8	11	14		1	2	3	4	Start Date->	Aug	Sep	Oct/Nov	Jan
Aug 30	9.27	10.25	11.15	12.13	Aug 30	10.22.21	12.10.21			K3				
Sep 13	10.18	11.8	11.29	12.20	Sep 13				3.18.22	PK				
Nov 8	12.13	1.3	1.24	2.14	Nov 8	1.28.22	4.8.22			MC				
Jan 16	2.21	3.14	4.4	4.25	Jan 16	2.25.22								
AmeriCorps Events					AmeriCorps Events									
Sep 11	National Day of Service and Remembrance				Jan 17	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service								
Oct 7	MEC Member Town Hall				Mar 3	MEC Member Town Hall								
Nov 18	Michigan's AC Member Celebration				Apr 29	Global Youth Service Day								
Dec 2	Michigan's AC LeaderCorps Orientation				May 20	Regional Russ Mawby Signature Service Projects								
Dec 30	MEC Member Town Hall				May 26	MEC Member Town Hall								
					Jun 4	End of MEC Service Year								