MI Kids Back on Track Evaluation Report
2023-2024 Part 1: District Impact Survey

What is MI Kids Back on Track?

The MI Kids Back on Track grant funds (MCL388.1623g) supports programs provided before school, during school, after school, or during the summer. These funds are designed to address unfinished learning, get students to get students to grade-level academic standards, provide additional academic assistance to students at risk of falling behind their peers, or help high school students prepare for postsecondary education.

Scope of this Report

The MiMTSS TA Center has prepared this report of 2023-2024 MI Kids Back on Track outcomes on behalf of Clinton County RESA and Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators. This report is based on data collected through the MI Kids Back on Track Impact Survey, which districts were required to complete as part of the grant requirements. The Part 1 report is framed around answering the following evaluation questions:

- Who has the funding supported (districts)?
- What programs and services are districts implementing using MI Kids Back on Track funding?
- What lessons have been learned from the MI Kids Back on Track grant program?

Part 2 will be an amendment of the Part 1 report and will address the remaining evaluation questions using student participation data and benchmark assessment data shared by Michigan DataHub on behalf of funded districts:

- Who has the funding supported (schools and students)?
- What is known about how programs and services were implemented?
- To what extent did student reading performance improve?
- To what extent did student math performance improve?

Who has the funding supported?

Five hundred twenty-four school districts (399 traditional school districts and 125 public school academies) applied for, were awarded, and accepted funding. All districts that applied for funding (530) were able to work with the Michigan Department of Education to meet all grant requirements in order to be approved for funding. Six districts had approved applications but later declined funding. In Figure 1, the maps illustrate the geographic location of all funded traditional school districts on the left and public school academies on the right, highlighted in blue. Each district's allocation was calculated by multiplying $364.517 by the number of nonproficient students on the 2023 M-STEP, MME, and SAT in Math and/or ELA. Using this formula, the smallest district allocation was $2,187, and the largest district allocation was $7,923,514.
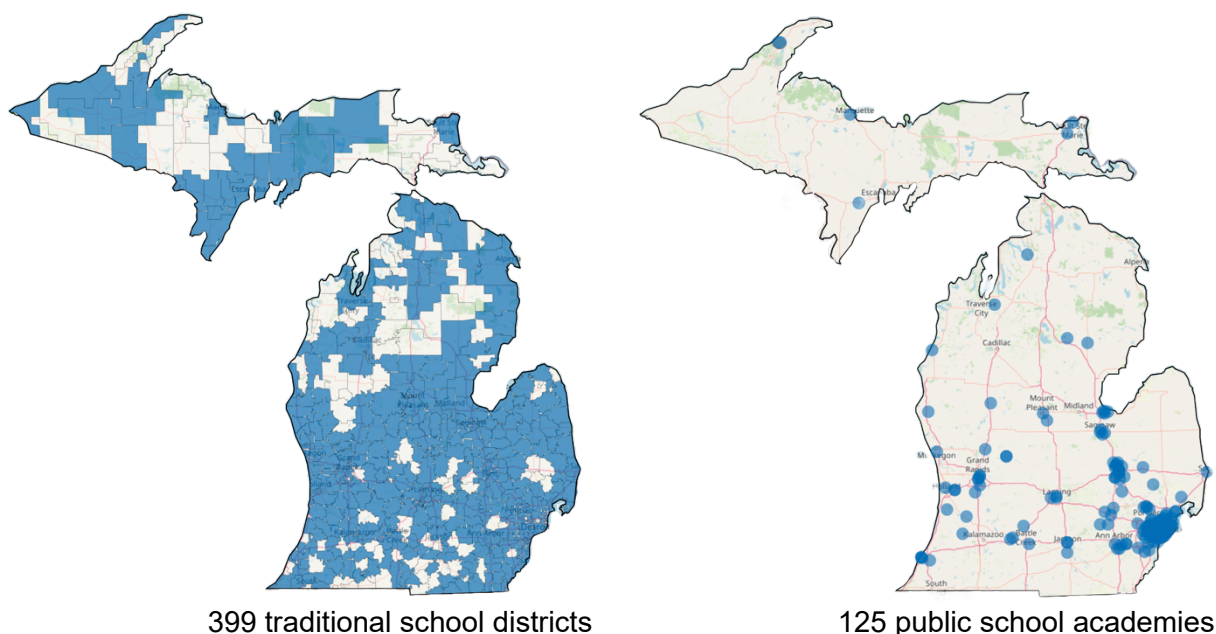
| 399 traditional school districts | 125 public school academies |

Figure 1. The geographic location of 23g-funded districts and public school academies

What programs and services are districts implementing using MI Kids Back on Track funding?

Funding Use

Districts completed an impact survey between June and October 2024. The survey asked districts to indicate which of the eight programming options they intended to implement using 23g funding. Districts could choose one or more options and were asked to respond retrospectively for the 2023-2024 school year, as well as for summer 2024 and the 2024-2025 school year.

A total of 518 districts responded to the survey, achieving a 99% response rate. Among these, 260 districts began using funds during the 2023-2024 school year, with 126 of them continuing to use funds in the summer of 2024. Additionally, 103 districts started using funds for the first time in summer 2024. In total, 229 school districts used funds in the summer of 2024, and 363 districts utilized funding prior to the 2024-2025 school year.

Districts applying for 23g funding were required to tie the funding request to their MICIP needs and plan, using MiStrategyBank to tag the strategies they planned to implement with the funding. Based on the district-selected strategies, it was clear that **most districts (272) are using their MI Kids Back on Track funding for expanded learning time**, defined as supplemental instruction before school, during school, after school, or during the summer

The most-selected 23g programming options were **Expanded Learning Time**, **Other Tutoring**, and **Intensive Individualized Support**. The least-selected programming options were **Career Pathways** and **Work-Based Learning Experiences**.

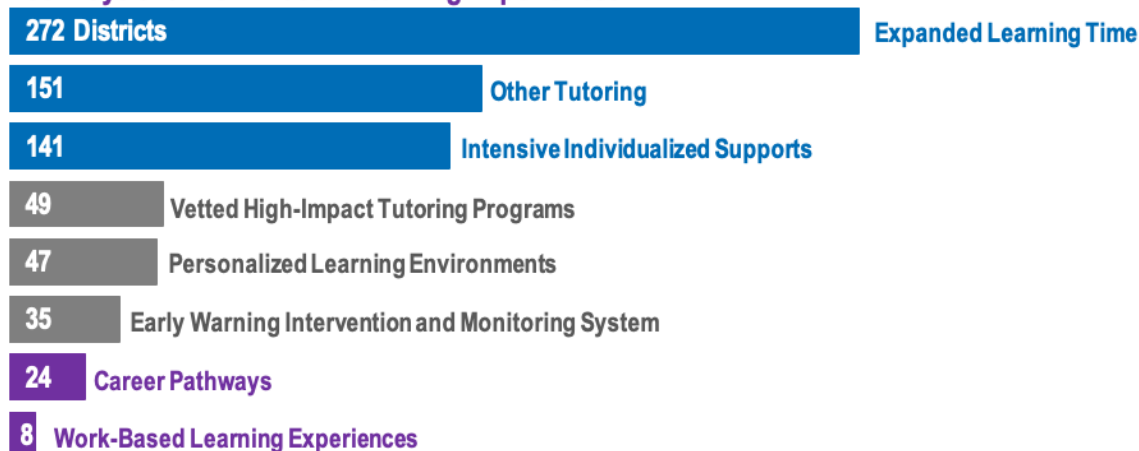|	
272 Districts	**Expanded Learning Time**
151	**Other Tutoring**
141	**Intensive Individualized Supports**
49	Vetted High-Impact Tutoring Programs
47	Personalized Learning Environments
35	Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System
24	**Career Pathways**
8	**Work-Based Learning Experiences**

Figure 2. 23g Programming options implemented by districts through Summer 2024

During 2023-2024 and Summer 2024, the most-implemented 23g programming options were **Expanded Learning Time**, **Other Tutoring**, and **Intensive Individualized Support**.
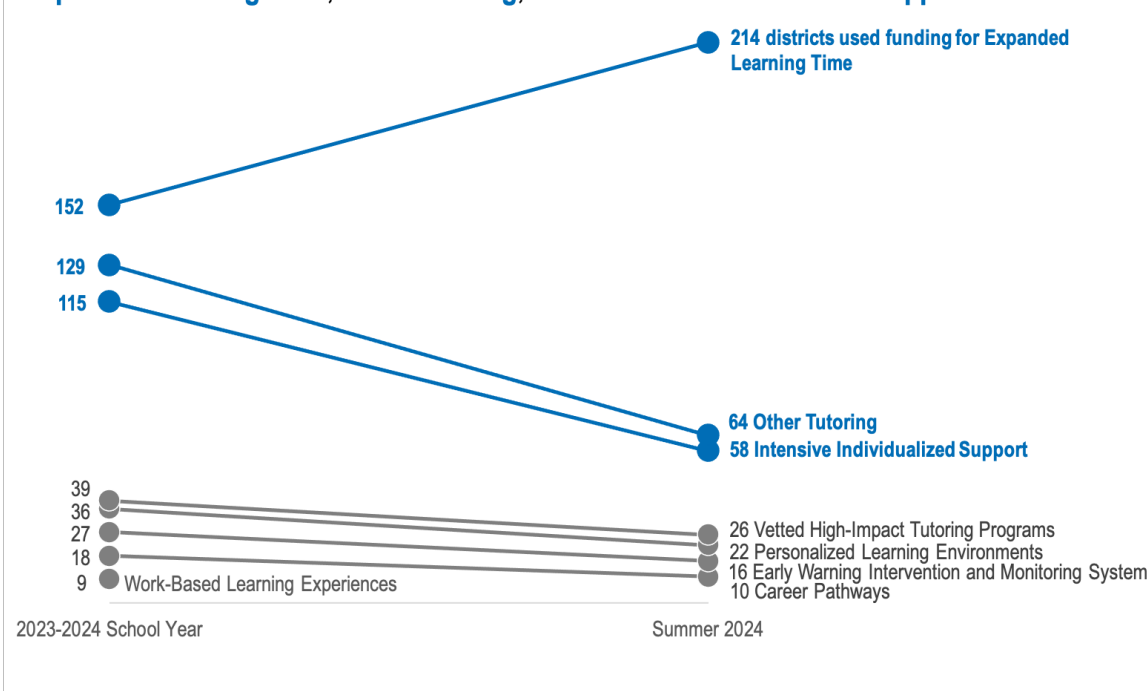
214 districts used funding for Expanded Learning Time

152

129
115

64 Other Tutoring
58 Intensive Individualized Support

39
36
27
18
9 Work-Based Learning Experiences

26 Vetted High-Impact Tutoring Programs
22 Personalized Learning Environments
16 Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System
10 Career Pathways

2023-2024 School Year   Summer 2024

Figure 3. 23g Programming options implemented by districts during 2023-2024 compared to Summer 2024

Michigan's MTSS Technical Assistance Center

High-Impact Tutoring Programs

As part of MI Kids Back on Track, the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) is vetting high-impact tutoring programs for alignment with the legislative requirements of Section 23g of the 2023-24 School Aid Act. This work includes providing a comprehensive report on tutoring programs eligible for purchase by recipients using the allocated funding. Due to the importance of this initiative, a dedicated section on high-impact tutoring is included here in this report. As of December 2024, **four waves of reviews have resulted in thirty programs meeting the requirements of a high-impact tutoring program.**

Thirty-nine districts used a high-impact tutoring program during 2023-2024, and 26 districts used a high-impact tutoring program during the summer of 2024. Several districts communicated that they wanted to wait to see which vendors would meet the requirements of a high-impact tutoring program before selecting one for implementation during the 2024-2025 school year. In addition, survey responses indicated that the timing of the disbursement of grant funds was an influential factor in why many districts did not implement high-impact tutoring during the first year.

Positive Impacts of 23g Funding

Method

The MI Kids Back on Track (23g) impact survey gathered insights from school districts regarding their use of 23g funding, focusing on services provided during the 2023-2024 school year and summer of 2024. The survey aimed to understand the positive impacts from various perspectives, including teachers, students, families, program staff, and district leaders.

The impact survey was completed primarily by members of the school district administration, including superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, and curriculum directors. Respondents were encouraged to consult with various informants, such as teachers, families, students, tutors, and other staff and administrators involved in the program, and then report the positive impacts being noticed from various perspectives.

The evaluators employed a hybrid approach to analyze the open-ended responses, integrating qualitative data analysis with advanced machine learning techniques. Initially, the evaluators manually labeled a randomly selected subset of responses to establish classification labels. Subsequently, a machine learning model was applied to the text data, assigning the initial labels with a confidence threshold of 90%. For text that the model could not confidently label, a separate model was employed to identify additional labels. This process was iterative, combining both the initial and new classification labels with the original data set. Finally, a quality assurance check was conducted by manually reviewing a random 5% of the labeled data to ensure accuracy. Of the 363 districts implementing during the 2023-2024 school year and summer 2024, 320 (88%) provided input in the open-ended section of the impact survey, while 43 (12%) did not complete this portion.

Positive Impact Categories

Figure 4 provides the labels that were self-reported by at least 25% of the districts and definitions of these nine labels are provided next.
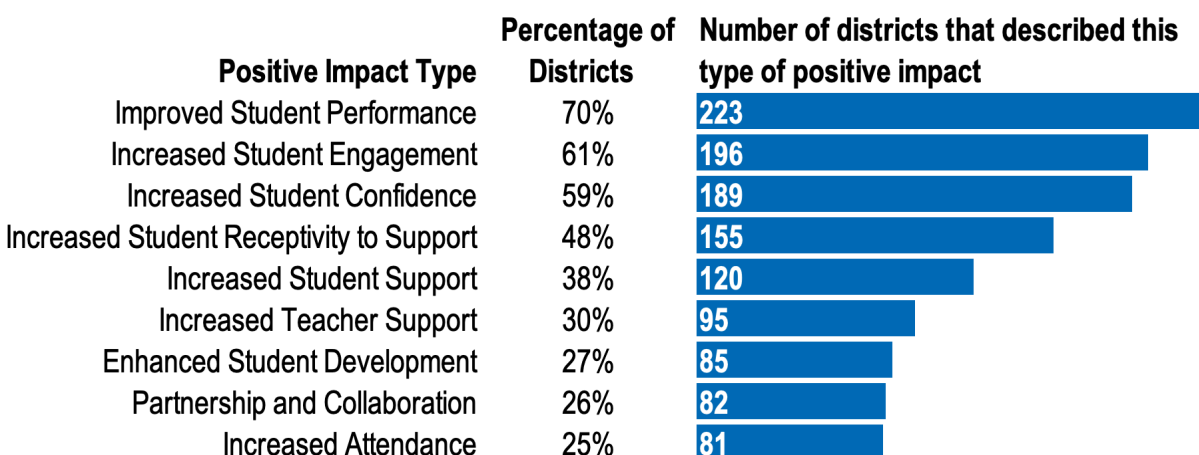
Positive Impact Type	Percentage of Districts	Number of districts that described this type of positive impact
Improved Student Performance	70%	223
Increased Student Engagement	61%	196
Increased Student Confidence	59%	189
Increased Student Receptivity to Support	48%	155
Increased Student Support	38%	120
Increased Teacher Support	30%	95
Enhanced Student Development	27%	85
Partnership and Collaboration	26%	82
Increased Attendance	25%	81

Figure 4. Positive impact labels self-reported by at least 25% of districts.

- **Improved Student Performance** (70% of districts): Noticeable increases in academic achievement, including higher test scores, better grades, and mastery of key concepts.
- **Increased Student Engagement** (61%): Heightened student motivation, participation, and enthusiasm for learning.
- **Increased Student Confidence** (59%): Students feeling more assured in their academic abilities.
- **Increased Student Receptivity to Support** (48%): Students becoming more open to receiving help.
- **Increased Student Support** (38%): Enhancing the resources and structures available to meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs, promoting their overall success and well-being.
- **Increased Teacher Support** (30%): Empowerment of teachers through professional development, collaborative opportunities, additional resources, and stipends, leading to improved instructional practices, and a more positive school climate.
- **Enhanced Student Development** (27%): Holistic growth of students, emphasizing academic achievement, social-emotional development, stronger relationships with peers and teachers.
- **Partnership and Collaboration** (26%): Strengthened communication, increased family involvement, and fostering positive connections between schools and families that enhance student engagement and academic success.
- **Increased Attendance** (25%): Improved student participation and consistency in attending programs.

The top three labels, or categories, of positive impact descriptions are described next in more detail.

Improved Student Performance

Two hundred thirty-three (233) survey respondents observed Improved Student Performance, including improvements in students' subject-specific knowledge, particularly in foundational skills like reading and math. Learning loss over breaks appeared to lessen, helping students maintain academic progress. Additionally, respondents noted gains in overall academic mastery, including better grades, credit recovery, and readiness for grade-level

expectations. Improved student performance will also be reported in the Part 2 report update using the student benchmark assessment data submitted by districts.

This district quote was provided in response to the prompt "What positive changes are teachers noticing?"

> *The after school-tutoring program supported the bottom 30% of students in reading and math. Teachers noticed a positive increase in student growth on the i-Ready assessments.*

Increased Student Engagement

One hundred ninety-six (196) survey respondents observed Increased Student Engagement, including students' heightened involvement and motivation in their learning process, often indicated by proactive participation in school activities and commitment to academic programs. Administrators, teachers, and families observed students being more enthusiastic about their educational experiences, showing a greater willingness to attend sessions regularly, collaborate with peers, and engage actively in classroom and extracurricular activities. Students and families expressed appreciation for these programs, with some demonstrating a renewed interest in subjects they previously found challenging.

These district quotes were provided in response to the prompt "What positive changes are families noticing?" They are direct quotes from local family surveys that districts then included in their Impact Survey responses.

> *He looks forward to the extra attention and special projects. He doesn't realize how much he is learning.*

> *All my kids are reading by choice!!!!*

> *I also feel that the sessions were helpful so the kids didn't lose 3 months of schooling.*

> *I feel all three kids learned throughout the summer in reading and math.*

Increased Student Confidence

One hundred eighty-nine survey (189) respondents observed Increased Student Confidence, including the observable growth in students' self-assurance and belief in their academic and social abilities. This was often indicated by students' willingness to participate actively in class, tackle challenging subjects, and advocate for their own learning needs. Teachers, administrators, and families noted that students became more comfortable asking questions, taking risks, and demonstrating resilience when facing difficult tasks. Students who previously struggled now exhibit a "can-do" attitude, showing pride in their accomplishments and celebrating personal growth. This newfound confidence extends beyond academics, fostering positive relationships with peers and staff and enhancing students' overall well-being and engagement with the school community.

These district quotes were provided in response to the prompt "What are students saying? What has changed for them?"

Statements overheard from students at summer intervention time:

I live to write.

Can we write again today?

Do we have to leave?

We get more practice with little words that helps me read bigger words.

The best part is being able to make up my grade and not have to sit in a school for 7 hours a day. Also, the best part is when I get candy at the end of the day from [teacher].

Other, less frequent, labels included:

- Gratitude for Support (25%)
- Increased Targeted/Personalized Learning (23%)
- Increased Sense of Belonging (22%)
- Student Progress Monitoring (19%)
- Increased Student Autonomy (17%)
- Insufficient Data Available (15%)
- Smaller Class Sizes (13%)
- Equity and Accessibility (9%)
- Expansion and Sustainability (8%)
- Strengthened Personnel Resources (8%)
- Improved Student-Teacher Relationship (7%)
- Ongoing Family Communication (6%)
- Increased Graduation Rate (6%)
- Improvements in Advanced Tiers (5%)
- Optimistic Program Expectations (5%)
- Credit Recovery (4%)
- Improved Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral Health (3%)
- Improved Data-Driven Instruction (3%)
- Program Evaluation (3%)
- Improved School-Family Partnerships (3%)
- Improved Climate (2%)
- Comprehensive Strategic Alignment (2%)

What lessons have been learned from the MI Kids Back on Track grant program?

As part of the 23g impact survey, districts were also asked to identify funding, implementation, and program support challenges to inform future improvements.

The evaluators used the same process for identifying the labels/categories of responses as we did for the comments about positive impacts. Of the 413 districts that responded to the challenges question, comments were analyzed using the same process outlined in the positive impact section. Among respondents, 21% left the challenges question blank, 15% stated that no challenges had been encountered, and an additional 14% did not mention any specific challenges in their responses. Altogether, 50% of participants did not specify or did not experience any challenges.

For the remaining 50%, the distribution of challenges was as follows: 13% reported difficulties with data collection, management, and reporting; 11% with the application process; 7% with communication; 7% with the timing of fund distribution; 5% with staffing; 3% with student attendance; 3% with sustainability; and 1% with managing multiple grants.

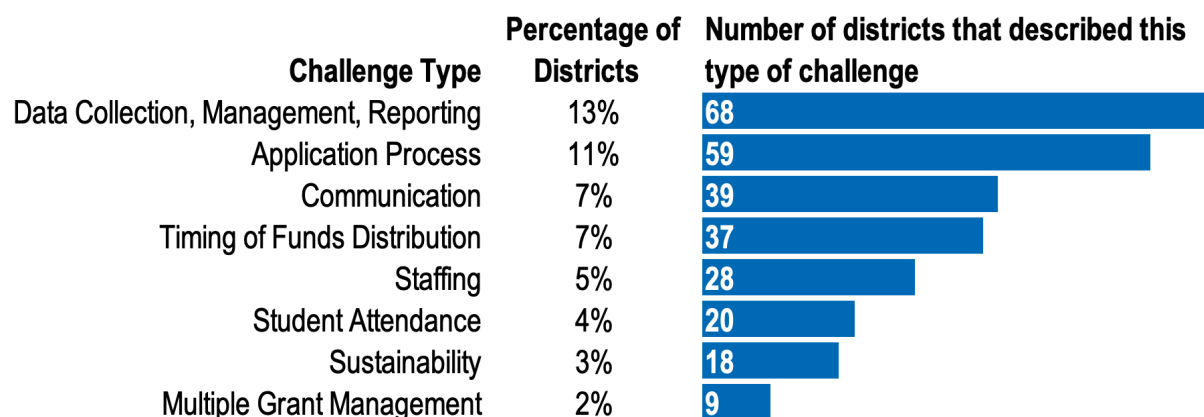| Challenge Type	Percentage of Districts	Number of districts that described this type of challenge
Data Collection, Management, Reporting	13%	68
Application Process	11%	59
Communication	7%	39
Timing of Funds Distribution	7%	37
Staffing	5%	28
Student Attendance	4%	20
Sustainability	3%	18
Multiple Grant Management	2%	9

Figure 5. Challenges described by districts

An obstacle related to data collection, management, and reporting was the misalignment between the legislative requirements of 23g and districts' planning and budgeting cycles, which made the application process particularly cumbersome. Many districts had to revise their Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process (MICIP) plans and budgets, even after they had been approved by school boards in June. Additionally, data systems and reporting requirements for the preceding year are typically finalized in June, creating complications for both student information systems and districts as they had to modify existing software to comply with grant requirements.

State leaders for 23g will review the detailed challenges self-reported by districts to identify areas that can be improved for current 23g grantees within the legislative parameters. The team will also identify opportunities to improve future grant procedures to reduce the burden on districts while upholding legislative requirements. Although no additional funding has been allocated for 23g, the expenditure window for districts has been extended through September

2027. As a result, districts will need to continue collecting and reporting data—a task that has been consistently identified as the most frequently reported challenge.

What's next?

Fall 2024: Districts participating in 23g have enabled the MiMTSS TA Center to access additional data sets through the Michigan DataHub. This includes student participation data and reading and math assessment data for the 2023-2024 school year, providing valuable information to support program evaluation and analysis. MiDataHub and the MiMTSS TA Center are working together to securely share this data so that a summary can be incorporated into the 2023-2024 Part 2 evaluation report.

Spring 2025: An updated evaluation report will be published, and state leaders will reflect on the positive impacts and challenges described by districts to make recommendations for future reporting and grant management.

As Needed: MAISA will continue to review resubmitted vendor modifications. No new vendor applications will be accepted.

Resources

MI Kids Back on Track
(https://www.michigan.gov/mde/resources/accelerated-learning/mi-kids-back-on-track)

Vetted High-Impact Tutoring Programs
(https://www.gomaisa.org/projects/mi-kids-back-on-track/)

> The MiMTSS Technical Assistance Center prepared this report. The MiMTSS TA Center provides program evaluation services for MI Kids Back on Track on behalf of Clinton County RESA and Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators.