

Children's Services Act

Performance Measures / Outcome Indicators Report FY2019



Office of
Children's Services
Empowering communities to serve youth

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Introduction

Virginia Code, §2.2-2648.D.17. requires that the State Executive Council for Children's Services shall:

Oversee the development and implementation of a uniform set of performance measures for evaluating the Children's Services Act program, including, but not limited to, the number of youths served in their homes, schools and communities. Performance measures shall be based on information: (i) collected in the client-specific database referenced in subdivision 16, (ii) from the mandatory uniform assessment instrument referenced in subdivision 11, and (iii) from available and appropriate client outcome data that is not prohibited from being shared under federal law and is routinely collected by the state child-serving agencies that serve on the Council. If provided client-specific information, state child serving agencies shall report available and appropriate outcome data in clause (iii) to the Office of Children's Services. Outcome data submitted to the Office of Children's Services shall be used solely for the administration of the Children's Services Act program. Applicable client outcome data shall include, but not be limited to: (a) permanency outcomes by the Virginia Department of Social Services, (b) recidivism outcomes by the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, and (c) educational outcomes by the Virginia Department of Education. All client-specific information shall remain confidential and only non-identifying aggregate outcome information shall be made available to the public.

Under the direction of the State Executive Council for Children's Services (SEC), the Office of Children's Services (OCS) has developed a set of performance/outcome measures to be used to evaluate the Children's Services Act (CSA) program. The seven indicators are:

- 1) The percent of youth who had a decrease in their score on the School Domain of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS), the mandatory CSA assessment instrument, from a baseline assessment to the most recent re-assessment;
- 2) The percent of youth who had a decrease in their score on the Child Behavioral and Emotional Needs Domain of the CANS instrument from a baseline assessment to the most recent re-assessment;
- 3) The percent of youth who had a decrease in their score (indicating increased strengths) on the Child Strengths Domain of the CANS instrument from a baseline assessment to the most recent re-assessment;

- 4) The percent of youth receiving Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) services compared to all youth placed in residential settings;
- 5) The percent of youth receiving only Community-based Services (CBS) of all youth receiving CSA funded services¹;
- 6) The percent of children in foster care who are in family-based placements; and
- 7) The percent of children who exit from foster care to a permanent living arrangement.

In addition to individually reporting on the performance on each measure, a locality-based comparison score is generated. On each of the first five measures, each locality is scored on a scale of 1 through 4 based on the degree of variation from the state average. Localities more than one standard deviation above the state average receive a score of 4, those between the state average and one standard deviation above that average receive a score of 3, those between the state average and one standard deviation below that average receive a score of 2, and localities scoring greater than one standard deviation below the state average receive a score of 1 on that measure. For the last two measures, each locality is scored on a scale of 2 through 4 based on their proximity to targets established by the Virginia Department of Social Services. On these two indicators, localities score 4 when the target was met or exceeded, a score of 3 is assigned if the locality was below, but within five percent of the target, and a score of 2 is assigned if the performance was more than five percent below the target. For all seven measures, 4 is the highest score. An overall composite measure of all seven performance indicators has been constructed. The composite measure represents the average of all the comparison scores for which a valid result could be determined.

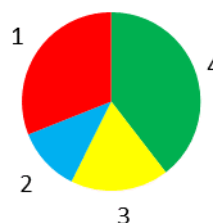
¹ In FY2019, foster care was reclassified as a Community-based Service (CBS). Therefore, the CBS performance measure in this report is not comparable to previous CBS performance measures. Data from previous years has been recalculated to reflect the new classification.

**Percent of Youth with a Decrease in the School Domain of the
Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Score**

The CANS is the mandatory uniform assessment instrument for all children receiving CSA funded services. It is administered at the time of service initiation and at periodic intervals throughout the duration of services. The re-assessment interval will vary depending on the type of service being provided (typically, children receiving more intensive services are re-assessed more frequently) and local practice. The School Domain of the CANS assessment tool has been established as a key indicator and scores would be expected to decrease (as needs decrease) if interventions are having the desired impact.

Decrease in CANS School Domain Score

Score	Range (% of valid cases)	Number of Localities
1	Less than 41.8%	40
2	Between 41.8% and 46.2%	15
3	Between 46.2% and 50.6%	23
4	Greater than 50.6%	51



N = 129 localities; 3,821 youth; Mean = 46.2%; Standard Deviation = 4.4%²

Note: 1 of the 130 localities were not rated due to not having any youth meeting the criteria for inclusion in the FY 2019 entrance cohort (a baseline and a subsequent re-assessment by 12/31/19).

The CANS School Domain score is the average score of the three items that constitute the domain³, each ranked 0, 1, 2 or 3 with a lower score indicating the youth has less significant needs (or better functioning) in those areas. All children with a baseline (initial) assessment in FY 2019 (and who did not have any assessments in previous fiscal years) have been assigned to the FY 2019 cohort. Only youth who have had at least one subsequent re-assessment (as of December 31, 2019) have been included in this report (as time elapses and additional youth in the FY 2019 cohort receive re-assessments, the number in the cohort will grow and the outcomes recalculated)⁴. The baseline assessment score was compared to the most recent assessment. For each locality, the percent of youth with a decreased average score on these items was calculated. The average time between assessments was 228 days. Statewide, this indicator showed that 46.2 percent of the FY 2019 cohort had a decrease (or improvement) in their CANS School Domain score. Seventy-four localities (57%) scored at or above the mean and 55 localities (43%) scored below the mean on this measure.

² The standard deviation measures the average distance between the mean and the values in a set of data. A relatively low standard deviation indicates that most of the values are near the mean. A relatively high standard deviation reflects a data set of values that are more spread out.

³ The items are: School Behavior, School Achievement and School Attendance.

⁴ FY 2019 and updated data from prior year's cohorts at the local level is reported in the "State and Local CSA Performance Measures" application found on the CSA website.

In comparison, about 49 percent of the FY 2018 cohort had a decrease in their CANS School Domain score. However, the average time between assessments for the FY 2018 cohort is 409 days. Improvement on CANS scores are expected to increase as time passes. This should be taken into account when comparing differences between the current and prior years' cohorts.

Percent of Youth with a Decrease in Child Behavioral/Emotional Needs Domain of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Score

In addition to the School Domain, the Child Behavioral/Emotional Needs Domain of the CANS assessment tool has been established as a key indicator. In the same manner as the School Domain, scores in this domain would be expected to decrease (as needs decrease) if interventions are having the desired impact.

Decrease in CANS Child Behavioral/Emotional Needs Domain Score

Score	Range (% of valid cases)	Number of Localities
1	Less than 40.6%	45
2	Between 40.6% and 45.0%	10
3	Between 45.0% and 49.4%	11
4	Greater than 49.4%	63



N = 129 localities; 3,825 youth; Mean = 45.0%; Standard Deviation = 4.4%

Note: 1 of the 130 localities were not rated due to not having any youth meeting the criteria for inclusion in the FY 2019 cohort (a baseline and a subsequent re-assessment by 12/31/19).

The CANS Child Behavioral/Emotional Needs Domain score is the average score of the 10 items that constitute the domain⁵ each ranked 0, 1, 2 or 3 with a lower score indicating the youth has less significant needs (or better functioning) in those areas. All children with a baseline (initial) assessment in FY 2019, and who did not have any assessments in previous fiscal years, have been assigned to the FY 2019 cohort. Only youth who have had at least one subsequent re-assessment (as of December 31, 2019) have been included in this report (as time elapses and additional youth in the FY 2019 cohort receive re-assessments, the number in the cohort will grow and the outcomes recalculated). The baseline assessment score was compared to the most recent assessment. For each locality, the percent of youth with a decrease in this difference was calculated. The average time between assessments was 228 days. Statewide, this indicator showed that 45.0 percent of the FY 2019 cohort had a decrease (or improvement) in their CANS Child Behavioral/Emotional Needs Domain score. Seventy-four localities (57%) scored at or above the mean and 55 localities (43%) scored below the mean on this measure.

Similarly, about 50 percent of the FY 2018 cohort had a decrease in their CANS Child Behavioral/ Emotional Needs Domain score. The average time between assessments for the FY 2018 cohort was 409 days

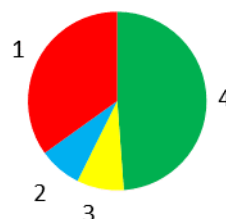
⁵ The items are: Psychosis, Impulsivity/Hyperactivity, Depression, Anxiety, Oppositional, Conduct, Adjustment to Trauma, Anger Control, Substance Use and Eating Disturbance.

**Percent of Youth with a Decrease in Child Strengths Domain of the
Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Score**

Along with the School Domain and the Child Behavioral/Emotional Needs Domain of the CANS assessment tool, the performance in scores in the Child Strengths Domain has been included in this report. Children with notable strengths tend to function better even if significant needs are present. In a similar manner as the School and Child Behavioral/Emotional Needs Domains, scores in this domain would be expected to decrease (as strengths increase) if interventions are having the desired impact.

Decrease in CANS Child Strengths Domain Score

Score	Range (% of valid cases)	Number of Localities
1	Less than 50.9%	49
2	Between 50.9% and 55.3%	14
3	Between 55.3% and 59.7%	14
4	Greater than 59.7%	52



N = 129 localities; 3,825 youth; Mean = 55.3%; Standard Deviation = 4.4%

Note: 1 of the 130 localities were not rated due to not having any youth meeting the criteria for inclusion in the FY 2019 cohort (a baseline and a subsequent re-assessment by 12/31/19).

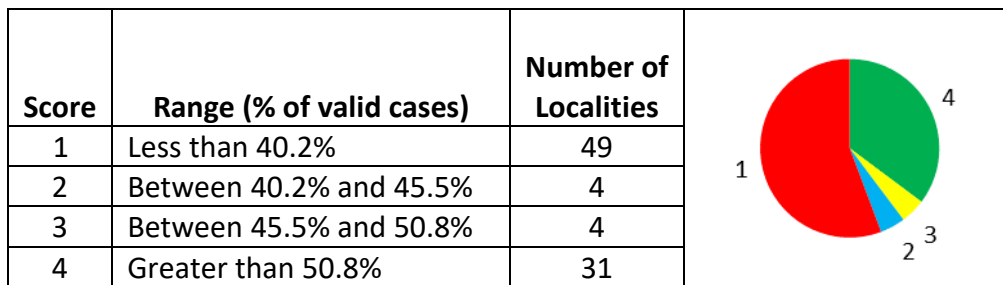
The CANS Child Strengths Domain score is the average score of the 11 items that constitute the domain⁶ each ranked 0, 1, 2 or 3 with a lower score indicating the youth has greater strengths (or better functioning) in those areas. All children with a baseline (initial) assessment in FY 2019, and who did not have any assessments in previous fiscal years, have been assigned to the FY 2019 cohort. Only youth who have had at least one subsequent re-assessment (as of December 31, 2019) have been included in this report (as time elapses and additional youth in the FY 2019 cohort receive re-assessments, the number in the cohort will grow and the outcomes recalculated). The baseline assessment score was compared to the most recent assessment. For each locality, the percent of youth with a decrease in this difference was calculated. The average time between assessments was 228 days. Statewide, this indicator showed that 55.3 percent of the FY 2019 cohort had a decrease (or improvement) in their CANS Child Strengths Domain score. Sixty-six localities (51%) scored at or above the mean and 63 localities (49%) scored below the mean on this measure. Correspondingly, about 60 percent of the FY 2018 cohort had a decrease in their CANS Child Strengths Domain score. The average time between assessments for the FY 2018 cohort was 409 days.

⁶ The items are: Family, Interpersonal, Optimism, Educational, Vocational, Talents/Interests, Spiritual/Religious, Community Life, Relationship Permanence, Child Involvement with Care, and Natural Supports.

**Percent of Youth Receiving Intensive Care Coordination Services Against
All Youth Placed in Residential Settings**

Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) is an evidence-informed service (also known as High Fidelity Wraparound) defined by the SEC as appropriate for children at risk of entering, or placed in residential care. The intent of ICC is to prevent the need for residential placement, shorten the length of residential placements, strengthen discharge planning and community reintegration, and improve results for children at high-risk for negative outcomes. In 2014, the SEC identified a target for this indicator at 75 percent.

Utilization of ICC



N = 88 localities; Mean = 45.5%; Standard Deviation = 5.3%

Note: 42 of the 130 localities were not rated due to low sample size. See footnote 5 below.

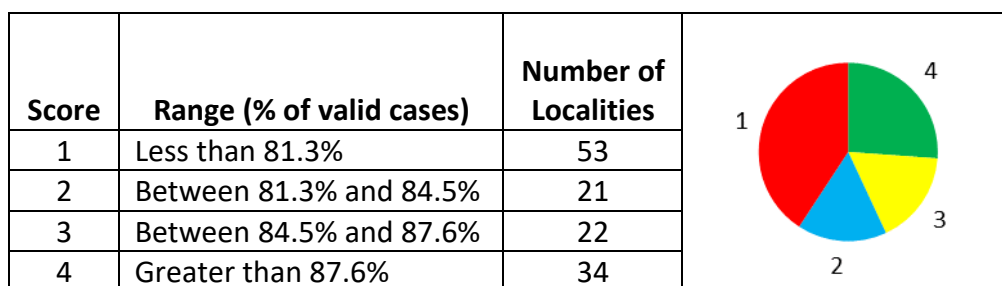
This performance measure weighs a locality’s utilization of ICC services relative to the number of youth placed in a residential care setting during the year. Statewide, the average was 45.5 percent in FY 2019, up from 41.2 percent in FY 2018. Thirty-five localities met or exceeded the state average, while 53 localities were below the state average.⁷ A majority of localities (49 or 56%) received a score of one on this measure, indicating performance more than one standard deviation below the state average. Twenty-three of the 88 localities (26%) met or exceeded the 75 percent target. This is about three percent fewer than FY 2018 (29%), when 24 of 84 localities met or exceeded the target.

⁷ Localities with no youth receiving ICC and six or fewer youth place in residential care were excluded from the calculations and not ranked to avoid misrepresentation due to low sample size.

**Percent of Youth Receiving Only Community Based Services of
All Youth Receiving CSA Funded Services**

The CSA has long-supported the principle of serving youth in their homes and home communities as a centerpiece of the system of care approach. This indicator assesses the extent to which this is realized. Youth who, in FY 2019, received only community-based services through CSA (no residential or congregate care) are counted from the entire population served. In FY 2019, 84.5 percent of all CSA youth receiving only community based services. This is the fifth straight year this indicator has increased (71.4% in FY 2015, 76.2% in FY 2016, 82.6% in FY 2017 and 83.7% in FY 2018).

Community Based Services



N = 130 localities; Mean = 84.5%; Standard Deviation = 3.2%

This performance measure considers the proportion of those receiving only community-based services to all youth served through the CSA. Fifty-six localities (43%) scored above the state average and 74 localities (57%) scored lower than the average. In all 130 localities, at least half of the CSA youth received only community-based services.

Outcomes Related to Foster Care⁸

A majority (54 percent) of children served through the CSA in FY 2019 were referred due to involvement in Virginia’s child welfare system through local departments of social services. The state Department of Social Services (VDSS) has established multiple indicators for children in the foster care system. The CSA has adopted two of these indicators in its performance measurement model.

Percent of Children in Foster Care in Family-Based Placements

Best practices in child welfare suggest that children who are removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect or other reasons are best served in family-based foster care settings. These are family and family-like settings with limited number of children as opposed to group homes or other larger congregate care settings. The VDSS has established a target that 85 percent of the children in foster care are placed in a family-based placement.

Children in Foster Care in Family-Based Placements

Score	Range (% of valid cases)	Number of Localities	
2	Less than 80.0%	51	
3	Between 80.0% and 84.9%	31	
4	Greater than or equal to 85.0%	47	

N = 129; Mean = 81.3%; Target = 85.0%

Note: 1 of the 130 localities were not rated due to not having any youth meeting the criteria for inclusion.

Statewide performance on this indicator was about 81 percent, or four percent below the VDSS established target, at the end of FY 2019. This year’s indicator is slightly greater than in FY 2018 (80.9 in FY 2018 and 81.3 in FY 2019). Localities received a score of 4 when the target was met or exceeded, a score of 3 if performance was below, but within five percent of the target, and a score of 2 if performance was more than five percent below the target. About 60 percent of localities (47) either met or exceeded, or were within five percent of the target (31). This is comparable to FY 2018, when about 54 percent of localities (49 out of 128) either met or exceeded, or were within five percent of the target (20). Fifty-one localities (40%) were more

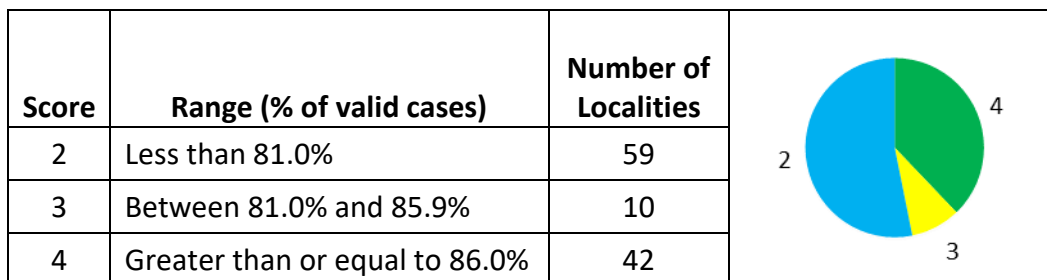
⁸ The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) is comprised of 120 local agencies, with some covering multiple jurisdictions. The VDSS reports foster care outcomes at the agency level. In this report, each locality within a multiple jurisdiction agency was assigned the overall DSS jurisdictions’ percentage.

than five percent below the target. In FY 2018, there were 59 localities (46%) that were more than five percent below the target.

Percent of Children Who Exit from Foster Care to a Permanent Living Arrangement

Children who “exit” or “age out” of the foster care system without establishing a permanent family connection (typically through adoption, reunification with their biological family or placement with a relative) are known to have considerably poorer life outcomes. Achieving permanency is a critical indicator of performance for the child welfare system. The VDSS has established a target that 86 percent of the children in foster care “exit” to a permanent living arrangement before “aging out”.

Children Who Exit from Foster Care to a Permanent Living Arrangement



N = 111; Mean = 76.3%; Target = 86.0%

Note: 19 of the 130 localities were not rated due to not having any youth meeting the criteria for inclusion.

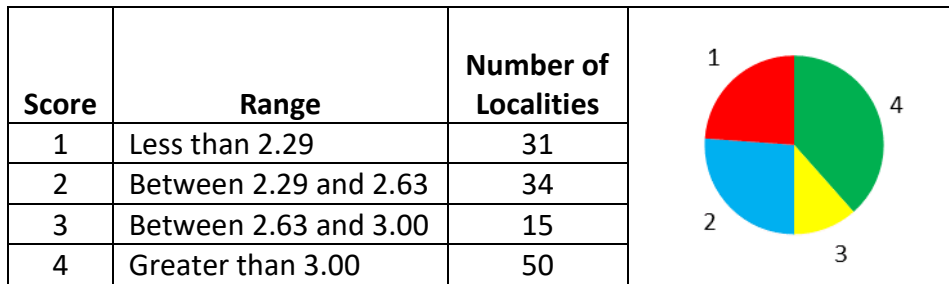
For FY 2019, the percent who exited to permanency statewide was 76.3 percent or about ten percent below the target. In comparison, about 77 percent exited to a permanent living situation in FY 2018. The majority of jurisdictions (59 or 53%) were more than five percent below this target⁹. About 38 percent (42) of localities met or exceeded the target. In FY 2018, 69 of 117 localities (59%) were more than five percent below the target and 27 percent (32) met or exceeded the target.

⁹ Localities with no youth exiting foster care to a permanent living arrangement and having six or fewer total youth exiting from foster care were excluded from the calculations and not ranked to avoid misrepresentation due to low sample size.

Composite Performance Measure

A composite measure for each locality was derived to provide a summary of a locality’s scores on as many of the seven performance indicators as possible. The composite performance measure score is calculated using the average of the seven¹⁰ individual outcome indicators. Localities are assigned a composite score based on the average of their seven outcome measure scores: 1 is the lowest 25 percent of scores; 2 is the between 25 percent and the midpoint (50%), 3 is between the midpoint and 75 percent and 4 is the highest group between 75 and 100 percent. Sixty-five localities received composite performance scores of either one (31) or two (34) and 65 localities received a score of either three (15) or four (50).

Composite Locality Scores



Differences in Performance Measures Based on Population Density, Geography and Income

The effects of differences in population density, geographic region¹¹ and income for the seven performance measures and the composite score are shown in Appendix 1. Localities classified as small or medium population density (less than about 376 people per square mile), from the Central region, or with “medium” per capita incomes (between \$25,229 and \$31,594) had the highest composite scores. Conversely, localities with large population density (greater than 376 people), from the Western region, or “small” per capita incomes (less than \$25,229) had the lowest composite score.

¹⁰ In cases where a locality did not receive a score for all outcome measures, the average was taken of only those outcome measures for which they do have scores.

¹¹ Geographic regions were aligned with the five VDSS defined regions.

Conclusion

Measuring the performance of the Children’s Services Act is a critical aspect in determining if CSA is achieving its stated goals and objectives. This report provides an update and additions to reporting completed in FY 2015-18. These performance benchmarks are treated with statistical analysis with the intent to provide information to CSA stakeholders and the State Executive Council about areas where there is a high level of performance, as well as areas where needs for improvement can be identified.

In addition to the state level data summarized in this report, the Office of Children’s Services has developed a web-based application allowing individual localities to view their performance on the seven measures and compare their outcomes to both the state average as well as other localities.¹² That application is available on the CSA website at www.csa.virginia.gov (see the Statistics and Publication > Reports and Publications menu). It is hoped that local CSA programs will utilize this application to identify and build upon areas of strength, as well as developing strategies to improve performance where appropriate.

¹² See Appendix 2 of this report for the FY 2017 – FY 2019 statewide results displayed through the web-based application.

Appendix 1

Performance Measure by Population Density, Regions and Per Capita Income

	CANS School	CANS Behavior	CANS Strengths	ICC	CBS	Foster Care Family-Based	Foster Care Permanency	Composite Score
Population Density (2019)¹								
Small (Less than 62.8 people/sq. mile)	48.41%	48.32%	55.78%	19.54%	83.09%	79.10%	79.50%	2.66
Medium (Between 62.8 and 375.9 people/sq. mile)	46.94%	48.62%	56.80%	44.66%	82.81%	82.28%	77.79%	2.69
Large (Greater than 375.9 people/sq. mile)	45.23%	42.13%	54.40%	51.33%	85.70%	81.32%	74.20%	2.62
Regions²								
Central	47.16%	47.06%	55.85%	38.51%	83.56%	80.77%	77.51%	2.78
Eastern	46.58%	45.56%	55.40%	47.15%	84.21%	80.92%	76.54%	2.72
Northern	46.33%	45.85%	55.70%	45.37%	84.05%	81.63%	76.49%	2.53
Piedmont	46.90%	46.20%	55.55%	40.72%	83.94%	80.71%	77.83%	2.71
Western	47.36%	47.29%	55.85%	32.93%	83.47%	80.52%	77.99%	2.50
Per Capita Income (2018)³								
Small (Less than \$25,229)	47.06%	46.37%	55.54%	38.53%	83.88%	80.49%	77.75%	2.54
Medium (Between \$25,229 and \$31,594)	47.04%	46.69%	55.73%	39.12%	83.72%	80.76%	77.65%	2.72
Large (Greater than \$31,594)	46.48%	46.07%	55.73%	44.84%	83.96%	81.48%	76.53%	2.71

¹ The county population density was calculated by dividing population by square miles of land. The area and estimated population data are from the US Census Bureau. The counties were grouped in to small, medium and large based on the lower, middle and upper thirds of the county density data.

² The regions were defined as those utilized by the Virginia Department of Social Services.

³ Per capita income data is estimated by the US Census Bureau via the American Community Survey. The average margin of error for counties in Virginia is 6.7%. To estimate the two combined geographic areas of Fairfax County/Fairfax City/Falls Church and Greensville/Emporia, the individual counties' per capita income was multiplied by 2018 county population estimates to obtain total county income. For the two combined geographic areas, the sum of individual total county incomes was divided by the sum of the individual county populations. The counties were grouped in to small, medium and large based on the lower, middle and upper thirds of the county per capita income.

Appendix 2

CSA Performance Measures - FY2017-2019

Year	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019							
Locality	51.7%	49.2%	46.2%	52.7%	50.1%	45.0%	60.3%	60.3%	59.6%	55.3%	34.0%	41.2%	45.5%	82.6%	81.7%	84.5%	81.0%	80.0%	81.3%	82.4%	77.1%	76.3%	2.67	2.57	2.66
Statewide	51.7%	49.2%	46.2%	52.7%	50.1%	45.0%	60.3%	60.3%	59.6%	55.3%	34.0%	41.2%	45.5%	82.6%	81.7%	84.5%	81.0%	80.0%	81.3%	82.4%	77.1%	76.3%	2.67	2.57	2.66

Locality Performance Measures with Rankings

