# Maryland Pyramid Model – Our Implementation Story

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The Maryland Pyramid Model (PM) team is currently piloting implementation sites in five early childhood settings across the state. We have organized our implementation and evaluation activities using an adaptation of the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) framework[1].

Exploration

1 Statewide application

✓ Readiness checklist developed, based on NCPMI program-wide implementation considerations
✓ Nov 2022-Jan 2023: 17 sites applied
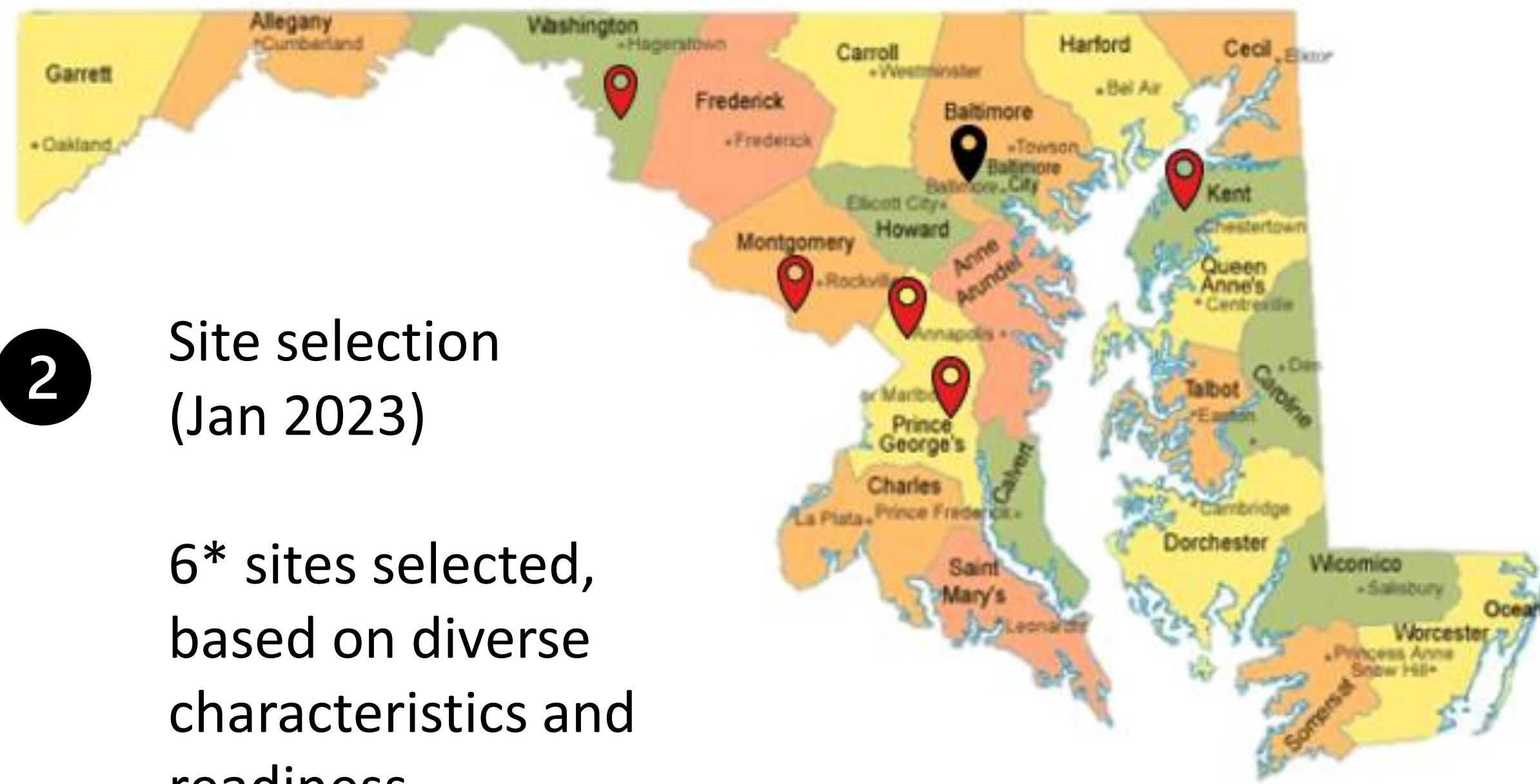
2 Site selection (Jan 2023)

6* sites selected, based on diverse characteristics and readiness

*Black pin represents one site that closed during the Exploration stage, leaving us with 5 sites

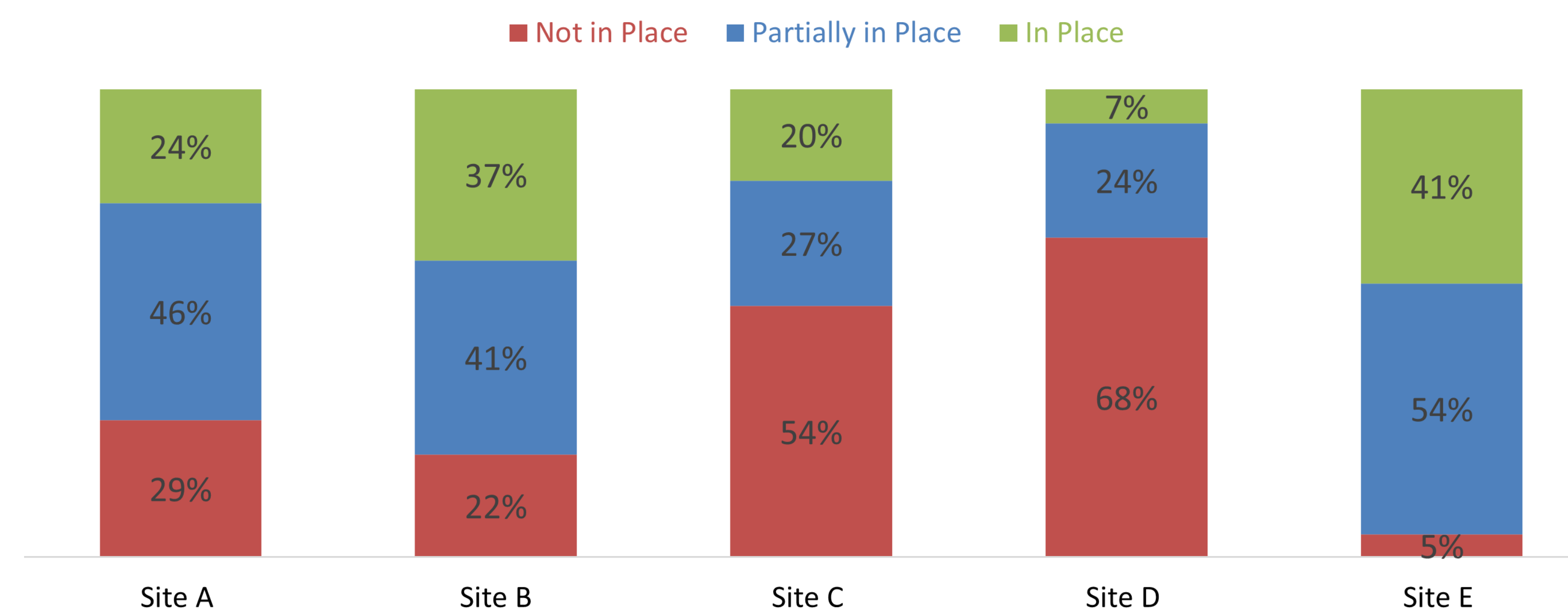| Site	# children served	# staff	Program type
A	51-100	11-50	National franchise
B	51-100	11-50	Black-owned, community child care center
C	11-50	11-50	Black-owned, community child care center
D	101+	11-50	Religiously affiliated private child care
E	101+	101+	Early Head Start & Head Start (*Implementing PM for 5 years)

3 Staff buy-in survey
✓ 4 items: interest in SEL practices, training, coaching, program wide initiative
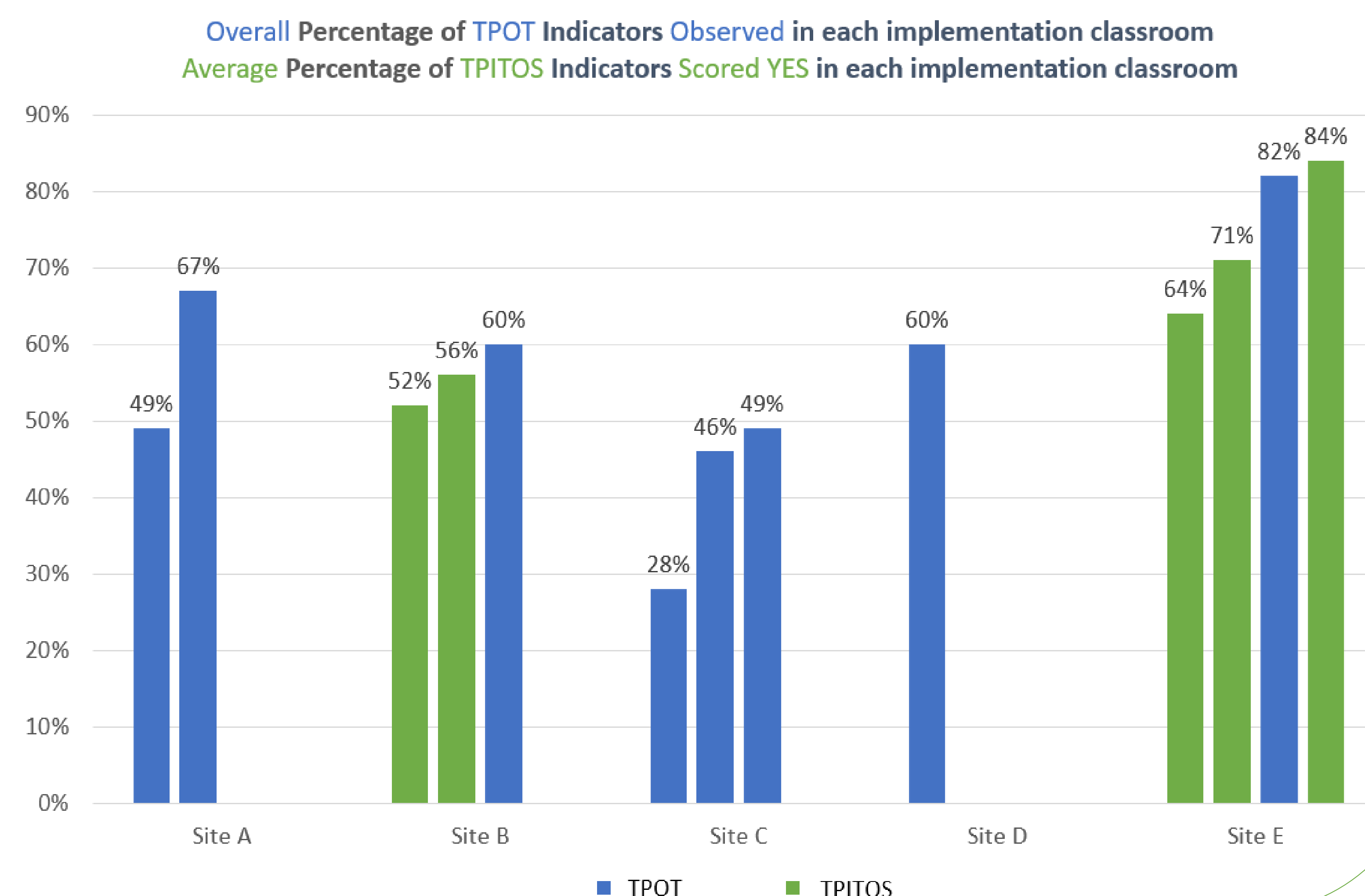
Installation

✓ Identified coaches
  • Trained in PM, Practice Based Coaching, and the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) and/or the Teaching Pyramid Infants and Toddlers Observation Scale (TPITOS)
  • Preference given to PM Trainers in the State (though this was not a requirement)
✓ Coach responsibilities
  • Attend monthly Community of Practice to learn about facilitating local leadership team, administering Benchmarks of Quality (BOQ) annually, and developing implementation work plans
  • Work directly with classrooms to conduct PM observations and do 1:1 coaching with teaching staff
✓ Established local PM leadership teams at each site

Percent of BOQ indicators in place at start

Legend: Not in Place (red), Partially in Place (blue), In Place (green)

Site	Not in Place	Partially in Place	In Place
Site A	29%	46%	24%
Site B	22%	41%	37%
Site C	54%	27%	20%
Site D	68%	24%	7%
Site E	5%	54%	41%

Initial Implementation

- **Implementation sites are currently in this stage**
- Local leadership teams are:
  - Meeting monthly
  - Identifying program wide goals from BOQ
  - Establishing a work plan
  - Completing the BOQ yearly
- Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) is occurring at least monthly in implementation classrooms
- TPOTs and TPITOS are completed 2x/year (graph shows results from initial observations completed October 2023-March 2024)

Overall Percentage of TPOT Indicators Observed in each implementation classroom
Average Percentage of TPITOS Indicators Scored YES in each implementation classroom

Site	TPOT	TPITOS
Site A	49%	67%
Site B	52%	56%, 60%
Site C	28%	46%, 49%
Site D	60%	
Site E	64%	71%, 82%, 84%

Looking Ahead

Full Implementation

Sites will be at this stage when…
- Internal PM trainer is identified
- Internal coach is trained in PBC
- Leadership team is continuing to meet monthly
- At least 80% of BOQ items have a rating of 2
- TPOT/ TPITOS ratings are at 80% fidelity

Sustainability & Scale-Up

Our team will…
- Identify a plan for training/ coaching new staff
- Identify a plan for phasing out external support
- Identify a plan for funding ongoing TA/ coaching
- Identify plan for ongoing data collection/ evaluation, with input from program coaches and the State Leadership Team
- Identify additional implementation classrooms
- Support internal coaches
- Better integrate IECMHC and PM efforts

[1]National Implementation Research Network (2020). Implementation Stages Planning Tool. Chapel Hill, NC: National Implementation Research Network, FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The Maryland Pyramid Model Implementation sites came to this project ready and willing to engage. In December of 2022, each program embarked on a **self-assessment**, reflecting on existing practices and areas for growth. This commitment to continuous improvement was further solidified by their willingness to establish monthly leadership teams with diverse representation – teaching staff, administrators, and families. In addition, each site committed to promoting ongoing professional learning, and allowing observation and feedback from an outside coach. Each program also agreed to incorporating feedback from staff and families. Recognizing the importance of dedicated time and support, the sites committed to providing staff with time and coverage to participate in coaching and feedback sessions, as well as having the same staff consistently in the same classroom. This allows teachers to fully benefit from the program and implement strategies effectively.

The five Maryland pilot sites all have established **leadership teams** that meet consistently. These teams, comprised of program administrators and teachers, play a crucial role. Our sites are aware of the importance of family member representation on the leadership team and are all working to ensure family member participation. These leadership teams are and will continue to be the guiding force, ensuring the program's fidelity and providing ongoing support throughout the implementation process. Each site's commitment to this initial step of creating a leadership team demonstrates a deep understanding of the importance of collaboration and shared vision. In addition to local leadership teams, the **Maryland Pyramid Model State Leadership Team (SLT)** continues to meet regularly to support the sustainability and scale-up of the implementation site program. As an example, to support future implementation sites, the Implementation and Demonstration Site subcommittee of the SLT has been working on an implementation guide based on feedback from program coaches (who have been invited to join the subcommittee).

Our Pyramid Model implementation sites are gaining momentum as they move towards several important benchmarks. In addition to working diligently to expand leadership teams to include family members, sites will develop strategies for their involvement in **teaming with staff**. This collaborative approach ensures families have a voice and empowers them to participate in creating individualized support plans for their children. Furthermore, creating opportunities for teachers to problem-solve with colleagues and families is a priority. This fosters shared learning and the development of team-based strategies for addressing persistent challenging behaviors. Sites are committed to utilizing effective family partnering strategies when concerns arise, ensuring a unified approach to supporting children. All sites are also working towards a child **discipline policy** that includes promoting social and emotional skills, positive guidance, and prevention approaches to eliminate suspension and expulsion. By prioritizing these areas for progress, our implementation sites are creating a culture of collaboration and building a strong foundation for success.

While all participating sites have established leadership teams, and are working towards teaming with families, a key area for growth has been identified: **data collection, monitoring, and its application** to support both children and teachers. Before becoming a pilot implementation site, all sites committed to participating in programmatic, classroom, and child data collection to monitor and evaluate the pilot's effectiveness. This evaluation plan includes TPOT/TPITOS data collection twice annually; a Suspension, Expulsion, and Exclusionary Practices Discipline Checklist to be completed monthly; a coaching log completed monthly; and Benchmarks of Quality (BOQ) rated annually. Using data as a tool to track implementation fidelity and behavior incidents will give program leaders a deeper understanding of what's working well and where adjustments might be needed. This information is crucial for tailoring support systems to fit the specific needs of each site. We are confident that by prioritizing data-based decision making, our sites will achieve not only strong implementation fidelity but also a nurturing environment that empowers teachers and promotes positive social emotional development for the children in their classrooms.

We are excited to see how these sites build upon this strong base and progress through the remaining benchmarks!

To learn more about the Maryland Pyramid Model's recent work, please see our [2022 Annual Report.](#)

And to stay updated on all things Maryland Pyramid Model, please visit our [website](#) (soon to be updated!). You can also contact us at piec@ssw.umaryland.edu.