# Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Alliance Districts

## Year 2 Application Amendment | Spring 2013

Form Number: ED701

C.G.S. § 10-262u

Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education
Debra Kurshan, Chief Turnaround Officer
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CONNECTICUT

STATE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
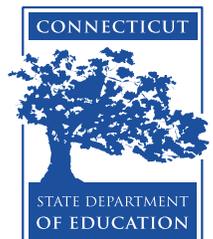
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# Year 2 Alliance District Application Amendment
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**SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATIONS**

1. School Improvement Plan Template *(for districts with Review/Turnaround schools)*
2. TIME Collaborative Application *(for districts with Review/Turnaround schools)*
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*\*\*\*Please find supplemental application materials on the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)
Web site at:  http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts\*\*\**

# PART I: ALLIANCE DISTRICT APPLICATION OVERVIEW

## 1. Alliance District Program Overview

Public Act 12-116 established a new process for identifying 30 Alliance Districts — the districts with the lowest district performance index (DPI) scores statewide — and targeted increased Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding for these districts. The Alliance District program is designed to help districts raise student performance and close achievement gaps by pursuing bold and innovative reform strategies. Each district's receipt of its designated ECS allocation is conditional upon district submission and the Commissioner of Education's approval of an Alliance District plan in the context of the district's overall strategy to improve academic achievement.

Alliance District plans are locally conceived, evidence-based reform plans that propose detailed initiatives for improving student achievement. The CSDE will review district plans on an annual basis and approve plans that align with the goals of the program. Approval of plans in years two through five will be predicated upon progress towards the described Year 1 performance targets, among other factors. Proposals for the use of Alliance District funding will be considered in the context of the quality of the overall strategy for reform proposed in the plan, as well as the degree of alignment between the proposed use of funds and the overall district strategy.

## 2. Application Components

The Year 2 Alliance District application amendment is mandatory for all Alliance Districts. Those districts with "Review" and "Turnaround" schools must also submit school improvement plans for the identified schools. Priority School Districts must also submit grant renewal applications. Please read the following requirements carefully:

- **Year 2 Alliance District Plan Amendment:** All Alliance Districts must submit a Year 2 Alliance District plan amendment, completing the application amendment template contained in this document. The Year 2 amendment requires districts to reflect upon Year 1 progress and identify an aligned and coherent set of district-level priorities for the second year of implementation.

- **Review and Turnaround School Plans:** The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver identified a subset of Connecticut's schools as needing significant intervention and improvement. Specifically, those schools classified as "Turnaround" or "Review" schools must develop and submit school improvement plans as a part of the Year 2 Alliance District package. Districts must submit plans for all of their Turnaround schools and at least half of their Review schools that will begin implementation in fall 2013. Appendix B provides a list of all of the district's Review and Turnaround schools. Districts must indicate the strategy each school will pursue to dramatically improve student achievement. Districts may: (1) develop a new plan for the school; (2) submit a preexisting school plan that has shown evidence of results; or (3) apply to participate in the TIME Collaborative. Schools may also have the opportunity to apply for the K-3 Literacy Initiative; more information about this initiative is forthcoming. Please find forms for these school-level plans on the CSDE's Web site at: http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts.

- **Priority School District Grant:** Priority Districts must complete a grant renewal application. This should align to and reinforce all other district plans, including the Alliance District plan. Please access the grant application on the CSDE's Web site: http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts.

## 3. Application Instructions

Review and follow all directions carefully when completing the application. Complete all of the required sections. A draft of the Alliance District Year 2 application amendment *must be postmarked by June 28, 2013, at 5 p.m. (EST)*. The submission of the final draft must include one original and three (3) additional hard copies. Districts must also provide an electronic submission either via e-mail or flash drive. In the event that a district determines that it will not or cannot meet this deadline, the district should notify the Chief Turnaround Officer immediately (see contact information at the bottom of this page).

PLEASE NOTE: All applications become the property of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and are subject to the rules of the Freedom of Information Act.

| **Mailing Address:** | **Overnight Mailing and Hand Delivery:** |
|---|---|
| Connecticut State Department of Education<br>Turnaround Office<br>P.O. Box 2219, Room 249<br>Hartford, CT 06145-2219<br>Attention: Debra Kurshan | Connecticut State Department of Education<br>Turnaround Office<br>165 Capitol Avenue, Room 249<br>Hartford, CT 06106<br>Attention: Debra Kurshan |

## 4. Timeline Summary

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Districts participate in the Year 2 planning site visits facilitated by the CSDE | May 2013 |
| 2. CSDE releases the Year 2 Alliance District application | May 23, 2013 |
| 3. CSDE hosts a webinar explaining the Year 2 application | May 23, 2013 |
| 4. Districts complete a survey indicating proposed Year 2 priority areas | June 7, 2013 |
| 5. Districts submit TIME Collaborative applications (optional) | June 14, 2013 |
| 6. Districts submit Year 2 Alliance District application amendments | June 28, 2013 |
| 7. Districts submit school plans for their Review and Turnaround schools | July 26, 2013 |
| 8. Districts submit Priority School District applications | August 16, 2013 |

## 5. Questions

Any and all questions regarding the Alliance District program should be directed to:

<div align="center">

Debra Kurshan
Chief Turnaround Officer
Connecticut State Department of Education
Telephone: 860-713-6777 | E-mail: Debra.Kurshan@ct.gov

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# PART II: YEAR 2 ALLIANCE DISTRICT PLAN AMENDMENT

## 1. District Contact Information

**Instructions:** Using the space provided below, please identify a main point of contact for the Year 2 Alliance District plan amendment and provide that individual's contact information.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name of School District: | Waterbury School District | | |
| Name of Grant Contact Person: | Louise Allen Brown, J.D., M.P.A., Grant Writer | | |
| Phone # of Contact Person: | 203-346-3506 | | |
| E-mail of Contact Person: | lbrown@waterbury.k12.ct.us | | |
| Address of Contact Person: | Street Address: | 236 Grand Street | |
| | City: | Waterbury | Zip Code: 06702 |
| Name of Superintendent: | Dr. Kathleen M. Ouellette | | |
| Signature of Superintendent: | | Date: | |
| Name of Board Chair: | Commissioner Charles Stango, President of Waterbury Board of Education | | |
| Signature of Board Chair: | | Date: | |
| Local Board Approval of Plan:[1] | ☐ Yes     ☐ No | | |
| Date of Plan Presentation to the Local Board: | | | |
| Priority School District? | ☒ Yes     ☐ No | | |

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[1] Due to the iterative process by which Alliance District plans will be submitted, reviewed and re-submitted, seeking local board of education approval may be most appropriate toward the conclusion of the application process. Districts must obtain board approval, but should submit completed plans regardless of whether approval has been obtained.

## 2. District Vision, Mission & Values

**Instructions:** Please provide the district's vision and mission statements below. Insert the district's core values or guiding beliefs that are to be embodied by all staff, students and members of the district community. This can come directly from your district strategic plan or district Improvement plan.

What is the district's **vision statement**?

All Waterbury students learn and achieve at high levels and are prepared to meet and conquer the challenges they will face upon high school graduation.

What is the district's **mission statement**?

With the support of strong instructional leaders, highly-qualified Waterbury teachers deliver data-driven, engaging and effective instruction, using rigorous curricula aligned with Common Core State Standards, to facilitate achievement at high levels for all students. In collaboration with Waterbury families and other stakeholders, the Waterbury School District prepares students to be successful in college and/or careers of their choice.

What are the district's core **beliefs or values**?

We believe that all students can learn and achieve at high levels.

We believe that students and families deserve a safe, secure, ad inviting learning environment at school.

We believe that student achievement is facilitated when schools and families forge partnerships to help children and youth to succeed.

We believe that engaging partners from the community at large in the educational process will benefit student learning.

We believe that low-performing schools can turnaround with a strong plan and district support.

Describe the district's overarching strategy and/or **theory of change** to dramatically improve student achievement district-wide.  The theory of change should describe a core set of inputs or strategies leading to several desired outcomes.  What major changes or shifts will result in improved student outcomes district-wide?

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## THEORY OF ACTION – Waterbury School District

"The primary goal for our educational leaders is to develop and sustain the essential skills and effective strategies necessary to assist all Waterbury students in achieving at high levels.  Waterbury has identified Central Office Transformation as the innovation that will elevate the district from its current state, to a district marked by excellence in teaching and high achievement by all groups of learners.

At the heart of the work of Central Office Transformation is serving students' learning.  Leaders acting to steward the work of central office transformation consistently convey that the work is successful only to the extent that it matters for improving learning for children and young people.  All principals, in partnership with their district instructional leadership directors, receive leadership coaching from accomplished instructional leaders to increase their individual skill in guiding and supporting effective teaching for all students.

In the first year of the reform effort, we redesigned our central support to emphasize a school-based model using a school reform team structure with job-embedded support; we also began working cross-functionally as an organization. Everyone must now own the work, not only at the leadership level and principal's level, but at every level of the organization. We must all learn new ways to work differently, and sustain the reforms over time….

Creating entire systems of excellent schools requires the exercise of leadership throughout district systems. Our close examination of central office practice clearly suggests that work at both levels is absolutely essential to the creation of a system of schools that can serve our students….

➢ If Instructional Leadership Directors work with principals individually and in learning networks to strengthen principals' instructional leadership, then all principals will strengthen their instructional leadership skills, encourage and promote high quality teaching in every classroom and significant improvements in teaching and learning district-wide will result….

➢ If all principals become excellent instructional leaders with the capacity to encourage and promote high quality teaching in every classroom, then high quality teaching in every classroom will result and thus, all students will be achieving at high levels….

➢ If Central Office leaders focus their attention directly on supporting improved principal instructional leadership and classroom practice, then powerful/highly effective instruction for all students will result….

➢ If Central Office creates "learning-focused partnerships" with principals through which all principals receive ongoing, personalized, differentiated supports for their development as instructional leaders from dedicated, executive-level central office staff, then all principals will strengthen their instructional leadership and we will achieve significant improvements in teaching and learning district-wide….

➢ If we provide embedded professional development for administrators and teachers related to key curriculum and instruction reforms, and design teacher evaluation, educational rounds, and school walk-throughs to identify both understanding and implementation of those key reforms, then teachers will improve their instructional practice and student achievement will increase…

➢ If we organize central office to provide support for principals and teachers, and expect accountability by principals and teachers for the quality of teaching and learning in each classroom, then we will increase district-wide leadership capacity to support continuous improvement in teaching and learning, and ultimately improvement in student achievement…."

  [Reference:  Center for Educational Leadership, University of Washington, College of Education]

NOTE – Additional info related to evidence to be examined to test the theory of action can be provided.

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## 3. District Data Profile

**Instructions:** Complete the district data profile below by providing student and staff information for the current school year (2012-13), and aggregate performance data from the past four school years (2009-10 to present).

| District Overview (2012-13): | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Enrollment: | 18385 | | Per Pupil Allocation:[2] | | $14,419.33 |
| Total # Schools: | 28 | | Operating Budget: | | $155,625,000. |
| # Review Schools:[3] | 11 | | # Turnaround Schools: | | 2 |

| Student Demographics (2012-13): | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % White: | 21.85% | | % F/R Lunch: | | 81.025% |
| % Black: | 24.70% | | % IEP: | | 5.95% |
| % Hispanic: | 48.27% | | % ELL: | | 11.29% |
| % Other: | 5.18% | | Attendance Rate: | | 93.19% |

| District Personnel (2012-13): | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| # Certified School-Based Staff: | 1520 | | Median Teacher Salary:[4] | | $59,241. |
| Student/Teacher Ratio:[5] | 12.09 | | # Central Office Administrators: | | 11 |
| # School Administrators: | 87 | | # Central Office Support Staff: | | 25 |

| Student Achievement: | | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| District Performance Index: | | n/a | n/a | | |
| Math | Gr. 3 at/above Goal: | 44.3% | 49.7% | 47.0% | n/a |
| | Gr. 5 at/above Goal: | 61.8% | 56.0% | 47.0% | n/a |
| | Gr. 8 at/above Goal: | 28.0% | 28.5% | 30.6% | n/a |
| | Gr. 10 at/above Goal: | 10.9% | 11.4% | 11.9% | n/a |
| Reading | Gr. 3 at/above Goal: | 32.9% | 39.3% | 35.0% | n/a |
| | Gr. 5 at/above Goal: | 39.3% | 35.5% | 40.8% | n/a |
| | Gr. 8 at/above Goal: | 42.7% | 47.4% | 53.4% | n/a |
| | Gr. 10 at/above Goal: | 13.9% | 13.6% | 18.3% | n/a |
| Chronic Absenteeism Rate:[6] | | n/a | n/a | n/a | 19.39% |
| Graduation Rate: | | 95.4 | 92.6 | 89.9 | n/a |
| % Pursuing Higher Education: | | 73.79% | 71.73% | 78.28% | n/a |

[2] Per pupil allocation should include all sources of funds (including local operating, state, federal and private funds).
[3] Review category includes "Review" and "Focus" schools.
[4] Median salary should reflect the median for all certified staff.
[5] Ratio should include all certified staff.
[6] Chronic absenteeism is defined as the percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of school days.

## 4. District Needs Analysis

**Instructions:** Using the spaces provided below, identify the district's greatest strengths and areas of need using findings from the CSDE planning site visit and other relevant district information and data. Be sure to include a root cause analysis identifying the factors contributing to current performance levels. Although you are encouraged to consider strengths and growth areas across all four district domains, you may choose to prioritize and are <u>not required</u> to cite strengths and growth areas in each of the four areas.

For the following domains, identify the district's greatest **strengths**.

| | |
|---|---|
| Academics | • Efforts to develop CCSS-aligned curricula<br>• Assessment Committee to establish Common Formative Assessments Progress monitoring system to ensure adherence to the Blueprint for Change<br>• Common planning time in grades K-8<br>• Professional development (PD) through early-release days and some literacy and math coaches<br>• Professional Development (PD) Committee to monitor the implementation of CCSS-aligned curricula in ELA and math |
| Human Capital | • New system of position control<br>• Central office reorganization and focus on student achievement and increased accountability<br>• Four new administrative positions (ILDs) to support principals and monitor student achievement<br>• New Supervisor of Talent and Professional Development and Improvements in talent recruitment and application processes<br>• Efficiency Study of District Human Resources Department<br>• Efficiency Study of School Business Office to assure spending is based on need |
| Operations | • Strong financial management with monthly spending reports<br>• Commitment to capital improvements<br>• School allocations now based on a per pupil ratio<br>• Alignment between district priorities and the budgeting process<br>• Successful grant writer and aggressive development strategy |

| | |
|---|---|
| Culture and Climate | • Commitment to family engagement (e.g., Parent Liaisons)<br>• System-wide PBIS implementation with coaches in all schools<br>• School Climate teams in all schools<br>• School Climate Surveys in schools (selected grades)<br>• Bridge to Success community collaborative to support workforce goals and wraparound services<br>• Community Groups consisting of community volunteers working with district staff |

For the following domains, identify the district's most significant **growth areas**.

| | |
|---|---|
| Academics | <ul><li>Student achievement in core content areas</li><li>Use of data to inform instruction</li><li>Differentiation of PD based on teacher need</li><li>SRBI process with consistent implementation</li><li>Assessment system and preparedness to transition toward Smarter Balanced Assessments</li><li>Student preparedness for electronic assessments</li><li>Time and resources to support the implementation of CCSS and the educator evaluation system</li><li>Online learning opportunities</li><li>ELL and/or dual-language programming</li></ul>*Root causes* that contribute to these areas for growth include the following:<br><br>The baseline School Performance Indices (SPI) for Waterbury Schools range from 39.6 to 83.2.  These scores have placed Waterbury among the 30 lowest-achieving school districts in Connecticut.  Waterbury has two schools applying for Commissioner's Network status, one focus school, and 10 review schools.  Only by improving student achievement in the core content areas will Waterbury move out of this group of lower-performing districts and onto the list of districts that have effectively implemented reform.<br><br>The district-wide data team established in 2012-13 has only started to identify data points that would facilitate educational decision-making across the schools in the district.  Continued work by this committee will be essential to the district realizing student achievement gains.  School-based data teams also provide critical information for administrators and teachers to use in making choices pertaining to site based improvements in teaching and learning.<br><br>The district 5D Assessment of staff professional development needs has revealed a number of  areas in which school leaders (and teachers) require differentiated and customized professional learning opportunities in order to build leadership capacity in the district.  Support to facilitate consistent staff use of SRBI process is among the identified PD needs.<br><br>To make student achievement gains, Waterbury will focus resources on supporting the implementation of revised ELA and Math curricula that is aligned with Common Core State Standards, and Smarter Balanced Assessments.  Until this summer, the teacher and administrator evaluation system did not place as much personal accountability on each administrator and teacher for student success.  The new Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plans, afford the district increased opportunity to assure greater accountability on the part of every educator, at every level, for student learning.<br><br>Waterbury has a number of special populations, including, for example,  PreK students and Alternative Education students.  Prior to the Alliance District plan a limited number of programs for those populations was available.  There are more preK aged children in Waterbury than can be accommodated at the district and private preK programs combined.  Achievement gaps exist between the general elementary school population, and students living in poverty and unlikely to be able to attend PreK programs for which families have to pay fees.  Waterbury students for whom alternative education programs are recommended have faced a previous lack of space for them at the district daytime alternative education program, limited access to online learning opportunities, and inflexible scheduling that is inconsistent with the kind of schedule in which we know our teens thrive.<br><br>The district has insufficient PreK classrooms for the number of PreK aged children in the community.  Central Office leaders realize there is a need to increase PreK classroom capacity in order to give students the robust academic start that could positively shape their elementary school years.  Options under consideration include opening a PreK center, perhaps by renovating a recently closed school in the City. |

<div style="writing-mode: vertical">Human Capital</div>

- Recruitment of high-quality administrators and teachers, including teachers for shortage areas (technology education, foreign languages, bilingual, special education, and library-media)
- Marketability and competiveness with other districts around attracting and retaining qualified educators
- Development of strong school leaders
- District capacity to support school turnaround efforts

*Root causes* that contribute to these areas for growth include the following:

Analysis of student achievement data demonstrates a trend over the past several years of only limited incremental gains resulting in persistent low academic achievement by most district schools compared to the State overall. Efforts to turnaround these trends have included attempts at hiring/assigning strong school leaders and highly effective teachers. However, previous recruitment efforts have been limited in scope and similarly limited in positive results. The district's rates of compensation for teachers and school administrators are most often lower than compensation in other districts in Connecticut. For this reason, even when teacher or administrator talent is identified through the application process, the district often cannot offer enough in annual compensation to attract that talent to accept a Waterbury position.

Building capacity of school leaders is a key growth area. With a new Supervisor of Talent and Professional Development now in place, the district is poised to move forward with improved talent recruitment that includes more effective marketing of the City's attributes to encourage prospective faculty to sign on to work in Waterbury. While the new Supervisor of Talent and PD implemented a more aggressive recruitment plan involving participation in multiple college and job fairs this year, further recruitment planning and marketing will be a part of the district's efforts to build leadership capacity. Additionally, the district will work to "grow our own" school leaders by implementing an aspiring school leaders program to prepare Waterbury teachers and new administrators to be highly effective educational leaders.

At this time the district lacks a dedicated turnaround schools officer. While the four ILDs are assigned to support a network of several schools, there is not a single central office team member dedicated to coordinating resources and supports for the lowest performing schools. There are twenty-eight schools in the district. With two schools having applied for designation as Commissioner's Network schools, one focus school and ten review schools, establishing greater central office support for those lower performing schools will be a priority for 2013-14.

| Operations | <ul><li>School technology infrastructure</li><li>Technology to support student testing</li><li>Electronic Time & Reporting System for Staff (attendance)</li><li>Alliance District spending</li><li>Efficiency study planned to assess equity and resource allocation</li></ul><br>*Root causes* that contribute to these areas for growth include the following:<br><br>Technology infrastructure needs to be updated.  For example, the wireless footprint at the schools is not adequate to facilitate learning with the use of technology, and student testing with computers, online.  There are also inadequate numbers of up-to-date computers in classrooms and computer labs.  And, the schools need tablets to facilitate student testing.<br><br>Teacher time and attendance monitoring is not sufficient to maintain highly accurate attendance data.  When teachers are absent leaving their classes with substitutes too often, student achievement is impaired.  An efficiency study of the school business office and spending practices already conducted will provide recommendations for 2013-14 related to equity and resource allocation. |
|---|---|

**Culture and Climate**

- Variability in family and community engagement and support across school sites
- Need for additional professional staff to support student behavior management efforts
- Assisting students with mental health issues
- Need for increased coordination of school security and emergency management
- Need for additional disciplinary data

*Root causes* that contribute to these areas for growth include the following:

Family and community engagement varies from one school to another. Through their ILDs, additional members of the central office leadership team, and the Parent Liaisons at the schools the school principals will be supported this year in improving such engagement to improve student achievement. School Governance Councils (SGCs), for example, are not organized and engaged at the same level at each school. The district will place emphasis on getting all of the SGCs operating efficiently and effectively in 2013-14.

Previous parent surveys and significant anecdotal information indicate that often parents and families do not feel welcome in the schools. A number of students in the middle and high school have reported on youth surveys that they feel unsafe in their schools and neighborhoods. This year for the first time, Waterbury administered the CT School Climate Survey for students, parents, and staff in (selected grades). School climate teams at each school were formed in 2012-13 and are now ready to work toward making the school environment more welcoming, safe, and secure. To facilitate that work the district has prioritized improving coordination of security and emergency management, and creating a new staffing structure in the middle and high schools for student behavior management including new behavior technicians to handle student disciplinary referrals and potentially to identify district supports for students that can address underlying student mental health issues.

## 5. District Strategy and Year 1 Reflection

**Instructions:** Summarize the district's overarching strategy and key initiatives from Year 1 of the Alliance District program. Describe successes and progress made in Year 1. Provide specific data points to support the analysis.

Articulate the **district's key initiatives from Year 1** of the Alliance District program.

1) Provide all students with quality school principals and teachers who deliver rigorous and effective instruction.

2) Ensure all students equal access to quality curriculum that is aligned to common core state standards.

3) Provide all students a positive school climate, creating safe, respectful and welcoming schools that actively engage all families.

4) Ensure that all students who enter grade 9 graduate on time by grade 12, prepared to enter colleges or careers of their choice.

Briefly describe the district's Year 1 Alliance District **accomplishments** citing specific data, where appropriate.

Year One Alliance District accomplishments are provided below the key initiative to which they pertain:

1) Provide all students with quality school principals and teachers who deliver rigorous and effective instruction.
   - Developed a Theory of Action to guide reforms
   - Organized central office to provide support and accountability to principals and teachers: established Networks of district schools and assigned an Instructional Leadership Director (ILD) to each network
   - Provided multiple professional developments to district-wide administrators on effective observation of teaching and learning and evidence-based observations
   - Provided multiple professional developments to district-wide administrators on School-Wide Data Teams/School Improvement and the new State Department of Education Administrator Evaluation system
   - Conducted walk-throughs with principals and provided feedback on leadership actions
   - Supported principals in the development of their respective school-wide data teams, school improvement plans and student learning objectives to help drive instructional decisions at their respective schools
   - Differentiated supports for principals' instructional leadership consistently over the entire academic year.
   - Modeled ways of thinking and acting that reflected desirable instructional leadership practice.
   - Brokered resources supportive of principals' instructional leadership
   - Fostered dialogue with Network principals and leaders to serve as resources for each

other around sound instructional leadership practices.

- o Developed plan to recruit and retain high quality teachers and administrators that reflect diversity of the community, including establishment of a Diverse Recruitment Team of district teachers and administrators formed by new Supervisor of Talent and Professional Development to attend recruitment events at colleges and job fairs
- o Developed district marketing materials for prospective teachers and principals
- o Set district PD schedule for 2013-14 to include seven (7) half days during the year, and three of the four full days pushed up to August 2013 prior to school year start
- o WTA contract amended to include common planning time for teachers
- o K-8 ELA curriculum aligned with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) complete
- o Grade 9-12 ELA curriculum and Math curriculum K-12 alignment with CCSS begun
- o New District Assessment Committee formed to review assessments used in district and to work on common formative and summative assessments
- o Developed district-wide data team to inform decisions
- o Effected school administrator transfers

2) Ensure all students equal access to quality curriculum that is aligned to common core state standards.
- o Conducted literacy curriculum audit
- o Conducted survey of technology resources by school
- o ILDs collaborated on multiple committees established by the central office that are integral to the educational reform initiative set by the Superintendent
- o ILDs supported all K-8 administrators, along with a support team of teachers who received training on the new English Language Arts Common Core State Standards through a nationally recognized consultant. Secondary administrators will receive training related to the ELA curriculum during the summer of 2013.

3) Provide all students a positive school climate, creating safe, respectful and welcoming schools that actively engage all families.
- o Conducted CT School Climate Survey (selected grades)
- o Established School Climate Committees at each school
- o Development of school climate plans

4) Ensure that all students who enter grade 9 graduate on time by grade 12, prepared to enter colleges or careers of their choice.
- Training for all secondary administrators related to the ELA curriculum during the summer of 2013
- o Scheduled collaborative professional development for science/math teachers slated to occur in the summer of 2013
- o Planned district-wide implementation of PSAT for 9th-11th grade, which will be embedded within the school day
- o Implemented the Night Program (Twilight program) at each of the three comprehensive high schools

Explain any key initiatives that the district will **stop or discontinue** and why.  Note that districts must consider discontinuing less effective strategies before adding new initiatives.

N/A –
The district is continuing all four key initiatives from year one.

## 6. Year 2 Priorities

**Instructions:** District improvement requires a targeted investment aligned to the district's most pressing needs. Please reflect upon district data, the CSDE planning site visit, Year 1 progress, and the needs analysis to identify three to four priority areas for the Year 2 Alliance District plan.

The CSDE has identified three focus areas the second year of the Alliance District program: (1) the transition to Common Core State Standards and new assessments; (2) educator evaluation and support (for both teachers and administrators); and (3) interventions in low-performing schools. Your application must explain how these three areas will be addressed, either through the Alliance District spending plan or via separate district initiatives. Below, identify three to four district-specific priority areas for Year 2 and indicate whether they are new or continued initiatives from Year 1. Then, explain how these priorities align to and reinforce the district's broader strategic plan and/or vision.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Priority #1 | Provide all students with quality school principals and teachers who deliver rigorous and effective instruction. | ☒Continued from Year 1<br>☐ New priority |
| Priority #2 | Ensure all students equal access to quality curriculum that is aligned to common core state standards. | ☒Continued from Year 1<br>☐ New priority |
| Priority #3 | Provide all students a positive school climate, creating safe, respectful and welcoming schools that actively engage all families. | ☒Continued from Year 1<br>☐ New priority |
| Priority #4 (optional) | Ensure that all students who enter grade 9 graduate on time by grade 12, prepared to enter colleges or careers of their choice, by implementing interventions to support low-performing schools through turnaround plans. | ☒Continued from Year 1<br>☒ New priority |

Briefly describe how the priorities listed above **support the district's theory of change** and strategic direction.

Waterbury's theory of change is designed to facilitate the creation of an entire school system of excellent schools. According to the theory, improvement in teaching and learning across all schools requires not only school-based reforms, but also the transformation of the central office into a critical support to facilitate school improvement. Central Office practice has been modified to accommodate the schools' need for such support. The central office has undergone a reorganization that began in 2012-13 with the establishment of positions of Chief Academic Officer, four Instructional Leadership Directors, a Director of Special Education, and a Supervisor of Talent and Professional Development. In 2013-14, Waterbury proposes to add a Director of Teaching and Learning under the Chief Academic Officer, and a Director of School Turnaround. With embedded professional development for administrators and teachers, these new staff are supporting the principals in becoming

excellent instructional leaders with the capacity to promote high quality teaching in every classroom, using curricula newly aligned with the Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balance Assessments.

If not explicitly identified as priority areas, explain how the district will address the CSDE's three focus areas for Year 2 of the Alliance District program. Briefly describe the district's strategy and level of preparedness to (1) transition to **Common Core State Standards** and new assessments, and (2) fully implement **educator evaluation and support** systems. You will be asked to describe your district's strategy to intervene in its lowest-performing schools in Section #7.

(1) Transition to **Common Core State Standards** and new assessments –

Waterbury has been proactive about taking steps to align core curricula with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). During the 2012-13 school year a committee of teachers met and revised the grades K-8 ELA curriculum to be aligned with CCSS. The new ELA K-8 curriculum was reviewed and approved by central office leadership and by the Waterbury Board of Education. On the curriculum revision committee were not only K-8 teachers, but also teachers from grades 9-12, to facilitate the next step in CCSS alignment: development of the ELA curriculum for grades 9-12.

In 2013-14, the district will 'roll-out' teacher training on the revised ELA K-8 Curriculum beginning in August, 2013 on multiple district professional days before the start of school. K-8 teachers will implement the new ELA curriculum in the 2013-14 school year.

The grade 9-12 ELA curriculum will be completed by the secondary school ELA curriculum revision team continuing their work during the 2013-14 school year. Also in 2012-13, a team of teachers and supervisors began to align the Math curriculum for grades K-12. The revised Math curriculum will be completed in the 2013-14 school year. Thereafter, the district will obtain necessary district and board approvals, provide teacher training, and implement the resulting ELA and Math curricula.

The district will further support the implementation of the CCSS aligned curricula by providing job-embedded training, coaching, and modeling from Literacy Coaches and Math Coaches at the schools.

A district-wide team has been organized and meeting already this year to evaluate what district assessments we have and what instructional leaders want to be able to glean from district level assessments. The team will then develop/identify district formative and summative assessments for core content areas that are aligned with CCSS and Smarter Balance Assessments. Once approved, those assessments will be utilized uniformly across district schools. The district proposes to invest in such an Assessment System in the 2013-14 school year.

(2) Fully implement **educator evaluation and support** systems –

Waterbury's Teacher Evaluation Plan (hereinafter "Plan") was approved by the Waterbury Board of Education on April 25, 2013, and by CSDE in May, 2013. According to the Plan, "Waterbury's Teacher Evaluation Model has been developed in alignment with the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation that were approved by the state in June 2012. Much of the plan has been adopted directly from SEED (Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development), thus drawing on the best practice and research embedded in this model….The purpose of the new evaluation model is to fairly and accurately evaluate teacher performance and to help each teacher strengthen his/her practice to improve student learning. The model applies to all teachers holding and serving under CT teaching licenses, with appropriate adaptations and applications of the model for varying teaching and pupil personnel service assignments."(Plan at p. 5) In 2013-14, Waterbury will offer training regarding the new teacher evaluation model. Waterbury has chosen to pilot the implementation of the teacher evaluation plan with all teachers district-wide in 2013-14.

Waterbury's Administrator Evaluation Plan (hereinafter "Administrator Plan") was approved by the Waterbury Board of Education on April 25, 2013, and submitted to CSDE for approval. "The Waterbury model draws o the core design principles of the Connecticut SEED model. The model is designed to 1. Focus on what matters most…student learning (45%), administrator practice (40%), stakeholder feedback (10%), and teacher effectiveness (5%). 2. Emphasize growth over time… 3. Leave room for judgment… 4. Consider implementation at least as much as design…The annual evaluation process includes a goal setting conference, a mid-year conference and an end of the year conference. The purposes of these meeting are to clarify expectations for the evaluation process, provide comprehensive feedback to each administrator on his/her performance, set goals and identify development opportunities…" (Administrator Plan, pp. 5-6) The State Department of Education asked for a few minor modifications to the Administrator Evaluatuion Plan; Waterbury has made the modifications and resubmitted the Administrator Evaluation Plan to CSDE. Waterbury is awaiting approval from CSDE on the revised Administrator plan. Once the Plan is approved by CSDE, the district will conduct training regarding the new plan and will implement the plan on a timeline agreeable to the State.

**Instructions:** For each of the priority areas identified in Section #6, identify a core set of strategies that will lead to results and successful implementation. Identify any expected outcome(s) and metrics to track the progress and fidelity with which that strategy is executed. Also indicate when the district will implement that strategy during Year 2 of the Alliance District program (summer 2013, fall 2013, winter 2014, spring 2014 and/or summer 2014). The information provided will serve as the foundation for the Year 2 CSDE support and monitoring.

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**Priority #1:** Insert the Year 2 priority below.

## Provide all students with quality school principals and teachers who deliver rigorous and effective instruction.
Objectives:

**Summary:** Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority.

The district will build effective school leadership capacity and will develop teachers' ability to deliver effective instruction by A) implementing recommendations from the 2013 Waterbury Human Capital Analysis Project Report (2013) concerning recruitment, hiring, and retention of staff; B) implementing the recommendations of the 2013 Waterbury "School System Funding Analysis" especially as to providing teachers with a "Value Proposition" (set of offerings and experiences provided by the employer, besides salary); C) providing professional development; and D) providing job-embedded support for principals and teachers by the central office leadership team including the Superintendent, the Chief Academic Officer, the Supervisor of Talent and Professional Development, a Supervisor of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, and most directly – four (4) Instructional Leadership Directors.

A) The Waterbury Human Capital Analysis Project Report (2013), prepared for the district by the Yale School of Management, included several recommendations for recruitment and hiring practices which Waterbury began to implement in early 2013, and which Waterbury will continue to implement for hiring in 2013-14. In 2013-14, the district will focus on: 1) moving up and accelerating recruitment and hiring for 2013-14; 2) clarifying/refining the central office/principal role in hiring (begun already with the Principal's roundtable); 3) prescreening all applicants in Human Resources (HR); 4) requiring Principals to interview candidates and have them teach a 10 minute lesson; 5) continuing improvement of communication with applicants; 6) building an online presence; 7) leveraging more partnerships with institutions of higher learning (student teacher programs); and 8) exploring internal referrals ideas.

As a result of the Human Capital Report, the district will clarify the roles of the HR office, and the principals together with the Instructional Leadership Directors (ILDs), around recruitment and hiring. The HR office will work to build pipelines of candidates, conduct up-front candidate screens, promptly communicate with candidates, send resumes along to principals and instructional

leadership directors, in order to improve efficiency in hiring.  And,  the Principals in collaboration with the ILDs will communicate their hiring needs to central HR early, will conduct in-depth interviews with candidates referred by Content Supervisors/Human Capital, assess candidate writing samples, demo lessons, sample lessons, etc., and make final hiring decisions.

Waterbury's proposed Aspiring Leaders Program will address, in part, the financial challenge of attracting high quality hires from out of district, by cultivating local educators for leadership roles.  Professional Development for aspiring leaders will help to build high quality leadership capacity from within the district.  And facilitating principals notifying central HR staff of their teacher needs early in the year will permit recruitment of the best teacher candidates to fill vacancies.

B) The Waterbury Public Schools "School System Funding Analysis (2013)" was recently completed by Connecticut Council for Education Reform (CCER) and identified how Waterbury currently allocates financial resources in order to enable the district to consider "trade-offs" so that it funds the most important priorities.  As to teacher effectiveness, the analysis revealed that on average, Waterbury teachers are less experienced than other CT urban districts; about half of Waterbury teachers are at pay step four (4) or less.  Further, while Waterbury's teacher pay is on par with neighboring districts at Year 1, over the long term, Waterbury salaries slightly trail neighboring districts.  And while Waterbury staff generally seems to have average workloads comparable to neighboring districts, Waterbury students have greater need.   The percentage of both English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Needs students is much greater than in neighboring districts; and ELL and Special Education teachers and social workers have high workloads compared to those other districts.  Compared to other districts, Waterbury's spending on special education paraprofessionals is high with special education paraprofessionals (293) out numbering special education teachers (255).  Conversely there is an unusually low number of special education students per paraprofessional.  This information points to a possible over utilization of special education paraprofessionals, where an investment in more special education teachers or other pupil personnel staff instead of so many paraprofessionals should be considered.  Additionally this analysis indicates that increased training for teachers concerning Waterbury's standard for requiring paraprofessionals, how to develop differentiated instruction, and available specialized support services within the school/district to which teachers may refer students.  The report points out that with fewer paraprofessionals to supervise and more special education Teachers, Waterbury could increase the number of highly qualified faculty working with special education students, potentially in increased instructional time.

The CCER Analysis also addressed transparency in Waterbury's financial systems and how increased transparency could enable the district to make more informed resource allocation decisions.  The findings included the fact that a number of teacher and paraprofessional salary and special populations dollars are not recorded (or coded) and reported down to the school level.   An immediate impact of coding more costs down to the school level would be to bring the overall school reported dollars to comparable levels with other similar districts.  Additionally more school level coding and a reduction in the use of some unclear

coding categories to the extent possible, would improve transparency that would allow the public to see the spending equity that exists among the schools.  Recommendations from the CCER report are incorporated into the Alliance strategies below.  The foregoing detail from the CCER Analysis applies also to Priority #2, below.

C)  Additionally, the district will provide teachers and principals with Professional Development (PD) that pertains to the implementation/integration of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in all content areas in order to develop high quality teachers and principals.  The district has had an 82 member teacher team of curricula writers working under the direction of Dr. Lois Lanning to align Waterbury curricula to the Common Core State Standards.  The new K-8 ELA curriculum is now aligned to CCSS; the district will roll out the new K-8 ELA curriculum during the August 2013 PD sessions.  This year the curriculum writing team is developing the grades 9-12 ELA curriculum aligned to CCSS.  The K-5 Math curriculum aligned to CCSS is nearly complete.  The grades 6-8 Math curriculum aligned to CCSS is under development this year.  And the High School Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry curricula have been aligned to the CCSS already.  The Social Studies curriculum is aligned to CCSS.  And Science is now being aligned to CCSS.

Professional Development sessions conducted on district PD days will focus in 2013-14 on Common Core State Standards, Waterbury Curricula aligned to CCSS, new administrator and teacher evaluation plan implementation, School Climate and Student Behavior, all with an eye toward meeting the *Blueprint for Change* objectives.  Beginning during the August 2013 PD days, PD topics for School Administrators will include roll out of the new K-5 English Language Arts Curriculum, Administrator Evaluator Training, Teacher Evaluator Training, and continuation of the Curriculum Writing Committee.  PD topics for Teachers for 2013-14, beginning at the August 2013 district PD days, include K-5 ELA Curriculum roll out by grade level, ELA Lesson Planning, School Climate and Behavior, Teacher Evaluation/CT Framework/Student Learning Objectives, SPI/School Plans, *Blueprint for Change* Objectives, and continued Curriculum Writing.  PD offered in 2013-14 builds upon trainings offered in January 2013 around Common Core State Standards, Best Practices-Marzano-Non Linguistic Representations and note-taking, Curriculum writing, CCSS in Social Studies, Embedded Mathematical Practices, Ways to support Common Core through World Languages, and Lessons & Best Practices USTA, STEP, Unified Sports, etc.

Instructional Leadership Directors will assist in identifying school and staff specific professional development needs through their on site observations at the schools and their interaction with school staff.  Significant on the job or job-embedded training will be provided by the Instructional Leadership Directors for principals, and for Teachers by Principals whose skills in instructional leadership will be honed through their work with their ILD.  This is further explained in the section below labeled Priority #1 - section D) – priority 1.

Teacher Professional Development will be largely school-based.  Now that there is a clear focus on improving instructional practice,

the Superintendent has requested and the Board of Education has approved additional PD half days on which students have an early release day and school-based trainings will occur.  The loss of instructional time to such training is recovered in the few more instructional days added to the school calendar 2013-14 per an agreement with the teachers' union.

The District Data Team will collect and review evidence of student achievement on an ongoing basis.  As part of that process team members will scrutinize the relationship between professional development provided for teachers and administrators, and student outcomes.  Instructional Leadership Directors (ILDs), and other district leaders, will observe classroom instruction and principal instructional leadership during walk-throughs to be conducted throughout the school year.  The district has engaged the Connecticut Center for School Change to support the ILDs and other district leaders in building instructional leadership capacity among principals.  See also section D) below.

D)  Waterbury's schools are divided into four networks, each of which is supported by one of the four Instructional Leadership Directors (ILDs) hired as part of the central office transformation that is at the heart of the Superintendent's Theory of Change.  ILDs will create "learning-focused partnerships" with all principals through which the principals will receive ongoing, personalized, differentiated supports for their development as instructional leaders. As principals strengthen their instructional leadership skills, Waterbury will be building capacity to achieve significant improvements in teaching and learning district-wide.  Each school/school principal has been assigned to one of the four ILDs.  In partnership with the principals, the ILDs will identify school specific needs for improvement.  The ILDs were hired last year with the full complement of ILDs in place beginning in January 2013.  The Superintendent of Schools has described the time from January 2013 to June 2013 as a period when the ILDs spent time with the principals at the schools building trust, developing some institutional knowledge of what has occurred historically at the schools, and identifying priority items to address when recommending changes designed to result in more effective teaching and learning.  Also in early 2013, the Center for Educational Learning administered the *5D Assessment* to assess instructional leadership proficiency.

The Instructional Leadership Directors (ILDs) have participated in extensive training and coaching themselves in the past 8 months; they will continue to be supported and coached in 2013-14.  ILD training is being provided by experts at the Connecticut Center for School Change (CCSC).  The CCSC team working with the ILDs is focusing their coaching of ILDs on ILDs developing the "knowledge, skills and dispositions to develop principals as instructional leaders and guide large-scale instructional improvement" across the district, specifically within the context of the Waterbury theory of change.  In 2013-14, the ILDs will intensify their work with principals.  Members of the Connecticut Center for School Change team assigned to work with the Waterbury ILDs will coach the ILDs in "creating routines to drive their practice."  CCSC staff will assist ILDs in creating calendars, visit protocols, communication plans, and meeting structures.

The Network of 7-8 schools which each ILD serves will take on additional significance in 2013-14 as ILDs heighten their focus on working within and among their cluster of schools.  Monthly meetings previously conducted by the Superintendent, the so-called "Administrators' Meetings" with all school administrators have been turned over to the ILDs to conduct meetings of the administrators from their Network of Schools separately.  Within clusters, school leaders will identify common professional development needs for administrators and for teachers.  They will identify like problem areas and work toward solutions with the support of their ILD in common.

In addition to providing principals and teachers with professional development that is school-based or network-based, the ILDs will move into an evaluation mode with their network schools.  For the first time, the ILDs will be responsible to formally evaluate the principals in 2013-14, instead of the Superintendent evaluating all of the principals.  ILDs will use the new Administrator Evaluation Plan for this purpose.

**Outcome Metric:**  What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #1?

- Waterbury will meet or exceed the target District Performance Index (DPI) – to be set by CSDE, for 2013-14.

| Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority. | Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy. | Timeline: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Su `13 | F `13 | W `14 | Sp `14 | Su `14 |
| Provide School Leaders with differentiated training and support to improve instructional leadership skills, including job-embedded PD and out-of-school training for school leaders | -Identify PD needed by school leaders on a Network by Network, (ILD Networks of Schools) and school by school basis<br>-Number and frequency of on the job PD opportunities provided for school leaders<br>-Number and frequency of out-of-school training opportunities provided for school leaders<br>-Staff Attendance/Participation at Trainings<br>-Exit ticket data provided by school leaders as a result of the pd | | X | X | X | X |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | -Instructional Leadership Director walk-throughs in each school gathering data on implementation of skills and knowledge gained as a result of PD documented by School Debrief Reports<br>-Administrator Evaluation results in area in which PD was provided | | | | | |
| Improve Teacher Effectiveness | -Refine responsibilities of Supervisor of Talent & PD to include responsibilities identified in Human Capital Analysis Report<br>-Consider re-allocating dollars from existing benefits to other forms of compensation ("a value proposition") such as improved working conditions, (staff to student ratios, other workload issues, need level of students), career opportunities, rewards, and growth opportunities in order to retain high quality staff<br>-Survey teachers to understand why so many leave after Step 4<br>-Create new career pathways (See Aspiring Leaders Program below)<br>-Provide Network specific and school-based professional development for teachers<br>-Number of teachers participating in PD opportunities<br>-Teacher participation and satisfaction with PD | | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | -Teacher implementation of learning from Network specific and school-based PD (walk-throughs) | | | | | |
| Implement recommendations from Human Capital Analysis | -accelerate recruitment and hiring for 2013-14 <br> -clarify/refine central office and principal roles in hiring <br> -prescreen all applicants in HR by Supervisor of Talent & PD <br> -consider requiring Principals to interview candidates and have them teach a 10 minute lesson <br> -continue improvement of communications with applicants - build an online presence for HR <br> -leverage more partnerships with institutions of higher learning (student teacher programs) <br> -explore internal referrals ideas | X | X | X | X | X |
| Add new Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment to central office leadership team to enhance central office support to principals and teachers | Hire and assign Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment <br> -Number and nature of supports provided to school leaders and faculty by this Supervisor <br> -Evidence of use of such support in the classroom (ILD walkthroughs) <br> -Student achievement data (State and Local (interim and summative) testing data collected by Data Teams) | | | X | X | |
| Principals (and ILDs) conduct informal classroom walkthroughs and identify additional professional | -Number of classroom walkthroughs conducted by school, by quarter | | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| development needs | -Observations/Major Themes from walkthroughs<br>-Additional PD needs identified based on walkthroughs | | | | | |
| Design district-wide and school-specific PD offerings for 2014-15 based on school and teacher needs | Design district and school level professional development calendars aligned to teacher evaluation data and needs identified from ILD Network meetings, walkthroughs, culture and climate surveys, and student achievement data. | | | | X | X |
| Redefine roles of Reading Teachers/Literacy Coaches to provide job-embedded literacy support for teachers | -Reading Teachers/Literacy Coaches assigned/reassigned to support literacy instruction<br>-Student scores in reading and writing as measured by district benchmark assessments and the SBAC<br>-Teacher evaluation rubric scores for all reading teachers and literacy coaches<br>-Survey administered to Principals by the Literacy Department measuring the effectiveness of the support before and after changes | X | X | X | X | |
| Provide job-embedded support for teachers by Math Coaches | -Number and frequency of on the job Math PD opportunities provided for teachers<br>-Results of teacher survey(s) about proficiency and comfort with Math content and instructional strategies addressed in the Math PD provided<br>-Observations by ILDs and Principals | | X | X | X | |

| Activity | Measures | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | during walk-throughs of teacher use of Math content and instructional strategies addressed in PD<br>-Student results in mathematics as measured by district benchmark assessments and the SBAC<br>-Minutes from Math data teams to provide evidence of strategy implementation | | | | | | |
| Improve Special Populations Services/Management | -Reconsider allocation of SPED paraprofessionals<br>-Provide SPED training and training in differentiated instruction for all teachers<br>-Scrutinize investments in SPED services and investments in support of ELL students | | | X | X | X | |
| Train all administrators on the new teacher evaluation systems and BloomBoard technology | -Attendance/Participation at trainings<br>-Administrator proficiency and comfort with evaluation system and technology (survey) | X | X | | | | |
| Implement new Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plans | -Training provided for all teachers and administrators<br>-Attendance at trainings<br>-Administrator and teacher proficiency and comfort with evaluation system and technology (survey)<br>-Percentages of teachers and administrators meeting deadlines established in the plans<br>-Rubric scores of all teachers and | X | X | X | X | X | |

| Activity | Metrics | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | administrators | | | | | |
| Conduct Fall 2013 teacher evaluations using the new evaluation model and identify additional professional development needs | -Number of evaluations conducted<br>-Teacher evaluation ratings<br>-Distribution of ratings by school<br>-Identified PD needs | X | X | | | |
| Conduct Spring teacher evaluations | - Number of evaluations conducted<br>-Teacher evaluation ratings<br>-Distribution of ratings by school<br>-Teacher growth between Fall and Spring | | | | X | |
| Provide Fall and Spring PBIS professional development sessions | -Teacher participation and satisfaction with PD<br>-Teacher use of PBIS strategies (classroom walkthroughs)<br>-Number of reported behavior incidents by school (SWIS data) | | X | X | X | |
| Provide job-embedded SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) training | -Teacher participation and satisfaction with PD<br>-Teacher use of SIOP strategies (classroom walkthroughs) | | | X | X | |
| Cultivate internal leadership pipeline through Aspiring Leadership Program  (Aspiring Leadership Program) | -Identify cadre of aspiring school leaders<br>-Program is delivered for all who are accepted into the Aspiring Leadership Program<br>-Percentage of those enrolled who complete the program<br>-Percentage of those enrolled in program who attain a leadership role in the following year | | | X | X | X |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Revise recruitment and hiring practices to conform to recommendations from the Waterbury Human Capital Report (2013), including establishing an accelerated timeline for identifying hiring needs at the schools, and enhancing online presence for district recruitment | -expedited timeline implemented for principal notice of teacher needs (with input of ILDs) for the following year<br><br>-posting of HR notices on district website and other Internet locations, in addition to other postings | | | X<br><br><br><br>X | X<br><br><br><br>X | |
| Host a weeklong induction/orientation for new teachers | -Number of new teachers<br>-Participation rates during orientation week<br>-Satisfaction/Impact of individual sessions (survey)<br>-Implementation of instructional practices and district policies addressed during new teacher induction/orientation (walk-throughs) | | | | | X |

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| **Priority #2:**  Insert the Year 2 priority below. |
| Ensure all students equal access to quality curriculum that is aligned to common core state standards. |
| **Summary:**  Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority. |
| The district has prioritized curriculum alignment with Common Core State Standards and local assessment testing to assure instruction using curricula aligned with CCSS is preparing students to be successful in taking Smarter-Balanced assessments.  The district proactively began ELA and Math curriculum revision to align with CCSS in 2012-13.  The K-8 ELA curriculum is complete and will be implemented in the schools beginning in 2013-14 after significant August professional development for teachers on this topic over three professional development days.  Resources to support the new ELA curriculum, including leveled books for example, will be provided to the schools this year.  The district will continue curriculum revision focusing on completing the CCSS aligned curricula in the 2013-14 school year. |

The district has had an 82 member teacher team of curricula writers working under the direction of Dr. Lois Lanning to align Waterbury curricula to the Common Core State Standards.  The new K-8 ELA curriculum is now aligned to CCSS; the district will roll out the new K-8 ELA curriculum during the August 2013 PD sessions.  This year the curriculum writing team is developing the grades 9-12 ELA curriculum aligned to CCSS.  The K-5 Math curriculum aligned to CCSS is nearly complete.  The grades 6-8 Math curriculum aligned to CCSS is under development this year.  And the High School Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry curricula have been aligned to the CCSS already.  The Social Studies curriculum is aligned to CCSS.  And Science is now being aligned to CCSS.

Professional development (described above in the section for Priority #1), will facilitate teacher implementation of the CCSS curricula developed in the district.  New provisions of the teachers' contract in effect in 2013-14 assure that every teacher has grade-level meeting or prep time every day that may also be used on occasion for job-embedded professional development.

Additionally, the district will contract for and implement a Local Assessment Program (LAP) that will "allow for the creation and implementation of student assessments, data management, and differentiated interventions in grades K-12.  The disaggregated data on student performance provided by the components of the LAP will be utilized to inform instructional practices at the school and district levels.  Student learning will improve as a result of the ongoing analysis of student outcomes and targeted intervention.  In 2013-2014, the Waterbury Public Schools will implement new curricula and assessments aligned with the Connecticut Common Core State Standards….This LAP will provide materials that support the instruction and assessment of students' higher-order thinking skills so that they are afforded better opportunities for academic success.  The data collected from the local assessment program will provide educators with constant and timely information they need to differentiate instruction for students, provide targeted classroom instruction, plan curriculum, customize professional development and monitor student progress over time.  They will enable educators to analyze student performance relative to high learning expectations that are predicated on the skills embedded in the CCSS." (district LAP rfp)

The LAP will include "customizable assessments (i.e., benchmark, diagnostic) that could be modified to (1) measure specific curriculum specifications at different times in the school year, (2) fit a variety of time constraints and (3) be given in a computer lab or classroom setting….The LAP will offer a variety of assessment reports which could be used by teachers and administrators to inform instructional decisions.  Question banks that will, be similar to the items students will see when taking the Smarter-Balanced assessment in 2014-2015.  These question banks will be available in ELA and Mathematic sin grades K-12.  Specifically, question banks will include selected response, constructed response and technology enhanced test items… Performance tasks with scoring rubrics and samples of student work….Technology-enhanced items (e.g., drag and drop, selected response with multiple correct answers, elimination of incorrect answer items) that will be explained along with samples provided.  The LAP will also include

student tutorials that can be assigned to students based upon their performance on the benchmark or diagnostic assessments. Students will have access to tutorials in ELA And Mathematics in grades K-12.  Tutorial components must be able to support differentiated instruction for students at all achievement levels….The online testing option will allow students to answer select response and computer enhanced test items….The paper and pencil option of the LAP will offer printing pre-coded answer sheets and bar-coded labels."  (district LAP rfp)

The LAP for the district will include test authoring tools for teachers.  It will provide a flexible performance task builder that allows educators to author performance tasks to the CCSS.  The LAP will also include a flexible 'custom test' builder feature that will allow users to create a variety of assessments.  Educators will be able to create tests by selecting items from the CCSS banks.  Reports will be available at student, class, school, and district levels, including reports at the school and district levels for AYP disaggregated groups.  Reports for students and classes will be available on the same day of testing for online administrations, and the same day as scanning for paper-based administrations.  The LAP provider will provide professional development for Waterbury educators, using a train-the-trainer model.

The district has conducted a search for a LAP provider in accordance with local procurement procedure requirements, including competitive bidding for a LAP solution vendor that will comply with providing the Local Assessment Program features detailed above.  CTB/McGraw-Hill LLC was just selected as the successful bidder for the local assessment program.  The district will move forward immediately to begin training of personnel through CTB/McGraw-Hill in the use of the program, and to implement the LAP in order to collect data to drive instruction in a more uniform and effective manner than ever before.  Data collected through implementation of the local assessments program will be reviewed and analyzed on the individual, class, school and district levels. The new Local Assessment Program will replace the previous splintered district practice of teachers and schools using individually selected assessments.  Previously for example, there were 126 ELA assessments being used in the district at the same time, allowing no direct comparison of student achievement and fostering the identification of multiple competing, and sometimes contradictory, directions for focusing instruction.  Use of the new Local Assessment Program for ELA and Mathematics by all schools will allow for customized yet comparable assessment results that will help determine instructional foci for teachers at all grade levels.

To support online student testing, the district is making significant technology improvements. All Waterbury schools are interconnected on a wide area network to the central office and CEN, the Connecticut Educational Network.  Now, all schools have been upgraded to 1GB+, a 5000% increase in bandwidth over last year's connection.  Through this year 2 Alliance Plan, the district has budgeted improvements to the wireless footprint in each of the schools, the purchase of updated computers for some computer labs, and computer devices (such as tablets or chrome books), to facilitate both State and interim and summative local student assessments. [The district is also pursuing other competitive technology grants to add still more computer devices to the technology

resources available for student testing, and still further wireless access throughout school buildings.]

The District Data Team will collect and review evidence of student achievement on an ongoing basis, including data from the district's new local assessment program. As part of that process team members will scrutinize the relationship between professional development provided for teachers and administrators, and student outcomes. Instructional Leadership Directors (ILDs), and other district leaders, will observe classroom instruction and principal instructional leadership during walk-throughs to be conducted throughout the school year (as is detailed above).

Also to assure equal access to quality curriculum, the district is also prioritizing access to quality aligned curriculum for special populations including PreK aged children and alternative education students. In 2013-14 the district will open additional PreK classrooms with ELL support. There are insufficient numbers of preschool slots for four year olds in Waterbury even with public school and private provider programs combined. Opening more PreK classrooms is a priority for the district; lack of space in the schools for additional programs has been an impediment in the past to opening more classrooms. As research is clear that students who enter school prepared with pre-reading skills and developmental readiness are more successful learners in early grades, Waterbury is making every effort to locate space to open four (4) new PreK classrooms in 2013-14. To date, three new PreK classrooms are being opened for the 2013-14 year, two at the newly renovated Carrington K-8 School, and one funded through the Alliance Grant at the High School Career Academy. District leaders will continue to seek space to open more three PreK classrooms.

The district will also continue the Night School Program started in the Spring of 2013 for high school students. Early reports from the Night School program initiated in the second half of the 2012-13 school year indicate that the program is responsible for both graduating seniors involved in the program this year with passing grades for all required courses, and for allowing other students in grades 9-11 to get on track to graduate on time by retrieving credits needed to earn a high school diploma. In 2013-14 the Night School will operate for the entire year to serve at-risk youth who have been unsuccessful in the regular daytime high school programs. An extended year program component is planned for the Night School for next summer.

Further, in 2013-14 the district will provide a Coordinator of Student Success Plans (SSPs) for the middle schools and a Coordinator of SSPs for the high schools. These Coordinators will assure that all students have SSPs in place and are being followed to assist students in meeting their academic and career goals. Dedicated management of the SSP implementation at each middle and high school will help to assure that no students "fall through the cracks" as the saying goes, without an educational plan. These coordinators will work to put systems in place at each school to facilitate SSP development for every student and adherence to each student's SSP by school schedulers, counselors, and other school personnel.

| Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #2? |
|---|

- Waterbury will meet or exceed the target District Performance Index (DPI) – to be set by CSDE, for 2013-14.

| Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority. | Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy. | Timeline: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Su `13 | F `13 | W `14 | Sp `14 | Su `14 |
| Complete curriculum revision to align district ELA and Math curricula with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Smarter Balance Assessments. | -Number of meetings of the curriculum writing committee(s) <br> -Revised ELA and Math curricula aligned with CCSS completed <br> -Documentation of Common Planning Time used for embedded PD for staff to ensure instructional alignment with CCSS and Smarter Balance Assessments <br> -Teacher and Administrator attendance, participation, and satisfaction with training on CCSS aligned curricula and Local Assessment Program (surveys) <br> -Observations by ILDs of teacher use of CCSS aligned curricula and local assessments consistent with Smarter Balanced Assessments (walk-throughs) | X | X | X | X | X |
| Implement a K-12 comprehensive assessment system aligned to CCSS | -Local Assessment Program (LAP) selected through city procurement procedures <br> -Local Assessment Program (LAP) customized to meet student, school, | | X | X | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | district needs<br>-Training provided for staff on use of LAP<br>-Use of LAP by schools<br>-Number of local assessments used or customized and used with students (surveys, walk-throughs)<br>-Results of local assessments used by teachers to inform instruction (survey, walk-throughs, lesson plans)<br>-Results of local assessments collected and provided to grade-level, school, and district data teams for review and analysis<br>-District Data Team meetings to monitor and analyze student outcomes<br>-Opportunities for growth identified by District Data Team | | | | | |
| Increase common planning time for teachers and time for data analysis | -Number of common planning meetings for teachers each week<br>-Action plans developed based upon data analysis and successful implementation monitored (walkthroughs)<br>-Lesson plans developed based upon common planning time and/or analysis of student data in grade level or school data teams (walk-throughs, lesson plans) | | X | X | X | |

| Strategy | Metrics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Enhance Transparency in Budgeting and Spending to demonstrate equity | -Document coding more dollars spent to the school level to demonstrate equity that exists among the schools | X | X | X | |
| Enhance Management of Services to Special Populations | -Reconsider allocation of SPED paraprofessionals and SPED teachers<br>-Provide SPED training and training in differentiated instruction for all teachers<br>-Scrutinize investments in SPED services and investments in support of ELL students | | X | X | X |
| Provide targeted supports and programs for special student populations, including PreK (New classrooms) and Night School students (Night School) | -Night School Program is continued<br>-Number of students attending Night School Program<br>-Number of students graduating from Night School Program<br>-Number of students on track to graduate by virtue of participation in Night School Program<br>-Open additional PreK classrooms<br>-Number of PreK classrooms opened with ELL support<br>-Number of PreK classrooms opened with SPED support<br>-Number of PreK students served in new PreK classrooms<br>-Number of PreK students determined to be ready to move on to Kindergarten after one year participating in the new PreK classes | X | X | X | X |
| Hire and Assign one Middle School Student Success Plan (SSP) Coordinator, and one High School Student Success | -number of SSP Coordinators hired and assigned to serve middle schools | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Plan (SSP) Coordinator | and high schools<br>-number of SSPs reviewed by each Coordinator<br>-number of student SSPs for which Coordinators assist directly with either amending or implementing | | | | | |
| Provide updated technology infrastructure and computer devices to facilitate teaching, learning, and test taking | - Number of wireless access points added to schools to improve Internet connectivity to facilitate technology integration into teaching and learning, as well as student testing<br>-Number of computer labs upgraded<br>-Number of new PCs provided to schools for computer labs and/or classrooms<br>-Number of new tablets, chrome books, or similar computer devices provided for student use, especially to facilitate State and District (interim and summative) testing | X | X | X | X | |

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| **Priority #3:** Insert the Year 2 priority below. |
| Provide all students a positive school climate, creating safe, respectful and welcoming schools that actively engage all families. |
| **Summary:** Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority. |

The district has put key structures in place to monitor, support, and promote positive school climate. Those structures include School Climate Teams established at each school in 2012-13, and new personnel who will be dedicated to handling student disciplinary referrals. The new "Behavior Technicians" will work to establish a safe and secure environment by managing consequences for student infractions equitably and with an eye toward identifying and addressing root causes of disciplinary referrals in order to reduce negative behaviors by students in the school environment. The "Behavior Technicians" will work at the middle and high schools to implement a positive behavior management system to improve student behavior and increase student academic skills. They will collaborate with the building administrator in the early intervention of behavioral issues and de-escalation of students in crisis. They will provide students with strategies and skills to meet expected behavioral and academic requirements at the schools. They will serve as 'first responders' to assist staff members with students' displaying inappropriate behavior. They will communicate policies and protocols to families and staff, and incorporate PBIS standards into classroom and individual behavioral management strategies and recommendations. Importantly, the "Behavior Technicians" will collect and track data pertaining to students' and school wide patterns of behavior, train staff in de-escalation strategies, and implement positive behavior plans/climate plans. ("Behavior Technician" job specification.)

To measure effectiveness of the new Behavior Technicians and additional Hall Monitors to be put in place for the first time in 2013-14, the district will collect baseline data concerning the number and nature of student behavior incidents, hallway fights, discipline referrals, the number of in and out of school suspension, student arrests, and student attendance rates. Comparison data will be collected and analyzed each year by school and district data teams.

Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) is a district wide initiative and additional character development programs are also provided in a number of schools in the district. Each school establishes conduct expectations for each setting in the building. The expectations are taught by teachers. Then, students are coached and rewarded to meet the expectations. In 2013-14, School Climate Teams will use PBIS as a tool to make climate improvements. Prior inconsistent use of PBIS at some schools will be remedied through repeated training opportunities for school personnel by the district PBIS coaches. In 2013-14, as in recent years, Waterbury will implement PBIS district wide, conduct a school wide review of PBIS implementation using the School Evaluation Tool (SET), and collect and analyze trends using SWIS (School Wide Information System) data. Implementation of the Check In Check Out program will continue for students who can benefit. And, the district will continue its developmental guidance program in all of the elementary schools. Developmental Guidance Counselors work with classes of students, small groups, and individual students, to promote pro-social behaviors that contribute to a positive school climate.

Through the *Blueprint for Change (2012)*, the district's improvement plan, and through the daily conduct of the central office leadership team and school leaders, the district is cultivating a culture of high expectations. The district's core beliefs, noted at the

beginning of this document, set the stage for stakeholders to buy-in to a new culture of high expectations for all students, including high expectations for student behavior.

School safety will be enhanced throughout the district in 2013-14 through the creation of the new position of Coordinator of Security and Emergency Management.  The district will hire a new Coordinator to oversee district security and coordinate emergency preparedness at the schools.  Natural and man-made disasters have been on the rise in school districts in recent years. Having a staff member dedicated to ongoing security assessment and improvement, and to facilitating emergency planning and drills with local first responders will enhance the readiness of the district to manage crises that occur without notice or reason.

**Outcome Metric:**  What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #3?

- Waterbury will meet or exceed the target District Performance Index (DPI) – to be set by CSDE, for 2013-14.
- Reduced suspension and arrest rates for Waterbury students.

| Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority. | Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy. | Timeline: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Su `13 | F `13 | W `14 | Sp `14 | Su `14 |
| Increase capacity of middle and high schools to respond to negative student behavior through hiring and assignment of new Behavior Technicians and Hall Monitors at middle and high schools | -number and nature of early interventions by Behavior Technicians and Hall Monitors in student disputes -frequency/number of disturbances in school hallways, classrooms -number of disciplinary referrals for violent behavior (fighting) -number of in and out of school suspensions at the middle and high schools -student attendance and tardiness rates -number of student arrests at the schools - School Climate Surveys results | | X | X | X | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | -Reports of walk-throughs at schools related to observations of school climate | | | | |
| Provide Fall and Spring PBIS professional development sessions | -Teacher participation and satisfaction with PD (survey)<br>-Teacher use of PBIS strategies (classroom walkthroughs)<br>-Number of reported behavior incidents by school (SWIS)<br>-Annual school wide PBIS evaluation (School Evaluation Tool – SET) | | X | X | X |
| Enhance school security/emergency management | -Hire Coordinator of School Security and Emergency Management<br>-School Security Assessment results<br>-Observations by Administrators during walkthroughs concerning school safety and security<br>-School Climate Survey Results concerning school safety and security<br>-Other surveys or observations concerning school safety and/or security<br>-practice of emergency procedures in the schools under the direction of the new Coordinator of School Security and Emergency Management | | X | X | X |

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| **Priority #4 (optional):** Insert the Year 2 priority below. |

Ensure that all students who enter grade 9 graduate on time by grade 12, prepared to enter colleges or careers of their choice by implementing interventions to support low performing schools through turnaround plans.

**Summary:** Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority.

To ensure that students entering grade 9 graduate on time by grade 12, prepared to enter colleges or careers of their choice, the district is
1) focusing attention on building the capacity of school leaders to be highly effective instructional leaders so that teaching is improved (see also, Priority #1);
2) providing supports for students to identify their pathway to a college or career of their choice through Student Success Plan development and implementation in both middle and high school.  Not only are guidance counselors and other school faculty and staff contributing to the SSPs, but in 2013-14 new SSP coordinators at the middle and high school levels will work to assure SSPs are fully implemented preparing students for their post-secondary options (see also, Priority #2);
3) providing digital curriculum that will allow students in the regular and alternative high school programs not only to utilize online learning for credit retrieval, but also to earn course credits toward graduation by taking and passing online courses;
4) conducting a study of district middle schools and developing options for middle school reorganization; and
5) creating and filling the new position of Supervisor of School Turnaround.   In order to dramatically improve achievement in the district's low-performing schools, Waterbury will dedicate district central office capacity and resources to this work.  Central to this approach will be the formation of a new District Turnaround Office and the hiring of a Supervisor of School Turnaround.  This high level support will facilitate low-performing schools' piloting new and innovative strategies that can break from current approaches that are not yielding significant student achievement results.  Once a set(s) of promising practices is established in a subset of schools, district-wide reform using such practices will be accelerated.  The Supervisor of School Turnaround, will offer implementation support relative to school reform plans; coordinate central office supports, and support external relations for the turnaround schools.  The Supervisor of School Turnaround will also support the Focus School, and to the extent feasible, the district's Review Schools.  Some examples of the duties of the Supervisor of School Turnaround include:  launching the new turnaround office; spearheading innovative reform strategies in accordance with turnaround plans; identifying opportunities to scale and replicate promising practices district-wide; delivering operational, transformational, and instructional leadership; providing change management in low-performing schools; providing frequent updates to the Superintendent and the Board of Education; collaborating with school leaders to cultivate a sense of urgency within the school community; working with school leaders to diagnose needs, identify academic priorities, devise strategies to address school needs, and support the implementation of improvement strategies; promoting academic excellence through high expectations for all students and adults; identifying

professional development needs; developing a robust performance monitoring strategy; working with school staff to establish action plans with performance goals and benchmarks through a process of continuous improvement; and building school-level capacity to use data to drive decision-making and differentiate instruction. (Supervisor of School Turnaround Job Specification)

The district will spend the 2013-14 school year identifying a Supervisor of School Turnaround, building the new District Turnaround Office, and identifying a subset of schools for participation in the "Turnaround Zone" (described below in more detail). The District Turnaround Office will serve as the turnaround schools' single point of contact at the central office, ensuring that these schools receive timely support that is customized to meet the unique needs of the school, students, and staff. This case management approach builds off of the district's recent adoption of the ILD structure, which assigns clusters of schools to central office administrators. This new structure decreased the proximity between schools and resources, and allows central office staff to provide more nuanced support services to their schools. The new District Turnaround Office creates a sustainable district structure to lead the district's improvement efforts. The District Turnaround Office institutionalizes the importance of this role.

The Supervisor of Turnaround will be authorized to facilitate school flexibility and accountability, and broker central office supports for turnaround schools in the areas of staffing, scheduling, programming, and resources. Over time the district may extend the responsibilities of the Supervisor of School Turnaround to other low-performing schools in the district such as the one Focus School and several Review Schools identified by CSDE. The Turnaround Office represents a systemic approach to management of dynamic improvements that will occur through Turnaround and School Improvement Plans at the district's 13 review, focus, and turnaround/Network schools.

(See also Turnaround Strategy section below.)

| Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #4? |
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- Waterbury will meet or exceed the target District Performance Index (DPI) – to be set by CSDE, for 2013-14.
- Increased district graduation rate.

| Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority. | Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy. | Timeline: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Su `13 | F `13 | W `14 | Sp `14 | Su `14 |
| Monitor Student Success Plan (SSP) development and implementation | -Middle School SSP Coordinator and High School SSP Coordinator in place<br>-Number of student success plans | | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | developed, amended, or implemented with direct intervention of the SSP Coordinators<br>-Number of teachers/students trained in use of Naviance software to facilitate creation and monitoring of SSPs<br>-SSP Coordinator logged hours of student and family meetings<br>-Number staff presentations regarding SSPs<br>-Documentation of SSP implementation monitoring (Coordinators' reports) | | | | | |
| Establish Turnaround Office—Hire Supervisor of School Turnaround and Empower Him/Her to Lead Turnaround Initiatives at low-performing schools | -Supervisor of Turnaround hired and assigned to provide oversight for the implementation of approved Turnaround Plans for Waterbury's turnaround school(s)<br>-Turnaround Plan(s) are supported by central office (ILD walk-throughs; observations of Turnaround Supervisor)<br>-Student academic achievement at turnaround schools (Data Teams)<br>-Student attendance and discipline referrals/suspensions, and arrest rates at Turnaround schools<br>-School Climate Surveys<br>-Observations of Central Office Administrator(s) relative to | | X | X | X |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | turnaround efforts during school walk-throughs<br>-Parent and Community Survey(s) | | | | | |
| Provide online learning opportunities for high school course credit | -Digital Curriculum selected and licenses purchased<br>-staff in place to support student use of digital curriculum in place<br>-student enrollment<br>-student use of online learning<br>-student activity logged hours engaged in online learning<br>-number of students graduating | | X | X | X | X |
| Offer extended time opportunities for some students to earn high school course credit | -Night School operational at multiple high school sites<br>-Number of students enrolled<br>-Student attendance<br>-Number of students graduating from Night School Program<br>-Number of students on track to graduate by virtue of participation in Night School Program<br>-online learning available to students at high schools (daytime)<br>-staff available to support online learning opportunity for students at the  high schools (daytime) | | X | X | X | |
| Study Middle School Restructuring Options | -Study Team formed<br>-Number of team meetings held<br>-Restructuring options identified | | | X | X | |

**Instructions:** Describe the district's strategy or approach to school improvement. Using the spaces provided below, explain how the district will support and enable dramatic school improvement, focusing resources and attention on the district's chronically underperforming schools. In Appendix B, districts with Review and Turnaround schools will be asked to identify a strategy to develop school-specific plans for identified school.

Explain the **district's capacity** to support school turnaround. Specifically, how is the central office structured to drive significant gains in the district's lowest-performing schools?

Waterbury Public Schools and the Superintendent of Schools recognize the critical need to establish a district-level approach and strategy for school turnaround. In many ways, school turnaround sits at the epicenter of Waterbury's Alliance District priorities. The district will invest time, energy, and resources in the four priority areas outlined in this plan, which are designed to have a profound impact on student outcomes, particularly in the district's chronically underperforming schools. In the past, reform efforts have been school-based and relatively light touch, thus resulting in incremental improvements. In order to dramatically improve achievement in the district's most struggling schools, Waterbury will dedicate district central office capacity and resources to this work. This does several important things:

- Signals a strong sense of urgency to the school and broader district communities;
- Prioritizes a subset of the district's neediest schools to receive targeted and differentiated supports;
- Creates a safe and protected space for low-performing schools to pilot new and innovative strategies, given that the current approach is not yielding fast or significant enough results;
- Supports the identification of promising practices in a subset of schools, thereby providing strategies and proof points to support district-wide reform; and
- Dedicates capacity and expertise to school turnaround.

Central to this approach will be the formation of a new District Turnaround Office and the hiring of a Supervisor of School Turnaround. The District Turnaround Office will serve as an autonomous unit within the central office that will drive, oversee, and coordinate the district's interventions in its chronically underperforming schools. The District Turnaround Office, as led by the Supervisor of School Turnaround, will have several core objectives:

- Provide direct coaching and capacity-building support for school teachers and leaders;
- Offer implementation support relative to school reform plans;
- Hold school and district staff accountable for implementation and results;
- Support external relations and manage any potential contracts with partners; and
- Coordinate central office support services.

The Supervisor of School Turnaround will report directly to the Superintendent. This will be a crucial hire, and Waterbury will seek out candidates who have a track record of success advancing student achievement and exceptional project management and implementation skills. The district will spend the 2013-14 school year identifying a Supervisor of School Turnaround, building the new District Turnaround Office, and identifying a subset of schools for participation in the "Turnaround Zone" (described below in more detail). Over time, the district may expand the District Turnaround Office to include content-area experts, a data specialist, and a family and community engagement specialist. The District Turnaround Office will serve as the turnaround schools' single point of contact at the central office, ensuring that these schools receive timely support that is customized to meet the unique needs of the school, students, and staff. This case management approach builds

off of the district's recent adoption of the ILD structure, which assigns clusters of schools to central office administrators. This new structure decreased the proximity between schools and resources, and allows central office staff to provide more nuanced support services to their schools. The new District Turnaround Office creates a sustainable district structure to lead the district's improvement efforts. Unlike initiatives such as the School Improvement Grant program and Commissioner's Network which help to jumpstart reform, the District Turnaround Office institutionalizes and solidifies the importance of this role.

The District Turnaround Office will be positioned in the following way:
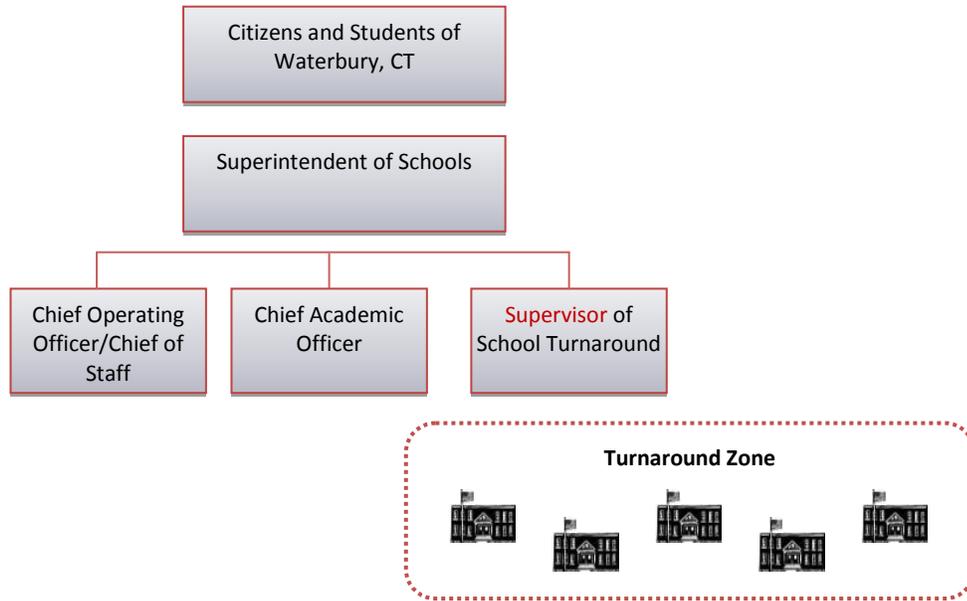


Describe the **district's school turnaround strategy**. How will the district differentiate support and accountability for its schools? How does this relate the district's overall theory of change? What new flexibility and resources will low-performing schools receive?

With 13 schools identified as Review, Focus, or Turnaround through the ESEA Waiver, and two schools having applied for participation in the Commissioner's Network, Waterbury cannot continue to tackle turnaround by treating schools as the unit of change. Instead, there is tremendous value in developing a systemic approach and building district infrastructure to support school turnaround. For that reason, Waterbury will establish the District Turnaround Office (described above) and develop a system-wide strategy of differentiated support and accountability.

Waterbury has begun this process by conducting a deep analysis of its schools, focusing on the 13 identified schools. District and school leadership have engaged in a process to reflect upon current and historic school data in the areas of culture and climate, academic achievement, and instruction. Based on this review, the district has clustered or tiered its schools based on factors such as: performance, need, capacity, grade levels served, programming/theme, geographic location, and/or feeder patterns. The resulting four clusters of schools, or "networks," receive supports from four Instructional Leadership Directors (ILDs) who have successful school reform experience; the ILDs report to the Chief Academic Officer. A subset of these schools,

the district's lowest-performing schools, will become part of the "Turnaround Zone" and receive direct support from the District Turnaround Office.

The Supervisor of Turnaround will be responsible for developing a case management approach for each of the Zone schools. This will involve identifying school strength and growth areas and an action plan to advance performance levels at each school. The schools in the Turnaround Zone will receive a heightened level of flexibility, resources, and accountability, given the increased level of need in these schools for significant and swift improvement. The Supervisor of School Turnaround, working closely with the Superintendent, will serve as the broker for increased flexibility in the areas of staffing, scheduling, programming, and resources. Increased site-based decision-making authority will be offset by heightened accountability in these schools. The Turnaround Zone encompasses the following decision principles, which reflect national and research-based best practices for turnaround:

- **Capacity:** Successful school turnarounds from around the country highlight the need for an infusion of talent and additional resources in persistently low-performing schools. High-performing schools consistently have strong leadership at the building and central office levels and dedicated and capable staff. The central office currently lacks dedicated turnaround staff. In order to first produce and then sustain results over time, the district must increase capacity internally by investing in school and district structures and staff, and externally by collaborating with partners who bring expertise and additional resources to the district. The District Turnaround Office model invests in and increases local capacity.

- **Conditions:** Previous policy and operating conditions have limited past improvement efforts. Through this new model, low-performing schools will benefit from increased flexibility and accountability. School leaders will receive increased site-based autonomy in essential areas, such as the daily schedule, staff hiring and placement, academic and nonacademic programs, budget, and professional development. The Supervisor will lead efforts to secure necessary flexibilities, empower school leaders with decision-making authority and tools, and maintain a heightened level of accountability. Waterbury Public Schools must disrupt the status quo and adopt new conditions to allow for the level of change that will produce the desired results. Clearly, this approach will require close collaboration between the district, collective bargaining units, city officials, and the CSDE.

- **Clustering:** With 13 identified schools and two schools poised to join the Commissioner's Network – Walsh School and Crosby High School – Waterbury has the unique opportunity to think systemically about its approach to turnaround. The new District Turnaround Office will initially support turnaround efforts at Walsh and Crosby; however, there is the opportunity to scale this work to support a cluster of schools, creating a community of practice and achieving economies of scale. A Turnaround Zone could ultimately support turnaround efforts in a cluster of Network, Review, and/or Turnaround schools, while also serving as an incubator of innovative strategies to inform school improvement efforts district-wide.

In summary, the new District Turnaround Office and the Supervisor of School Turnaround will serve as schools' main point of contact within the district and coordinate all central office services for the school by streamlining supports from multiple offices instead of creating additional bureaucracy. The new central office structure, combined with the thoughtful strategy outlined above, is designed to improve student outcomes by concentrating efforts and customizing supports in the district's chronically underperforming schools. This strategy uses the Commissioner's Network, Alliance District program, and identification of Review and Turnaround schools as the catalyst for systemic reform.

The graphic below provides a visual representation of the Turnaround Zone within the broader district construct.
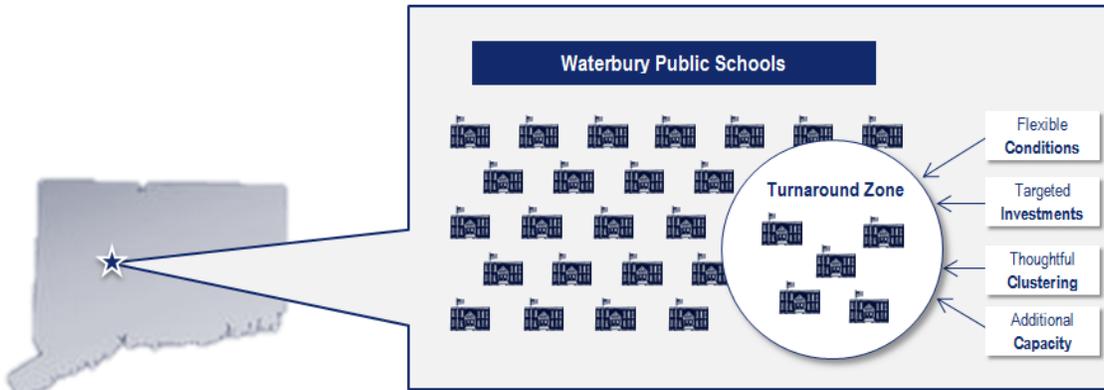
## 8. Accountability and Support

**Instructions:** Explain how the district will promote accountability and ongoing progress monitoring to ensure the successful implementation of the Alliance District plan and school-specific improvement plans. What systems and processes are in place or will be developed to promote optimal accountability? At the district level, who will be responsible for ensuring that these systems and processes are executed throughout the year?

Explain the **district-level** monitoring strategy.

School leaders at each school are developing school specific improvement plans, with the assistance of their Instructional Leadership Directors. Each school now belongs to a network of schools that is supported by one of the four new Instructional Leadership Directors (ILDs), and other members of the central office leadership team. Each ILD is charged with ensuring systems and processes are in place to facilitate student achievement gains in the network schools. During the past several months, school leaders and the ILDs have been working to develop school improvement plans that are aligned with the district *Blueprint for Change* and the Alliance District Plan; the plans will be completed July 2013.

Each school has an identified leadership team that will also serve as the school data team. This team will be responsible for assuring that the school plan is implemented with fidelity, and that all members of the school community are held accountable for plan implementation. School data teams will report to the district data team with their ILD approximately quarterly. Based on the data shared, the school and district data teams will identify action steps the schools will take to assure continuous improvement in each school. The ILDs and school teams will review and monitor SPI indexes and changes in the SPI.

Describe the district's strategy for **monitoring schools**.

Implementation of each school improvement plan will be closely monitored by the school leadership teams, the ILDs and the rest of the central office leadership team. ILDs and the new Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment will work with school leaders in network groups, and individually, to build school leadership capability and capacity. The district data team will monitor student data from each school and provide reports to central office leadership and school leaders alike to be used to assist school leaders in formulating next steps in the school improvement process. The district will use common formative assessments (as developed) as a monitoring tool related to teaching and learning. A district-wide assessment system will be developed in 2013-14. Data such as DRA scores, CMT scores-SBAC, individual student scores, SPI, attendance, PBIS, and discipline data will be used by both central office and school-based leaders to drive and guide school improvement. The new teacher and administrator evaluation plans will be implemented. Content area supervisors will also monitor and support ongoing curriculum revision and implementation by teachers using instructional best practices. And administrator and teacher access to student data in a web-based format will be enhanced as the district IT staff continues to upgrade the Waterbury Public Schools "dashboard." In short, the district will employ multiple sources of data and new central office support systems to monitor and facilitate continuous school improvement.

How can the **CSDE support the implementation** of the Alliance District plan and school-specific turnaround plans?  Specifically, what trainings and technical assistance would you suggest the CSDE provide to school- and/or district-level staff?

It would be very helpful for the district if CSDE could provide support for reform through Professional Development pertaining to:

- Administrator Evaluation Plans - Student Learning Outcomes, Connecticut Core of Teaching Rubric, Teaching expectations
- Implementing the teacher and administrator evaluation plans
- Teacher professional development
- Administrator professional development – instructional leadership
- Common Core State Standards training
- Implementation of Smarter Balance Assessments
- Instructional Rounds
- Central Office Transformation

## 9. Budget

**Instructions:** Please complete and submit the Excel budget workbook as a part of the Year 2 Alliance District application package. Follow the instructions outlined below.

1. **Budget Summary:** Please use the Excel budget workbook to provide a high-level budget summary that identifies the costs associated with each of the strategies outlined in Section 6.

2. **Budget for Alliance District Funding (for new priorities and the expansion of existing priorities):** For each strategy that will be launched or expanded with Alliance District funding, please provide a line-by-line budget that details the use of the Alliance District funding for 2013-14, as well as the use of other funds and leveraging of efficiencies. For each initiative, provide a cost basis, identify any/all funding streams that will support the strategy, and indicate which priority area(s) the expenditure supports. Note that the total of the budgets should equal a substantial majority of the Alliance District Funding allocated to the district.

3. **Budget for Alliance District Funding for Other Purposes:** In the event that your budget proposes using any Alliance District funds for purposes other than new reforms, or the expansion of existing reforms, please attach an operating budget for these uses for 2013-14. Also provide a one-page summary explaining the need for such expenditures. Please note that any expenditure of Alliance District funds not allocated for the initiation or expansion of reform initiatives must be justified in this summary. (*Districts may submit operating budget for 2013-14 in electronic format only*).

   *Note: The total of the budgets provided in Parts 2 and 3 should equal the total Alliance District funding allocated to the district.*

4. **Total Alliance District Funding Budget:** Provide an ED114 budget that includes all Alliance District funding expenditures. The total of this ED114 budget should equal the sum of the budgets provided in Parts 2 and 3, and should equal the total Alliance District funding allocated to the district.

## 10. Stakeholder Engagement

**Instructions:** Please describe stakeholder engagement throughout the planning process. Provide evidence that collective bargaining units, school and district personnel, School Governance Councils, Parent Advisory Councils, parents, students and community members were engaged in the planning process and/or are aware the contents of this plan.

The Superintendent of Schools, other members of the central office leadership team, and school principals have taken every opportunity to engage stakeholders in planning and ongoing updates about the reforms now underway in the district. The Superintendent of Schools has shared information about district reform efforts at most Board of Education meetings which are held once per week. The meetings are not only open to the public with an opportunity for the public to address the board about anything including school reform, but the meetings are also recorded and played on the local educational cable TV channel 16. Channel 16 viewership is widespread. Additionally, the Superintendent, ILDs, the Chief Academic Officer, and other central office staff routinely share reform news and seek input about proposed or ongoing reforms at staff meetings, parent/family meetings, School Governance Council meetings, parent association meetings, school open houses and other scheduled events, and meetings of committees that include representatives of the collective bargaining units for teachers and administrators.

The Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Kathleen M. Ouellette, has shared reform updates and gathered feedback and input about school reform at regular Mayor's Cabinet Meetings of city department heads. She has also participated in two-way communication opportunities at meetings and events which have included the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| September 21, 2012 | Chamber of Commerce |
| September 21, 2012 | Addressed new teachers at a reception at Mt. Olive AME Zion church with Granville Academy and Concerned Black Clergy |
| September 27, 2012 | Fireball Run on Waterbury Green |
| September 30, 2012 | Spoke to Parents and dignitaries at Reed Open House & Dedication |
| October 2, 2012 | WATR - Talk of the Town (call-in local radio show) |
| October 5, 2012 | Spoke at Madre Latina Conference |
| October 10, 2012 | Title I Annual Meeting |
| October 15, 2012 | Addressed graduating class of 'Parent See' Program at Waterbury Hospital |
| December 6, 2012 | Bridge to Success Forum at Veterans Hall |
| January 22, 2013 | Panelist at First 1000 Days event - LOB |
| January 30, 2013 | WATR - Talk of the Town (call-in local radio show) |
| February 25, 2013 | Hosted Breakfast Meeting with Legislators |
| February 26, 2013 | 100 Best Communities Celebration & Young People Awards |
| March 5, 2013 | Met with Ministers at Grace Baptist Church spoke on Education Update |
| March 21, 2013 | Bridge to Success Community Forum |
| March 23, 2013 | BW Stop - New Opportunities |
| March 27, 2013 | Waterbury Exchange club |
| May 11, 2013 | Madre Latina Scholarship Awards (Dr. Received Leadership Award) - and Addressed the audience on Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| May 18, 2013 | Mayor's Ethnic Festival - Parade and Library Park |
| May 21, 2013 | Addressed parents and students at Elementary Student Awards |
| May 22, 2013 | Addressed parents and students at MS & HS Student Awards |
| June 1, 2013 | Autism Walk at Library Park and Relay for Life at Crosby HS |

Upcoming stakeholder engagement opportunities for the Superintendent include:

| | |
|---|---|
| July 2,2013 | Scheduled meeting with Walsh School parents and staff regarding status of Walsh Principal, Turnaround, etc |
| July 3, 2013 | Tentative meeting with Crosby Staff regarding the status of Crosby Principal, Turnaround, etc. |

As the district moves ahead with school and district reform marked by central office transformation to a service oriented support system for the development of highly effective schools and rapid turnaround of low-performing schools, both central office and school leaders will be mindful of the importance of continued stakeholder engagement in the reform process.  As a result, they will embrace opportunities within the school communities and the community at large to both share improvement plans and work to continuously improve those plans based upon stakeholder input.  Board of Education meetings (including public speaking portion of meetings), School Governance Council meetings, Parent organization meetings, school open house meetings, community meetings and forums, and local events, are examples of these opportunities.

# PART III:  APPENDIX SECTION

## A.  Statement of Assurances

**CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES | GRANT PROGRAMS

**PROJECT TITLE:**

**THE APPLICANT:**          Waterbury School District          HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

**A.**  The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;

**B.**  The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;

**C.**  The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;

**D.**  The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;

**E.**  Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;

**F.**  Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;

**G.**  The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;

**H.**  The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;

**I.**  If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;

**J.**  The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;

**K.** At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

**L.** REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)
1) References in this section to "contract" shall mean this grant agreement and references to "contractor" shall mean the Grantee.

For the purposes of this section, "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

For the purposes of this section, "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials 51 percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) Who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise; (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise; and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of section 32-9n; and "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations. "Good faith efforts" shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements.

2) (a) The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the state of Connecticut. The contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation, or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (b) the contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (c) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (d) the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and sections 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to sections 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; (e) the contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor as relate to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56.

3) Determination of the contractor's good faith efforts shall include but shall not be limited to the following factors: the contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or

efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

4) The contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.

5) The contractor shall include the provisions of section (2) above in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with section 46a-56; provided, if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the contractor may request the state of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

6) The contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this section as the term of this contract and any amendments thereto as they exist on the date of the contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this contract and any amendments thereto.

7) (a) The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the state of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (b) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (c) the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to section 46a-56; (d) the contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor which relate to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56.

8) The contractor shall include the provisions of section (7) above in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with section 46a-56; provided, if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the contractor may request the state of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

**M.** The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education and availability of state or federal funds.

**N.** The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official; hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature: _____

Name: *(typed)*          Dr. Kathleen M. Ouellette

Title: *(typed)*          Superintendent of Schools

Date: _____

## B. Review and Turnaround Schools

**Instructions:** The list below identifies all of the district's Review and Turnaround schools. The district must submit plans for all of its Turnaround schools and <u>at least half</u> of its Review schools. Indicate which of the district's Review schools will begin implementation in fall 2013. Also indicate how the district will satisfy planning requirements for each school. This can include: (1) developing a new plan for the school; (2) submitting an existing plan that has shown progress; or (3) applying to participate in the TIME Collaborative.

In the final column, indicate whether the district is considering participation in the Commissioner's Network.[2] Please note that if a school is not selected for the TIME Collaborative, then that school must complete the School Improvement Plan template. If the school is submitting an existing plan, then the district must only complete the cover page or Section #1 of the School Improvement Plan template for that school. Schools may also have the opportunity to apply for the K-3 Literacy Initiative; more information about this initiative is forthcoming.

***Please complete and submit the Appendix B form provided and customized for your district.***

*The following Waterbury schools are designated as review, focus, and turnaround schools.*
Carrington
Driggs*
Duggan
Gilmartin*
Sprague*
Wilson*
Kennedy*
Wilby
NEMS*
WSMS
Bucks Hill (Focus)*
Walsh (Turnaround)**
Crosby (Turnaround)**

*Schools for which the district intends to submit a School Improvement Plan in July 2013, for the 2013-14 year.
**Schools for which the district is applying for Commissioner's Network status at this time.

For each of the focus and review schools designated with an asterisk(*), school teams and central office Instructional Leadership Directors have been working on School Improvement Plans for some months. By the July 2013 Alliance deadline, each of those schools will have completed a new plan and aligned it to the SDE template for School Improvement Plans.

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[2] Expression of interest does not signify a requirement or intent to apply. Expansion of the Commissioner's Network will be contingent upon the availability of funds.