Connecticut ESEA Flexibility Request

Revised August 3, 2015

U. S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

Paperwork Burden Statement
OMB Number: 1810-0581
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SECTION I: COVER SHEET, WAIVERS, ASSURANCES AND CONSULTATION

Each SEA must remove the Cover Sheet, Waivers, and Assurances pages from its currently approved ESEA flexibility request. It must replace those pages with the completed Cover Sheet, Waivers, and Assurances pages from this form as part of its renewal request.

Cover Sheet for ESEA Flexibility Request

Legal Name of Requester: Connecticut State Department of Education	Requester's Mailing Address: 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 303 Hartford, Connecticut 06106
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request Name: Charlene Russell-Tucker Position and Office: Chief Operating Officer Contact's Mailing Address: 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 303 Hartford, Connecticut 06106 Telephone: 880-713-6550 Fax: 860-713-7022 Email address: Charlene.russell-tucker@ct.gov	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner	Telephone: 860-713-6500
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X Dianna R. Wentzell	Date: August 3, 2015
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of ESEA flexibility.	

WAIVERS

By submitting this updated ESEA flexibility request, the SEA renews its request for flexibility through waivers of the nine ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements, as well as any optional waivers the SEA has chosen to request under ESEA flexibility, by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested.

☒ 1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement on the State's assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.

☒ 2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.

☒ 3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.

☒ 4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.

☒ 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a school-wide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of "priority schools" and "focus schools," respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.

☒ 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve any of the State's priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of "priority schools" and "focus schools," respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

☒ 7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State's reward schools that meet the definition of "reward schools" set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

☒ 8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.

☒ 9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.

Optional Flexibilities:

If an SEA chooses to request waivers of any of the following requirements, it should check the corresponding box(es) below:

☒ 10. The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (*i.e.*, before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.

☒ 11. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA's State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools.

☒ 12. The requirements in ESEA section 1113(a)(3)-(4) and (c)(1) that require an LEA to serve eligible schools under Title I in rank order of poverty and to allocate Title I, Part A funds based on that rank ordering. The SEA requests this waiver in order to permit its LEAs to serve a Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent that the SEA has identified as a priority school even if that school does not otherwise rank sufficiently high to be served under ESEA section 1113.

☐ 13. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver in addition to waiver #6 so that, when it has remaining section 1003(a) funds after ensuring that all priority and focus schools have sufficient funds to carry out interventions, it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs to provide interventions and supports for low-achieving students in other Title I schools when one or more subgroups miss either AMOs or graduation rate targets or both over a number of years.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #13, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request that it has a process to ensure, on an annual basis, that all of its priority and focus schools will have sufficient funding to implement their required interventions prior to distributing ESEA section 1003(a) funds to other Title I schools.

Click here to enter page numbers where edits have been made and where new attachments have been added. Do not insert new text here – insert new text in redline into the revised request.

☐ 14. The requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(1)(B) and 1111(b)(3)(C)(i) that, respectively, require the SEA to apply the same academic content and academic achievement standards to all public schools and public school children in the State and to administer the same academic assessments to measure the achievement of all students. The SEA requests this waiver so that it is not required to double test a student who is not yet enrolled in high school but who takes advanced, high school level, mathematics coursework. The SEA would assess such a student with the corresponding advanced, high school level assessment in place of the mathematics assessment the SEA would otherwise administer to the student for the grade in which the student is enrolled. For Federal accountability purposes, the SEA will use the results of the advanced, high school level, mathematics assessment in the year in which the assessment is administered and will administer one or more additional advanced, high school level, mathematics assessments to such students in high school, consistent with the State's mathematics content standards, and use the results in high school accountability determinations.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #14, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request how it will ensure that every student in the State has the opportunity to be prepared for and take courses at an advanced level prior to high school.

Click here to enter page numbers where edits have been made and where new attachments have been added. Do not insert new text here – insert new text in redline into the revised request.

ASSURANCES

By submitting this request, the SEA assures that:

☒ 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of ESEA flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.

☒ 2. It has adopted English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State's college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)

☒ 3. It will administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)

☒ 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State's ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii) no later than the 2015–2016 school year. (Principle 1)

☒ 5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)

☒ 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)

☒ 7. It will annually make public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools prior to the start of the school year as well as publicly recognize its reward schools, and will update its lists of priority and focus schools at least every three years. (Principle 2)

If the SEA is not submitting with its renewal request its updated list of priority and focus schools, based on the most recent available data, for implementation beginning in the 2015–2016 school year, it must also assure that:

☒ 8. It will provide to the Department, no later than January 31, 2016, an updated list of priority and focus schools, identified based on school year 2014–2015 data, for implementation beginning in the 2016–2017 school year.

☒ 9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)

☒ 10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its ESEA flexibility request.

☒ 11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs. (Attachment 2)

☒ 12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the SEA customarily provides such notice and information to the public (*e.g.*, by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice. (Attachment 3)

☒ 13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout its ESEA flexibility request, and will ensure that all such reports, data, and evidence are accurate, reliable, and complete or, if it is aware of issues related to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of its reports, data, or evidence, it will disclose those issues.

☒ 14. It will report annually on its State report card and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the "all students" group, each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II), and for any combined subgroup (as applicable): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State's annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. In addition, it will annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively. It will ensure that all reporting is consistent with *State and Local Report Cards Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended Non-Regulatory Guidance* (February 8, 2013).

Principle 3 Assurances

Each SEA must select the appropriate option and, in doing so, assures that:

Option A	Option B	Option C
☐ 15.a. The SEA is on track to fully implementing Principle 3, including incorporation of student growth based on State assessments into educator ratings for teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals.	If an SEA that is administering new State assessments during the 2014–2015 school year is requesting one additional year to incorporate student growth based on these assessments, it will: ☐ 15.b.i. Continue to ensure that its LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation systems using multiple measures, and that the SEA or its LEAs will calculate student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year for all teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals; and ☐ 15.b.ii. Ensure that each teacher of a tested grade and subject and all principals will receive their student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year.	If the SEA is requesting modifications to its teacher and principal evaluation and support system guidelines or implementation timeline other than those described in Option B, which require additional flexibility from the guidance in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility* as well as the documents related to the additional flexibility offered by the Assistant Secretary in a letter dated August 2, 2013, it will: ☒ 15.c. Provide a narrative response in its redlined ESEA flexibility request as described in Section II of the ESEA flexibility renewal guidance.

CONSULTATION

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State's Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.1) Did the SEA meaningfully engage and solicit input on its request from teachers and their representatives?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.2) Is the engagement likely to lead to successful implementation of the SEA's request due to the input and commitment of teachers and their representatives at the outset of the planning and implementation process?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.3) Did the SEA indicate that it modified any aspect of its request based on input from teachers and their representatives?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.4) Did the SEA meaningfully engage and solicit input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.5) Is the engagement likely to lead to successful implementation of the SEA's request due to the input and commitment of relevant stakeholders at the outset of the planning and implementation process?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.6) Did the SEA indicate that it modified any aspect of its request based on stakeholder input?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.7) Does the input represent feedback from a diverse mix of stakeholders representing various perspectives and interests, including stakeholders from high-need communities?

Throughout the development of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver in 2012 and subsequently during the implementation of the ESEA principles, the CSDE has engaged in continuous ongoing consultation with stakeholders to meaningfully include them in the process and to receive feedback from the broad universe of constituents affected by aspects of the education plan described in the various iterations of the ESEA Flexibility plan.

During the time of the original submission the CSDE participated in extensive engagement with stakeholders that helped shape the finalized CT ESEA Flexibility Waiver application. As stated in the 2012

submission, provided below is a summary of the impact of stakeholder engagement on the final 2012 application.

Outcomes of Consultation (2012)

In all engagements with stakeholder groups, the CSDE has informed the individuals and organizations of the state's plans, updated them on specific policy proposals, and solicited comments and feedback. All feedback has been documented, reviewed, and addressed by the CSDE teams and managers responsible for the development of the waiver. The CSDE went through the issues, considered them carefully, and determined the appropriate actions. Below are summaries of interactions and outcomes as they pertain to each section of the waiver application.

1. College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students (Principle 1). The CSDE engaged stakeholder groups during the CCSS adoption process. While nearly two-thirds of the June 2010 CCSS Stakeholder Conference attendees were educators, over 25% represented educational organizations, and just under 10% represented higher education institutions. Participants represented the P-20 Council, the CPAC, the CABE, the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA), the Connecticut Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Connecticut IHEs, and the RESC Alliance.

The CSDE is in the process of convening a CCSS implementation team with the specific mandate to ensure all constituent groups are reached. The CCSS Implementation team will include CSDE staff members that support curriculum, assessment, instruction, ELLs and students with disabilities, as well as external partners. The internal CSDE team will meet quarterly and has a mandate to reach stakeholders in adult education, early childhood, and family engagement. The team that includes partners external to the CSDE will also meet quarterly and will include members that represent IHEs, professional organizations, district-level administrators, teachers' organizations, parent organizations, and advocacy groups. The CSDE continues to seek educator input on the implementation process by providing surveys and other feedback mechanisms during statewide and local trainings. Furthermore, the CSDE has convened a stakeholder group of public and private agencies, parents, consumers, advocates, and district representatives to address the secondary transition needs of students with disabilities. This Special Education Transition Taskforce examines the CCSS and identifies those standards most appropriate for transition planning for students with disabilities.

2. State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support (Principle 2). In the first draft of this application, which was posted on the CSDE website and presented at the information sessions, the CSDE included student and teacher attendance as part of its accountability system. Participants at one of our information sessions and principals in our Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) focus group expressed concerns about the current research linking student attendance to achievement as well as the out-of-school factors that could influence student attendance. While the CSDE believes that student and teacher attendance is critical to the success of Connecticut students, it agrees that until it has developed more robust ways to assess school climate, it should remove these measures. Participants were also concerned about school tutoring and summer programs. The CSDE clarified that this application includes continuing summer and tutoring programs as optional interventions—rather than as requirements—for both Priority and Focus Schools.

3. Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership (Principle 3). The feedback the CSDE received on the development and implementation of new evaluation systems touched on three issues: 1) how to evaluate non-classroom teachers, 2) how to measure student learning, and 3) how to ensure that the

process is not burdensome to teachers. As described in the implementation plan, PEAC is convening three evaluation workgroups to develop separate models for administrators, teachers, and support staff. The CSDE anticipates that the evaluation for non-classroom teachers will be addressed by either the teacher or support staff group. The state's requirements—which have just been approved by the SBE—specify that 45% of the evaluation must be based on student learning. Of this 45%, half (or 22.5%) must be based on the state test or a standardized test in grades and subjects for which no state test exists, while the other half must include other reliable and valid measures. Finally, to address concerns regarding potential burdens created by the system and inadequate support for teachers, the CSDE clarified that the state will provide additional resources to support the implementation of the new evaluation system and associated professional development. Specifically, the proposed legislative package includes $7.5 million for additional professional development support and technical assistance linked to the new evaluation system.

Continuing Engagement

Additionally, as the text from the 2012 application indicates, the CSDE committed to an ongoing engagement with stakeholders as the three ESEA Waiver Principles were implemented. The 2012 application stated:

The CSDE will execute many initiatives over the next three years and remains committed to continuous engagement with stakeholders throughout this process. After the initial submission of this flexibility request, the CSDE plans to repeat certain aspects of the engagement process, including posting the submitted request for comments and requesting feedback through the title1waivers@ct.gov e-mail address. Furthermore, the CSDE plans to solicit feedback through e-mails and face-to-face meetings with stakeholder groups specifically concerning the following areas:

- Transition to Common Core assessments;
- Interventions in Focus Schools;
- Implementation of educator evaluation; and
- Measures of school climate, student health, and arts and fitness to include in accountability system.

While the CSDE values the input of all stakeholders, because of the particular nature of the policies proposed in this flexibility request, CSDE staff will especially seek the input of teachers, administrators, superintendents, parents, students, advocates for high-needs students, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and racial/ethnic minorities.

The CSDE plans to work with the state's RESCs and SERC – which have a long history of providing information, professional development, and technical assistance to schools and districts – to identify mechanisms best suited for continuing to engage parents of ELLs. The CSDE is considering developing outreach plans, letters, and information sessions for district level staff to use in engaging parents. During May 2012, the CSDE, SERC, Connecticut Parent Information Resource Center (CT PIRC), CPAC, and CAPELL will develop a plan regarding parent partnerships and engagement. The plan will include various technology and face-to-face communication strategies. In addition, content tools and resources will be disseminated and discussed to assist parents of students with disabilities and parents of ELLs to support their children's academic growth. Existing resources available through CCSSO and the National Parent Teacher Association will be utilized, and when necessary, expanded to meet the state's needs.

Finally, stakeholder engagement specifically around the waiver request is strongly linked to the work being done throughout the state. The CSDE continues to work with other agencies to further the state's shared goals of promoting excellence for all and closing the achievement gap. Beginning in January 2012, the statutorily mandated Interagency Council for Ending the Achievement Gap will meet quarterly and will focus on the introduction of school-linked wrap-around services in low-performing schools. The CSDE Commissioner sits on the council, as do representatives from the Departments of Children and Families, Social Services, Public Health, Economic and Community Development, Administrative Services, and Policy and Management as well as the Office of the Governor and representatives from higher education.

Throughout the CSDE's conversations with stakeholders, it has heard a consistent message: Connecticut will not improve outcomes for its students with more repackaged versions of the status quo. The CSDE is invigorated by the dedication of individuals and groups in all corners of the state to improve Connecticut schools. The CSDE looks forward to continuing the dialogue with these groups throughout the coming years as they work together toward the shared goals of achieving better results for all students and ambitious levels of growth for the state's lowest-performing students.

Since the approval of the Connecticut ESEA Flexibility Waiver application, the CSDE has indeed continued its overall engagement with stakeholders to strengthen the initiatives included in the 2012 application, to adjust the initiatives as needed, and to help shape the 2015 ESEA Flexibility Waiver renewal application. Provided below is a summary of how the ongoing engagement with stakeholders has impacted the implementation of the 3 principles since 2012. All of the CSDE divisions have been involved with the implementation of ESEA, and division leaders have worked collaboratively throughout the implementation and renewal processes. However, some divisions are more closely related to some principles and have therefore taken responsibility for conducting consultation in those areas. Principle 1 is most closely linked to the Academic Office, Principle 2 primarily encompasses the work of both the Performance and Turnaround Offices, and the Talent Office has taken the lead on Principle 3.

<u>Principle 1.</u>

1) Since the last renewal submission, the CSDE has engaged in extensive stakeholder engagement with educators in the deep work surrounding the components of Principle 1.

- Redoubling efforts to actively engage stakeholders in high quality implementation of College- and Career-Ready Standards.
- Providing regular and thorough communication in a multitude of formats, the CSDE works proactively to anticipate the needs of stakeholders at every stage of the implementation process.
- By actively engaging with and responding to stakeholder needs, the CSDE is building capacity in local curriculum development and CCSS-aligned instructional shifts.
- The CSDE offers stakeholders a wealth of resources related to the Smarter Balanced Assessment System.
- Through a partnership with the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), twelve CCSS trainings were created and delivered for local boards of education from January 2014 through January 2015. Additionally, from January-April 2015, seven trainings were developed and delivered focusing on Next Generation Science Standards.
- To date, one hundred and fifty three local education agencies (77%) agreed to collaborate and as of March 2015, the CSDE has provided 336 professional learning opportunities (workshops

and webinars) with over 10,000 attendees, including novice and veteran teachers, district and school leaders, pupil personnel and specialists, faculty from IHE teacher preparation programs, and others.

- Over 1200 days of customized, in-district coaching and/or technical assistance (funded by the CSDE) were delivered by the end of the 2014-15 school year to support local implementation efforts.
- Connecticut recruited 45 educators to serve as the State Network of Educators (SNE) to develop and evaluate materials for the Smarter Balanced Digital Library.

2) Since the last renewal submission, the CSDE has engaged in extensive stakeholder engagement with parents on the components of Principle 1

- Since January 2014, the department has partnered with the Connecticut PTA in providing multiple parent/ community forums and presentations.
- The CSDE launched a CCSS dedicated website CTCORESTANDARDS.ORG in December 2013, including a Parent/Community page with parent-friendly materials explaining CCSS in the top seven languages spoken by Connecticut students.
- Through the monthly Academic Office Newsletter, the department regularly provides Local Education Agencies with model materials for parents, families, and community members, including customizable presentation slide decks, as well as links to parent-friendly resources.

3) Since the last renewal submission, the CSDE has engaged in extensive stakeholder engagement with boards of education on the components of Principle 1. To address a concern from the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) regarding training for State Board of Education (SBE) members, the CSDE developed summer academies for members of the local boards of education in the implementation plan.

Additionally, stakeholder engagement helped shaped the CSDE renewal application. The ESEA Flexibility Renewal application requires the state to:

- Update its plan to describe how it will continue to support all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, low-achieving students, economically disadvantaged students, and the teachers of those students.
- Adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards and administer similarly aligned ELP assessments.

Stakeholder feedback resulted in:

- Adoption of English Language Proficiency Standards Aligned to College and Career Readiness on Schedule with Other Students
- Beginning in the fall of 2014, the CSDE and ACES (a regional education service center) assembled a practitioner committee to review options for new the English Language Proficiency Standards to serve as a foundation for the Connecticut English Language Proficiency Standards.
- Working with diverse stakeholders, including Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL), as well as teachers and administrators, the CSDE explored available CCSS-aligned standards for English Learners.
- Updates have been provided to the CT State Board of Education Policy and Legislative Committee regarding proposed standards adoption and other major initiatives to support ELs
- Recently, the ELP Standards Committee recommended the English Language Proficiency Standards (developed by NGA, CCSSO, West Ed and Stanford University) and the CSDE has

begun to disseminate information and collect feedback toward a proposal of adoption by the State Board of Education (anticipated in fall 2015).
- The ELP Standards are scheduled to be reviewed with the State Board Standards and Assessment Committee in March 2015

Furthermore, The ESEA Flexibility Renewal application requires CSDE to update its plan to ensure all students graduate from high school ready for college and a career through the implementation of college- and career-ready standards and high-quality, aligned assessments.

Stakeholder feedback resulted in:
- Based on P.A. 15-238 and the recommendation of the High School Assessment Working Group, the CSDE will administer the SAT in lieu of the Grade 11 Smarter Balanced test.
- Working with broad internal and external stakeholders, the CSDE selected K-3 Reading as a critical and preventive instructional focus for the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR), See Appendix 1.8. The CSDE has integrated the SSIP requirement relating to K-3 literacy for students with disabilities into the required School Improvement Planning process that is part of this renewal application.
- Following diverse stakeholder feedback opportunities, the CSDE presented the Next Generation Science Standards to the Connecticut State Board of Education.

The list of Academic Office activities during which they worked with stakeholders on ESEA implementation and consultation related to the ESEA Flexibility Renewal can be found in Appendix Con 6.

Principle 2 - Accountability

After receiving its first flexibility approval in May 2012, Connecticut implemented an accountability system that was a substantial improvement over the prior rigid approach known as AYP. The post-AYP system introduced a performance index, raised expectations, integrated all tested subjects, made achievement gaps more transparent, and classified all schools. Over the past two years, the CSDE has actively sought feedback regarding this system. We've heard from district and school staff, state and national experts, Department staff, and other stakeholders. We have also analyzed data from the system's implementation.

This feedback has revealed several areas for further refinement and improvement. These ideas are being incorporated into modifications Connecticut is proposing to its accountability system as part of this renewal application. Some of the major proposed enhancements are as follows:
- In addition to academic achievement, academic growth of the same students over time in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics will become an important component. Because the students enrolled in a school in the tested grades change from one year to the next, measuring growth of the same students over time is a more direct measure of curriculum and instructional quality. This indicator will be implemented after the second administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments in spring 2016.
- The accountability system will also incorporate many new indicators. They will be focused on college- and career-readiness and on the delivery of a well-rounded education. These include indicators such as chronic absenteeism, participation in postsecondary or career readiness

courses, four-year and six-year graduation rates, entrance into a two- or four-year postsecondary institution, access to the arts, and results from Connecticut's physical fitness assessment.

- This inclusive set of indicators will provide a more complete picture of the successes and challenges facing a school. It will guard against narrowing of the curriculum to the subjects that are tested, something that emerged under AYP. It will encourage school staff to assume ownership of the accountability system. It will also allow schools to demonstrate success on indicators that may be precursors to test scores.

There is widespread support for these overall changes. A collaborative of six organizations representing superintendents, schools, local boards of education, advocacy groups, and business/industry leaders affirmed in their recent policy manifesto that "…Connecticut must adopt a rigorous and holistic framework for accountability that prioritizes student achievement growth and uses multiple measures to determine whether schools and districts are making progress."

Additionally, stakeholder engagement helped shaped the CSDE renewal application for Principle 2 by directly informing the proposed design of the new accountability system. The proposed new accountability system has 11 key indicators, and provided below is a summary of the stakeholder feedback for each indicator. (See Principle 2 for a full description of each indicator.) The ESEA Flexibility Renewal application requires states to demonstrate continuous improvement of the recognition and accountability system, and ensure that the system incorporates student achievement, graduation rates, and school performance and progress over time, for all students and subgroups.

Stakeholder feedback resulted in:

Indicator 1: Academic Achievement (Status)

Input/Feedback: The overall notion of a Performance Index that recognizes student performance across the continuum, not just "proficient" and "not proficient", has been well received. However, in extensive conversations with local practitioners, three important issues emerged with Connecticut's prior approach to the index:

- First, though the index was an enhancement to the AYP approach of looking solely at 'proficient' and 'not proficient', it still didn't capture improvement *within* performance levels. Furthermore, with Smarter Balanced assessments offering four achievement levels as opposed to five in the CMT/CAPT assessments, practitioners are concerned that the index will fail to capture differences in performance within the wide achievement levels.
- Second, the interpretable and actionable value of an overall index score that averages all the tested subjects was questioned. Practitioners generally prefer subject-specific indices.
- Lastly, practitioners asked why advanced performance couldn't garner additional points in the index, especially if the State's expected level of achievement was below that level. For example, in the Smarter Balanced assessment, level 3 of 4 is considered on-track for college and career readiness, while level 4 is an explicit standard that truly represents an "advanced" level of performance.

Indicator 2: Academic Growth (Longitudinal)

Input/Feedback: Practitioners have long awaited the inclusion of academic growth as an indicator in district/school accountability. They are generally more supportive of using academic growth than achievement status to evaluate the effectiveness of a district/school.

Indicator 3: Participation Rate

Input/Feedback: This indicator has gained increasing acceptance statewide. Many districts and schools have begun to track and monitor chronic absenteeism voluntarily. The CT Legislature has established a Strategic Action Group around this issue that is serving as a centralizing force for disseminating promising new practices, promoting communication and collaboration among critical state agency and community-based partners, and reporting to the legislature on statewide progress. The CSDE's district/school turnaround initiatives (Alliance District program and Commissioner's Network) incorporate chronic absenteeism as an important indicator.

Indicator 5: Preparation for Postsecondary and Career Readiness – Coursework

Input/Feedback: The primary feedback to this indicator has been that the system should be inclusive to recognize opportunities beyond AP/IB that may be offered by districts. For example, many districts have partnerships with in-state colleges/universities (e.g., UCONN's Early College Experience program) that enable students to take college courses in high school and earn both high school and college credit. In response to this suggestion, the CSDE modified its data collection to begin collecting information about dual enrollment courses.

Indicator 6: Preparation for Postsecondary and Career Readiness - Exams

Input/Feedback: As with coursework, the primary feedback to this indicator has been that the system should be inclusive and recognize that students may demonstrate college/career readiness through different exam options.

Indicator 7: Graduation - On-Track in 9th Grade

Input/Feedback: Some questioned if the five credits in grade 9 represents being on-track since the total credits required to graduate in many high schools exceed the state minimum of 20. Others suggested course passage instead of credit accumulation. Some administrators of K-8 schools districts were also concerned that this metric was holding them accountable for student success in an educational system outside their own.

Indicator 8: Graduation – Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate – All Students

Input/Feedback: Among all the indicators in the accountability model, this is one that continues to concern many district/school leaders. While a vast majority of students do graduate in four years, practitioners adamantly (and one might say rightly) contend that some students (e.g., English Learners who newly arrive in the country in middle/high school, and low income students who may need to work part-time to support their family) benefit from having an extra year or two to complete high school; consequently, they claim it is unfair that these non-graduates are counted as a "failure" in the four-year rate which has become the "de-facto graduation rate."

Indicator 9: Graduation – Six-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate – High Needs

Input/Feedback: The six-year rate elicits a very different reaction from that of the four-year rate. This extended graduation rate is viewed very favorably by all constituents and stakeholders.

Indicator 10: Postsecondary Entrance Rate – All Students

Input/Feedback: Some practitioners are supportive of this indicator because it encourages school staff to extend their efforts beyond the school building to support student success. Others are less supportive because they consider this indicator as being shaped more by factors beyond the influence of school staff (e.g., personal choice, family economics). Some of these objectors are amenable to its inclusion so long as it is not weighted too heavily and the ultimate target is reasonable.

The CSDE has heard from the field and acknowledges data limitations associated with this indicator. Currently, the Department does not have access to information about important post-secondary outcomes for students, including but not limited to, evidence of full-time employment immediately following graduation, entry into the military, enrollment in private occupational schools, and transition to apprenticeships.

Indicator 11: Physical Fitness

Input/Feedback: Though cardiovascular fitness has been shown to correlate with improved academic performance, stakeholders accept a metric that looks at standard-attainment in all four assessment areas because the focus is health/fitness. Some stakeholders wondered if this area was weighted too heavily.

Indicator 12: Arts Access

Input/Feedback: Traditionally, access to the arts has been measured through instructional hours offered. District/school administrators indicate that self-reported arts instructional hours are not comparable across schools. With the availability now of course-level data, the extent to which students avail of arts opportunities can be empirically known and compared across districts/schools.

The CSDE has heard from the field that students are engaged in important arts-related activities that are not captured through this indicator. The Department acknowledges that many students participate in school- or community-based art programs and activities outside of the school day. At this time, there is not a way to capture that information in this system.

Additionally, stakeholders have requested that the definition of arts coursework be expanded to courses that incorporate the use of technology including computer-aided design. For now, this system will remain focused on dance, theater, music and the visual arts, but consideration will be given to expanding how this indicator is defined in future years.

The list of Performance Office activities during which they worked with stakeholders on ESEA implementation and consultation related to the ESEA Flexibility Renewal can be found in Appendix Con 7.

Principle 2 – Turnaround

Providing support to school districts and schools engaged in school turnaround work is critically important. The CSDE is better able to assess the effectiveness of resources being utilized to support this work, how well strategies are working and what additional efforts can be employed for districts to better support schools, principals to better lead turnaround work, and for teachers to strengthen their practice all focused on improving student learning.

The CSDE was extensively engaged with all stakeholders involved in this work that helped shape the additional turnaround models and strategies that are included in this renewal application. Provided below is a listing of all stakeholder engagements with schools undertaking turnaround work. Turnaround Office staff conduct quarterly review meetings with both school and district staff. The Office also holds Alliance District Convenings three times per year, as well as quarterly Netstat meetings. In addition, because of the intensive support provided to the Focus and Turnaround schools, Turnaround Office staff conduct support and monitoring at least every two weeks, or every three weeks depending on the needs of the school. In total, there have been thousands of hours of meetings, workshops, and walk-throughs, during which SDE staff and district personnel are working closely together to implement the state's turnaround efforts in the lowest performing schools.

The list of Turnaround Office activities during which they worked with stakeholders on ESEA implementation and consultation related to the ESEA Flexibility Renewal can be found in Appendix Con 8.

Principle 3

The Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) is a diverse group of educators who created the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation in June 2012. Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development, PEAC meets on a quarterly basis and is responsible for ongoing advising relating to the Educator Evaluation and Support Systems (EESSs). PEAC is comprised of educators representing the following stakeholder groups:

- Regional Education Service Centers
- American Federation of Teachers – CT (teachers union)
- CT Association of Schools (principals' organization)
- Connecticut State Department of Education
- Sacred Heart University
- CT Association of Public School Superintendents
- CT Education Association (teachers union)
- Board of Regents for Higher Education
- CT Association of Boards of Education
- CT Federation of School Administrators

Since 2012, PEAC has reviewed the rollout of the EESSs and have recommended adjustments. With the guidance and input of PEAC since 2012, the following adjustments have been made.

The ESEA Flexibility Renewal application requires CSDE to ensure continuous improvement of evaluation and support systems that result in instructional improvement and increased student learning.

PEAC feedback resulted in:

- On July 15, 2013, the SBE, in consultation with the PEAC, authorized the CSDE to submit a flexibility request to the United States Department of Education (USED) that would enable districts, through a local process, to determine whether to use Common Core-aligned assessments produced by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), the legacy state tests (CMT/CAPT) or both in the 2013-14 school year. On January 30, 2014, Connecticut's request for flexibility was approved, and the CSDE established procedures to guide local decision making, including stakeholder and local board chair input into the choice regarding state test administration.
- In addition, PEAC and the SBE authorized the CSDE to request a delay on the use of state test data in evaluation through 2014-15, as the state made the transitioned from the legacy assessment to the new Smarter Balanced assessment.
- Connecticut's first operational administration of the Smarter Balanced assessment will be in spring 2015, and an additional administration in 2015-16 is necessary to establish baseline and determine appropriate student growth. Therefore, PEAC and the SBE authorized the CSDE to request additional flexibility regarding the timeline for incorporating state test results. Connecticut will require that LEAs incorporate state test data in performance ratings to measure student growth beginning in the 2016-17 school year.
- In 2014-15, all LEAs were required to implement Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system with 100% of their certified educators. An exception to the above pertained to the following unique educational entities:
    - Adult Education
    - Unified School District #1 (Department of Corrections)
    - Unified School District #2 (Department of Children and Families)
    - Approved Private Special Education Facilities
    - Pre-K
    - Central Office and Charter School administrators

  Given their unique structures and implementation considerations, the SBE, in consultation with PEAC, approved and adopted an exemption from implementation of the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (2012) through the 2014-15 school year for educators in the aforementioned educational entities. However, those systems that are ready to proceed were enabled and encouraged to conduct permissive pilots during the 2014-15 school year. For the 2015-16 school year, educators in these educational settings will participate in a required pilot of EESS. This renewal application is requesting a full implementation date of the 2016-17 school year for these above-mentioned educational entities.
- In an effort to continuously improve upon the Guidelines, PEAC reached consensus on the provision of flexibility regarding several components of the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (2012) on Wednesday, January 29, 2014. Subsequently, on February 6, 2014, the SBE approved and adopted PEAC's proposed flexibilities with some minor edits. These revisions were adopted by the SBE on May 6, 2014, and are summarized below:

I. Dispute-Resolution Procedure:
    - Additional guidance, inclusive of an illustrative example, regarding the Dispute-Resolution Process required as part of district educator evaluation and support plans.

II. Rating System: Four Performance Evaluation Designators:

- Clarification of the term "performance" as applied to the four summative performance level designators; and
- A commitment to ongoing discussion between the CSDE and PEAC related to the "4-Level Matrix Rating" process during the course of the 2014-15 academic year.

III. Standardized indicators/ Non-standardized Indicators:

- Adjusted language with respect to the use of standardized and non-standardized indicators for the Student Growth and Development component of a teacher's evaluation, which consists of 45% of the final summative rating; and
- A commitment to ongoing discussion between the CSDE and PEAC to examine and develop the system of standardized and non-standardized student learning indicators, during the course of the 2014-15 academic year.

The list of Talent Office activities during which they worked with stakeholders on ESEA implementation and consultation related to the ESEA Flexibility Renewal can be found in Appendix Con 9.

Stakeholder Engagement Feedback on the draft ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal Application

The CSDE strongly believes in the importance of meaningful continuous consultation with stakeholders relating to all aspects of the work of the Department. As evidenced above, the CSDE staff spends thousands of hours consulting with stakeholders each year, working together to refine and improve the work of teaching and learning in Connecticut. All of the CSDE divisions and the division leaders have been involved with stakeholder consultation relating to the ESEA Flexibility Renewal Application. The Department formed an ESEA Leadership Team to oversee the renewal application and related activities.

Modalities of Consultation

The ESEA Renewal Application was an agenda item on the CT State Board of Education meetings in January, February, and March 2015. These meetings are attended by representatives of most major educational organizations in the state. Board documents are presented in Appendix Con 2.

The CSDE has used regularly scheduled meetings and workshops with education leaders, administrators, and teachers to provide information regarding the ESEA Renewal Application

- Meetings with the leaders and board of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS).
- Meetings with the leaders and board of the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS),
- Meetings with the leaders of the six Regional Education Service Centers- the RESC Alliance.
- Meetings with American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education- CT (AACTE-CT) which is comprised of the deans of the schools of education at our institutes of higher education.
- Meetings with the leaders of the Connecticut Education Association (CEA) and the Connecticut American Federation of Teachers (AFTCT).

The CSDE has also scheduled many other meetings to make presentations related to the ESEA Flexibility Renewal to stakeholders including teachers, students, parents and advocates of students with disabilities, parents and advocates of English Learners, and community organizations. A list of these meetings is presented in Table Con 1 below.

Table: Con 1: ESEA Renewal Stakeholder Consultation Meetings

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Personnel Responsible
CAS Board of Directors Meeting	Principals	11/6/14	Commissioner
CAPSS Board of Directors Meeting	Superintendents	11/7/15	Commissioner
CT Association of Boards of Education	School Board Members	11/14/14	Chief Performance Officer (CPO)
Northeast Region Superintendents Association	Superintendents	11/20/14	CPO
Network Netstat Meeting	Commissioner's Network Schools	12/10/14	Turnaround Director
Conn Case	LEA Special Education Directors	12/8/14	CPO
Southeast CT Superintendents Association	Superintendents	12/12/14	CPO
CAPSS Board of Directors Meeting	Superintendents	1/8/15	Commissioner
Hartford Area Superintendents Association	Superintendents	1/8/15	CPO
Sheff Coalition Meeting	Community Advocates	1/12/15	Chief Operating Officer (COO), CPO, & Director of Regional School Choice Office (RSCO)
Meeting with AFT and CEA Representatives	Teacher Unions	1/12/15	COO
Alliance District Convening	Alliance District Administrators and Teachers	1.14.15	Turnaround Director, Chief Academic Officer (CAO), & CPO
CAS Principals Meeting	Principals	1/20/15	CAO
High School Assessment Working Group	High School Administrators & Teachers	1/21/15	CAO
Western CT Superintendents Association	Superintendents	1/23/15	CPO
CT Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL)	EL Administrators	2/6/15	CAO
CT Teachers of the Year Advisory Committee	Teachers	2/10/15	Commissioner, Chief Talent Officer (CTO)
RESC Alliance	RESC Leaders	2/11/15	Commissioner
AACTE-CT Meeting	Deans of Education	2/13/15	CTO & CPO
RESC Science Council Meeting	Science Administrators & Teachers	2/13/15	CAO

RESC Curriculum Council	Asst. Superintendents & Curriculum Directors	2/16/15	CAO
Superintendents Roundtable	Superintendents	2/18/15	Commissioner
Special Education Advisory Council	Special Education Administrators, Advocates and Parents	2/18/15	CTO, CPO, Director of RSCO
CT Science Supervisors & Teachers Association	Science Administrators & Teachers	3/5/15	CAO
Litchfield County Superintendents Association	Superintendents	3/13/15	CPO
Connecticut Education Association	Union Leaders & Teachers	3/16/15	CPO
Parent & Community Organization ESEA Meeting	Parents and Community Members	3/17/15	CPO Director of RSCO

In these meetings, the CSDE engaged diverse stakeholders throughout the state including: administrators, teachers, board of education members, deans of higher education institutions, students, community advocacy and civil rights organizations, and families of students with disabilities and English learners.

The CSDE also established an ESEA Flexibility Renewal webpage on the CSDE website posted where materials related to the original ESEA Flexibility application and to the ESEA Renewal application are posted. The postings included a narrated PowerPoint presentation designed to help the general public understand the ESEA Renewal process and the changes proposed in the renewal. Letters and e-mails were sent widely to stakeholders and constituent groups, and the CSDE issued a press release to inform stakeholders of the posted documents and the desire for feedback from stakeholders. The department also established a dedicated e-mail address to receive written feedback from stakeholders, ESEAFlexRequest.SDE@ct.gov. Stakeholders could provide feedback from March 5 – March 27, 2015. The Commissioner's letter to stakeholders is attached as Appendix Con 1.

The CSDE held a meeting for Parents and Community Organizations to discuss the ESEA Renewal and receive feedback. The list of organizations and individuals invited to the Parent and Community Organization Meeting can be viewed in Appendix Con 5.

The CSDE received 36 pieces of feedback through the dedicated ESEA Flexibility e-mail address. For the log of e-mails see Appendix Con10. For samples of written comments and meeting notes see Appendix Con 11.

Outcomes of Consultation

In all engagements with stakeholder groups, the CSDE has informed the individuals and organizations of the state's plans, updated them on specific policy proposals to make changes to the ESEA Flexibility Application, and solicited comments and feedback. All feedback has been documented, reviewed, and

addressed by the CSDE teams and managers responsible for the development of the Renewal Application.

Of the 36 individuals or groups that submitted feedback by e-mail: 18 were administrators, 11 were teachers, 3 were advocacy groups, and 4 were educational organizations. The vast majority of the feedback received focused on 11th grade testing. Twenty of the respondents were opposed to adding another test at 11th grade due to the already full testing schedule for high school juniors. Most of the respondents on this issue were supportive of the CSDE proposal to use a revised version of the SAT instead of the SBAC test. Eight of the respondents commented on the changes to monitoring in Principle 2. Most of the comments were highly positive regarding the use of multiple measures, and a few of the respondents had technical questions regarding the new metrics being proposed. Two respondents gave positive comments about extending the flexibility regarding using student growth in teacher evaluation, and two respondents commented positively about the proposal to exempt English learners from testing for two years.

As a result of the ongoing stakeholder consultation that occurred throughout the implementation of the elements of the ESEA Flexibility, stakeholders have a strong understanding of the programs. The stakeholders have been involved in discussions regarding changes to the Flexibility Request. In addition, the proposed changes to Principles 1 and 3 have been relatively modest and have been based on the ongoing consultation with stakeholders. The major changes to Principle 2, particularly those related to monitoring which is the responsibility of our Performance Office, have been widely discussed with a broad representation of stakeholders for a long period of time, and mirror the feelings of the field to broaden the measures used to measure quality teaching and learning. The CSDE received the greatest amount of feedback regarding 11th grade testing, and the Renewal Application reflects the feedback received from stakeholders. Although questions remain regarding the proposed changes to the accountability system, the indicators that will be used are evolving, and the CSDE will continue to work closely with stakeholders to develop the new system. In summary, the changes proposed in the ESEA Flexibility Renewal have been widely applauded in the feedback the CSDE has received, because stakeholder feedback was already incorporated into the Renewal Application. No further changes to the Renewal Application are required following the review of stakeholder feedback.

EVALUATION

The Department encourages an SEA that receives approval to implement the flexibility to collaborate with the Department to evaluate at least one program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs implement under principle 1, 2, or 3. Upon receipt of approval of the flexibility, an interested SEA will need to nominate for evaluation a program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs will implement under principles 1, 2, or 3. The Department will work with the SEA to determine the feasibility and design of the evaluation and, if it is determined to be feasible and appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

☒ Check here if you are interested in collaborating with the Department in this evaluation, if your request for the flexibility is approved.

Overview of SEA's Request for the ESEA Flexibility Renewal

Provide an overview (about 500 words) of the SEA's request for the flexibility that:

1. explains the SEA's comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA's strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and

2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA's and its LEAs' ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.

The CSDE requests ESEA Flexibility Renewal because the principles of the flexibility renewal align with the reforms Connecticut has implemented during the past three years as described in the original flexibility request. Connecticut is committed to being a national leader in narrowing the achievement gap and creating academic excellence for all students. The initiatives proposed in the original ESEA Flexibility Request, the broad CSDE initiatives implemented during the past three years, and the proposed changes in this ESEA Flexibility Renewal Request all aim to create a system focused at every level on preparing students for success in college and careers. The CSDE has and will continue to provide educators with the support they need and will embrace performance-based accountability as a lever for continuous improvement.

Connecticut is home to over 569,000 students and 51,500 staff members in 1,165 schools and 189 districts, including RESCs and public charter schools. The CSDE knows that to realize sustained progress over time, improvement cannot be limited to select groups of students. This is an ongoing challenge for the CSDE because the state's performance data continues to reveal troubling achievement gaps. In fact, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data shows that Connecticut is among the top 10 states with the largest achievement gaps based on every subgroup comparison, including the single largest gap for the majority of subgroups. Additionally, state-level data confirms large gaps in academic progress, graduation rates, and other indicators between the highest- and lowest-performing students and subgroups, and these gaps are widening. The CSDE believes that the proposed policy changes outlined in this waiver will move Connecticut closer to the goal of achieving better results for all students and ambitious levels of growth for the state's lowest-performing students.

In February 2012, Governor Malloy declared 2012 the "year for education reform" and outlined Connecticut's policy direction. Key components of the state's strategy included the development of the very best teachers and principals, delivery of more resources to districts that embrace reform, intervention in the state's chronically low-performing schools, and removal of red tape and other barriers to success, especially for the state's highest performing schools. For a complete description of the Governor's 2012 education agenda, see the Governor's proposal on the CSDE website.

On May 8, 2012, the Connecticut General Assembly passed Bill 458, a 185-page piece of legislation with provisions that advanced the Governor's principles for education reform. The legislation appropriated more than $250 million in new funding to support education statewide, and included several significant initiatives, which are summarized below. The programs to be created by the Governor's legislation, combined with the proposed accountability system in this waiver request, will allow the CSDE to focus increased resources and interventions on the schools and districts attended by our state's most disadvantaged students – augmenting the CSDE's existing work with these schools. And, importantly, the initiatives have enabled us to focus on improving educational outcomes for students statewide.

Table OV 1

Principle: Enhance families' access to high-quality early childhood education opportunities.	
Current Statute	*Final Legislation*
• No current state obligation to create a specific number of early childhood opportunities	• Creates 1000 new early education slots in low-income communities • Launches a facilities study for the continued expansion of early education • Calls for the development a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System
	• Creates pilot program to enhance literacy for students in kindergarten through third grade
Principle: Authorize the intensive interventions and enables the supports necessary to turn around Connecticut's lowest-performing schools and districts.	
Current Statute	*Final Legislation*
• Limited and uncoordinated efforts for the state to intervene in the state's struggling schools; responsibility to turn around low-performing schools largely rests with local districts	• Creates the Commissioner's Network, enabling the State to provide intensive supports and interventions in 25 of the lowest-performing schools over the next three years • Each turnaround school will convene a Turnaround Committee made up of teachers, parents, and administrators, which will have the opportunity to submit a consensus plan for consideration by the Commissioner of Education • Turnaround plans can also be developed and implemented by the Commissioner • Enables high-performing non-profit school operators to operate a subset of the turnaround schools (6 of the 25) • Under specified circumstances, allows financial impact bargaining, on an expedited timeframe, regarding elements of the plan; permits election to work agreements and other labor flexibilities
• Insufficient specificity for identification of struggling readers and interventions on their behalf	• Creates an ambitious pilot program to enhance literacy for students in kindergarten through third grade with specific interventions
Principle: Expand the availability of high-quality school models, including traditional schools, magnets, charters, and others.	
Current Statute	*Final Legislation*
• State charter schools receive $9,400 per pupil	• Increases charter per pupil funding to: ○ $10,500 for 2012-2013 ○ $11,000 for 2013-2014

• State law does not give special consideration to charters with special missions to serve individual student populations • No incentive to create local charter schools	○ $11,500 for 2014-2015 • Requires state charters to submit a recruitment and retention plan detailing efforts to serve priority student populations. The State Board will hold schools accountable for adherence to these plans. • Requires the State Department of Education to endeavor to launch two charter schools focused on English Language Learners/dual language programs in the coming years. One is opening in 2015. • Offered incentives to local Boards of Education that reached agreement with their bargaining unit regarding staffing flexibility, to launch local charter schools – such districts continue to be eligible for startup grants and $3000 per pupil operating grants beginning in the 2013-2014 school year.
• Agricultural Science High Schools receive $1,355 per pupil in state funding	• Provided additional funding for Agricultural Science High Schools, magnet schools, and vocational-technical schools.
Principle: Ensure that our schools are home to the very best teachers and principals – working within a fair system that values skill and effectiveness over seniority and tenure	
Current Statute	*Final Legislation*
• Evaluations are ongoing but no time period is specified and implementation varies by district • Teachers are required to have a specific number of Continuing Education Units (CEUs)	• Requires annual performance evaluations of principals, administrators, and teachers, based upon the framework developed by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council. • Strengthens professional development for educators, requiring job-embedded coaching as the predominant form of training. • Requires an evaluation system to be piloted in a diverse group of 8-10 school districts.
• Tenure is attained based on number of years of service: a teacher offered a fifth year of employment is automatically granted tenure	• Awards tenure on the basis of effective practice. • Allows for ineffective teachers to be terminated. • Focuses termination hearings on whether the evaluation ratings were reasonable and in accordance with the new evaluation program. • Limits, for the first time, the number of hours of evidence and testimony.
• No designation exists for excellent teaching performance to enable career advancement within the teaching profession.	• Recognizes excellent educators with a "distinguished educator" designation; creating a career ladder within the teaching profession

Principle: Deliver more resources, targeted to districts with the greatest need – provided that they embrace key reforms that position our students for success	
Current Statute	*Final Legislation*
	• Since 2012 ECS funding to the Alliance Districts – the state's 30 lowest-performing districts- has increased to over $130 million annually. • Introduces new accountability for funding the Alliance Districts. Provides for a "Common Chart of Accounts" as a budgetary template, enhancing transparency for education spending at the local level.

While structural and governance changes were central to the reform strategy, the CSDE recognized that this work requires great talent at all levels. In January 2012, the SBE approved the Commissioner's reorganization plan for the CSDE *(Figure OV 0.1)*. The reorganization will result in a department structure based on strategic priorities rather than compliance and lays essential reform groundwork by creating the structure and capacity to implement legislative priorities and initiatives outlined in the waiver. Since these plans were implemented in 2012, the CSDE has been successfully reorganized around the Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness led by the Chief Operating Officer and the newly formed Academic, Performance, Talent, and Turnaround Offices. The leaders of these offices work in close collaboration to lead and oversee the implementation of the major aspects of Connecticut's educational reform efforts that are described in this document.

The reorganization aligns with Governor Malloy's six principles of education reform

Table OV 0.2: Governor's Principles and CSDE Leadership

Governor's Principles	CSDE Leader
1) Enhance families' access to early childhood education opportunities	Office of Early Childhood
2) State support and intervention in low-performing schools	Chief Turnaround Officer
3) Expand high-quality school models	Chief Turnaround Officer
4) Remove red tape and other barriers to success	Chief Operating Officer
5) Develop the very best teachers and principals	Chief Talent Officer
6) Deliver more resources to districts that embrace reform	Chief Performance Officer and Chief Academic Officer

See the CSDE website for a full presentation on the CSDE reorganization.
Part of the Governor's plan was to put much greater emphasis on universal high quality preschool education. One aspect of the plan was to create the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) as a cabinet-level agency rather than a bureau within CSDE. The CSDE and OEC work very closely on all issues related to early childhood education.

Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

The CSDE showed its commitment to move toward its goals when it adopted the CCSS in July 2010 (Principle 1). The CCSS adoption signaled Connecticut's belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels. In addition to increasing rigor for all students, common standards promise to yield better results for highly mobile students and help decrease college remediation rates, a concern voiced by the CSDE's higher education partners.

The CSDE recognized that Connecticut's educators would need to deeply engage with the standards and look carefully at how and what they teach. The CSDE has worked diligently to provide guidance and support to all districts during these years of transition.

Since the original ESEA Flexibility Application, the CSDE has conducted significant work to implement college- and career-ready standards in the form of the Connecticut Core Standards, which are rigorous standards based on CCSS and adapted to the specific needs of Connecticut based on stakeholder feedback. The CSDE has provided educators with the resources necessary to implement the CT Core Standards. The level of support to educators was unprecedented. The ctcorestandards.org website was launched, districts were provided with a communications toolkit translated into the seven most prevalent languages, hundreds of $2000 implementation mini-grants were provided to teachers, over 360 educator workshops were conducted for over 10,000 attendees, over 1200 days of customized in-district training was provided, and 10,000 copies of an instructional guide for school and district leaders was published and disseminated.

Connecticut is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), and recognizing that educators would require training regarding SBAC, has provided dozens of workshops on the Smarter Balanced Assessment System, and successfully conducted the Smarter Balanced Field test that included 90% of Connecticut school districts during the spring of 2014. The first operational administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System for students in grades 3-8 and 11 will occur during the spring of 2015.

As part of the ESEA Flexibility Renewal the CSDE will continue with the Connecticut Core Standards, develop new standards in other academic areas not included in the standards, and continue implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

The CSDE is working with stakeholders to explore options and develop English language proficiency (ELP) standards that are aligned to the CT Core Standards. CSDE will bring recommendations regarding ELP to the State Board of Education in the near future. In 2013-14 CSDE funded the use of a more rigorous ELP assessment titled "LAS-LINKS Form C" which contains academic vocabulary as an indicator of academic achievement. The CSDE along with its stakeholder group will continue to explore options for appropriate ELP assessments to match the ELP standards.

The CSDE will also report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and public high school. Pending the recommendations of the High School Assessment Working Group, a group of high school educators and other stakeholders, CSDE will also seek flexibility to utilize an alternate assessment for the Grade 11 Smarter Balanced test.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Since the approval of the initial ESEA Flexibility application in May of 2012, the CSDE developed a post-AYP accountability system to hold the state, districts, and schools accountable for improving the performance of all students. This system is a vast improvement over the AYP-based system. It introduced the performance index, raised expectations for all students, integrated all tested subjects, made achievement gaps more transparent, and classified all schools. The CSDE's aim was, and continues to be, to offer greater flexibility and freedom to districts and schools that are high-performing or improving rapidly, and provide the greatest support to the lowest-performing schools. Supporting goals include recognizing and rewarding student progress at every level, and eliminating a one-size-fits-all approach to accountability and support, which several stakeholders, including superintendents, consider unhelpful.

Over the past two years, the CSDE implemented the new accountability system and actively sought stakeholder feedback regarding the system. The CSDE received meaningful feedback from district and school staff, state and national experts, department staff, and other stakeholders, and analyzed data from the system's implementation. The feedback and analysis revealed several areas requiring further refinement and improvement, which are being incorporated into this renewal application.

Several improvements of the accountability are being proposed in this document. The accountability system is being aligned to the State Board of Education's vision and goals. The Board's vision (currently in draft form) is that "Connecticut students will think critically, learn joyfully, express themselves creatively, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Connecticut schools will prepare every learner for success and fulfillment in college, careers, and life." To align with this broad vision, the proposed accountability system also takes a broad view.

In addition to academic achievement, academic growth of the same students over time in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics will become an important component. Because the students enrolled in a school in the tested grades change from one year to the next, measuring growth of the same students over time is a more direct measure of curriculum and instructional quality.

The accountability system will also incorporate many new indicators. They will be focused on college- and career-readiness and on the delivery of a well-rounded education. These include indicators like chronic absenteeism; participation in postsecondary or career readiness courses; four-year and six-year graduation rates; entrance into a two- or four-year postsecondary institution; access to the arts; and results from Connecticut's physical fitness assessment.

This inclusive set of indicators will provide a more complete picture of the successes and challenges facing a school. It will guard against narrowing of the curriculum to the subjects that are tested, something that emerged under AYP. It will make more staff in the school feel ownership of the accountability system. It will also allow schools to demonstrate success on indicators that may be precursors to test scores.

There is widespread support for a more inclusive accountability system. A collaborative of six organizations that represents superintendents, local boards of education, schools, advocacy groups, and businesses affirmed recently that "…Connecticut must adopt a rigorous and holistic framework for accountability that prioritizes student achievement growth and uses multiple measures to determine whether schools and districts are making progress."

In addition to including academic growth and a broader set of indicators, the Department is also proposing to refine certain indicators, make subgroup performance more impactful, and adjust the school classification approach.

Specifically, the Department is proposing to use subject specific index scores for accountability purposes and not an overall index score that averages all subjects. This is expected to provide more meaningful and actionable results for schools and districts. The Department is planning to calculate these index scores based on scale scores and not achievement levels; this should provide a more accurate measure of overall performance.

Additionally, the Department will be seeking approval to exempt from index score calculations, recently arrived English learners who have attended schools in the United States for fewer than *two* years; this exemption is currently available only for up to *one* year. Instead, Connecticut will propose that in the second year, it will evaluate *growth* on state assessments for recently arrived English learners. This shift requires that all English learners in Grades 3-8 be tested in all content areas regardless of time in a U.S. school.

The performance of students who belong to at least one of the three subgroups of low income students, English learners or students with disabilities (referred to as the "High Needs" subgroup) will receive additional points in the accountability system. Previously, subgroup performance counted primarily for gap calculation purposes; now in addition to gap calculation, subgroup performance will count separately towards a school or district's overall score in the areas of achievement, growth, attendance, and graduation.

Since 2012 the CSDE annually recognized Title I or Title I-eligible schools that met our criteria for high subgroup performance, high-progress, or high growth. Title I or Title I-eligible schools with the lowest performance for all students have been identified as Priority Schools, referred to in this request as "Turnaround Schools." Additionally, any Title I or Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate lower than 60 percent was automatically included as a Turnaround School, as well as any school that was a SIG Tier I or Tier II school. To identify Focus Schools, the CSDE has created a "High Needs" subgroup that includes ELLs, students with disabilities, and students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. We created this High Needs subgroup for Focus School identification to avoid the unwieldy process of treating each subgroup individually. To ensure that this race-neutral High Needs subgroup does not mask racial and ethnic achievement gaps, the CSDE will examine all schools in the state to determine whether Hispanic or African-American subgroups perform similarly to the identified High Needs subgroup. Any schools with equally low-performing Hispanic or African-American students will also be identified as Focus Schools.

Beginning in 2012, the CSDE classified all schools into five levels – Excelling, Progressing, Transition, Review, and Turnaround. This system was found to be confusing to stakeholders, and the flexibility renewal application proposes a more easily understandable classification system. Turnaround schools are schools performing in the bottom 5% of points earned in the new accountability system. This group includes SIG Tier I and II schools as well as high schools with a 6-year graduation rate below 70%. Focus schools will be identified as those schools with the lowest academic achievement or graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup statewide.

The proposed changes to the classification system will eliminate the confusing names and all schools will be placed in Category 1 through Category 5. Category 1 will be the top quartile of schools as long

as significant gaps in academic achievement or graduation do not exist. Category 2 schools will be in the middle two quartiles. Category 3 schools will be those in the lowest quartile, but not in Category 4 or 5. Category 4 schools will be the newly designated Focus and Turnaround schools. Category 5 schools will be the previously identified Focus and Turnaround schools that did not meet the exit criteria. The Category 5 schools will receive additional supports and rigorous interventions to improve student academic outcomes that will allow them to exit Focus or Turnaround status.

The CSDE's Turnaround and Performance Offices partnered with districts to ensure that schools in each of these categories received appropriate levels of support. The CSDE helped to build district and school capacity by increasing financial resources to the districts with the greatest need, partnering with districts as they planned for school intervention, and removing barriers and duplication. The CSDE provided over $250 million in additional funding to the state's 30 lowest-performing districts through the Alliance district program, conditional on district plans for reforms in key areas defined by the state. In addition, CSDE launched the Commissioner's Network as a statewide network of low-performing schools collaboratively pursuing evidence-based strategies to dramatically improve student achievement. There are currently 16 Commissioner's Network schools and they have received $26 million in grants over the past three years. The CSDE's Turnaround Office acted as a resource to districts as they planned for and monitored interventions in their struggling schools. The CSDE also worked to reduce barriers for districts by reducing unnecessary reporting requirements. The Turnaround Office will work to turn around schools with records of persistent underperformance by providing supports, guidance, interventions, and new strategies. Provided below is the timeline and pathways for schools identified as Category 4 or 5 schools with the new classification to take effect on January 1, 2016.

Integration of Connecticut's State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
The U.S. Department of Education (USED) has revised its accountability system under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Results-Driven Accountability (RDA) shifts the Department's accountability efforts from a primary emphasis on compliance to a framework that focuses on improved results for children with disabilities, while continuing to ensure states meet IDEA requirements. RDA emphasizes improving child outcomes such as performance on assessments, graduation rates, and early childhood outcomes. To support this effort, States are required to develop a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) as part of their State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR).

With the input of stakeholders and through the process of data analysis and infrastructure analysis, Connecticut has identified, as its State Identified Measurable Result for Children with Disabilities (SIMR), *early literacy as measured by third grade reading achievement.* USED strongly encourages the integration of this initiative, to strengthen early literacy for students with disabilities, into other school improvement activities being implemented in Connecticut.

Accordingly, the CSDE recommends that for Category 1 and 2 schools the SIMR for children with disabilities, early literacy as measured by third grade reading achievement, be included in the school's locally determined process to support continuous improvement. For Category 3 schools, the CSDE recommends that the SIMR for children with disabilities, early literacy as measured by third grade reading achievement, be included as part of its locally developed and maintained School Improvement Plan.

Each Category 4 and Category 5 school is required to include the SIMR for children with disabilities,

early literacy as measured by third grade reading achievement, as a component of its School Improvement Plan submitted to the CSDE for review.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

Connecticut has long recognized that teacher and principal evaluation and support systems are critical to fostering an environment that ensures equal opportunity and excellence for all students. In July 2010, state legislation created the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), a broadly representative stakeholder group devoted solely to assisting the CSDE in developing new teacher evaluation guidelines and a data collection and evaluation support system. The CSDE worked with PEAC on a rigorous schedule and ambitious action plan to develop the new guidelines and evaluation support systems and implement the educator evaluation and support system.

The CSDE began its implementation efforts in 2012-13 with a pilot of the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED), which was developed as Connecticut's state model. Ten districts piloted the state model in order to provide information about the opportunities and challenges of implementation. An implementation study was conducted by the Neag School of Education at UCONN in order to inform improvements and refinements to the system before statewide implementation was to occur during the 2013-14 school year. The CSDE received considerable feedback from LEAs about the challenge to implement with 100% of their educators in 2013-14 as was planned. As a result, PEAC recommended and the SBE approved, a partial implementation plan in which LEAs and charter schools were required to implement the new system with at least 1/3 of the educators in their district. During the 2014-15 year, all LEAs and charter schools have been required to implement with all certified educators with some exceptions as recommended by PEAC and approved by the SBE.

Additionally, to continue to provide support for all Connecticut teachers, in May 2013, the CSDE convened a broadly representative stakeholder group called the CT Academy for Professional Learning, comprised of representatives of 22 organizations to help the CSDE develop and implement a vision for high quality professional learning in Connecticut. In November 2014, the CSDE reconvened some of the same stakeholders in a restart of the work to transform the system for professional learning. The CT Academy has convened four times since November and will convene for the final two-day session in March 2015.

A subset of CT Academy participants, with one representative from each of the stakeholder groups, including both state teachers' unions; the statewide administrators' union; the CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE); the CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS); the CT Association of Schools (CAS); the RESC Alliance; and the State Education Resource Center (SERC) comprise the Professional Learning Advisory Council (PLAC). PLAC convened to collaborate with the CSDE and serve in an advisory capacity to work together to transform the system for professional learning.

Consistent with Connecticut's timeline for the first operational administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments and for creating a corresponding student growth model, CSDE proposes an additional year before educators in tested grades and subjects will be required to use the results of the state test to measure student growth as part of their evaluation Connecticut will require educators in tested grades and subjects to incorporate the results of the state test as one of the measures to assess student growth in the 2016-17 school year.

Additionally, the CSDE continues to work with the educators in our unique educational settings as listed here. The CSDE recognizes that there are unique implementation challenges to be considered when implementing the new system for educator evaluation and support in these settings. To that end, Connecticut will propose an additional year of flexibility for the following settings.

- Pre-K;
- Adult Education;
- Unified School District #1;
- Unified School District #2; and
- Approved Private Special Education Facilities.

While allowed the flexibility to conduct a "permissive pilot" of the new system during the 2014-15 school year, CSDE will require a pilot of the system during the 2015-16 school year. This will allow the CSDE, along with representatives from these settings, to continue to explore the implementation challenges, and also explore appropriate solutions to address those challenges. The CSDE is committed to determining how best to implement the evaluation guidelines in these settings and ensuring that the system is a fair and accurate one in such settings.

Similar to the implementation challenges in unique educational settings, the CSDE also became aware of challenges associated with the implementation of Connecticut's new system for educator evaluation and support, as designed, with administrators in charter schools and in central office roles in LEAs. As a result, the CSDE, in collaboration with PEAC, requested approval by the SBE for a one-year waiver of the requirement to use the new system for educator evaluation and support with these administrators. While CSDE encouraged a permissive pilot of the system during the 2014-15 school year, it expects to recommend that charter school and central office administrators fully participate in the system for educator evaluation and support during the 2015-16 school year.

The CSDE recognizes the potential of unintended consequences of the new educator evaluation and support system, including the possible exclusion of certain subgroups, specifically students with disabilities and English learners. In order to ensure support to educators who work with these students, as well as those educators in non-tested grades and subjects, the CSDE and respective workgroups will continue to explore and develop appropriate supports, tools, and resources in order to provide appropriate support and guidance to these educators.

As required by the US Department of Education, Connecticut has developed a system to monitor the implementation of the new system for educator evaluation and support in all Connecticut LEAs and charter schools. In designing the system, the Department worked to ensure that the system of monitoring would also provide important information to continue to inform on-going refinements and improvements to the system, while not being overly burdensome to the LEAs and charter schools. To that end, we have built the monitoring system requirements into the existing annual submission of educator evaluation and support plans to the extent practical.

Finally, Connecticut plans to continue to work to reduce the burden of red tape and state mandates faced by school districts. Based in part on the needs of school districts identified in a statewide superintendents' survey, Governor Malloy's proposed changes to state policies will, in the short term, provide local school districts greater flexibility to hire and develop teachers as well as free districts from excessive and redundant data reporting. To ensure continued focus in this area, Governor Malloy convened a Red Tape Review and Removal Taskforce to examine comprehensive solutions to fixing unnecessarily burdensome state regulations and mandates. The taskforce reviewed regulations and met over the next year, soliciting input from all stakeholders, specifically boards of education,

superintendents, school leaders, teachers, and parents. The taskforce developed initial recommendations and report to Governor Malloy and the Commissioner of Education in December 2012, ahead of the 2013 legislative session. Plans that address this principle are interwoven throughout the three sections of the flexibility request. The Governor's press release on the Red Tape Review and Removal Taskforce can be found on the state website.

Throughout this work, Connecticut has committed itself to continuous improvement. All of the CSDE's proposed initiatives, including this ESEA Flexibility Request, reflect a clear pathway for Connecticut to achieve its goals. The CSDE is committed to a rigorous analysis of data and student results, as well as to continuous conversations with teachers, principals, superintendents, parents, and other stakeholders, to ensure that the course it has chosen works for Connecticut's students.

PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

Option A

☒ The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.

i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)

Option B

☐ The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.

i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)

ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)

1.B TRANSITION TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Provide the SEA's plan to transition to and implement no later than the 2013–2014 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools and include an explanation of how this transition plan is likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards. The Department encourages an SEA to include in its plan activities related to each of the italicized questions in the corresponding section of the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance*, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.1) Is the SEA's plan to transition to and implement college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the 2013–2014 school year realistic, of high quality? Is the SEA's plan likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with the college- and career-ready standards?

College and Career Readiness

Connecticut has endorsed the Association of Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) definition of college and career readiness, which states that readiness "involves three major skill areas: core academic skills and the ability to apply those skills to concrete situations to function in the workplace and in routine daily activities; employability skills (such as critical thinking and responsibility) that are essential in any career area; and technical, job-specific skills related to a specific career pathway. These skills have been emphasized across numerous pieces of research and allow students to enter true career pathways that offer family-sustaining wages and opportunities for advancement."

The state signaled its commitment to college and career readiness in January 2009 when an executive order established the Connecticut P-20 Council. The P-20 Council has a mandate to prepare students for college and careers, and its tasks were defined specifically as:

- Developing a public policy framework for state leaders that increases collaboration across the systems at their current and potential points of intersection;
- Exploring how the systems can work more effectively together to deliver services; and
- Realigning existing activities and operations in ways that makes the education pipeline more responsive to the diverse needs of students.

The P-20 Council has increased collaboration, information sharing, and planning among the early childhood, K–12, higher education, and workforce training sectors by disseminating meaningful data and research to educators and employers. As a result, deeper conversations have occurred between districts, IHEs, and businesses. In addition to organizing workshops and working groups on specific policy issues, it has developed a Connecticut Career and College Readiness tool kit to inform educators, workforce representatives, parents, and other stakeholders on how to improve college and career readiness for all students.

On July 7, 2010, with a unanimous vote, Connecticut's SBE, along with 44 states and the District of Columbia adopted new academic standards in ELA and mathematics—known as the CCSS—that establish what Connecticut's public school students should know and be able to do as they progress through grades K–12.

The CCSS were designed to consist of fewer, clearer, and higher-level standards; to be aligned with college and work expectations; to include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order thinking skills; to build upon the strengths of current state standards; to be internationally benchmarked so that all students will be prepared to succeed in the global economy; and to be based on evidence and research.
By adopting and implementing the CCSS, Connecticut affirms its belief that all students can and should achieve at higher levels. The CSDE has worked diligently to provide guidance and support to all districts as they transition from Connecticut's old frameworks and standards to the CCSS. The CSDE has provided support at several levels in a deliberate manner to ensure horizontal and vertical alignment of instruction based on the CCSS within the PK–16 system. Connecticut has a Preschool Curriculum Framework (PCF) for ages two and one-half through five. Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics from the PCF were aligned to the new kindergarten CCSS. The alignment reinforces that all Connecticut learners must be provided access to the CCSS-based curricula to fully prepare for college and careers.

To efficiently and effectively serve the needs of districts and relevant stakeholders, the CSDE has developed an approach to target four key areas of implementation: curriculum frameworks and materials, assessment, professional development, and communication. The CSDE CCSS leadership team will continually review and update the current implementation plan. The CSDE's CCSS leadership team, associate commissioners, bureau chiefs, content area staff, and many local partners including RESCs and districts are designing a self-assessment tool to help monitor the implementation process.

The CSDE believes that the implementation of the CCSS in every classroom will transform teaching and learning by requiring teachers to focus on high-priority areas, which in turn will provide all students the opportunity to gain a deep understanding of important content and develop higher-order thinking skills and will reduce the need for college remediation.

Foundation for Implementation: History and Timeline of the CCSS Adoption

The CSDE has conducted a multistep process to inform and engage educators and public stakeholders during the adoption process that included the following key activities:

Table 1.1: CCSS Adoption Timeline

Milestones	Timeline
CSDE personnel and members of professional organizations reviewed the draft CCSS documents and provided feedback to the developers.	November 2009 and February 2010
Standards Comparison Study. In the months leading up to the adoption of the recommendation to the SBE, the CSDE conducted a thorough standards comparison study. In February 2010, the CSDE was invited to be the first SEA to field-test a Web-based program developed by Achieve, a non-profit education organization that provides technical assistance to states on their standards, assessments, curriculum, and accountability systems. A team of CSDE curriculum consultants met with representatives of Achieve in April 2010 to learn how to use the Common Core Comparison Tool (CCCT) and to suggest improvements for its further development. The tool analyzes matches made by state standards experts and generates reports summarizing the percentage of matches and the strength of each match. It also indicates where grade-level differences exist. On May 28, 2010, CSDE content specialists and representatives from Achieve brought together over 50 experts in Connecticut's ELA and mathematics standards to use the tool to conduct the standards comparison study. After receiving training on how to use the CCCT, the content specialists worked in pairs to identify a Connecticut standard or a set of standards that were similar in their essence to each standard. It was determined that approximately 80% of the CCSS match the Connecticut ELA standards, and 92% of the CCSS match the Connecticut mathematics standards.	May 2010
Stakeholders Conference. On June 17, 2010, a CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference was held to share the results of the comparison study and to provide an opportunity for educators and other stakeholders from businesses and communities to provide their general impressions of the new CCSS and to recommend resources and support systems necessary for effective implementation. An invitation was e-mailed to 180 stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, education organizations, higher education faculty,	June 2010

business leaders, and community advocacy groups. Participants represented the P-20 Council, the CEA, the CPAC for students with disabilities, the CABE, the CBIA, the Connecticut ASCD, the Connecticut Reading Association, CAS, the Connecticut Association of School Principals, the CAPSS, the CSDE, Connecticut IHEs, the CAPELL, the RESC Alliance, and the Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center. Over 100 individuals attended the Stakeholder Engagement Conference. Of these individuals, 64.4% represented districts, 26.7% were from educational organizations, and 8.9% represented higher education institutions. Additionally, CSDE gave presentations to the Connecticut State Advisory Council on Special Education, which is an advisory council to the CSDE and the state's legislative General Assembly. The council is composed of parents, legislators, state agency representatives, and school district personnel. The CSDE also briefed the special education parent advisory committee on the CCSS and Next Generation assessments.	
SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). The Connecticut educational leadership (the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, the SBE Chair, the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Chancellor of the state university system, and the Chancellor of the community college system) signed a memorandum of understanding to become a governing member of the SBAC and join with 30 other states to seek federal funds under the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant to develop new systems of assessment.	June 2010
Adoption of the CCSS. The SBE adopted the CCSS in ELA and mathematics with a unanimous vote.	July 2010

CCSS Implementation Timeline

The CSDE commissioned a study of the CCSS adoption process which was published in June 2010.Since the adoption of the CCSS, the CSDE has significantly increased communication, professional development activities, and curriculum development/revision work with districts and state and national partners. Below is the timeline of key activities.

Table 1.2: CCSS Implementation Timeline

Milestones	Timeline
CSDE science content and assessment experts review Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS); state science leadership team composed of CSDE state policymakers, RESC leaders, IHE faculty, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) industry representatives convenes to lead planning for NGSS adoption.	March 2010 – present
The SBE adopts the CCSS.	July 2010
The CSDE launches the CCSS webpage.	August 2010
ELA and mathematics content experts develop crosswalks.	August 2010
The CSDE joins the SBAC as a governing state; five CSDE staff members participate in SBAC work groups, with two members serving as co-chairs; the CSDE hosts two statewide summer institutes on Next Generation assessments.	August 2010– present
The CSDE begins statewide transition to CCSS professional development.	October 2010

CAPELL quarterly meetings are held; biannual RESC ELL Consortia Meetings are held.	2011–12
The CSDE sponsors Rigorous Curriculum Design (RCD).	January 2011–March 2011
The CSDE aligns the ELL framework to the CCSS ELA and the CCSS Mathematical Practices.	January 2011–March 2011
The CSDE joins the State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS).	January 2011–March 2011
The CSDE joins the Implementing Common Core System (ICCS) SCASS and names a state leadership team.	January 2011–March 2011
The CSDE begins realignment of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) training modules to CCSS.	March 2011
The CSDE sponsors an IHE symposium.	April 2011
The CSDE continues professional development activities, including RCD and crosswalk development; the state leadership team develops a multi-tiered implementation plan.	May 2011–August 2011
The CSDE attends the ICCS SCASS.	August 2011
The CSDE aligns the Career and Technical Education (CTE) standards with the CCSS mathematics.	September 2011
The CSDE provides an overview of the CCSS and Next Generation assessments to administrators of special education in public and private schools.	September 2011
Connecticut and select states create the State Collaborative on English Language Acquisition (SCELA) Standards project.	October 2011
The CSDE develops and provides a regional professional development program in collaboration with RESCs.	December 2011
The CSDE attends ICCS SCASS.	December 2011
The CSDE develops a special education professional development series: Designing Standards-Based Individual Education Programs (IEPs) to Support Progress in the General Education Curriculum.	January 2012
The CSDE collaborates with RESCs and the SERC and continues to offer regional professional development.	January 2012–15
The CSDE aligns the ELA CCSS to the CTE standards.	February 2012
The CSDE conducts the Spring Language Arts Council Meeting series.	April 2012
The CSDE sponsors the second annual IHE symposium.	April 2012
The CSDE attends the ICCS SCASS.	April 2012
The CSDE sponsors the Data Showcase Conference with a focus on CCSS implementation.	April 2012
The CSDE and CT Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL) create a resource for educators titled "Scientific Research-Based Interventions for English Language Learners: A Handbook to Accompany Connecticut's Framework for RTI Click here for SRBI for ELLs	Spring 2012
The CSDE provides samples of scope and sequence for K-12 ELA and Mathematics courses aligned to the CCSS	Summer 2012
The CSDE launches a K-3 Literacy Assessment and Instructional Coaching Study including a parent engagement component	Fall 2012

The CSDE begins a monthly Academic Office Newsletter outlining CCSS implementation efforts and providing direct resources and links for parents and educators	January 2013-present
A Memorandum of Collaboration (MOC) is signed by one hundred and fifty three LEAs (public school districts and charter or magnet organizations) agreeing to actively engage in professional learning offerings, resources and supports. The CSDE establishes a district contact list for critical instructional communication	May 2013
To align more closely to CCR standards, the CSDE engages districts, schools and teachers in the switch to a new version of the existing English Learner Proficiency (ELP) assessment, an intermediate step toward adopting new ELP standards and an aligned assessment. The CSDE provides training, supports, resources to LEAs	Sept. 2013- June 2014
The CSDE collaborates with the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) to develop the new Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). This assessment is designed for eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 3-8 and 11 and will be administered beginning in March 2015. The new assessment will align with the CCSS and will replace the "CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist" for ELA and Mathematics. Eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities will continue to be assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist in Science. Click to access more CTAA information	Spring 2013
The CSDE provides links and workshops on the CTAA to interested stakeholders Click here for training materials.	Summer 2013-present
The CSDE provides CCSS materials for schools and families coinciding with back-to-school events and translated in to the top seven languages spoken by CT students.	August-Sept. 2013
The CSDE, in collaboration with the CT Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) Alliance, launches a series of assessment literacy workshops for Connecticut leaders and educators	November 2013 - present
The CSDE recruits and trains 45 Connecticut educators as the State Network of Educators (SNE) for the Smarter Balanced Digital Library, joining 1400 other educators across the consortium. SNE create, curate and evaluate resources for inclusion in this repository of materials used in CCSS-aligned instruction and the formative assessment process. Click here for information on the Digital Library .	November 2013 - present
The CSDE collaborates with the CT Association of Boards of Education to provide training and training materials for local boards of education, including 12 trainings on the CCSS and 14 trainings on Next Generation Science Standards.	November 2013 - present
The CSDE and the Connecticut Association of Schools partner to provide an ongoing "Community of Practice" focused on CCSS Implementation for principals, and other school and district leaders. Held monthly, average attendance is 30 leaders. Click here to see current "Community of Practice" Offerings.	October 2013 - present

The CSDE provides workshops on the Smarter Balanced Assessment System titles "Assessment Literacy." Workshops are fully attended (approximately 180 attendees) and plans are made to repeat the offering in the winter of 2015. Click here for resources.	November – December 2013
The CSDE launches the CT Core Standards Website ctcorestandards.org with dedicated pages for diverse stakeholders: family & community ; teachers ; school & district leaders ; and curriculum designers which are refreshed/ updated 3 times per week.	January 2014 - present
The CSDE launches the CT Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning Series, a multi-faceted, statewide professional learning initiative to build educator capacity in CCSS curriculum development, instructional shifts and supports for all learners as well as effective formative assessment practices ctcorestandards professional learning.	January 2014
The CSDE, in collaboration with the CT Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) Alliance, launches a series of assessment literacy workshops for Connecticut leaders and educators	November 2013 - present
The CSDE, in partnership with Public Consulting Group, holds thirteen "CT Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning Series" Launch Events in various regions of Connecticut, which are attended by 521 educators and leaders.	January-February 2014
Through the RFP process, the CSDE awards 10 million dollars in technology readiness grants to Connecticut LEAs in preparation of the operational launch of Smarter Balanced Assessment in 2014-15.	January – March 2015
Established by Executive Order 41, Governor Dannel P. Malloy calls for a task force charged to review state implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), study best practices in that implementation effort and make specific recommendations as to implementation improvements moving forward. The task force recommendations are included in the "Report of the Educators' Common Core Implementation Task Force" published in June 2014. See Appendix 1.3	March - June 2014
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group delivers Module 1 *(Focus on ELA Instructional Shifts and MATH Practice Standards)* of the CT Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning Series is delivered 41 times (in grade bands) across various geographic regions of Connecticut, reaching 968 attendees.	March –April 2014
The state of CT funds the local administration of the LAS LINKS Form C, a more rigorous ELP assessment containing academic vocabulary as a measure of academic growth.	Spring 2014 until new standards adoption
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group provides follow-up webinars after Modules 1, 2, and 4, statewide in ELA and Mathematics. The purpose is to revisit the content delivered in person and answer questions from the field. The webinars are delivered six times to 15-50 attendees.	March 2014 – November 2015
Granted local testing flexibility, ninety percent of Connecticut LEAs opt to administer the Smarter Balanced Field Test	March – June 2014
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group deliver Module 2 *(ELA - Supporting ALL Students in Close Reading, Academic Language, and Text-based Discussion and MATH –Focus on Content Standards)* is delivered 39 times (in grade bands) across various geographic regions of Connecticut, reaching 1030 attendees.	April – May 2014

The CSDE and Scholastic Inc. deliver eight English Language Arts professional learning opportunities (in grade bands) titled *"Putting Text First: A Focus on Complexity, Range, and Quality for ALL Students"* around the state, reaching 396 attendees.	April – May 2014
The CSDE and Scholastic Inc. deliver eight English Language Arts professional learning opportunities (in grade bands) titled *"Building Vocabulary: A Focus on Academic and Domain-Specific Words"* around the state, reaching 337 attendees.	April – May 2014
The CSDE and Scholastic Inc. deliver eight Mathematics professional learning opportunities (in grade bands) titled *"Problem Solving: Developing Disposition, Competence, and Confidence"* around the state, reaching 444 attendees.	April – November 2014
The CSDE partners with LearnZillion to assemble a Connecticut Dream Team" who will create/facilitate a summer academy titled "CT Teachfest." The Dream Team training is a three-day long event to build CCSS expertise for 100 top educators drawn from a pool of applicants in a rigorous selection process. Click here for Teachfest resources.	April 2014
The CSDE and RESCs deliver thirty-six sessions of the Smarter Balanced Digital Library training Click her for Digital Library Training resources reaching 763 attendees to date.	May 2014-present
The CSDE funds 18-month subscriptions for 750 teachers to *Scholastic's Nextpert*, a repository of CCSS-aligned materials. Nextpert Training on the use of the resource is held eight times around the state reaching 319 attendees.	May – June 2014
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group deliver Module 3 *(ELA - Supporting All Students in Writing and MATH- Focus on Teaching and Learning)* of the CT Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning Series is delivered forty two times (in grade bands) across various geographic regions of Connecticut, reaching 903 attendees. Click here to view resources.	May-June 2014
The CSDE surveys Connecticut superintendents and their designees to assess immediate, mid-term, and long-term needs related to CCSS and aligned assessment implementation. Response rate was 67% and provided valuable information to produce the most urgent concrete supports.	June 2014
Through an application process, the CSDE and the CT RESC Alliance (regional education service centers) partner to deliver 1200 days in the 2014-15 school year for customized, in-district supports for LEAs including coaching or technical assistance. Sixty-six LEAs apply and receive between 2.5 and 31 days each.	June 2014 - present
The CT Board of Education adopts a menu of Research Based Grade K-3 Reading Assessments for use statewide with mandated data submission by Priority districts three times per year Link to K-3 Assessment Menu and Background information	July 2014
The CSDE begins scaling up the K-3 Reading Model Pilot by providing a monthly "Literacy Leadership Series" for literacy teams from selected district pilot schools in 17 Alliance Districts	July 2014

The CSDE and LearnZillion hold "CT Teachfest," a daylong training for 673 teachers. Participants collaborate with colleagues, the Connecticut Dream Team teachers and LearnZillion coaches to create resources that put the Connecticut Core Standards into practice. Click here for Teachfest resources .	July 2014
The CSDE provides ELL parent resources translated into Connecticut's top seven student languages and resources for teachers.	July 2014
The CSDE and the CT RESC Alliance (regional education service centers) partner to deliver summer academies for pre-service teachers, first year teachers, novice teachers (1-4 years), and their Cooperating and TEAM Mentor teachers as well as faculty from preparing institutions (IHEs). Five sessions were held reaching 190 attendees.	July – November 2014
The CSDE provides concrete resources to districts at the annual Superintendent back-to-school event. Resources provided electronically and in hard copy. Click here for resources.	August 2014
Ten thousand copies of the CSDE Academic Office publication "CONNECTICUT CORE STANDARDS CLASSROOM "LOOK FORS" In English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L) And Mathematics" are mailed to CT schools to provide guidance and concrete examples of what to "look for" in a CCSS-aligned classroom. Click here for principal CCSS "look fors".	August 2014
Informed by Governor's Taskforce recommendations and the Superintendent Survey Results, the CSDE launches Year 2 of CT Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning including regional workshops focusing on supports for ELs, SWDs, and struggling learners; 1200 days of in-district coaching or technical assistance; assessment literacy workshops; and online activities	Sept. 2014 - present
The CSDE and ACES (a regional education service center) assemble a practitioner committee to review options for new the English Language Proficiency Standards to serve as a foundation for the Connecticut English Language Proficiency Standards.	September 2014
The CSDE published the "2014-14 Assessment Guidelines" for the • Smarter Balanced Assessments • Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA) • Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)--Science • Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)SKILLS CHECKLIST-Science	September 2014
The CSDE provides Monthly Principal Webinars to build instructional leadership in implementing CT Core Standards	Sept 2014 - Jun 2015
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group (PCG) begin delivering principal webinars monthly on a variety of topics related to leading CCSS implementation at the school level. Hosted by Academic office Leadership and PCG experts. Click here for webinar archive.	September 2014 - present
Through the RFP process, the CSDE provides Connecticut LEAs with 0.5 million dollars in Assessment Reduction Grants encouraging districts to examine district and school level mandated assessments in an effort reduce testing time throughout the school year.	September – November 2015

Working with diverse stakeholders, including Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL) as well as teachers and administrators, the CSDE explores available CCSS-aligned standards for English Learners. Update provided to the CT State Board of Education Policy and Legislative Committee regarding proposed standards adoption and other major initiatives to support ELs.	September 2014 – present
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group deliver Module 4 *(ELA - Designing and Aligning CCS ELA & Literacy-aligned Instruction and Assessment and MATH- Focus on Learning Design)* is delivered thirty eight times (in grade bands) across various geographic regions of Connecticut, reaching 915 attendees. Click here for resources.	September-October 2014
The ELP Standards Committee recommends the English Language Proficiency Standards (developed by NGA, CCSSO, West Ed and Stanford University) and the CSDE begins stakeholders engagement is begun to disseminate information and collect feedback toward a proposal of adoption by the State Board of Education (anticipated in Fall 2015).	October 2014 - Present
Informed by Governor's Taskforce recommendation and through a competitive RFP process,, the CSDE provides standards implementation mini-grants to 140+ teachers (for classroom materials or teacher professional development) statewide totaling a half million dollars.	October 2014
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group deliver Module 5 *(ELA - Looking at Student Work and Engaging Students in the Learning Process and MATH- Focus on Sustaining Change)* is delivered thirty eight times (in grade bands) across various geographic regions of Connecticut, reaching 721 attendees. Click here for resources.	October-November 2014
The CSDE and the CT RESC Alliance (regional education service centers) partner to begin delivering *"Connecting The Claims To Classroom Instruction"* which is designed to help teachers link daily instruction in the standards to the claims the Smarter Balanced Assessment are built upon. The workshop was delivered 19 times around CT reaching 364 attendees. The series will be repeated 21 times in March and April 2105.	October 2014-present
To ensure the accelerated progress of low performing students and students who are economically disadvantaged, the CSDE is recommitting to the Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) -Connecticut's Framework for Response to Intervention by establishing an SRBI Practitioner Committee to survey the state and make recommendation for further supports/ PD for any struggling learners including those from target population(s) such as economically disadvantaged.	October 2014 - present
Working with broad internal and external stakeholders the CSDE selects K-3 Reading as a critical and preventive instructional focus for the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR). See Appendix 1.8	Fall 2014-present
The state provides up to 10,000 dollars in assessment reduction grants to 52 CT LEAs through a competitive RFP process to encourage review and revision of district assessment to reduce testing time for students.	December 2014-present

The CSDE, in partnership with the State Education Resource Center (SERC) held an SRBI Symposium focusing on the intersection of higher standards and intervention systems. The event drew 600 attendees and is being repeated in spring 2015.	November 2014
Initiated through a diverse participation in a rigorous drafting and review process, and followed by extensive stakeholder feedback opportunities, the Connecticut State Board of Education initially adopts new Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks aligned with College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework and aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Full adoption is expected in February 2015 (first state in the U.S.). CSBE initial adoption of SS Framework	December 2014
In advance of the Smarter balanced Interim Assessment release in late January 2015, the CSDE provided districts with guidance and an early resource titled "Frequently Asked Questions about the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment."	January 2015
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group develop an additional series "Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards Success for English Learners and Students with Disabilities" focusing on the instructional needs of English Learners and Students with Disabilities. *Module 1 (Academic Optimism and Universal Design for Learning)* was delivered six times across various geographic regions of Connecticut, reaching 388 attendees. Click here for resources. **See Appendix 1.7.**	January - February 2015
The CSDE develops Smarter Balanced Assessment Communication Materials for Families (explaining test purpose and rationale, testing times and "windows" and performance levels accompanied by parent- and student-friendly resources (translated into Connecticut's top seven languages) to improve student performance.	January –June 2015
Using an RFP process, the CSDE provides up to 10 million dollars in technology grants to Connecticut LEAs to continue to build technology infrastructure, educational resources, and educator capacity in technology.	January – March 2015`
Following diverse stakeholder feedback opportunities, the CSDE presents the Next Generation Science Standards to the Connecticut State Board of Education.	February 2015
Following State Board of Education and stakeholder feedback, the CSDE proposes adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards by the Connecticut State Board of Education.	Spring-Fall 2015
The CSDE and Public Consulting Group provide workshop series "Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards Success for English Learners and Students with Disabilities" focusing on the instructional needs of English Learners and Students with Disabilities. Modules 2 and 3 are under development and will be delivered in late February – early April and can accommodate up to 600 educators. Click here for resources. **See Appendix 1.7**.	February –April 2015
The CSDE plans to develop a Social Studies Framework Guidance Document with grade level exemplars, models and guidance for local curriculum development, as well as a statewide series of professional development opportunities for the CT Social Studies Framework.	March 2015 – June 2017

The CSDE begins the first operational administration of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment	March – June 2015
The CSDE brings the proposed English Language Proficiency Standards to the Connecticut State Board of Education Standards and Assessment Committee for review.	March 2015
The CSDE anticipates proposing the adoption of English Language Proficiency Standards to the Connecticut State Board of Education.	April-May 2015
The CSDE will provide online learning opportunities for Connecticut Teachers. Online courses are being developed titled "Foundations of Connecticut Core Standards," and "Curriculum Development Using Connecticut Core Standards" and "Supporting Educators of English Learners and Students with Disabilities." Online Courses will be offered in two formats - self-paced or cohort facilitated to meet the different learning needs of professionals.	April 2015 – June 2016
The CSDE and the CT RESC Alliance (regional education service centers) are developing a professional learning workshop focused on Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments, particularly the selection, administration, scoring and data analysis of Interim Assessment as student growth measures throughout the school year.	May – October 2015
The CSDE aligns statewide professional development to Next Generation assessments for grades 3–8 and high school.	2014- 2017
Consistent with Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-221c , i the CSDE develops a model Algebra I curriculum aligned to the CCSS including an end of year exam.	2013–15
Consistent with Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-221c ,the CSDE continues the development of model Geometry and Algebra II curriculum aligned to the CCSS, including an end of year exam .	Sept 2014- January 2015
Informed by feedback, surveys (including a K-3 Teacher Reading Skill Survey) and ongoing recommendations from stakeholders, the CSDE is planning Years 3, 4 and 5 of CT Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning, continuing regional workshops: in-district coaching or technical assistance; teacher mini-grants and districts grants; and introducing on-line courses free of charge to educators in fall 2015	Ongoing January 2015- June 2017

From 2010 to the beginning of 2012, the CSDE focused primarily on building state capacity to support training and technical assistance, aligning the CCSS with ELL and CTE standards, supporting educators of ELL students and students with disabilities, creating instructional materials to support curriculum development in districts, and engaging stakeholders across the state. With this strong foundation in place, the CSDE will continue to offer regional professional development through collaboration with local partners, provide technical assistance on CCSS-based curriculum, transition to new assessment items, find innovative ways to support professional learning and continue communication with educators, districts, and other stakeholders.

The CSDE views the CCSS implementation as a process and not an event. Therefore, the CSDE is using a tiered approach to support CCSS implementation, knowing that different target audiences have unique needs and require specialized support. The CSDE CCSS leadership team has developed an implementation plan that consists of four key areas: communication and public outreach, materials to

support curriculum, professional development, and assessment. Each key area is intended to work in tandem and complement each other.

Table 1.3 is updated with examples of the CSDE's support to PK–16 educators and other stakeholders. The alignment between PK–12 and higher education is critical; however, no one aspect is more important than another.

Table 1.3: Key Areas of CSDE Support around CCSS

Key Area	State Support
Communication and Public Outreach	• CSDE/CCSS website • Connecticut Core Standards Website (ctcorestandards.org) • E-alerts • Monthly Academic Office newsletters • Quarterly Subject Area Newsletters • Weekly Assessment Newsletters • Face-to-face meetings and presentations for districts, regional councils, professional organizations, and stakeholder groups • Collaboration with higher education
Curriculum Supports	• Multiple crosswalk departments • K–12 ELA and mathematics units of study • Pacing guides • Individualized technical assistance • Professional Learning Academies
Professional Development	• Regional and in-district trainings • In-district coaching and technical assistance • Teacher mini-grants • Content-specific training • Symposia for higher education • Online professional learning resources dedicated CCSS, specifically the instructional supports necessary for ELLs and students with disabilities • Online courses dedicated to the CCSS instructional needs of ELLs and students with disabilities • Online courses focused on instructional shifts of CCSS curriculum development

Assessment	• Participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium
	  • Participate in pilot and field testing and operational use of Smarter Balanced Assessments
	  • Participate in development of materials for the Smarter balanced Digital Library
	  • Provide access and training for CT educators to materials in the Smarter Balanced Digital Library

	• Provide access and training for CT educators to the Smarter Balanced Interim Block and Comprehensive Assessments • Move to the CCSS aligned Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) for students with significant cognitive disabilities • Move to LAS LINKS Form C Assessment for ELL Exit Criteria • Consider use of ELPA21 Assessment after 2014-15 for use in ELL Exit Criteria • Analyze existing assessments and determine possible changes to align with the CCSS • Maintain Science legacy assessments until NGSS adoption and statewide implementation

College- and Career-Ready Standards in the Reorganized CSDE

CSDE's first-ever Chief Academic Officer (CAO) will be charged with improving academic excellence across all schools and leading efforts to implement clearer standards aligned with national and international benchmarks. This work includes aligning summative assessments to college and career benchmarks and collaborating with districts and schools to facilitate more expansive use of formative assessments to help inform instructional practices—helping educators identify problems and prescribe interventions. The CAO will also lead Connecticut's collaboration with 44 other states and the District of Columbia that are implementing the CCSS, helping the CSDE identify and introduce best practices. The CAO will work with the Chief Talent Officer to align professional development activities with the CCSS.

Direct responsibility for implementing the new standards and assessments will fall to the Bureau of Standards, Curriculum and Instruction and the Bureau of Assessments. To increase alignment between PK–16 standards and assessments, a newly created Early Learning and Development function, led by the Chief Academic Officer, will also fall under this area.
To ensure that the CSDE provides the best support to Connecticut's educators during the transition to the CCSS, the CSDE has been an active participant in several national and multistate collaboratives on assessment and student standards.

Building Coherence Across the CSDE and other State Agencies to Benefit all Stakeholders

Since January 2013, the Chief Academic Officer and Academic professional staff has worked diligently to ensure coherence for educators, leaders, parents, and students regarding work encompassed in Principles 1, 2, and 3. This means that significant collaboration and dismantling of SEA "silos" of work have had to occur internally.

Internal Academic Office Coherence: Of particular note is the close collaboration between staff now housed together but formerly assigned to either the Bureau of Teaching and Learning or the Bureau of Student Assessment. Just as instruction and assessment cannot be separated in a quality education, increased coherence of the Academic Office both internally and externally have occurred. Examples

include collaborative efforts of all Academic professional staff in developing professional development on the standards and the assessment.

Academic Office and Talent Office Coherence: The two offices have collaborated regularly on projects including the Connecticut Core of Teaching Rubric Evidence Guides which provide relevant examples of what teaching looks like at each level of the rubric by grade bands and subject areas. Other examples include a superintendent survey of needs in June 2014 and the delivery of concrete supports that were requested by August 2014.

Academic Office and Turnaround Office Coherence: The Academic office provides regular resources to the Alliance District Newsletters and provides presentations and resources at Alliance District Convenings. The two offices collaborate extensively on the department's K-3 Literacy initiative

Coherence between the Academic Office and Other Offices of the CSDE: The Academic office works collaboratively with Student Services and Special Education on professional development to support standards implementation for students with disabilities, as well as re-energizing Connecticut's RTI Framework – Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) to increase our efforts to help all students reach success including target subgroup population(s) and vulnerable populations. Examples also include general and special education collaboration on the development of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) focusing on K-3 Reading Initiative as our powerful prevention and intervention strategy utilizing the Menu of K-3 reading Assessments approved by the State Board in July 2014.

Coherence Between the Academic Office and the Office of Early Childhood: The two offices work closely on the Age Three to Grade Three Initiative, the Early Learning Standards and the accompanying K-3 Social Emotional and Intellectual Habits Framework (in draft), as well as the Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (in statute) and the K-3 Reading Initiative.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.2) Does the SEA intend to analyze the extent of alignment between the State's current content standards and the college- and career-ready standards to determine similarities and differences between those two sets of standards? If so, will the results be used to inform the transition to college- and career-ready standards?

Alignment with Current State Standards

In May 2010, the CSDE conducted a thorough standards comparison study to identify alignment between the state's existing standards and the CCSS.

English Language Arts (ELA). Results from the comparison study indicated that approximately 80% of the CCSS match the Connecticut ELA standards. The study identified 200 ELA standards not currently included in the Connecticut standards for grades K–12. Between 64 and 90% of the CCSS ELA standards match Connecticut standards for each grade from K to 8.

To increase the districts' understanding of the CCSS as they compare to Connecticut standards, the CSDE provided a series of professional development sessions to district curriculum writing teams during the summer of 2011. Based on the data from the comparison study and the districts' current curriculum documents, the districts were able to determine where best to begin their curriculum revisions. While there were a high percentage of matches between Connecticut standards and the

CCSS, the skills and competencies in the CCSS were introduced at different grade levels. For ELA, most of the matches between the CCSS and Connecticut standards occurred at the same grade level; there were few or no grade differences (e.g., grade 3 CCSS matched grade 3 in Connecticut's old standards). However, based on the percentage of matches at the middle school level, the CSDE has advised districts to emphasize curriculum revisions at the middle school level. In addition, the CSDE has advised districts to emphasize K–2, placing importance on these foundational years of literacy development.

The matches for high school ELA standards were not indicated by grade level because the CCSS document has two grade bands, 9–10 and 11–12, whereas the Connecticut standards document has a 9–12 grade band. The results of the comparison study indicated that 92% of the Connecticut standards at grades 9–10 match the CCSS, and 93% of the Connecticut standards at grades 11–12 match the CCSS, revealing an even greater percentage of matches at the high school level.

The greater percentage of matches allows high school teachers to focus on infusing the ELA CCSS across other content areas so that students understand the importance of literacy beyond traditional ELA courses. The CCSS set requirements for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects and specify the literacy skills and understandings required for college and career readiness in multiple disciplines. This degree of match will also allow for ELL, special education, and related service professionals to focus more on the necessary supports and services to assist ELLs and students with disabilities than on entirely new standards.

Mathematics. Results from the comparison study indicated that, overall, approximately 92% of the CCSS for mathematics matched the Connecticut standards. In grades K to 8, 86% to 100% of the CCSS matched Connecticut standards. While there were a high percentage of overall matches between the CCSS and Connecticut standards, many involved collective matches, indicating that the CCSS content at a single grade was addressed at multiple grade levels in the Connecticut standards.

Matches for high school mathematics standards were not indicated by grade level because the CCSS are organized into five conceptual categories across grades 9–12, as opposed to the four categories in the Connecticut standards. Content for Connecticut's grades 9–12 standards were grouped into 9–12 Core (C) and 9–12 Extended (E). The 9–12 (C) Standards specified the content that could potentially be tested on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), as well as concepts and skills that students should know and be proficient at prior to high school graduation. Grades 9–12 (E) standards represented concepts that students could typically encounter in a variety of advanced courses beginning with Algebra II and beyond. The study found that 89% of Connecticut standards for grades 9–12 matched the CCSS, though 48% of the matches characterized as weak indicating that major aspects of the CCSS were not addressed. In addition, the comparison study identified 40 CCSS that were not included in the Connecticut standards. The results of the study have guided the CSDE's work on the development of crosswalks and the composition of recommendations for the CCSS implementation.

States were allowed to supplement the CCSS with an additional 15% of state-specific standards. As a follow-up to the May 2010 standards comparison study, the CSDE content specialists reconvened a core group of the ELA and math comparison study team members in November 2010 to review the Connecticut standards that did not match the CCSS. The groups spent a day reviewing all unmatched standards to determine whether any should be considered for part of the additional 15% option. They decided that Connecticut would not add state-specific standards for ELA and mathematics.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.3) Does the SEA intend to analyze the linguistic demands of the State's college- and career-ready standards to inform the development of ELP standards corresponding to the college- and career-ready standards and to ensure that English Learners will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to inform revision of the ELP standards and support English Learners in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?

English Language Learners (ELLs). Approximately 5% of Connecticut students are ELLs. To support ELLs in the content areas, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), bilingual, and ELA experts met in January 2011 to create crosswalk documents that show the connection between the ELL Framework and the CCSS. The goal of the project was to identify instructional links between the CCSS and ELL Framework indicators so that district professionals can have meaningful ways to help students access the CCSS, regardless of their English language proficiency.

Teams of ELA practitioners and CSDE content area experts reviewed the CCSS ELA standards with English as a second language (ESL)/bilingual education practitioners and K–12 CCSS for Mathematical Practice with mathematics practitioners. The experts linked Connecticut ELL Framework indicators to the CCSS. This work is in final review and will imminently be available to districts. Ultimately, there will be a complete document for each grade level or secondary grade span in which the Connecticut ELL Framework indicators are linked to the CCSS. For a timeline of all CCSS and ELL-related activities.

In addition to state-level work, content area experts at the CSDE are participating in an interstate collaborative focused on English language proficiency and standards, as related to the CCSS. As a part of the CSDE's membership in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) SCASS, two content area experts have attended the ELL SCASS meetings, which focus on assessment issues related to ELLs and provide a forum for interstate collaboration.

During the October 2011 meeting, a new group composed of a subset of members of the ELL SCASS was convened. The goals of the State Collaborative on English Language Acquisition (SCELA) Standards project are to develop common ELP expectations that align with the CCSS—which have been adopted by all participating states—and to systematically examine current ELP/English language development (ELD) standards in participating states and subsequently identify commonalities and differences among them.

Adoption of English Language Proficiency Standards Aligned to College and Career Ready Standards and Assessment of English Language Proficiency for English Learners (ELs)

Beginning in the fall of 2014, the CSDE and ACES (a regional education service center) assembled a practitioner committee to review options for the new English Language Proficiency Standards to serve as a foundation for the Connecticut English Language Proficiency Standards. Since spring 2013, the CSDE has funded and used statewide the LAS LINKS Form C as an English language proficiency assessment. Since the 2013-14 school year exit criteria have been raised. The timeline below is representative of Connecticut's commitment to the success of our English learners and provides specific information on both past and continuing action steps from September 2013- June 2017.

Table 1.4 2013-2017 Timeline for Implementation of Connecticut's English Language Proficiency (CELP) Standards and Assessments

Date	CELP Standards and Assessment Activities	Stakeholders
September 2013	• To better align to college and career ready standards, Connecticut transitions from the existing English Learner Proficiency (ELP) assessment, LAS LINKS (FORM A & B) to a newer version (FORM C), which is better aligned to college and career ready standards and contains measures of academic/ content area vocabulary. — CSDE funds statewide English Language Proficiency Assessments of all Connecticut English Learners in every local education agency (LEA) — CSDE raises the exit criteria from ESL services to level five proficiency as measured by the LAS LINKS (FORM C). — English Language Proficiency assessment (LAS LINKS -FORM C) administered online for the first time in Connecticut.	• Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)
September 2013 - June 2014	• Statewide training, supports, and resources to Connecticut school districts, teachers, and administrators on the administration	• CSDE staff and test vendor
January 2014	• Connecticut launches a family webpage on ctcorestandards.org with resources translated into Connecticut's top 7 languages	• CSDE staff
April 2014 - May 2014	• Connecticut administers LAS LINKS (FORM C) statewide	• CSDE staff and test vendor
May 2014	• Vendor scoring and delivery	• Test vendor

	of results of LAS LINKS (FORM C) assessment to CSDE and CT school districts	
June 2014	• Data analysis of LAS LINKS (FORM C)	• CSDE staff
September 2014	• Individual student reports sent to parents	• CSDE staff, test vendor, CT school districts
September 2014 – December 2014	• Establish CELP Standards and Assessment Working Group to recommend next generation ELP standards for Connecticut • Meet regularly to review available college and career ready ELP standards and consider developing Connecticut -specific ELP standards	• CSDE staff , teachers, and members of Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL) • CSDE staff and CELP Standards and Assessment Working Group
December 2014	• Recommendation of ELPA21 Standards for adoption by CSBE	• CELP Standards and Assessment Working Group
January 2015	• Development of Connecticut English Language Proficiency (CELP) Standards—Linguistic Supports for Students	• CSDE staff and CELP Standards Framework and Assessment Working Group
February 2015	• Update on English Learner and Bilingual Programs, including an introduction to CELP Standards and Assessment	• CSDE staff and Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) committee on Policy and Legislation
March 2015	• AMAO letters sent to districts.	• CSDE staff and CT school districts
April 2015 – May 2015	• Year two administration of statewide, fully funded ELP assessment, LAS LINKS (FORM C)	• CSDE staff and test vendor
May 2015	• Vendor scoring and delivery of results of LAS LINKS assessment (FORM C) to CSDE and CT school districts	• Test vendor
June 2015	• Comprehensive review of the CELP Standards and	• CSDE staff and CSBE Committee on Standards

	Assessment	and Assessments
June 2015	• Meeting to plan CELP stakeholder engagement (June - October 2015) as well as Standards and Assessment Implementation (2015-2017)	• CSDE staff & CELP Standards and Assessment Working Group
June 2015	• New CELP standards posted to CSDE websites (www.sde.gov and www.ctcorestandards.org)	• CSDE staff
July 2015	• Develop stakeholder engagement activities and CELP Professional Development (PD) Plan	• CSDE staff & CELP Standards & Assessment Working Group
July 2015	• Secure an independent evaluator to review and evaluate the alignment of LAS LINKS assessment (FORMS C & D) with the CT Core Standards with report deadline by 9/30/15	• CSDE staff
July 2015– October2015	• Phase 1 –Initial Stakeholder Engagement: — Presentations of new CELP Standards aligned to CT Core Standards — Presentation of ongoing use of LAS LINKS (FORMS C & D)	• CSDE staff and parent groups, RESC council meetings, Education Committee of CT General Assembly • Connecticut educators
July 2015	• Develop a CELP Train the Trainer model of statewide PD • Develop PD materials and post on CTCoreStandards.org website • Develop a PD calendar and budget	• CSDE staff • CELP Standards and Assessment Working Group • RESC staff
September 2015 – November 2015	• Based on Governor's CCSS Taskforce recommendation, deliver statewide Professional Development titled ***Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards for Educators of English Learners***	• CSDE staff and Public Consulting Group

	and Students with Disabilities	
September 2015	• LAS LINKS-FORM C Individual student reports sent to parents	• CSDE staff, test vendor, CT school districts
September 2015	Data Analysis of LAS LINKS (FORM C)	• CSDE staff
October 2015	• Review data and feedback collected to date from stakeholders	• CSDE staff
October 2015	• Presentation on progress to date in standards introduction and assessment alignment, as well as professional development and implementation plan	• CSDE staff and CSBE Standards & Assessment Committee • CSDE staff and CSBE Legislative Policy & Accountability Committee
October 2015	• Recommendation that the State Board of Education adopt the CELP Standards and the LAS LINKS (Forms C & D)	• CSDE staff • CSBE
October 2015 -June 2016	• Phase 1 –Continued Stakeholder Engagement: — informational sessions on CELP Standards and LAS LINKS (FORM C & D) assessments — Webinars — Print and electronic materials for parents translated into CT's top seven languages,	• CSDE staff and parent groups, RESC council meetings, Education Committee of CT General Assembly • Teachers and Administrators
October 2015	• The professional development series, ***"Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards for Educators of English Learners and Students with Disabilities"*** becomes available as a free-of-charge online mini-course for CT educators through the CSDE website Ctcorestandards.org	• CSDE staff and Public Consulting Group • RESC & SERC staff • Teachers and Administrators

October 2015-June 2017	• Professional Development on District, School and Classroom Implementation of CELP standards and the data analysis/ instructional adjustments based on results from LAS LINKS assessment (FORM C & D)	• CSDE staff • CELP Standards and Assessment Working Group • RESC and SERC staff • Teachers and Administrators

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.4) Does the SEA intend to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to support students with disabilities in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?

Students with Disabilities. Nearly 12% of Connecticut students require special education services. The CSDE believes that students with disabilities can and should access rigorous grade-level content. Connecticut does not modify academic achievement standards for students with disabilities (SWD); however, the CSDE does administer the Smarter Balanced Assessment with extensive accommodations for SWDs, as well as an alternate assessments designed to assess the state standards for students with cognitive disabilities. Historically, 2% of Connecticut's students have taken the computer-based Modified Assessment System (MAS) and are particularly well positioned for the 2014-2015 assessment due to their experience with a computer-based assessment system. The newly developed Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) will replace the MAS beginning in spring 2015. The new CTAA is detailed below.

Smarter Balanced Assessment

While Connecticut believes many of its current practices have prepared students for this next generation assessment system, the CSDE has planned additional activities to successfully transition districts, educators, and students to the Smarter Balanced computer-based assessment in the 2014-2015 school year. Connecticut participation in test development has included:

- Attend USDOE public meeting on accessibility and accommodations.
- Participate in a series of three SBAC technology architecture meetings in Chicago, New Hampshire, and Las Vegas.
- Extensive participation in Item development in English language Arts and Mathematics for grades 3-8 and 11
- A community of special education practitioners has been formed to review and respond to the SBAC work. In addition, CSDE content and assessment specialists are ongoing participants in the SBAC Access and Accommodations work group.
- The CSDE has provided extensive training to District test coordinators on universal and designated supports in the Smarter Balanced Assessment System for students with disabilities

Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) For Students With Significant Cognitive Disabilities

The Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) was developed in collaboration with the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) consortium. Similar to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium,

NCSC is developing a system of valid, reliable and fair next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics for Grades 3-8 and 11, for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This new assessment will replace the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Beginning in 2014-15, Connecticut is transitioning to the CCSS aligned Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) for students with significant cognitive disabilities (approximately 1% with significant cognitive disabilities).

- The CSDE requires that all educators who will be administering the CTAA and the Skills Checklist Science to receive training in 2014-15.
- The CSDE has provided training throughout the year, which allowed educators to learn about the assessment either through live presentations offered throughout the state or online.
- To date, approximately 500 educators have taken part in the live training and 1700 educators have participated online.

Professional Development in the Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities
Since the last waiver renewal submission, the department has worked diligently to support improved instruction to increase achievement of students with disabilities as outlined in all aspects of the work of Principle 1.

- The CSDE has provided statewide professional development opportunities intended to equip both general and special education teachers with the knowledge and skills to implement the changes to curriculum and the instructional shifts necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve the promise of college-and career-ready standards.
- Additionally, the department has embarked on a powerful workshop series focusing on the principles of Hoy's academic optimism, planning and implementation of lessons that employ universal design for learning principals, and effective strategies to help students with disabilities achieve their personal best and become college and career ready upon graduation.
- The workshop series, offered in both spring 2015 and fall 2015, will also be developed into facilitated online courses free of charge in an effort to reach more CT educators.

Additionally, the Bureau of Special Education and the Academic Office have collaborated and committed to joining forces on the K-3 reading initiative as a critical prevention and intervention strategy

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.5) Does the SEA intend to conduct outreach on and dissemination of the college- and career-ready standards? If so, does the SEA's plan reach the appropriate stakeholders, including educators, administrators, families, and IHEs? Is it likely that the plan will result in all stakeholders increasing their awareness of the State's college- and career-ready standards?

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement began during the adoption process and included a statewide Stakeholder Engagement Conference in June 2010. The CSDE is cognizant of the need to provide clear, consistent messages and support to districts and its partner organizations. The CSDE is committed to working with all districts (which include charter and magnet schools), approved private special education programs

(APSEPs), RESCs, and IHEs to assist them in fully implementing the CCSS. Additionally, the business community, parents, and the public at large will be actively involved in the process and are committed to the notion that by implementing the CCSS, students will be better prepared to compete on the international stage.

1) Since the last renewal submission, the CSDE has engaged in extensive stakeholder engagement with educators in the deep work surrounding the components of Principle 1

- Redoubling efforts to actively engage stakeholders in high quality implementation of College and Career-Ready Standards.
- Providing regular and thorough communication in a multitude of formats the CSDE proactively works to anticipate the needs of stakeholders at every stage of the implementation process.
- By actively engaging with and responding to stakeholder needs, the CSDE is building capacity in local curriculum development and CCSS-aligned instructional shifts.
- The CSDE offers stakeholders a wealth of resources related to the Smarter Balanced Assessment System.
- Through a partnership with the Connecticut Association of Board of Education (CABE), twelve CCSS trainings were created and delivered for local boards of education from January 2014 through January 2015. Additionally, from January-April 2015, seven training will be developed and delivered focusing on Next Generation Science Standards.
- To date, one hundred and fifty three local education agencies (77%) agreed to collaborate and as of March 2015, the CSDE has provided three hundred and thirty six professional learning opportunities (workshops and webinars) with over ten thousand and thirty attendees including novice and veteran teachers, district and school leaders, pupil personnel and specialists, faculty from IHE teacher preparation programs and others.
- Over 1200 days of customized, in-district coaching and/or technical assistance (funded by the CSDE) will be delivered by the end of the 2014-15 school year to support local implementation efforts.
- Connecticut recruits 45 educators to serve as the State Network of Educators (SNE) to develop and evaluate materials for the Smarter Balanced Digital Library

2) Since the last renewal submission, the CSDE has engaged in extensive stakeholder engagement with parents on the components of Principle 1

- Since January 2014, the department has partnered with the Connecticut PTA in providing multiple parent/ community forums and presentations.
- The CSDE launched a CCSS dedicated website CTCORESTANDARDS.ORG in December 2013 including a Parent/Community page with parent-friendly materials explaining CCSS in the top seven languages spoken by Connecticut students.
- Through monthly Academic Office Newsletter, the department regularly provides Local Education Agencies with model materials for parents, families, and community members including customizable presentation slide decks as well as links to parent-friendly resources.

3) Since the last renewal submission, the CSDE has engaged in extensive stakeholder engagement with Boards of Education on the components of Principle 1

- To address a concern from the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) regarding training for State Board of Education (SBE) members, the CSDE developed summer academies for members of the local boards of education in the implementation plan.

1.C Develop and Administer Annual, Statewide, Aligned, High-Quality Assessments that Measure Student Growth

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

Option A	**Option B**	**Option C**
☒ The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition. i. Attach the State's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. (Attachment 6)	☒ The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs. i. Provide the SEA's plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.	☐ The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs. i. Attach evidence that the SEA has submitted these assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review or attach a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)

Connecticut remains committed to administering the Smarter Balanced assessments in Grades 3-8, but based on Public Act 15-238 and the recommendation of the High School Assessment Working Group, the CSDE will administer the SAT statewide in lieu of the Grade 11 Smarter Balanced test.
A comprehensive and aggressive plan is needed to implement this new assessment to grade 11 students in 2015-16. A high level implementation plan that addresses key areas related to test development, administration, scoring, reporting, and research studies is presented on the following pages.

U.S. Department of Education Criteria	Table 1.5 Connecticut State Department of Education Implementation Plan		
	Activities and Resources	**Timeline**	**Party(ies) Responsible**
TEST DEVELOPMENT			
The process and timeline for development of test blueprints and item specifications **The review and selection of items for inclusion in the assessments (including through piloting)** **Scaling and scoring procedures to be used** **An independent evaluation of alignment of the assessments with the State's college- and career-ready standards** **Data analyses proposed to document validity and reliability of the assessments**	Assemble Connecticut Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of psychometric and assessment experts from CSDE, local districts, and higher education institutions	July 2015	CSDE
	Procure from the assessment vendor *and* facilitate TAC review of test blueprint, item specifications, item selection procedures, pilot testing, and scaling/scoring procedures *Resources:* Test	August – September 2015	CSDE and College Board
	Hire an independent evaluator to evaluate the alignment of this new 11th grade assessment to Connecticut's Core Standards *Resources:* *College Board's SAT Suite of Assessments and their Alignment to Connecticut Standards (attached)* Adobe Acrobat Document	August – September 2015	CSDE and Independent Evaluator
	Present technical review and content alignment information to the 11th Grade Assessment Working Group. Procure State Board Approval of the SAT as the 11th grade mastery examination for Connecticut	October 2015	CSDE
	Use Connecticut SAT results and continue to conduct research/analyses to confirm the validity of SAT performance in predicting high school graduation and college success	Ongoing	CSDE, P20 WIN

U.S. Department of Education Criteria	Connecticut State Department of Education Implementation Plan		
	Activities and Resources	Timeline	Party(ies) Responsible
TEST ADMINISTRATION			
Test administration procedures, including selection and use of appropriate accommodations	Convene a Test Administration Procedures Committee (TAPC) that includes District Test Coordinators and districts that have experience with SAT School Day test administration (i.e., Alliance Districts)	September 2015	CSDE
	Work Collaboratively with the TAPC and the College Board to finalize the following test administration protocols and procedures: • Establish test dates • Establish protocols and support districts/schools to prepare for and implement school day testing • Create test administration manual • Train District Test Coordinators and Counselors in test administration procedures *Resources:* *2014 Maine High School Assessment: SAT Initiative – A Guide for School Staff (attached)* Adobe Acrobat Document	September 2015 – January 2016	CSDE, TAC, College Board
	Establish an Accommodations and Supports Committee (ASC) comprised of practitioners who work with students with disabilities and English learners Develop a process for all students with disabilities, ELs, and others to seek available accommodations and supports for SAT Testing	August – December 2015	CSDE and College Board

U.S. Department of Education Criteria	Connecticut State Department of Education Implementation Plan		
	Activities and Resources	Timeline	Party(ies) Responsible
SCORING, STANDARD SETTING, REPORTING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT			
The process and timeline for setting college- and career-ready achievement standards and the method and timeline to validate those achievement standards **Meaningful report formats to communicate results to students, parents, and educators.**	Contract with the College Board to set achievement level standards that are aligned to Connecticut's achievement level descriptors and are based on in-depth input from a diverse group of Connecticut stakeholders including teachers, curriculum developers, education administrators, higher education faculty, and other interested parties.	Preliminary in Fall 2015 Final after first administration in Spring 2016	CSDE and College Board
	Establish and deliver professional development on the redesigned SAT for teachers, counselors, and education administrators around test content and connections of the SAT and the PSAT to classroom instruction and academic readiness for college *Resources* *Sample counselor workshops offered by the College Board*	September – November 2015	CSDE, College Board, Professional Development Partners
	Create Connecticut specific SAT reports for students, parents and educators by soliciting input from diverse stakeholders	October – December 2015	CSDE and College Board
	Develop and implement a communications plan that will educate the broader public and the media about the redesigned SAT, the reporting formats, and the timeline for results.	September 2015 – June 2016	CSDE and College Board

2.A Develop and Implement a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA's plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2012–2013 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.1) Did the SEA propose a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, and a high-quality plan to implement this system no later than the 2012–2013 school year, that is likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.2) Does the SEA's accountability system provide differentiated recognition, accountability, and support for all LEAs in the State and for all Title I schools in those LEAs based on (1) student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, and other subjects at the State's discretion, for all students and all subgroups of students identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II); (2) graduation rates for all students and all subgroups; and (3) school performance and progress over time, including the performance and progress of all subgroups?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.3) Does the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system create incentives and provide support that is likely to be effective in closing achievement gaps for all subgroups of students?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.4) Did the SEA provide a plan that ensures that the system will be implemented in LEAs and schools no later than the 2012-2013 school year?

INTRODUCTION

After receiving its first ESEA Flexibility in May 2012, Connecticut began implementing its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (i.e., Accountability 2.0) in 2012-13. This system was a significant enhancement over the rigid AYP approach because it:

- valued improvement in student achievement at all performance levels – not just from 'not proficient' to 'proficient'—through the introduction of a performance index;
- raised expectations by setting the target that all students perform at the 'goal' level rather than at the 'proficient' level;
- integrated all tested subjects, encouraging schools to improve instruction not only in mathematics and reading, but also in science and writing;
- lowered minimum N size to 20 to make subgroup performance more visible; and
- enabled the classification of all schools into five categories so as to enable districts and the state to provide tailored support to individual schools.

Over the past two years, the CSDE has closely monitored the effectiveness of this new system by working collaboratively with district/school leaders, consulting with state/national experts, seeking

ongoing input from staff, and analyzing results from the implementation of the system. During the same period, the State Board of Education (SBE) has articulated a vision (currently in draft) for education in Connecticut (see below) that captures the broad aims of a public school education.

> ***State Board of Education Vision***
> *Connecticut students will think critically, learn joyfully, express themselves creatively, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Connecticut schools will prepare every learner for success and fulfillment in college, careers, and life.*

The following three ambitious goals are designed to realize this vision:

1. Improve overall academic achievement and reduce academic achievement gaps;
2. Produce college and career ready graduates; and
3. Prepare well-rounded, civically engaged students.

THE NEXT GENERATION ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL – HIGH LEVEL OVERVIEW

Based on analyses of input/feedback and data with respect to the implementation of Accountability 2.0 and given the SBE's overarching vision/goals for public education, Connecticut is introducing the next-generation district/school accountability model to coincide with the implementation of the new Smarter Balanced assessments aligned to college and career-ready standards as well as Connecticut's new alternate assessment developed through the Department's work as a member of the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC). This accountability system preserves what has worked, adds components to provide a fuller picture of district/school success, and refines metrics to address ineffective elements. It will aggregate multiple measures through a compensatory weighted method while also integrating conjunctive factors around critical issues. A combined compensatory and conjunctive approach will ensure, for example, that schools with overall high scores on the model will not receive the highest school category rating if there are significant achievement or graduation rate gaps.

A high level overview of the framework and the key changes are summarized on the following two pages. This model represents our best efforts at the present time to expand the model without adding new data collection/reporting burden to districts. As this model is implemented, the CSDE will continue to work collaboratively with stakeholders and analyze data to refine and improve this model. Some of the enhancements being considered include: incorporation of on-site quality reviews to gauge the development of, among other things, civic engagement/citizenship and 21st century skills; attainment of industry recognized credentials; and indicators of school climate that are based on student/parent feedback.

State Board of Education Vision:
Connecticut students will think critically, learn joyfully, express themselves creatively, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Connecticut schools will prepare every learner for success and fulfillment in college, careers, and life.

Three ambitious goals designed to realize the vision.

Improve overall academic achievement and reduce academic achievement gaps

- Academic Achievement (Status)
  - All Students Subject Index
  - High Needs Subject Index
- Academic Growth (Longitudinal)
  - All Students
  - High Needs Subgroup

Produce college- and career-ready graduates

- Attendance/Chronic Absence
  - All Students
  - High Needs Subgroup
- Preparation for Postsecondary and Career Readiness
  - Coursework
  - Exams
- Graduation
  - On Track in 9th grade
  - All Students Four-year Rate
  - High Needs Six-Year Rate
- Postsecondary Success
  - Entrance

Prepare well-rounded, civically engaged students

- Civics - TBD
- Arts
  - Course Access
- Physical Fitness
  - Fitness Assessment
- Grit/Persistence/Personal Development - TBD

Table 2.2: Summary of Changes

Preserve	Add	Refine
Performance index to capture improvements throughout the performance continuum Minimum N size of 20 Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate	New indicator for Goal 1 – Improve overall academic achievement and reduce academic achievement gaps • Longitudinal Academic Growth New indicators for Goal 2 – Produce College and Career Ready Graduates • Attendance/Chronic Absence • Participation in CCR Coursework • Performance on CCR Exams • On-Track in 9th Grade • Six Year Graduation Rate • Postsecondary Entrance New indicators for Goal 3 – Prepare well-rounded and civically engaged students • Physical Fitness • Arts Access	Calculate index based on scale scores instead of achievement levels Make subgroup performance more impactful and actionable • High Needs subgroup will hold more schools accountable • Subgroup performance over-weighted for not only achievement but also growth and graduation • "Outlier approach" to gap identification • Graduation gap matters

There is widespread support for these overall changes. A collaborative of six organizations representing superintendents, schools, local boards of education, advocacy groups, and business/industry leaders affirmed in their recent policy manifesto that "…Connecticut must adopt a rigorous and holistic framework for accountability that prioritizes student achievement growth and uses multiple measures to determine whether schools and districts are making progress."

Four key principles guide this next generation accountability system: inclusive, reflective, collaborative, and transparent. These principles, along with the underlying theory of action, are presented in the table below:

Table 2.3: Accountability System Guiding Principles

Principle	Description	Theory of Action
Inclusive	Accountability indicators should include more than test scores and graduation rates.	One-size doesn't fit all. An inclusive set of indicators will: • provide a more complete picture of successes and challenges; • guard against narrowing of the curriculum to the tested subjects; • expand ownership of accountability to more staff; and • allow schools to demonstrate progress on "outcome pre-cursors."
Reflective	Results of accountability systems should inform decision-making at the local and state level.	An accountability system that provides useful information for decision-making at the state and local level will encourage leaders to view accountability results not as a "gotcha" but as a tool to guide and track improvement efforts.
Collaborative	Indicators and models should be developed with extensive input from district and school leaders.	Listening to local leaders in the development of an accountability system will ensure that the indicators selected and the model used will engender acceptance of the system as a fair reflection of practice and minimize gamesmanship.
Transparent	The system should tell it like it is and be easy to understand.	A system that presents results publically and makes them easily accessible to various stakeholders will gain credibility and invite engagement across the school community.

THE NEXT GENERATION ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL – THE DETAILS

Connecticut is proposing that the full model presented here be implemented for the first time following the release of 2015-16 achievement data. In the meantime, Connecticut is requesting an accountability "pause," meaning that the CSDE will not assign all schools new ratings based on assessments administered in 2014–2015. However, the CSDE will use 2014-15 achievement data to exit Turnaround and Focus schools that have demonstrated improvement (explained in Sections 2D and 2E), and to identify new Turnaround and Focus schools as well as a new cohort of Schools of Distinction (Section 2C) in order to meet ESEA flexibility renewal requirements. All other schools will retain their 2014–2015 rating/classification in 2015–2016 and will continue to implement appropriate interventions.

Goals and Indicators

The following pages list specific indicators for each of the three ambitious goals stated earlier. Each indicator will present the maximum points that can be earned for that indicator for each of the next three years[1]. It will also describe the method through which those points can be earned. A district/school will be evaluated on a particular indicator if appropriate (e.g., elementary schools will not be evaluated on cohort graduation rates) ***and*** if there is a minimum reportable N of at least 20 students for that indicator. The total eligible points that can be earned by a district/school will vary based on school type (i.e. grades served) and indicators available. The overall score for a district/school is the percentage of eligible points earned.

Goal 1: Improve overall academic achievement and reduce academic achievement gaps

Indicator 1: Academic Achievement (Status)

Indicator	Weight	
	Year 1	Years 2 and 3*
Subject Performance Index (0-100) in ELA, math, and science		
• All Students	300	150
• Students in *High Needs Subgroup*	300	150

*Points for schools where longitudinal academic growth (Indicator 2) cannot be evaluated (e.g., 9-12 high schools) will retain Year 1 point values for years 2 and 3.

Description (What): This indicator will produce performance indices for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics based on results from the Smarter Balanced assessments for Grades 3-8, SAT for Grade 11, and the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) assessments for students in all available tested grades (i.e., 3 through 8 and 11) in the district/school. Science index scores will be generated based on results from the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) assessments and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)

[1] Note: Year 1 represents the data year 2014-15 with analysis being conducted during 2015-16. Years 2 and 3 represent the next annual time periods.

assessments (both the standard form and Skills Checklist) in all available tested grades (i.e., 5, 8, and 10) in the district/school. This indicator weights tested subjects equally.

Rationale (Why): The academic achievement indicator provides the most current status of achievement of the students in a school or district.

Applicability (Who): The achievement status indicator is applicable to all schools and districts with at least one tested grade (i.e., grades 3 through 8, 10 or 11).

Input/Feedback: The overall notion of a Performance Index that recognizes student performance across the continuum (not just 'proficient' and 'not proficient') has been well received. However, in extensive conversations with local practitioners, three important issues emerged with Connecticut's prior approach to the index:

- First, though the index was an enhancement to the AYP approach of looking solely at 'proficient' and 'not proficient', it still didn't capture improvement *within* performance levels. Furthermore, with Smarter Balanced assessments offering four achievement levels as opposed to five in the CMT/CAPT assessments, practitioners are concerned that the index will fail to capture differences in performance within the wide achievement levels.
- Second, the interpretable and actionable value of an overall index score that averages all the tested subjects was questioned. Practitioners generally prefer subject-specific indices.
- Lastly, practitioners asked why advanced performance couldn't garner additional points in the index, especially if the state's expected level of achievement was below that level. For example, in the Smarter Balanced assessment, level 3 of 4 is considered on-track for college and career readiness while level 4 is an explicit standard that truly represents an "advanced" level of performance.

Methodology (How): In spring 2015, Connecticut students will be taking the Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy and Mathematics assessments in grades 3-8 and 11. In both subjects, the test scores are vertically scaled across grades and would facilitate tracking student growth within the same subject across grades, despite differences in test content and difficulty.

Each vertical scale ranges from 2000-3000 score points. Vertical scale scores on the Smarter Balanced assessments for each tested grade will be converted to an appropriate index point value that ranges from 0 to 125. The precise conversion table will be finalized after the 2014-15 administration. An illustrative example is presented below.

Given the recent legislative change to administer SAT as the grade 11 assessment in lieu of Smarter Balanced, the CSDE will develop a methodology, similar to that proposed above for Smarter Balanced assessments, to convert SAT scores to index values.

	Tested Grade						
SB Vertical Scale	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**11**
2000 | | |

A subject index score for a district/school/subgroup is calculated by averaging the index points earned by students in that particular collective. Subject-specific index scores will be generated and reported for the following groups as long as the minimum subgroup N of at least 20 students is reached:

- All students
- All race/ethnicities
- Both genders
- Low income
- English Language Learners (EL)
- Students with Disabilities (SWD)
- High Needs supergroup (i.e., a student belongs to at least one of the following ESEA subgroups – low income, ELs or SWD).

Though index scores will be reported for all student subgroups, the High Needs supergroup will be the subgroup used in accountability calculations. This will hold more schools accountable for the subgroup performance of many more students.

- For example in 2013, there were 105 schools where no individual subgroup met the minimum N threshold of 20 but 58 of those schools had a High Needs group with at least 20 students.

- This supergroup approach also includes students in the EL and SWD subgroups into accountability calculations who might have previously been excluded because their individual subgroup Ns were between 1 and 19.
    - In 2012-13 there were 584 schools with EL subgroups between 1 and 19 students; in the old approach, EL students in these schools were excluded from accountability calculations. However, in 526 of those 584 schools, there is a High Needs group with an N>=20. If the High Needs group were used for accountability, the achievement of an additional 3,132 EL students (19.6% of those in the school achievement denominator) would now contribute to the subgroup accountability calculations.
    - Similarly, there were 297 schools with SWD subgroups between 1 and 19 students. However, in 205 out of 297 of these schools, there is a High Needs subgroup with an N>=20. If the High Needs group were used for accountability, the achievement of an additional 2,736 students with disabilities (7.3% of those in the school achievement denominator) would now contribute to the subgroup accountability calculations.
    -

Lowering subgroup N size from 40 to 20 in the first iteration of ESEA Flexibility made many subgroups visible across Connecticut; utilizing the High Needs group will further increase the number of schools and the number of students in those individual subgroups that are held accountable for subgroup performance and achievement gap determinations.

In Year 1, up to 300 points will be earned for the All Students group and an additional 300 points for the High Needs subgroup. Here is an illustrative example. King Elementary School is a K-5 school. It tests students in ELA, math, and science. It is presumed that all index scores in all grades meet the minimum N requirement for reporting. Presuming that the ELA, math, and

science index scores are 70, 65, and 68 respectively and that the ultimate target is established at 85, this school will earn a total of 238.8 of the 300 eligible points as follows: (70/85)*100 for ELA + (65/85)*100 for math + (68/85)*100 for science. A similar approach will be used to ascertain the up to 300 points that can be earned based on the High Needs subgroup index scores in the three subject areas. Weighting the High Needs subgroup separately in addition to the All Students group rightly over-weights subgroup performance.

Additional Flexibility for English Learners

At this time, Connecticut is requesting additional flexibility related to the inclusion of recently arrived ELs in academic achievement calculations (Indicator 1 of this model). Currently, Connecticut policy allows an exemption from the ELA assessment for any EL enrolled for the first time in a U.S. school for fewer than 12 calendar months when the testing window begins. However, these recently arrived ELs must take the state English proficiency test, the mathematics assessment, and the science assessment. Such students' scores are not included in the accountability determinations for any subject. However, these students are counted toward meeting the 95% participation requirement in mathematics and science.

The CSDE proposes eliminating the ELA exemption period for newly arrived ELs in Grades 3 through 8. This shift would require assessing all newly arrived ELs in all content areas. The exclusion of a student's scores from achievement status calculations (Indicator 1) will be extended to a period of two years. Year 1 scores will be used to establish a baseline against which growth will be measured in the student's second year and included in the accountability system (Indicator 2). In the student's third year, ELA and mathematics scores will be included in school achievement status measure (Indicator 1) and the longitudinal academic growth measure (Indicator 2) of the accountability system. This approach includes all of our ELs in the system and delays the incorporation of scores of recently arrived ELs in the achievement status measure until the third year, but rightly values growth over time in the second year. All of these students will continue to be counted toward meeting the 95 percent participation requirement in all subjects.

Achievement Gap

A district/school is identified as having an achievement gap if the size of its index score gap between the *High Needs subgroup* and the *Non-High Needs group* (or the ultimate achievement target when established, if that's lower) is a significant outlier i.e., at least one standard deviation greater than the statewide gap in any subject area ***and*** the AMO target (when they are established) for the subject area(s) for its *High Needs subgroup* is not met.

Indicator 2: Academic Growth (Longitudinal)

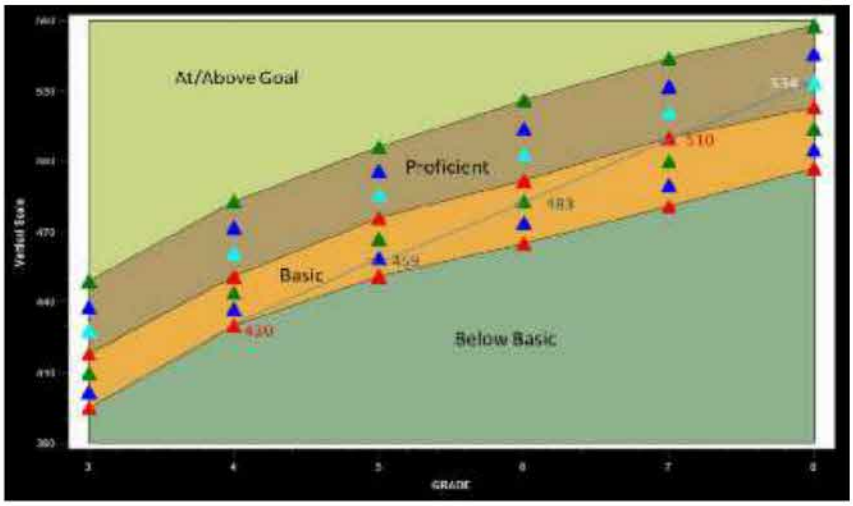
Indicator	Max Points	
	Year 1	Years 2 and 3
Percentage of students in grades 4 through 8 meeting growth targets (½ SB-ELA; ½ SB math)		
• All Students	N/A	200
• Students in *High Needs Subgroup*	N/A	200

Description (What): In Connecticut, the Smarter Balanced Assessment in ELA/Literacy and mathematics will be used for measuring student achievement growth. In spring 2015, Connecticut students will be taking the Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy and mathematics in grades 3-8. In both subjects, the test scores are vertically scaled across grades and would facilitate tracking student growth within the same subject across grades, despite differences in test content and difficulty.

Each vertical scale ranges from 2000-3000 score points. By subtracting a student's current score (e.g., a grade 5 score of 2400 in mathematics) from the student's previous score in the same subject (e.g., a grade 4 score of 2300 in mathematics), a teacher or administrator can assess the individual student's growth in mathematics performance over a one year period (a growth of 100 points in this example). Teachers and administrators can use achievement growth information with other academic information about students to plan for student instruction.

The CSDE will utilize the vertical scale to create a growth model based on the expectation that all students in grades 4 through 8 should demonstrate growth each year in each tested subject. Desired and achievable growth targets will be set in ELA/Literacy and mathematics for all students entering grades 4 through 8 to reach in that year.

The CSDE has a proven track record of successfully creating a vertical scale score based growth model. After constructing a vertical scale for its CMT assessment through a rigorous linking study in 2007, the CSDE analyzed CMT results to construct its growth model. In that approach, using achievement level cut scores on the vertical scale, two equidistant interim cut points were calculated for achievement levels of Basic, Proficient and Goal. This produced three gain-score targets, low, mid-, and high scores, for each of these CMT score bands. End-of-year achievement target scores were set for students in grades 4-8, based on scores and achievement levels from the previous year. Growth targets were set such that each student must grow one-third of the difference between adjacent performance levels (e.g., low to mid-basic, mid to high basic, high basic to proficient). The vertical scale, performance levels and intermediate level vertical scale cuts within each CMT achievement level for mathematics is presented below. The paper titled "The Development of Connecticut's Vertical Scale and Growth Model" discusses the model and its development in great detail. This model is in alignment with the criterion-referenced federal definition of "Student growth" i.e., *a change in student achievement for an individual student between two or more points in time*.



The development of the new growth model based on the Smarter Balanced assessment will incorporate the lessons learned from the development of the prior model. One expected enhancement is with respect to students performing at the lowest achievement level. In the prior model, students who performed at the lowest level in the CMT had a constant target of reaching the next level. In the new model, however, it is expected that students at the lowest achievement level will have targets that are based on their vertical scale scores. At the other end of the spectrum, it is expected that students performing at the highest level will also have growth targets to reach the following school year.

The primary aggregate metric that is expected to be generated from the growth model is termed the "Success Rate"; it is the percentage of students in the group (e.g., district, school, subgroup, class) who meet their individual growth targets in the subject.

The individualized targets in ELA/Literacy and mathematics will be established through ongoing collaborations with various stakeholders, including classroom teachers, subject matter experts, school principals, superintendents, CSDE staff, policy leaders, and measurement experts. The CSDE will begin the process of engaging stakeholders after it receives the results from the first operational assessment. A detailed timeline for development of the new growth model is provided below. As the timeline indicates, the CSDE will finalize the model after the second administration of the Smarter Balanced assessment. This model will serve as an important component of the statewide school accountability system and also inform the educator evaluation and support process starting with the 2016-17 school year.

Timeline for Development of a Longitudinal Student Growth Model for Smarter Balanced Assessments (Grades 3-8)

Target Date	Activity	Notes
August - September 2015	Receive, review, validate, and certify the full dataset based on the 2014-15 administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments.	
October 2015	Using certified data, conduct tests of the vertical scale to ensure the soundness of the scale and identify/resolve any challenges.	
November 2015	Given that 90 percent of Connecticut districts participated in the 2013-14 Smarter Balanced field test, explore the feasibility of using field test data to supplement data from the 2014-15 census assessment.	It may be possible to use item parameters from the field test to complement the census data.
December 2015	Using preliminary data (i.e., single year of census test), run scenarios to explore the importance of the achievement level cut points for measuring growth on the vertical scale.	Other reviews may include comparisons of average scale scores from grade to grade, analyses of score distributions across the grades and within achievement levels, identification of student scores that may cross the scale into another grade, and analyses of standard errors.
January 2016	Internal review of preliminary findings, including small scale preliminary growth standard setting using impact data.	Internal reviews will include representatives from across the agency including staff from the Academic, Performance, Turnaround, Talent, and Student Supports Offices.

Target Date	Activity	Notes
February - March 2016	Share preliminary information with and seek feedback from the SBE, LEA representatives, including teachers, community groups, and other education stakeholders.	The CSDE anticipates that during this time period adjustments may be made to the proposed model based on input from the field.
April 2016	Draft white paper explaining the approach to measuring growth.	
July 2016	Apply model to Year 2 (2015-16) Smarter Balanced census data.	
September 1, 2016	Update white paper to reflect Year 2 findings and disseminate.	
2016-17 School Year	Full Implementation of statewide approach to measuring student growth on the state assessment in grades 4 through 8 in Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy and mathematics for teachers of tested grades and subjects.	

Rationale (Why?): The vertical scale enables the evaluation of growth achieved by the same kids over time. A district/school will not be deemed successful on this metric simply because it enrolls students who are historically high performing. Success on this metric is earned by helping all students, whether low or high performing, to achieve adequate growth from one year to the next.

Applicability (Who): The academic growth indicator is applicable to all districts and schools with at least one grade between 4 and 8, inclusive.

Input/Feedback: Practitioners have long awaited the inclusion of academic growth as an indicator in district/school accountability. They are generally more supportive of using academic growth than achievement status to evaluate the effectiveness of a district/school.

Methodology (How): Points will be earned for the All Students group ***and*** the High Needs Subgroup based on the percentage of students who achieve their growth targets. Weighting the High Needs subgroup separately in addition to the All Students group rightly over-weights subgroup growth. The ultimate target for this indicator will be established after the second Smarter Balanced administration in spring 2016.

Indicator 3: Participation Rate

Every school and district is expected to meet/exceed the 95% participation rate standard for the All Students group ***and*** the High Needs group in all the tested subjects. If a school that would

otherwise have been classified in Category 1 or 2 has a participation rate that is less than 95% for either the All Students group or the High Needs group in any tested subject, it will be classified into the next lower category.

High participation rates for all students across subgroups is critical if accountability reports are to be representative of all students. The validity of conclusions one can derive from assessment results is partly dependent on the percentage of students who participated in the assessment. For example, one cannot make generalizations about a school's performance if a large number of eligible students did not participate in the test. Additionally, without high participation rates, fair comparisons across schools and years cannot be made.

Goal 2: Produce College and Career Ready Graduates

Indicator 4: Chronic Absenteeism

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of students chronically absent • All Students • Students in *High Needs Subgroup*	 50 50

Description (What): A district/school/subgroup chronic absenteeism rate is the percentage of students missing ten percent or greater of the total number of days enrolled in the school year for any reason. It includes both excused and unexcused absences. For example, children who are enrolled for the full school year (e.g., 180 days) become chronically absent if they miss at least 18 days of school for any reason. Because aggregate school/district-wide attendance rates can mask the extent of individual absenteeism, chronic absenteeism is a better indicator of student attendance.

Rationale (Why?): Students need to attend school daily to succeed and data must guide local efforts to improve student attendance. In 2013-14, 10.7% of all students statewide were chronically absent. Great disparities exist in chronic absenteeism rates among student subgroups. For example, the chronic absenteeism rate for students eligible for free lunch (19.9%) is more than three times that of their peers who are not eligible for lunch subsidies (6.1%). National reports/research as well as state level data analyses highlight the association of chronic absenteeism to student academic achievement and high school graduation.

Applicability (Who): The chronic absenteeism indicator is applicable to all districts and schools with at least one grade between K and 12, inclusive.

Input/Feedback: This indicator has gained increasing acceptance statewide. Many districts and schools have begun to track and monitor chronic absenteeism voluntarily. The Connecticut Legislature has established a Strategic Action Group around this issue that is serving as a centralizing force for disseminating promising new practices, promoting communication and collaboration among critical state agency and community-based partners, and reporting to the

legislature on statewide progress. The CSDE's district/school turnaround initiatives (Alliance District program and Commissioner's Network) incorporate chronic absenteeism as an important indicator.

Methodology (How): Points will be earned for the All Students group ***and*** the High Needs subgroup based on the percentage of students who are chronically absent. It is important to weight subgroup absenteeism rates separately because disparities in chronic absenteeism rates among student subgroups exist in a vast majority of districts/schools throughout the state. The CSDE's expectation is that no district/school will have a chronic absenteeism rate that is greater than 5%; therefore, full points will be awarded if the chronic absenteeism rate is 5% or lower. Conversely, no points will be awarded if the chronic absenteeism rate is 30% or greater. To recognize incremental improvement in the reduction of chronic absenteeism, rates between 30% and 5% will be awarded proportional points.

Indicator 5: Preparation for Postsecondary and Career Readiness - Coursework

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of students in grades 11 & 12 participating in *at least one* of the following during high school: two courses in AP/IB/dual enrollment; ***or*** two courses in one of seven CTE categories; ***or*** two workplace experience "courses" in any area.	50

Description (What): This is an access metric. It evaluates whether students in grades 11 and 12 have participated in coursework during high school that prepares them for success in college and/or careers. In recognition of the diverse pathways of our students, credit is awarded if students pursue traditional college-preparatory courses (e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate), career-technical education courses, or workplace experience/internship opportunities.

Rationale (Why?): Students cannot be expected to demonstrate success in college and careers if they are not receiving the requisite preparation.

Applicability (Who): This indicator is applicable to all districts and schools that offer grades 11 and/or 12.

Input/Feedback: The primary feedback to this indicator has been that the system should be inclusive to recognize opportunities beyond AP/IB that may be offered by districts. For example, many districts have partnerships with in-state colleges/universities (e.g., UCONN's Early College Experience program) that enable students to take college courses in high school and earn both high school and college credit. In response to this suggestion, the CSDE modified its data collection to begin collecting information about dual enrollment courses.

Methodology (How): Points will be awarded to the All Students group based on the percentage of 11th and 12th graders who meet the specified coursework participation thresholds. Points will be prorated based on the percentage of the ultimate target achieved.

Indicator 6: Preparation for Postsecondary and Career Readiness - Exams

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of students in grades 11 & 12 achieving CCR benchmark on *at least one* of the following: Smarter Balanced 11th ***or*** SAT ***or*** ACT ***or*** AP ***or*** IB	50

Description (What): This metric evaluates whether students in grades 11 and 12 have attained benchmark scores on at least one of the most prevalent college/career readiness exams.

Rationale (Why?): In addition to looking at "access" (i.e., indicator 5), it is also important to evaluate "performance". In recognition of the exam options available to students, this metric recognizes attainment of the benchmark score in any of those options.

Applicability (Who): This indicator is applicable to all districts and schools that offer grades 11 and/or 12.

Input/Feedback: As with coursework, the primary feedback to this indicator has been that the system should be inclusive and recognize that students may demonstrate college/career readiness through different exam options.

Methodology (How): Points will be awarded to the All Students group based on the percentage of 11th and 12th graders who meet the following benchmark scores on the respective exams:

- Smarter Balanced – Level 3 or higher on both ELA and math;
- SAT – composite score of 1550 or higher;
- ACT – meeting benchmark on 3 of 4 exams (benchmark varies based on subject);
- AP – 3 or higher on an AP exam; and
- IB – 4 or higher on an IB exam.

Points will be prorated based on the percentage of the ultimate target achieved.

Indicator 7: Graduation - On-Track in 9th Grade

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of 9th graders earning at least five full-year credits in the year ***and*** no more than one failing grade in English, Mathematics, Science or Social Studies	50

Description (What): This indicator calculates the percentage of 9th graders earning at least five full-year credits in the year ***and*** no more than one failing grade in English, mathematics, science or social studies in the school year.

Rationale (Why?): Ninth grade is a critical year. The University of Chicago's Consortium on Chicago School Research "identifies students as on-track if they earn at least five full-year course credits and no more than one semester F in a core course in their first year of high school. On-track students are more than three and one-half times more likely to graduate from high school in four years than off-track students. The indicator is a more accurate predictor of graduation than students' previous achievement test scores or their background characteristics."

Applicability (Who): This indicator is applicable to all districts and schools that offer grade 9. It will also be applied to districts/schools where grade 8 is the terminal grade in order to serve as an indicator of how well the middle school is preparing students for success in the first year of high school.

Input/Feedback: Some questioned if the five credits in grade 9 represents being on-track since the total credits required to graduate in many high schools exceed the state minimum of 20. Others suggested course passage instead of credit accumulation. Some administrators of K-8 schools districts were also concerned that this metric was holding them accountable for student success in an educational system outside their own.

Methodology (How): The total number of students in 9th grade who earn at least five full year credits ***and*** no more than one failing grade in English, mathematics, science or social studies is expressed as a percentage of all 9th graders.

The ultimate target for this indicator is 94% (same as that for the four-year cohort graduation rate). Points will be prorated based on the percentage of the ultimate target achieved.

Indicator 8: Graduation – Four Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate – All Students

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of first time 9th graders who graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years or less – All Students	100

Description (What): The four year adjusted cohort graduation rate represents the percentage of first time 9th graders who graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years or less. It is based on the nationally consistent method defined in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19 (73 FR 64508 (Oct. 29, 2008)).

Rationale (Why?): Graduating from high school is an important milestone in a student's education. The inclusion of the specific four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is a requirement of ESEA Flexibility.

Applicability (Who): This indicator is applicable to all districts and schools that offer at least one grade between 9 and 12, inclusive.

Input/Feedback: Among all the indicators in the accountability model, this is one that continues to irk many district/school leaders. While a vast majority of students do graduate in four years, practitioners adamantly (and one might say rightly) contend that some students (e.g., ELs who newly arrive in the country in middle/high school and low income students who may need to work part-time to support their family) benefit from having an extra year or two to complete high school. Consequently, they claim it is unfair that these non-graduates are counted as a "failure" in the four-year rate which has become the "de-facto graduation rate."

Methodology (How): The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is based on the nationally consistent method as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19 (73 FR 64508 (Oct. 29, 2008)). The ultimate target for all students remains at 94%. Districts/schools can earn up to 100 points based on the pro-rated percentage of the ultimate target (94%) achieved by All Students. For example, a school with a graduation rate of 84.6 (i.e., 90% of the ultimate target of 94%) will earn 90 out of 100 points.

Indicator 9: Graduation – Six Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate – High Needs

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of first time 9th graders who graduate with a regular high school diploma in six years or less – *High Needs Subgroup*	100

Description (What): The six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate represents the percentage of first time 9th graders who graduate with a regular high school diploma in six years or less. It is based on the nationally consistent method defined in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19 (73 FR 64508 (Oct. 29, 2008)).

Rationale (Why?): For a variety of reasons, some students (e.g., ELs who newly arrive in the country in middle/high school and low income students who may need to work part-time to support their family) benefit from having an extra year or two to complete high school. Unlike in the four-year rate, the graduation accomplishment of these students can be counted as a success in the six-year rate. The results below for the 2012 cohort illustrate why the six-year is a more fair and complete reflection of the successes of all students and subgroups.

Table 2.4: 4, 5, and 6-year Graduation Rates for the 2012 Graduation Cohort

Category	4-Year Rate	5-Year Rate	6-year Rate (prelim)
All Students	84.8	87.5	88.1
ELL	62.7	70.4	71.4
Special Education	64.4	72.0	75.3
Low Income	70.5	75.4	76.2
High Needs	71.4	76.4	77.7
Male	81.5	85.0	85.7
Female	88.3	90.2	90.7
Hispanic	68.6	73.5	74.3
Indian or Alaska Native	84.5	85.3	85.7
Asian	91.9	94.7	95.1
Black	73.0	77.8	78.9
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	95.0	95.0	95.0
White	91.3	92.9	93.4
Two or More Races	83.4	86.7	87.1

Applicability (Who): This indicator is applicable to all districts and schools that offer grade 12.

Input/Feedback: The six-year rate elicits a very different reaction from that of the four-year rate. This extended graduation rate is viewed very favorably by all constituents and stakeholders.

Methodology (How): The six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is based on the nationally consistent method as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19 (73 FR 64508 (Oct. 29, 2008)). The ultimate target for all students and subgroups remains at 94%. Districts/schools can earn up to 100 points based on the pro-rated percentage of the ultimate target (94%) achieved by High Needs students. For example, a school with a six-year graduation rate of 84.6 (i.e., 90% of the ultimate target of 94%) will earn 90 out of 100 points.

Graduation Rate Gap: A district/school is identified as having a graduation rate gap if the size of its six-year graduation rate gap between the *High Needs subgroup* and the *Non-High Needs group* (or 94% if that's lower) is at least one standard deviation greater than the statewide gap ***and*** the six-year graduation rate target for its *High Needs Subgroup* for the most recent available cohort is **not** met.

Indicator 10: Postsecondary Entrance Rate – All Students

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of graduating class who enrolled in a two or four-year postsecondary institution any time during the first year after high school graduation	100

Description (What): This rate is the percentage of all students in a graduating class who enrolled in a two- or four-year postsecondary institution any time during the first year after high school graduation.

Rationale (Why?): In addition to evaluating the extent of preparation for college/career, it is important to also evaluate attainment of that outcome.

Applicability (Who): This indicator is applicable to all districts and schools that offer grade 12.

Input/Feedback: Some practitioners are supportive of this indicator because it encourages school staff to extend their efforts beyond the school building to support student success. Others are less supportive because they consider this indicator as being shaped more by factors beyond the influence of school staff (e.g., personal choice, family economics); some of these objectors are amenable to its inclusion so long as it is not weighted too heavily and the ultimate target is reasonable.

The CSDE has heard from the field and acknowledges data limitations associated with this indicator. Currently, the Department does not have access to information about important post-secondary outcomes for students including but not limited to evidence of full-time employment

immediately following graduation, entry into the military, enrollment in private occupational schools, and transition to apprenticeships.

Methodology (How): Points will be awarded based on the percentage of All Students from the graduating class who enter a two- or four-year postsecondary institution any time during the first year after high school graduation. Points will be prorated based on the percentage of the ultimate target (75%) achieved.

Goal 3: Prepare well-rounded, civically engaged students.

Indicator 11: Physical Fitness

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of students meeting/exceeding the "Health Fitness Zone Standard" in all four areas of the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment (CTPFA)	50

Description (What): The Third Generation CTPFA is focused on health-related fitness. The program mirrors options in the President's Challenge Physical Fitness Program and FitnessGram/ActivityGram. The assessment includes four health-related physical fitness tests designed to assess muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and cardiovascular fitness. It is administered to all students in grades 4, 6, 8, and 10. Criterion-referenced standards associated with good health are used rather than the normative standards.

Rationale (Why?): The Connecticut SBE is committed to the physical development of Connecticut's students and focused on outcomes and specific performance objectives that evidence attainment of that goal.

Applicability (Who): This indicator is applicable to all districts and schools that offer grades 4, 6, 8 or 10.

Input/Feedback: Though cardiovascular fitness has been shown to correlate with improved academic performance, stakeholders accept a metric that looks at standard-attainment in all four assessment areas because the focus is health/fitness. Some stakeholders wondered if this area was weighted too heavily.

Methodology (How): To account for variation in estimated participation rates, the following participation rate multiplier is established.

- If the estimated participation rate is at least 90%, the multiplier is 1. This standard was achieved by approximately 82% of all schools.
- If the estimated participation rate is at least 70% but less than 90%, the multiplier is 0.5 (approximately 11% of schools).

- If the estimated participation rate is at least 50% but less than 70%, the multiplier is 0.25 (approximately 3% of schools).
- If the estimated participation rate is less than 50%, no points will be awarded for this indicator.

The ultimate target for the percentage of All Students meeting/exceeding the "Health Fitness Zone Standard" in all four areas of the CTPFA for a school or district is set at 75%.

Points will be prorated based on the percentage of the ultimate target achieved as adjusted by the participation rate multiplier. Two examples are included below.

Example 1: An elementary school has a 92% estimated participation rate, and the percentage of those tested meeting the "Health Fitness Zone Standard" in all four areas is 76%. This school earns all 50 eligible points.

Example 2: An elementary school has a 55% estimated participation rate, and the percentage of those tested meeting the "Health Fitness Zone Standard" in all four areas is 80%. This school earns 12.5 of 50 eligible points.

Indicator 12: Arts Access

Indicator	Max Points – All Years
Percentage of students in grade 9 through 12 participating in at least one dance, theater, music, or visual arts course in the school year	50

Description (What): This is an "access" metric that evaluates the extent to which students in high school participate in at least one arts course in the school year in dance, theatre, music, or the visual arts.

Rationale (Why?): The Connecticut SBE believes every student needs and deserves a high-quality education in the arts, including dance, music, theater and the visual arts. The arts are an integral component of the comprehensive curriculum provided to all Connecticut students at every grade.

Applicability (Who): This indicator is applicable to all districts and schools that offer any grade between 9 and 12, inclusive.

Input/Feedback: Traditionally, access to the arts has been measured through instructional hours offered. District/school administrators indicate that self-reported arts instructional hours are not comparable across schools. With the availability now of course-level data, the extent to which students avail of arts opportunities can be empirically known and compared across districts/schools.

The CSDE has heard from the field that students are engaged in important arts-related activities that are not captured through this indicator. The Department acknowledges that many students participate in school- or community-based art programs and activities outside of the school day. At this time, there is not a way to capture that information in this system.

Additionally, stakeholders have requested that the definition of arts coursework be expanded to courses that incorporate the use of technology including computer-aided design. For now, this system will remain focused on dance, theater, music and the visual arts, but consideration will be given to expanding how this indicator is defined in future years.

Methodology (How): Points can be earned for the percentage of All Students in grades 9 through 12 who enroll in at least one arts course during the school year. Points will be prorated based on the percentage of the ultimate target achieved.

Distribution of Points by School Type

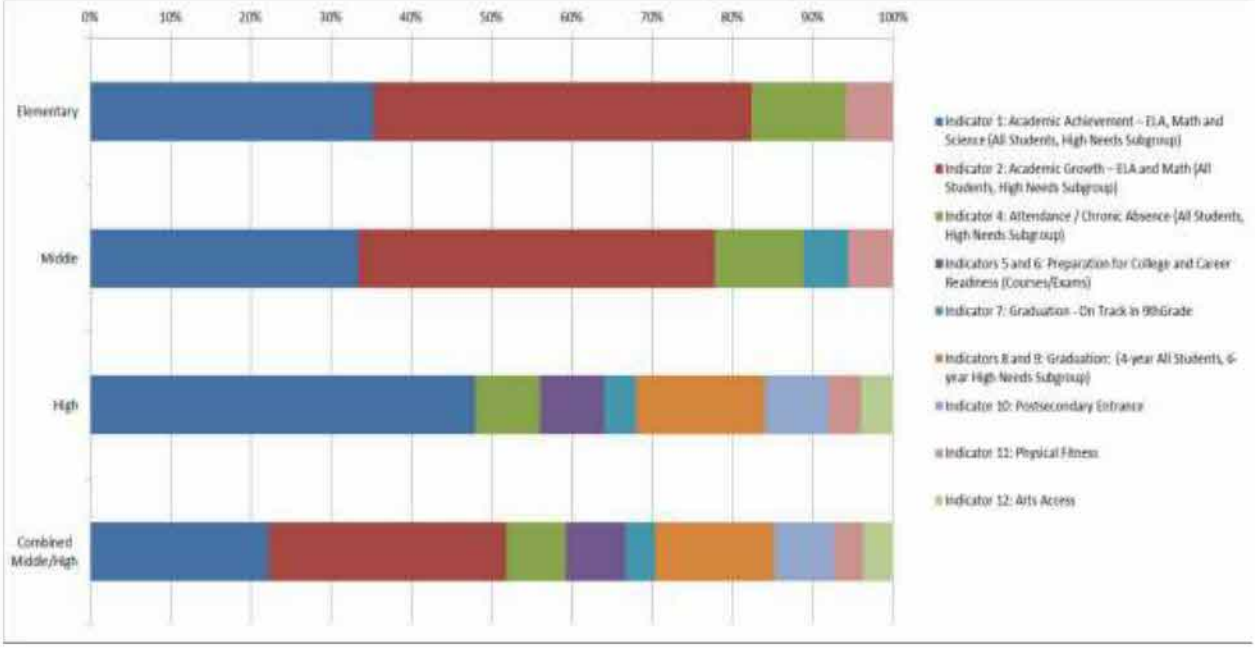
The following table and chart summarize the maximum points that can be earned for each of the indicators and the percentage weight of each indicator by school type in years 2 and 3 when academic student growth (indicator 2) is included. For Year 1, the points allocated for growth are incorporated within academic achievement (indicator 1). Please note that some indicators have been combined for ease of presentation.

Table 2.5: Allocation of Points by School Type, Years 2 and 3

	Elementary	Middle	High	Middle /High
Indicator 1: Academic Achievement – ELA, math and science (All Students, High Needs Subgroup)	300	300	600	300
Indicator 2: Academic Growth – ELA and math (All Students, High Needs Subgroup)	400	400	*n/a*	400
Indicator 4: Attendance / Chronic Absence (All Students, High Needs Subgroup)	100	100	100	100
Indicators 5 and 6: Preparation for College and Career Readiness (Courses/Exams)	*n/a*	*n/a*	100	100
Indicator 7: Graduation - On Track in 9th Grade	*n/a*	50	50	50
Indicators 8 and 9: Graduation: (Four-year All Students, Six-year High Needs Subgroup)	*n/a*	*n/a*	200	200
Indicator 10: Postsecondary Entrance	*n/a*	*n/a*	100	100

Indicator 11: Physical Fitness	50	50	50	50
Indicator 12: Arts Access	*n/a*	*n/a*	50	50
Total Possible Points	**850**	**900**	**1250**	**1350**

Table 2.6: Percentage of Points Allocated by School Type, Years 2 and 3



School Classifications

As required under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-223e, Connecticut will implement a five category school classification system. Elementary/Middle schools (schools where the highest grade is less than or equal to 8) and high schools will be classified separately. In previous legislation, Connecticut identified the state's highest poverty and lowest performing districts as "Priority School Districts." In order to prevent confusion between the "Priority School Districts" and "Priority Schools," the CSDE has elected to refer to Priority Schools as "Turnaround Schools."

Connecticut will be implementing an accountability "pause" in 2015-16, meaning that most schools will retain their prior school classification/rating. However, the CSDE will use 2014-15 achievement data to exit Turnaround and Focus schools that have demonstrated improvement (explained in Sections 2D and 2E), and to identify new Turnaround and Focus schools as well as a new cohort of Schools of Distinction (Section 2C) in order to meet ESEA flexibility renewal requirements. The "pause" means that no schools will be classified as Category 1, 2, or 3 in 2015-16. Category 4 will be newly identified Turnaround and Focus Schools based on 2014-15 data, and Category 5 will be previously identified Turnaround and Focus schools that have not exited. The CSDE will provide a complete, updated list of Turnaround and Focus schools to USED by January 31, 2016.

In 2016-17, the CSDE will use the most recent available data for all indicators (including results from the Smarter Balanced assessment in 2014-15 and 2015-16) to update its list of school classifications. Per state law, the school classifications will be labeled as Category 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5.

Category 1 Schools:
Schools in the top quartile based on the overall percentage of eligible points earned are classified as Category 1 schools as long as:

- the school does not have an *achievement gap* (explained in Section 2.A.i—Indicator 1) or a *graduation rate gap* (for high schools – defined in Section 2.A.i—Indicator 9) in which case the school will be classified as a Category 2 school;
- the school achieves a participation rate of at least 95% in Math, ELA, and Science for the All Students Group *and* the High Needs subgroup (a school earning the requisite points to be a Category 1 School but failing to achieve the 95% participation standards will be designated as a Category 2 School); and
- the school is not already classified as a Category 4 or 5 school.

Category 2 Schools:
Schools in the middle two quartiles based on the overall percentage of eligible points earned are classified as Category 2 schools so long as they:

- achieve a participation rate of at least 95% in Math, ELA, and Science for the All Students Group and the High Needs Subgroup (a school earning the requisite points to be a Category 2 School but failing to achieve the 95% participation standards will be designated as a Category 3 School); and
- the school is not already classified as a Category 4 or 5 school.

Category 3 Schools:
Schools in the bottom quartile based on the overall percentage of eligible points earned are classified as Category 3 schools so long as they are not already classified as a Category 4 or 5 school.

Category 4 Schools: (Newly Identified Turnaround and Focus Schools)

Category 5 Schools: (Previously Identified Turnaround and Focus Schools that have not exited)

- Turnaround Schools: A Turnaround school is a school that is among the lowest performing schools in Connecticut. The total number of Turnaround schools will be at least five percent of the Title I schools in Connecticut. The detailed rules regarding identification and exit of Turnaround schools are outlined in Section 2.D.
- Focus Schools: The CSDE defines Focus Schools as schools that are contributing to academic achievement gaps and graduation rate gaps by having the lowest academic performance or graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup. The total number of Focus schools will equal at least 10 percent of the Title I schools in Connecticut. The detailed rules regarding identification and exit of Focus schools are outlined in Section 2.E.

Note: There are approximately 50 schools in Connecticut that do not have any grades assessed using the Smarter Balanced assessments, the CAPT, or SAT (e.g., a K-2 school). For accountability purposes, the CSDE will apply school classification rules to district-level data and apply the appropriate classification status to the school with no tested grades. For divided high schools, the school classification for the portion with the tested grade will be applied to the other.

School Classifications Beyond 2015-16

- The list of category 4 and 5 schools will be updated after three years. During that time it is possible for Focus and Turnaround schools to exit their status after two years based on specified exit criteria in Sections 2D (Turnaround) and 2E (Focus).
- Schools in categories 1, 2, and 3 will be classified annually. To maintain reasonable stability in the annual determinations, the CSDE will use a weighted average of the percentage of eligible points earned each year for up to the three most recent years to determine the annual classification category for a school. To ensure that recent performance has greater influence on the classification, the most recent year will receive greater weighting. After Year 2, the second year will receive a weight of 2 and the first year will receive a weight of 1. After Year 3, the third year will receive a weight of 3 while the two prior years will receive weights of 2 and 1 respectively. After three years, this approach will ensure that 50% of a schools determination in a year will be based on results from the most recent year.
- The first and third quartile cut points for the percentage of eligible points earned that are used in year 2 will inform the establishment of criterion-based cut points to be used in future years.

District Accountability

A district's overall performance will be determined by applying the school level accountability indicators, along with their corresponding weights, for all students in the district. The indicators to be included for a district will be based on the grade range offered by the district. District level reports will highlight a district's performance on the individual indicators *and* on the overall percentage of points earned by all students in the district. The CSDE will continue to target interventions and supports in the previously identified 30 lowest performing districts (i.e., the Alliance Districts). Per state law, Alliance Districts are designated for a period of five years. Since the first cohort of Alliance Districts was identified in 2012-13, the CSDE will reevaluate its list of thirty districts for the 2017-18 school year.

Supporting Connecticut's Other Schools

The CSDE will classify all schools into five categories—1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The CSDE's Turnaround and Performance Teams will partner with districts to ensure that schools in each of these categories receive appropriate levels of support. The lower-performing schools will receive more support from the state, their home districts, and RESCs and will be required to engage in a process of diagnosis, planning, intervention, and monitoring. However, the higher-performing schools will be given the information they need to drive their own improvement. All schools will be given school performance reports that provide detailed information about student performance across numerous metrics.

Building State, District, and School Capacity

The CSDE will help build district and school capacity by increasing financial resources to the districts that need it most, partnering with districts as they plan for school intervention, and removing barriers and duplication. The state's 30 lowest-performing districts will receive substantial increases in funding, conditional on district plans for reform in key areas defined by the state. The state's new Turnaround Team will act as a resource to districts as they plan for and monitor interventions in their struggling schools. Finally, the state is working to reduce barriers for districts by reducing unnecessary reporting requirements.

2.A.ii Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.

Option A	**Option B**
☐ The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.	☒ If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must: a. provide the percentage of students in the "all students" group that performed at the proficient level on the State's most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.5) Did the SEA include student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.6) Did the SEA provide the percentage of students in the "all students" group that performed at the proficient level on the State's most recent administration of each additional assessment for all grades assessed?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.7) Does the SEA's weighting of the included assessments result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve the State's college- and career-ready standards?

The CSDE proposes to continue incorporating the results of science assessments into the accountability framework along with results from English language arts and mathematics.

In Connecticut, science is tested in the fifth, eighth, and tenth grades. The CSDE recognizes the strong relationship between mathematics and science and the potential through strong STEM programs to nurture students' abilities to reason analytically and to apply knowledge to solve complex problems of all types. The CSDE is in full agreement with the Board on Science Education within the National Academy of Sciences that "science, engineering, and technology permeate every aspect of modern life . . . and some knowledge of science and engineering is required to understand and participate in many major public policy issues of today, as well as to make informed everyday decisions."[2]

[2] Board on Science Education (2011). *A framework for K-12 science education: Practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas.* Retrieved from http://www7.nationalacademies.org/bose/Frameworks_Report_Brief.pdf

The table below provides statewide Science performance index scores for 2009-10 through 2013-14 for all students and subgroups. Please note that Science index scores will be calculated based on the scale score approach described earlier. The results below are provided for informational purposes.

Table 2.7 CMT

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14*
All Students	78.2	78.4	79.6	78.9	76.9
High Needs	58.8	59.5	62.1	61.7	58.9
Special Education	55.5	55.9	57.0	55.8	47.5
Low Income	57.4	58.4	61.1	61.0	58.4
ELL	41.8	41.1	44.4	45.4	40.4
Black/African-American	55.2	55.8	58.1	57.5	54.7
Hispanic/Latino	55.8	57.2	60.0	60.6	57.5

CAPT

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14*
All Students	73.1	73.9	73.1	74.8	71.0
High Needs	51.5	53.3	51.8	54.9	49.7
Special Education	45.2	46.1	45.2	46.3	38.9
Low Income	51.0	53.2	51.6	54.9	49.8
ELL	30.2	27.1	23.5	27.5	22.8
Black/African-American	49.5	51.7	49.3	53.2	46.6
Hispanic/Latino	51.0	52.8	51.6	55.0	50.0

* Prior to 2013-14, students with disabilities who were administered the CMT/CAPT Modified Assessment System (MAS) in Reading or Mathematics were excluded from Science index score calculations. In 2013-14, 90 percent of Connecticut districts administered the Smarter Balanced Field Test (SB-FT). Since the SB-FT did not offer a MAS option ***and*** students with disabilities previously identified for the CMT/CAPT MAS participated in the standard SB-FT, the CSDE is unable to apply this "exclusion rule" when calculating Science index scores for SB-FT districts in 2013-14. Moreover, in 2014-15, the MAS will no longer be an assessment option for any student. Therefore, to maintain comparability in Science index score results among all districts in 2013-14 and future years, the CSDE removed this "exclusion rule" from its accountability calculations effective 2013-14.

2.B Set Ambitious but Achievable Annual Measurable Objectives

Select the method the SEA will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts. If the SEA sets AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, the AMOs for LEAs, schools, or subgroups that are further behind must require greater rates of annual progress.

Option A	**Option B**	**Option C**
☐ Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the "all students" group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.	☐ Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–2020 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.	☒ Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs. ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below. iii. Provide a link to the State's report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.1) Did the SEA describe the method it will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics, for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups, that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts through one of the three options?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.2) *Option C* – Did the SEA describe another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.3) Did the SEA provide the new AMOs and the method used to set these AMOs?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.4) Did the SEA provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.5) If the SEA set AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, do the AMOs require LEAs, schools, and subgroups that are further behind to make greater rates of annual progress?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.6) Did the SEA attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups? (Attachment 8)

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.7) Are these AMOs similarly ambitious to the AMOs that would result from using Option A or B above?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.8) Are these AMOs ambitious but achievable given the State's existing proficiency rates and any other relevant circumstances in the State?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.9) Will these AMOs result in a significant number of children being on track to be college- and career-ready?

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES (AMO)

AMO for Academic Performance and Growth: Connecticut is implementing the Smarter Balanced assessment system beginning with the 2014-15 school year. This ***new*** assessment is aligned to Connecticut's ***new*** college and career ready standards. The results from this assessment will enable the establishment of a ***new baseline*** for student academic performance and growth. Because Connecticut is submitting its ESEA Flexibility request prior to the administration of this assessment system, it is unable to establish AMOs for English Language Arts and Mathematics at the present time. As permitted by the USED, Connecticut will amend its ESEA Flexibility by January 31, 2016 to revise its AMOs based on results from the new assessments. In the Smarter Balanced assessment system, writing is assessed within ELA; therefore, the writing AMOs contained in Connecticut's previously approved ESEA Flexibility request are no longer relevant. Since Science index scores are being recalculated using a scale score approach, the AMOs for Science will also be reestablished.

AMO for Graduation Rates: AMOs for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate outlined previously (see below) will remain in effect. The Holding Power Rate is being substituted with the six-year adjusted

cohort graduation rate. AMOs for the six-year graduation rate from the 2011 cohort will be established similar to the method used for establishing the AMOs for the four-year rate. AMOs will be established for the All Students group and the High Needs subgroup with an ultimate target of 94 percent. Connecticut's goal remains that schools, districts, and the state as a whole will achieve increases in graduation rates such that they are halfway to achieving these state targets over six cohorts starting with 2011.

Table 2.8: Four-Year Graduation Rate (All Students)

Reporting Year	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**Target**
Cohort Year	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	
Target	82.7	83.7	84.6	85.6	86.5	87.4	88.4	94.0
Actual	82.7	84.8	85.5					

2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

2.C.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools. If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance.

2.C.ii Provide the SEA's list of reward schools in Table 2.

2.C.iii Describe how the SEA will publicly recognize and, if possible, reward highest-performing and high-progress schools.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.C.1) Did the SEA describe its methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools? If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but is instead, *e.g.*, based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.C.2) Did the SEA's request identify both highest-performing and high-progress schools as part of its first set of identified reward schools? (Table 2)

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.C.3) Are the recognition and, if applicable rewards proposed by the SEA for its highest-performing and high-progress schools likely to be considered meaningful by the schools?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.C.4) Has the SEA consulted with LEAs and schools in designing its recognition and, where applicable, rewards?

Schools of Distinction

CSDE refers to its Reward Schools as Schools of Distinction. A School of Distinction can be either a high-performing school or a high-progress school. A school with any of the following is ineligible to be recognized as a School of Distinction:

- an achievement gap based on the difference in index scores between the High Needs subgroup and the non-High Needs group in ELA, Math, or Science (explained in Section 2.A.i—Indicator 1)
- a graduation rate gap based on the six-year graduation rate difference between the *High Needs subgroup* and the *Non-High Needs group* (defined in Section 2.A.i—Indicator 9;
- an assessment participation rate below 95% for the All Students group or the High Needs subgroup in Math, ELA, or Science;
- in a district that has received an IDEA District Determination of Needs Assistance - level 2, Needs Intervention, or Needs Substantial Intervention on their most recent Special Education Annual Performance Report (LEA-level APR) pursuant to Section 616(b)(2)(C)(i) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) and 34 C.F.R. Section 300.602(b); or
- in a district that does not meet the Annual Measurable Achievement Objective progress target (AMAO 1) for English learners.

Title I and non-Title I schools will be grouped and identified separately. Elementary/Middle schools (schools where the highest grade is less than or equal to 8) and high schools may be identified separately.

Highest Performing School
The CSDE will recognize two types of "Highest Performing Schools".

1. Highest Performing Overall: These will be schools in the top 10% with respect to the overall percentage of points earned

2. Highest Performing Subgroup: These will be schools in the top 10% of points earned for the High Needs subgroup in indicator 1.

Highest Progress
The CSDE will not identify highest progress reward schools using the 2014-15 data. After the 2015-16 year, the CSDE will recognize two types of Highest Progress schools:

1. Overall Progress: These will be the top 10% of schools based on the increase in the overall percentage of points earned from 2014-15 to 2015-16.

2. Subgroup Progress: These will be the top 10% of schools based on increase in the points earned for the High Needs subgroup in indicator 1 from 2014-15 to 2015-16.

Distinction for Sustained Progress. In addition to annually recognizing Reward Schools, the CSDE may award grants to schools that demonstrate the greatest sustained performance, progress, and growth over a period of three years. Specifically, pending legislative appropriation, the CSDE may award Schools of Distinction with the highest performing subgroups and the highest progress over a three-year period with grants ranging from $20,000 to $100,000. These awards may be funded with re-purposed state funds or with a portion of the state's increase in federal Title I, Part A funds (authorized by ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A)). The CSDE may decide to increase the frequency of the grants if funding resources permit.

Schools can elect to use these grants for programs or strategies aimed toward increasing student achievement or enrichment opportunities for students. The grants will be coupled with the responsibility to participate in a partnership with low-performing schools to share and promote effective practices. RESCs will work with grant awardees to arrange partnerships with low-performing schools within their respective RESC regions.

2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

2.D.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State's Title I schools as priority schools. If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance.

2.D.ii Provide the SEA's list of priority schools in Table 2.

2.D.iii Describe the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that an LEA with priority schools will implement.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.1) Did the SEA describe its methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State's Title I schools as priority schools? If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but is instead, *e.g.*, based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.2) Does the SEA's request include a list of its priority schools?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.3) Did the SEA identify a number of priority schools equal to at least five percent of its Title I schools?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.4) Did the SEA's methodology result in the identification of priority schools that are —

(i) among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the achievement of the "all students" group in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, combined, and have demonstrated a lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group;

(ii) Title I-participating or Title I-eligible high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years; or

(iii) Tier I or Tier II schools under the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program that are using SIG funds to fully implement a school intervention model?

Identifying Turnaround Schools

In previous legislation, Connecticut identified the state's highest poverty and lowest performing districts "Priority School Districts." In order to prevent confusion between the "Priority School Districts" and "Priority Schools," the CSDE has elected to refer to Priority Schools as "Turnaround Schools." A Turnaround school is a school that is among the lowest performing schools in Connecticut.

- The total number of Turnaround schools will be at least five percent of the Title I schools in Connecticut.

- Prior to the start of the 2015-16 school year, previously identified Turnaround schools that are not in the bottom 10% of schools based on the percentage of All Students at or above level 3 on both the Smarter Balanced ELA ***and*** Mathematics assessments will exit the Turnaround category.
- By January 31, 2016, the CSDE will provide an updated list of Turnaround schools using the rules below.
    - First, any school that is presently a School Improvement Grant (SIG) Tier I or Tier II school will be included as a Turnaround school.
    - Second, to ensure that the total number of Turnaround schools is at least five percent of the Title I schools in the state, new Turnaround schools will be added; they will be those with the lowest percentage of overall eligible points earned.
    - Any previously identified Turnaround school that is not identified using the above method will exit the Turnaround category.
    - Lastly, after identifying the requisite number of Turnaround schools, any high school with a six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for All Students that is less than 70% for the two most recent cohorts will also be added as a Turnaround school.
    - Newly identified Turnaround schools will begin implementing interventions by the 2016-17 school year.

The CSDE will ensure that Turnaround schools receive necessary interventions or supports by pursuing one of three main approaches available to Turnaround schools:

1. Participation in the Commissioner's Network
2. Participation in the School Improvement Grant Program
3. District-led school turnaround process

The Commissioner's Network

To address the challenges faced by Connecticut's chronically low-performing schools and districts, Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h authorized the CSDE to create the Commissioner's Network—a system of state supports and interventions designed to improve chronically low-performing schools. Passed in 2012, the statute established the Commissioner's Network, a strategy to turnaround low performing schools based on the combined efforts of the state and local school districts. The Network has served as a vehicle for innovative initiatives, a platform for the sharing of effective practices, and a model for other schools and districts throughout the state.

The legislation gave the State Board of Education and the Commissioner the authority to select up to 25 schools over three years to be part of the Commissioner's Network. The Commissioner's Network currently has three cohorts totaling 16 individual schools. All Category 4 and 5 schools are eligible for the Commissioner's Network. Schools are selected for the Network based on low student achievement and lack of progress.

Schools receiving School Improvement Grants (SIG) may also receive non-monetary supports from the CSDE through the Commissioner's Network, but remain ineligible for a Network grant.

Network schools have joined for a period of three to five years of support. The CSDE has authority to discontinue the partnership within the initial three years if schools are not participating in good faith. The CSDE can also extend a network school partnership for a fourth or fifth year.

Since 2012, $7.5 million in new turnaround funding provided by legislative appropriation has supported the Commissioner's Network. This allocation provided each school with start-up funding for planning and support activities, additional training, necessary resources, and increased compensation for school staff. Four schools joined the Commissioner's Network in year 1 and seven schools were added in year 2. In year 3, five additional schools joined the network. The CSDE has received expressions of interest from 14 schools for the coming year. In addition to funding, Commissioner Network Schools have received extensive structure, tools and supports from the CSDE. Gradual release of responsibility for funding of supports and building and maintaining best practices in school turnaround/ improvement. Gradual release of responsibility is an expectation among Commissioner Network Schools.

The CSDE has established the structures, tools, and quality assurance mechanisms necessary to support and monitor network schools in their turnaround efforts. These tools include, but are not limited to

- a transparent application, review and selection process requiring mutual commitment and partnerships;
- A coherent framework for improvement (Talent, Academics, Culture/Climate, and Operations);
- Establishment of vital partnerships addressing leadership, assessment and data analysis, and educator effectiveness;
- Systems of supports including school and classroom walkthroughs, quarterly progress check-ins, NetStat Sessions (quantitative analyses of leading and lagging indicators of school turnaround), and midyear reviews;
- Tools for efficient and effective school improvement efforts (calendars, data protocols, spreadsheets, budget sheets and updates, etc.);
- Timely communication, coaching, and feedback; and
- Expectations, discussions, and tools for gradual release of responsibility.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.5) Are the interventions that the SEA described aligned with the turnaround principles and are they likely to result in dramatic, systemic change in priority schools?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.6) Do the SEA's interventions include all of the following?

(i) providing strong leadership by: (1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the SEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget;

(ii) ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by: (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs;

(iii) redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;

(iv) strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards;

(v) using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;

(vi) establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs; and

(vii) providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.7) Are the identified interventions to be implemented in priority schools likely to —

(i) increase the quality of instruction in priority schools;

(ii) improve the effectiveness of the leadership and the teaching in these schools; and

(iii) improve student achievement and, where applicable, graduation rates for all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest-achieving students?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.8) Has the SEA indicated that it will ensure that each of its priority schools implements the selected intervention for at least three years?

Introduction:

All Category 4 and 5 schools, inclusive of Connecticut's *newly*-identified Turnaround (federal "Priority") and Focus school (i.e., Category 4 schools) and *previously*-identified Turnaround and Focus schools that have not exited their status (i.e., Category 5 schools) must redouble their efforts to dramatically improve student achievement. Informed by national best practices and the U.S. Department of Education's turnaround principles, schools must pursue a model and strategies aligned to school needs and likely to improve student outcomes.

The CSDE is committed to working with schools, local education agencies (LEAs), and partners to ensure these efforts are resourced and sustainable over time through the thoughtful application of local, state, and federal funds. The CSDE has developed a tiered system of supports and accountability to provide schools and districts with technical assistance and ongoing performance management as they implement strategies to transform teaching and learning, ultimately advancing school performance and student achievement.

Definitions:

The following terms and definitions provide a framework for the approach contained and described within this section.

- **Category 4 Schools:** Newly identified Turnaround and Focus schools.
- **Category 5 Schools:** Previously identified Turnaround and Focus schools that have not exited their status.
- **Model:** The overarching approach or governance structure identified to transform school performance and advance student achievement.
- **Strategies:** The actionable programs, interventions, and strategies the school will pursue in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations to improve and accelerate teaching and learning.
- **Resources:** The financial resources (e.g., local, state, and federal) available to support and sustain school improvement efforts.

Model Selection:

Beginning in 2016, with the release of new school classifications (Categories 1 -5), LEAs will select a new improvement model or confirm an existing improvement model for their Category 4 and 5 schools. Depending on the history of turnaround efforts, as well as growth and performance levels at each school, the CSDE will allow each school and LEA with decision-making authority along a continuum. The decision-making authority will be locally driven at the beginning years of identification and continue if its growth targets are achieved. However, the state will provide more structured decision-making if growth targets for student achievement and other indicators are not met.

The CSDE may elect to conduct school audits of Category 5 schools using the CSDE's audit tool which is aligned to the state's school performance framework with sub-indicators in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. The CSDE may commission external auditors to conduct impartial audits, thereby informing the CSDE's review of the LEA's model recommendation.

After two years, Focus schools that: (a) meet annual targets both years exit their status; (b) meet targets one of two years continue model implementation; or (c) fail to meet targets for two years may be reclassified as a Category 5 school. LEAs are expected to continue to support exiting Focus schools to ensure sustained and continued growth.

Turnaround schools may exit after two consecutive years of improvement under the designation. However, Turnaround schools must continue to implement interventions for at least three years. State and local authorities must take collective responsibility for Turnaround schools (Category 4 and 5) that fail to meet local and state targets for two consecutive years by following the decision-making pathways described below. Tables 2.9 and 2.10 outline the increasingly structured decision-making pathways and options available to LEAs and schools.

Table 2.9: Focus and Turnaround School Model Selection Process and Exit Opportunities

	During the three years of 2016-17 (Year 1), 2017-18 (Year 2) & 2018-19 (Year 3)		
School Type and Category	**Two Consecutive Years of Improvement**	**Mixed Improvement** *(Meets targets in Year 1 only **or** in Year 1 & Year 3)*	**No Improvement for Two Consecutive Years** *(Either in Years 1 & 2, or Years 2 & 3)*
Focus School: Category 4 *(newly identified Focus in 2016)*	Exit Focus Category 4 and be reclassified into Category 1, 2, or 3	Remain in Focus Category 4 and employ interventions that are more intensive	Reclassified as Focus Category 5 May be required to follow a new option in the locally- structured decision-making pathway.
Focus School: Category 5 *(previously identified and still Focus in 2016)*	Exit Focus Category 5 and be reclassified into Category 1, 2, or 3	Remain in Focus Category 5 and employ interventions that are more intensive	Remain in Focus Category 5 Required to follow either (a) a new option in the locally-structured decision-making pathway, or (b) an option in the state-structured decision-making pathways.
Turnaround School: Category 4 *(newly identified Turnaround in 2016)*	Exit Turnaround Category 4 and be reclassified into Category 1, 2, or 3 (Interventions must be implemented for at least three years regardless of exit status)	Remain in Turnaround Category 4 and employ interventions that are more intensive	Reclassified as Turnaround Category 5 Required to follow either (a) a new option in the locally-structured decision-making pathway, or (b) an option in the state-structured decision-making pathways.

Turnaround School: Category 5 *(previously identified and still Turnaround in 2016)*	Exit Turnaround Category 5 and be reclassified into Category 1, 2, or 3	Remain in Turnaround Category 5 and employ interventions that are more intensive	Remain in Turnaround Category 5 Directed to a different option in the state-structured decision-making pathway.

As noted, each Category 4 and 5 school must pursue an overarching school model. The CSDE reserves the authority to approve or reject local model recommendations. *Table 2.2* lists possible models for Category 4 and 5 schools. State and local authorities must take collective responsibility for Turnaround schools that fail to meet local and state targets for two consecutive years. Category 5 Turnaround schools that fail to meet targets for two consecutive years will be limited to "State Structured Decision-Making Pathways." These options represent more significant shifts in school governance and management.

Table 2.10: Decision-Making Pathways and School Improvement Models

Local Decision-Making Pathway *(Options for all schools upon initial classification. Beyond 2016, these options are available for Category 4 and 5 Focus schools and may be available to Category 4 Turnaround schools pending Commissioner approval.*	**State Structured Decision-Making Pathway** *Required of Category 5 Turnaround schools not meeting growth targets for two consecutive years.*
Options 1. District-led Improvement Plan 2. School Improvement Grant 1003(g) 3. Commissioner Network 4. Innovation School Model 5. CommPACT School Model 6. School Reorganization Model 7. Community School Model	**Options** 1. School Reconstitution 2. Commissioner Network 3. School Improvement Grant 1003(g) 4. Restructure School Governance Council 5. Restructure Board of Education Governance

Options and Model Descriptions:

Category 4 and 5 schools must pursue a model likely to address school needs and improve student achievement. Within 60 days of the issuance of new school categorizations during the 2015-16 school year, LEAs must submit an initial model recommendation to the CSDE. The CSDE reserves the authority to approve or reject the model recommendation. In some instances, LEAs will seek the confirmation and extension of the existing intervention model (e.g., participation in SIG or the Commissioner's Network). Within 120 days, all Category 4 and 5 schools must submit school improvement plans (SIPs) to the state; this deadline may be delayed for specific models depending on the exact timelines for competitive grant models. The summaries below provide more detailed overviews regarding the

models listed in *Table 2.2*. Schools having previously pursued one of the models listed above may not pursue the model for a second time unless approved by the Commissioner.

Options in the Local Decision-Making Pathway

1. **District-Led Improvement:** Districts may pursue a locally-driven turnaround process following CSDE guidance and parameters. Category 4 or 5 schools must use the CSDE's SIP template unless the district successfully secures a waiver from the CSDE to use a locally-developed SIP template. Prior to completing a SIP, schools must engage in a needs analysis process using the CSDE's school performance framework and rubric. The needs analysis may be in the form of a CSDE-coordinated external audit, district-led audit, or school self-audit; the CSDE reserves the authority to determine the format. The CSDE will review SIPs and will approve only those, which are likely to lead to a significant improvement in student achievement and school climate. The CSDE encourages SIPs which are aligned with coherent district improvement strategies (e.g. Alliance District plans.) Districts must establish plans to fully resource SIPs through local, state, and/or federal funds.

   The CSDE has proactively identified programs and identified grant opportunities to support schools and districts pursuing this local option during the 2015-16 school year. In an effort to incentivize and invest in bold plans, Category 4 and 5 schools may apply for 1003(a) competitive funds. The CSDE Turnaround Office will review all Category 4 and Category 5 SIPs for approval, regardless of whether the school is applying for a competitive school-level grant. Category 4 and 5 schools may also apply to participate in the TIME Collaborative, committing to redesigning the school's schedule and significantly expand learning time in collaboration with the National Center on Time and Learning (NCTL).

2. **School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003(g):** Category 4 and 5 schools may apply to participate in the SIG 1003(g) program, receiving Title I SIG 1003(g) funds. The federal SIG program is a competitive grant, providing states, districts, and schools with additional funding to incite and leverage change necessary to turn around chronically underperforming schools. According to federal SIG guidelines, schools must submit an application pursuing one of five possible models: (1) turnaround; (2) transformation; (3) closure; (4) restart; and (5) a new, possible state-determined model. Pursuant to federal SIG guidance, schools may remain in the SIG program for up to three to five years and must secure flexibilities pertaining to staffing, programming, budgeting, and scheduling. Consistent with the CSDE's SIG application, such autonomies must be memorialized in agreements with local collective bargaining units and submitted along with the school's SIG application to the CSDE. The CSDE will give preference to those schools and LEAs with the greatest need and strongest commitment to use the funds to substantially raise student achievement. At present, there are four schools receiving SIG grants; these schools were selected in spring 2014 and are in their first full year of implementation. These schools represent Connecticut's third cohort of SIG schools. The CSDE will identify a fourth cohort of SIG schools in spring 2015 and again in future years, pending federal funding. On an annual basis the CSDE may require SIG plan amendments based on annual school audits and will determine whether sufficient progress is being made; the CSDE may discontinue SIG funding if sufficient progress is not being made.

3. **Commissioner's Network:** The Commissioner's Network, launched in 2012 and described in Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h, is a statewide network of low-performing schools implementing research-based reform strategies in partnership with the CSDE and other Network

schools. The Network marks a commitment between local stakeholders and the CSDE to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 schools. The Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools participate in the Network for a period of three to five years. At present, there are 16 schools participating in the Network. Network schools receive grant and bond funding to support programmatic and capital investments. Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h, schools initially selected by the Commissioner for possible Network participation participate in a CSDE-coordinated external audit and structured planning process. Network schools must also negotiate flexibilities with collective bargaining units consistent with strategies outlined in the approved turnaround plan. Network schools receive ongoing technical assistance from the CSDE, participate in a community of practice with other Network school teams, and engage in regular performance management.

4. **Innovation School:** Consistent with C.G.S § 10-74h, a local or regional board of education in a Priority School District may, through agreement with the teachers' and administrators' unions, convert a Category 4 or 5 school into an innovation school. An innovation school must establish an innovation plan articulating autonomies and flexibilities in the areas of staffing, programming, budgeting, and scheduling, including necessary waivers to local policies and collective bargaining units. Innovation schools must be evaluated annually by the superintendent, and the superintendent must submit an evaluation to the Commissioner. The evaluation determines whether the school has met annual goals outlined in the innovation plan.

5. **CommPACT School:** Consistent with C.G.S § 10-74g, the CommPACT school model emphasizes the collaborative role played by all stakeholders in a school: the community, parents, administrators, children, and teachers. The local or regional board and representatives for the teachers' and administrators' collective bargaining units must jointly decide to pursue the CommPACT school model. The board grants the school autonomy in the areas of governance, budgeting, and curricula. CommPACT schools are managed collaboratively by the superintendent and a governing board comprised of representatives of the teachers' and administrators units, community leaders, and parents and guardians of students at the school.

6. **School Reorganization Model:** Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-74f, the school reorganization model reorganizes a school into academies, each serving up to 175 students divided into different classes by grades. Each academy must include all grade levels at the school. Academies have different themes, but the curriculum is consistent school-wide. The principal appoints a teacher as the team leader for each academy. The team leader does not supervise teachers; rather, he/she supports lesson planning, data work, academy planning, and small group work with students. Every day, students must have a 90-minute math block, and 120-minute literacy block. Every student must have an individual education plan. All teachers meet on a weekly basis by grade-level teams to plan lessons. Teachers meet daily in teams to plan lessons. At least once a week, team leaders and the principal meet to discuss data and instruction. Students receive regular assessments, including short assessments every two weeks. Students that fall behind must meet with teachers, the principal, and their parents.

7. **Community School:** Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-74i, community schools are public schools that participate in a coordinated and community-based effort with community partners to provide comprehensive educational, developmental, family, and health and wraparound services to students, families, and community members. The board of education develops a community school plan for community schools. On an annual basis, community schools must submit a detailed report to the CSDE, containing information, such as: a school performance evaluation, an evaluation and inventory of partner services, and documentation of school-family communication.

Options in the State Structured Decision-Making Pathway

1. **Reconstitution:** Consistent with 10-223j, a Category 4 or 5 school may be reconstituted. Reconstitution under this model could:
    a. LEA maintains authority and reorganizes school and re-staffs the school.
    b. LEA maintains authority but enters into a management partnership with an external entity for the management of one or more critical component of the school or functions (i.e. curriculum design and implementation, pedagogical approaches, or school management).
    c. LEA transfers the entire management and oversight of a school to an external entity with a track record of successfully managing schools serving comparable student populations, such as a Regional Education Service Center (RESC), Special Master, or education management organization. In this case, the LEA in which the school is would be responsible for providing the managing entity with the district's per pupil allocation for each child enrolled in the school (e.g., local, state, and federal). The new management entity would have autonomy regarding staffing, leadership, curriculum, assessments, programming, scheduling, and budgeting.
    d. Consolidation / Closure occurs when an LEA closes a school and enrolls the students who attended that school in other schools within reasonable proximity and that are higher achieving. Schools must submit plans and a detailed timeline for the consolidation process and process for families to enroll in other area schools. Closure plans must include ongoing efforts to inform and engage stakeholders impacted by the consolidation.
2. **Commissioner's Network:** Described above
3. **School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003(g):** Described above
4. **Restructuring School Governance Council:** The CSDE may require interventions on a continuum from training the school governance council as well as collaboration directly with the CSDE regarding turnaround efforts to more intense interventions such as a school governance council reconstitution.
5. **Restructuring School Board Governance:** The CSDE may require interventions on a continuum from training the board and superintendent as well as direct collaboration with the CSDE regarding turnaround efforts to more intense interventions including but not limited to actions such as school board reconstitution, special master, or receivership.

Strategy Identification:

Regardless of model or intervention strategies used, schools must develop SIPs and pursue evidence-based strategies and interventions in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations that are consistent with the model and align to the school's greatest needs impacting student achievement. As shown in *Table 2.3*, the CSDE's performance framework aligns to the seven turnaround principles outlined by the U.S. Department of Education.

The menu presented in *Table 2.4* offers required strategies as well as elective strategies schools may elect to pursue. The menu is heavily informed by the U.S. Department of Education's turnaround principles, national best practices, and practices proven effective in Connecticut's schools and districts. The menu is more prescriptive for Turnaround schools. Turnaround schools must, at a minimum, pursue the strategies listed in the left column (many of which impact bargaining and must be memorialized in agreements with local collective bargaining units).

2.11. Performance Framework Crosswalk	
CSDE Performance Framework:	**USED Turnaround Principles:**
Talent: Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.	1. Strong leadership 2. Effective teachers
Academics: Design and implement a rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels.	3. Rigorous and aligned instructional program 4. Use of data for continuous improvement
Culture and Climate: Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.	5. Safe and healthy students 6. Family and community engagement
Operations: Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.	7. Redesigned schedules for additional time

2.12. Menu of Interventions			
	Turnaround Schools: Required Strategies **Focus Schools: Elective Strategies**	**Focus Schools: Required Strategies**	**Turnaround and Focus Schools: Additional Elective Strategies**
Talent	1. Review the performance of the current principal and replace the principal if such a change is necessary 2. Review the performance of the current principal and demonstrate to the CSDE that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; 3. Negotiate flexible working rules with collective bargaining units consistent with required interventions outlined herein 4. Ensure the principal and/or managing entity with site-based structured autonomy around staff selection /placement 5. Prevent forced staff placement at the school 6. Implement a staff recommitment process requiring mutual-consent hiring 7. Ensure site-based, structured autonomy in selecting/ designing professional development 8. Provide educators with job-embedded, ongoing learning informed by educator evaluation and support systems, consistent with Connecticut's teacher effectiveness initiative	1. Identify district leadership who will support and advise school leadership in focus strategies to improve student outcomes 2. Provide supports to the school leadership team to allow for increased instructional leadership 3. Provide educators with job-embedded, ongoing learning informed by educator evaluation and consistent with Connecticut's teacher effectiveness initiative 4. Focus professional development and programming on improving student outcomes as well as purposeful family and community engagement, highly inclusive of target population(s) and consistent with Connecticut's teacher effectiveness initiative	1. Contract with external partners who provide leader and educator capacity-building 2. Increase common planning time, both vertically and horizontally to support educators' professional learning 3. Implement a comprehensive induction program for new teachers focused on improving student outcomes, consistent with Connecticut's teacher effectiveness initiative 4. Focus on recruitment/retention strategies for top talent 5. Implement a system of complementary evaluators and/or peer evaluation 6. Other: _____ _

2.12. Menu of Interventions			
	Turnaround Schools: Required Strategies **Focus Schools: Elective Strategies**	**Focus Schools: Required Strategies**	**Turnaround and Focus Schools: Additional Elective Strategies**
Academics	1. Provide the proven school leader/operator with structured choices around academic programming 2. Expand, alter, or replace Tier 1 curricula, ensuring scientific research based curricula that is aligned with the Connecticut Core Standards and has embedded supports for English Learners, students with disabilities, struggling learners and gifted and talented learners. 3. Where applicable, establish Tier 1 explicit instruction in the English language arts standards focusing on foundational reading skills 4. Implement nationally-normed assessment systems in mathematics and reading 5. Create data systems providing students, families, and staff with real-time data 6. Establish multi-tiered systems of support following Connecticut's Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) model 7. Establish a menu of research based Tier 2 and 3 interventions to address a student academic needs and establish regular Tier 2 and 3 progress monitoring to ensure academic interventions are effective or should be adjusted to ensure accelerated growth 8. Increase college and career readiness for students by increasing educator capacity in specific instructional strategies leading to greater achievement for students with disabilities, English Learners, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and economically disadvantaged students.	1. Formalize school expectations of academic excellence for all students to achieve their personal best at grade level or in rigorous coursework 2. Embed instructional supports for English Learners, students with disabilities, struggling learners and gifted and talented learners. 3. Establish multi-tiered systems of support following Connecticut's Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) model. 4. Increase college and career readiness for students by increasing educator capacity in specific instructional strategies leading to greater achievement for students with disabilities, English Learners, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and economically disadvantaged students.	1. Review Tier 1 core curriculum and instruction and review /revise course offerings and sequencing, thus supporting the widest range of students 2. Increase educators' capacity in instructional planning using universal design principles supporting the widest range of students in the classroom 3. Offer blended learning opportunities, including remediation and credit recovery to assist and re-engage struggling students 4. Increase college access programming 5. Provide opportunities for advanced coursework and career-related opportunities 6. Provide enrichment or accelerated learning opportunities for gifted and talented learners 7. Other: _____

2.12. Menu of Interventions			
	Turnaround Schools: Required Strategies **Focus Schools: Elective Strategies**	**Focus Schools: Required Strategies**	**Turnaround and Focus Schools: Additional Elective Strategies**
Climate	1. Provide site-based, structured autonomy around nonacademic programming and partnerships 2. Formalize school-wide expectations of academic excellence for all students to achieve their personal best in grade level or rigorous coursework 3. Implement strategies to increase attendance and on-time arrival 4. Develop or revise a school-wide discipline policy, to include relationship building and positive behavioral supports 5. Implement a purposeful family and community engagement strategy with a focus on positive communications and supports for student learning 6. Implement biannual climate surveys	1. Formalize school-wide expectations of academic excellence for all students to achieve their personal best in grade level or rigorous coursework 2. Target chronic absenteeism 3. Develop or revise the school-wide discipline policy, to include relationship building and positive behavior supports, highly inclusive of target population(s)	1. Identify the social, emotional, and health needs of student population(s) and develop strategies to address such needs 2. Engage external partners to provide wraparound services for students and families 3. Engage external partners to support family and community engagement 4. Create/expand opportunities for career exploration and internships 5. Implement a comprehensive dropout prevention and reentry program 6. Other: _____

2.12. Menu of Interventions			
	Turnaround Schools: Required Strategies **Focus Schools: Elective Strategies**	**Focus Schools: Required Strategies**	**Turnaround and Focus Schools: Additional Elective Strategies**
Operations	1. Restructure school leadership to allow for increased instructional leadership 2. Provide the proven school leader/operator with site-based, structured autonomy over staffing, scheduling, budgets, programs 3. Redesign school/district budgets to maximize resources flowing directly to students/educators 4. Substantially revise the school schedule and calendar to maximize students' time on task 5. Invest in technical assistance to establish scheduling, staffing patterns, resources, and training necessary to improve student outcomes	1. Provide supports for the school leadership to allow for increased instructional leadership 2. Invest in technical assistance to establish scheduling, staffing patterns, resources, and training necessary to improve student outcomes	1. Conduct a time audit and, if necessary, extend the school day 2. Offer double-doses of instruction in core content areas 3. Increase student and teacher access to instructional technology 4. Provide before/after/summer/ weekend school enrichment and/or intervention programs 5. Invest in facilities improvements 6. Invest in or deploy existing instructional coaches, to support educators in the use of research-based, effective instructional practices that meet the needs of the target population(s) 7. Other: _____

Adequate Resourcing:

School improvement oftentimes requires upfront investments in new programs and personnel to jumpstart the transformation and pilot new strategies to address school needs. The CSDE facilitates a number of competitive grants to support and incentivize bold SIPs with investments aligned to school needs. All of the CSDE's competitive school grants give preference to LEAs demonstrating adequate local investments in the school's improvement efforts. *Table 2.5* outlines possible funding streams to support improvement efforts; LEAs must monitor the impact of new investments and support the sustainability of high-yield strategies.

Table 2.13: School Resourcing Guide	
Model:	**Available Supplemental Resources:**
District-led improvement plan, Innovation School, or Compact School	❑ Local funds ❑ Alliance District grant ❑ Priority School District grant ❑ Title I funds ❑ SIG 1003(a) competition
School Improvement Grant 1003(g)	❑ SIG 1003(g) competition ❑ State bond funding, pending annual appropriation ❑ Local funds ❑ Alliance District grant ❑ Priority School District grant ❑ Title I funds
Commissioner's Network	❑ Commissioner's Network grant, pending appropriation ❑ State bond funding, pending appropriation ❑ Local funds ❑ Alliance District grant ❑ Priority School District grant ❑ Title I funds
Reconstitution	❑ State local charter per pupil allocation, pending annual appropriation (if charter conversion) ❑ Charter start-up grant, pending annual appropriation ❑ Local per pupil allocation (inclusive of local, state, and federal funds) ❑ Local funds ❑ Alliance District grant ❑ Priority School District grant ❑ Title I funds

2.D.iv Provide the timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA's choice of timeline.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.9) Does the SEA's proposed timeline ensure that LEAs that have one or more priority schools will implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.10) Does the SEA's proposed timeline distribute priority schools' implementation of meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in a balanced way, such that there is not a concentration of these schools in the later years of the timeline?

Preliminary Timeline for Turnaround Schools (Subject to State/Federal Timeline)

Table 2.6 below summarizes 2014-15 school grant process and the 2015-16 reclassification and planning timeline for Category 4 and 5 schools. Timelines are subject to change, pending state and federal timelines and allocations.

Table 2.14: 2014-15 School Planning and Grant Processes	
Commissioner's Network Cohort IV Expansion	
• CSDE releases solicitation for expressions of interest	December 2014
• Local board submits expression of interest	January 2015
• Commissioner initially selects school for the Network[3]	February 2015
• Local board forms Turnaround Committee[1]	Winter 2015
• Auditors conduct school audits	Winter 2015
• Turnaround Committee develops Turnaround Plan[1]	Winter 2015
• Committee reaches consensus/Commissioner imposes a plan[1]	TBD[1]
• SBE votes to approve Turnaround Plan[1]	TBD[1]
• Local board and collective bargaining units for certified staff negotiate MOUs[1]	TBD[1]
• School operationalizes Plan in partnership with the CSDE	TBD[1]
• Certified staff identified to work at the school ratify MOUs	TBD[1]
• CSDE allocated Network funds and bond monies to the school	TBD[1]
SIG 1003(g) Cohort IV Expansion	
• CSDE hosts an informational session about school-level grant opportunities, including SIG 1003(g)	January 2015
• CSDE releases the LEA SIG application	*Pending US Department of Education release of SIG guidance and approval of CSDE SIG application.*
• Districts submit expression of interest forms	
• Districts submit SIG applications	
• CSDE conducts school finalist visits; interviews principals	
• CSDE awards SIG	
• Schools begin pre-implementation	
• Schools initiate full implementation	
SIG 1003(a)	
• CSDE hosts an informational session about school-level grant opportunities, including SIG 1003(a)	January 2015
• CSDE releases the 1003(a) application	February 2015
• Districts submit 1003(a) applications	April 2015
• CSDE awards 1003(a) grants	Spring 2015

[3] Pending legislative authorization.

Table 2.14: 2014-15 School Planning and Grant Processes	
• Schools begin implementation	Fall 2015
2015-16 School Planning and Grant	
All Category 4 and 5 Schools	
• CSDE releases new school categorizations	~January 2016
• LEAs submit model recommendations to CSDE, pending approval	Within 60 days
• CSDE organizes school audits, as deemed appropriate/necessary	As needed
• LEAs submit SIPs to CSDE	Within 120 days
Commissioner's Network Cohort V	
• Cohort V expansion pending legislative authorization and annual appropriations. Contingent on authorization, the process and timeline will mirror the process outlined for 2014-15.	
SIG 1003(g) Cohort V	
• Cohort V expansion pending U.S. Department of Education guidance and appropriations. The process will mirror the process outlined for 2014-15.	
SIG 1003(a)	
• CSDE hosts an informational session about school-level grant opportunities, including SIG 1003(a)	January 2015
• CSDE releases the 1003(a) application	February 2015
• Districts submit 1003(a) applications	April 2015
• CSDE awards 1003(a) grants	Spring 2015
• Schools begin implementation	Fall 2015

2.D.v Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status and a justification for the criteria selected.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.11) Did the SEA provide criteria to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.12) Do the SEA's criteria ensure that schools that exit priority status have made significant progress in improving student achievement?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.13) Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit priority status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?

Exit Criteria for Turnaround Schools

Prior to the start of the 2015-16 school year, previously identified Turnaround schools that are not in the bottom 10% of schools based on the percentage of students at or above level 3 on both the Smarter Balanced ELA ***and*** Mathematics assessments will exit the Turnaround category.

An updated list of Turnaround Schools will be identified by January 31, 2016. These schools must demonstrate the following annual progress for the most recent two consecutive years in order to exit Turnaround status:

- Increase the overall percentage of eligible points earned by an amount determined by the CSDE;
- Meet/exceed annual performance index targets/AMOs (when established) for All Students in all three subject areas as applicable (i.e. ELA, Mathematics, and Science) **OR** achieve above average longitudinal student growth for All Students in ELA and Math based on the growth model (when established); and
- For high schools, also meet/exceed the six-year cohort graduation rate target for All Students.

The CSDE will evaluate SIG schools annually based on the implementation of the reform model and progress made increasing student achievement. Schools that fail to make sufficient progress will undergo additional interventions and may be required to switch models.
Once a Turnaround School in the Commissioner's Network achieves exit status, it will be evaluated to determine whether it should exit the Commissioner's Network. If so, steps will then be taken to transition the school out of the Network; however, schools may elect to retain some of their Network characteristics even after their return to home district governance.

2.E Focus Schools

2.E.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State's Title I schools as "focus schools." If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of focus schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.1) Did the SEA describe its methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State's Title I schools as focus schools? If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of focus schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but is instead, *e.g.*, based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.2) In identifying focus schools, was the SEA's methodology based on the achievement and lack of progress over a number of years of one or more subgroups of students identified under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or, at the high school level, graduation rates for one or more subgroups?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.3) Is the SEA's methodology for identifying focus schools educationally sound and likely to ensure that schools are accountable for the performance of subgroups of students?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.4) Did the SEA include a list of its focus schools? (Table 2)

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.5) Did the SEA identify a number of focus schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State's Title I schools?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.6) Did the SEA's methodology result in the identification of focus schools that have —

(i) the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup or subgroups and the lowest-achieving subgroup or subgroups or, at the high school level, the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate; or
(ii) a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.7) Did the SEA identify as focus schools all Title I-participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years that are not identified as priority schools?

Identifying Focus Schools

Connecticut's commitment to closing the state achievement gap is not limited to the very lowest-performing schools. Rather, the CSDE will remain within the spirit of the NCLB Act by continuing to identify and support interventions in all schools that are contributing to the state's wide achievement gaps.

Schools that are not identified as Turnaround Schools are considered for placement into the Focus School selection pool. The CSDE defines Focus Schools as schools that are contributing to academic achievement gaps and graduation rate gaps by having the lowest academic performance or graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup.

- The total number of Focus schools will equal at least 10 percent of the Title I schools in Connecticut.
- Prior to the start of the 2015-16 year, previously identified Focus schools will be reevaluated to determine whether they may exit Focus status.
    - Schools previously identified as Focus Schools due to low subgroup achievement that are not in the bottom 10% of schools based on the percentage of students in the High Needs subgroup at or above level 3 on both the Smarter Balanced ELA ***and*** Mathematics assessments will exit the Focus category.
    - Schools previously identified as Focus Schools due to low graduation rates may exit Focus status if the six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup is at least 70% for the two most recent cohorts.
- By January 31, 2016, the CSDE will provide an updated list of Focus schools using the rules below.
    - First, starting with all schools not identified as Turnaround schools, the CSDE will rank order the ELA, Math, and Science performance index scores for the High Needs subgroup in these schools.
    - Then, four percent of the Focus schools will be selected from the bottom four percent of ELA performance index scores for the High Needs subgroup. Following the identification of the Focus ELA schools, an additional four percent of the Focus schools will be selected

from the bottom four percent of the Math performance index scores for the High Needs subgroup; if a school has already been identified as a Focus school based on ELA, then the school with the next lowest Math performance index will be selected until at least four percent of the Focus schools have been identified using Math results. Lastly, an additional two percent of the Focus schools will be selected from the bottom two percent of the Science performance index scores for the High Needs subgroup; if a school has already been identified as a Focus school based on ELA and/or Math, then the school with the next lowest Science performance index will be selected until at least two percent of the Focus schools have been identified using Science results.

- Any high school with a six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup that is less than 70% for the two most recent cohorts will also be added as a Focus school.
- Any previously identified Focus school that is not identified using the above method will exit the Focus category.
- Newly identified Focus schools will begin implementing interventions by the 2016-17 school year.

2.E.ii Provide the SEA's list of focus schools in Table 2.

2.E.iii Describe the process and timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the SEA's focus schools and their students and provide examples of and justifications for the interventions focus schools will be required to implement to improve the performance of students who are the furthest behind.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.8) Does the SEA's process and timeline ensure that each LEA will identify the needs of its focus schools and their students and implement interventions in focus schools at the start of the 2012–2013 school year? Did the SEA provide examples of and justifications for the interventions the SEA will require its focus schools to implement? Are those interventions based on the needs of students and likely to improve the performance of low-performing students and reduce achievement gaps among subgroups, including English Learners and students with disabilities?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.9) Has the SEA demonstrated that the interventions it has identified are effective at increasing student achievement in schools with similar characteristics, needs, and challenges as the schools the SEA has identified as focus schools?

As outlined in Section 2.D., all Category 4 and 5 schools, inclusive of all of Connecticut's Focus schools, must pursue a model approved by the CSDE to dramatically improve school performance and student achievement.

For more information on the various intervention models, strategy and resourcing requirements, and preliminary planning and grant timelines please refer to **Section 2.D.**

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.10) Has the SEA identified interventions that are appropriate for different levels of schools (elementary, middle, high) and that address different types of school needs (e.g., all-students, targeted at the lowest-achieving students)?

Differentiated Interventions by Subgroups

To ensure the progress of low performing students, students who are economically disadvantaged, English learners and students with disabilities, the CSDE has undertaken the following professional development planning and implementation efforts. The CSDE believes these statewide efforts and supports will significantly and positively impact the capacity of Focus school educators to meet the instructional needs of all students:

1. A state level recommitment to Connecticut's multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) referred to locally as Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI). Launched in 2008, Connecticut's Framework for Response to Intervention is now shared between the Office of Special Education and the Academic Office.
    - The CSDE, in partnership with the State Education Resource Center (SERC) held an SRBI Symposium focusing on the intersection of higher standards and intervention systems in November 2014. The event drew 600 attendees and is being repeated in spring 2015.
    - As a needs analysis, the CSDE assembled an SRBI "Practitioner Working Group" to develop a statewide survey on SRBI practices. Seven hundred responses were received and professional development plan will be drawn from that data for the development of additional professional learning and district- and school-level supports in 2015-16.

2. The CSDE partnered with Public Consulting Group and is delivering a statewide professional development series titled, "Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards Success for English Learners and Students with Disabilities," focusing on the instructional needs of English learners and students with disabilities.
    - Module 1 (Academic Optimism and Universal Design for Learning) was delivered six times across various geographic regions of Connecticut, reaching 388 attendees.
    - Module 2 contains two workshops and is currently underway statewide (March 2015). The first workshop is "English Learners: Accessing the Connecticut Core Standards in English Language Arts," and the second session is "Students with Disabilities: Adapting the Curriculum in UDL Style."
    - Module 3 is planned for delivery statewide in April 2015.
    - June 2015- June 2017- The content from the series will be transformed into three free online courses offered to Connecticut educators. These courses will be one of several professional development recommendations for Turnaround and Focus schools identified in 2016.
    -

State Support and Funding for Focus Schools

Districts will be required to use up to 20% of Title I funds to intervene in and support the Focus Schools; the amount set aside will depend on the number of Focus Schools in their district and the level of intervention required. Federal SIG, Part A funds will also be used to support these schools through a competitive grant process. When Focus Schools are located in one of the state's 30 lowest-performing districts, districts are expected to use their Alliance District resources to support these schools.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.11) Did the SEA provide criteria to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status?

2.E.iv Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status and a justification for the criteria selected.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.12) Do the SEA's criteria ensure that schools that exit focus status have made significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.13) Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit focus status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?

Exit Criteria for Focus Schools

Prior to the start of the 2015-16 year, it will be possible for previously identified Focus schools to exit the Focus category. As explained at the beginning of this section (2.E.i), Focus schools that were identified based on low subgroup achievement that are not in the bottom 10% of schools based on the percentage of students in the High Needs subgroup at or above level 3 on both the Smarter Balanced ELA ***and*** Mathematics assessments will exit the Focus category. Focus schools previously identified based on low graduation rates may exit Focus status if the six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup is at least 70% for the two most recent cohorts.

Schools on the updated list of Focus schools (identified by January 31, 2016) will exit the Focus category when they meet the following for the most recent two consecutive years.

- Schools identified as Focus due to low index scores for the High Needs subgroup must meet their change in index score targets for the High Needs subgroup in the particular subject area(s) that were the reason for their identification **OR** achieve above average longitudinal student growth for the High Needs Subgroup based on the growth model (when established) in the particular subject area(s) that were the reason for their identification; and

Schools identified as Focus due to low graduation rates must meet their targets for increasing the six-year cohort graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

The CSDE will provide a complete, updated list of Turnaround and Focus schools to USED by January 31, 2016. In 20116-17, the CSDE will use the most recent available data for all indicators (including results from the Smarter Balanced assessment in 2014-15) to update its list of school classifications. Per state law, the school classifications will be labeled as Category 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. Category 4 will be newly identified Turnaround and Focus Schools. Category 5 will be previously identified Turnaround and Focus schools that have not exited.

2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE I SCHOOLS

2.F Describe how the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on the SEA's new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, and an explanation of how these incentives and supports are likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.F.1) Does the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system provide incentives and supports for other Title I schools that, based on the SEA's new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.F.2) Are those incentives and supports likely to improve student achievement, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for all students, including English Learners and students with disabilities?

Under Principle 2, Connecticut has chosen to implement Option C, which allows states to use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups. Connecticut's accountability model identifies twelve indicators that make up a balanced scorecard measuring school performance and growth over time. The CSDE believes that all schools benefit from the cycle of strategic planning that includes data examination, root cause analysis, goal setting, intervention selection, planning for implementation, and monitoring progress. The CSDE acknowledges that schools need varying levels of support to effectively engage in the process of strategic planning and in assessing their current set of practices and selecting new practices that will drive achievement. The CSDE will therefore provide schools with the quantitative data and qualitative assessment tools needed to engage in the process of continuous improvement, but will differentiate the level of support for and monitoring of schools based on their performance.

Supporting Other Title I Schools (Categories 1, 2, and 3)

While significant state attention is focused on turning around Connecticut's lowest performing schools and districts, Connecticut's differentiated system of recognition, accountability, and support extends to all Connecticut schools. All schools that are performing in Categories 1, 2 and 3, will be reclassified annually using a weighted average of the percentage of eligible points earned each year for up to the three most recent years. Connecticut will require "Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plans" which outline efforts to improve lagging indicators for all Title I Category 2 and 3 schools. The major components for differentiated recognition, accountability and supports for other Title I schools are summarized in Table 2.15 below.

Table 2.15. Components of the Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Supports for Connecticut's Other Title I Schools			
	Recognition	**Accountability**	**Supports**
Category 1 Schools	• School of Distinction (performance or progress) • Distinction for Sustained Progress (grant funds and partner with Category 2 or 3 school)	• Notification of entry into "Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support Network" following annual classification • Waiver from the Connecticut "Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan"	• Access to all CSDE professional learning opportunities outlined in Principle 1 • Alliance District funding (if applicable)
Category 2 Schools	• School of Distinction (progress) • Distinction for Sustained Progress • Distinction for Sustained Progress Partner • Partnership with a Distinction for Sustained Progress	• Notification of entry into "Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support Network" following annual classification • Required to complete and publish an annual Connecticut "Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan"	• Access to all CSDE professional learning opportunities outlined in Principle 1 • Alliance District funding (if applicable) • Access to resources on Targeted Indicators webpage of the CSDE ctcorestandards.org website with matching best practice resources to lagging indicators
Category 3 Schools	• School of Distinction (progress) • Distinction for Sustained Progress • Distinction for Sustained Progress Partner • Partnership with a Distinction for Sustained Progress	• Notification of entry into "Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support Network" following annual classification • Required to complete and publish an annual Connecticut "Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan" • 1% of Category 3 schools statewide will be audited annually on their "Connecticut Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan" by the CSDE Turnaround Office	• Access to all CSDE professional learning opportunities outlined in Principle 1 • Custom review and recommendations if selected for audit • Alliance District funding (if applicable) • Webpage on CSDE ctcorestandards.org with matching best practice resources to lagging indicators • Direct electronic access to Turnaround and Network resources and tools • Electronic subscription to Turnaround Office newsletters

Title I Schools Classified as Category 1 in Connecticut's Accountability System

Recognition: Title I Category 1 schools will have an opportunity to be recognized as a "School of Distinction" based on overall high performance or subgroup high performance. As mentioned previously, Title I and non-Title I schools will be grouped and identified separately. Elementary/Middle schools (schools where the highest grade is less than or equal to 8) and high schools may be identified separately. The CSDE will begin to identify highest progress reward schools after the 2015-16 year when progress data are available.

The CSDE will recognize two types of "Highest Performing Schools." Schools in the top 10% with respect to the overall percentage of points earned will be recognized as Highest Performing Overall. Schools in the top 10% of points earned for the High Needs subgroup in indicator 1 will be recognized as Highest Performing Subgroup. Other Title I schools classified as category 1, 2, or 3 may also receive recognition and financial resources if they qualify for "Distinction for Sustained Progress." As stated previously, the Department may award grants to schools that demonstrate the greatest sustained performance, progress, and growth over a period of three years. Grant funds will be directed toward increasing student achievement or student enrichment opportunities. The grants will be coupled with the responsibility to participate in a partnership with low-performing schools to share and promote effective practices. RESCs will work with grant awardees to arrange partnerships with low-performing schools within their respective RESC regions.

Accountability: By virtue of high overall and high subgroup performance (i.e., no *achievement gap* or *graduation rate gap* as explained in Section 2.A.i), Title I schools classified as Category 1 will not be required to develop and publish a Connecticut "Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan" that outlines the improvement efforts for the upcoming school year based on any lagging indicators from the preceding year.

Supports: Category 1 schools will receive support in college and career ready standard implementation, next generation assessments, English Learner and Special Education supports, and all other statewide supports available to schools statewide.

Title I Schools Classified as Category 2 in Connecticut's Accountability System

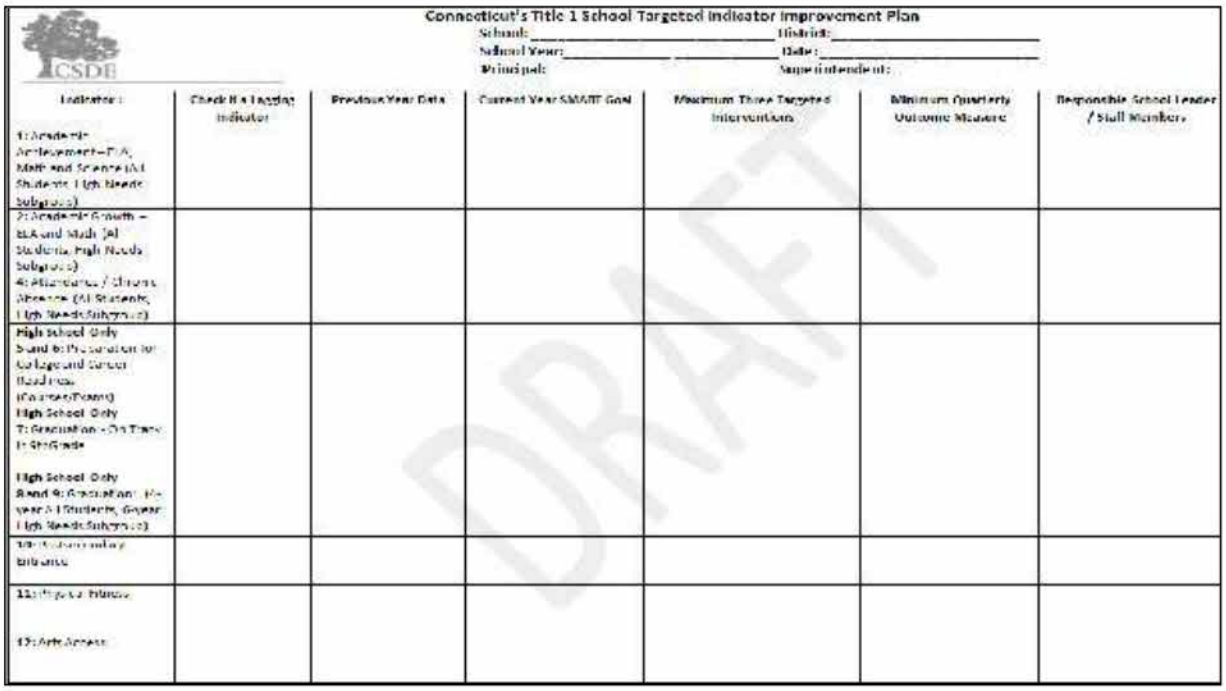
Recognition: Similar to Category 1 schools, Title I schools categorized as level 2 will have an opportunity to be recognized as a "School of Distinction" based on overall high performance or subgroup high performance. Title 1 category 2 schools may also receive recognition and financial resources if they qualify for "Distinction for Sustained Progress." Grants will be coupled with the responsibility to participate in a partnership with low-performing schools to share and promote effective practices.

Accountability: Title I Category 2 schools will receive notification of entry into the "Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support Network" following annual classification. Schools will be required to develop and publish a Connecticut "Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan" that outlines the improvement efforts for the upcoming school year based on any lagging indicators from the preceding year. This requirement will allow for timely remediation using effective strategies that target the most essential indicators.

Supports: Category 2 schools will receive support in college and career ready standard implementation, next generation assessments, English Learner and Special Education supports, and all other statewide

supports available to schools statewide. In addition, all Title I Category 2 schools will have access to a specially designed "Targeted Indicators Improvement" webpage of the CSDE website which will match best practice resources to accountability indicators for schools seeking resources for improvement. In addition, a category 2 school may be found in one of Connecticut's lowest performing school districts and may be eligible for Alliance District funding (if applicable).

Figure 2.1. Connecticut's Title I School Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan



Connecticut's Title 1 School Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan

School: _____ District: _____

School Year: _____ Date: _____

Principal: Superintendent:

Indicator:	Check If a Lagging Indicator	Previous Year Data	Current Year SMART Goal	Maximum Three Targeted Interventions	Minimum Quarterly Outcome Measure	Responsible School Leader / Staff Member
1: Academic Achievement – ELA, Math and Science (All Students, High Needs Subgroups)						
2: Academic Growth – ELA and Math (All Students, High Needs Subgroups) 4: Attendance / Chronic Absence (All Students, High Needs Subgroups)						
High School Only 5 and 6: Preparation for College and Career Readiness (Courses/Exams) High School Only 7: Graduation – On Time 8: 9th Grade High School Only 5 and 9: Graduation (4-year & 7 Students, 6-year High Needs Subgroups)						
10: Discretionary Indicator						
11: Early Literacy 12: Arts Access						

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Title I Schools Classified as Category 3 in Connecticut's Accountability System

Recognition: Similar to Category 1 and 2 schools, Title I schools categorized as level 3 will have an opportunity to be recognized as a "School of Distinction" based on overall high growth or subgroup high growth. Title I category 3 schools may also receive recognition and financial resources if they qualify for "Distinction for Sustained Progress." Grants will be coupled with the responsibility to participate in a partnership with low-performing schools to share and promote effective practices. Title I Category 3 schools may also be selected as a partner with another school that is higher performing or higher growth through the same grant program.

Accountability: Title I Category 3 schools will receive notification of entry into the "Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support Network" following annual classification. Schools will be required to develop and publish a Connecticut "Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan" that outlines the improvement efforts for the upcoming school year based on any lagging indicators from the preceding year. This requirement will allow for timely remediation using effective strategies that target the most essential indicators. This process provides a user-friendly process with a laser-like focus on immediate improvement of key indicators by the school.

One percent of Title I Category 3 schools statewide will be audited annually on their "Connecticut Title I Targeted Indicator Improvement Plan" by the CSDE Turnaround Office staff. Audits will consist of a

minimum desk audit. Site visits may occur if staffing and CSDE resources allow. Site visits will be more extensive than desk audits and will utilize the same tools used for Turnaround and Focus schools by the Turnaround Office, such as a monitoring visit protocol, data heat map, and report outlines.

Supports: Category 3 schools will receive support in college and career ready standard implementation, next generation assessments, English Learner and Special Education supports, and all other statewide supports available to schools statewide. Title I Category 3 schools will also have access to a specially designed "Targeted Indicators Improvement" webpage of the CSDE website, which will match best practice resources to accountability indicators for schools seeking resources for improvement. Like Category 2 schools, these schools may be found in one of Connecticut's lowest performing school districts and may be eligible for Alliance District funding (if applicable).

Lastly, resources will be made available to Title I Category 3 schools from the many Turnaround resources the CSDE can bring to bear. These will be posted on a specially designed webpage on the CSDE website and will contain matching best practices to lagging indicators. In addition, electronic subscription to Turnaround Office newsletters will be provided with the annual notification letter.

2.G Build SEA, LEA, and School Capacity to Improve Student Learning

2.G Describe the SEA's process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:

i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;

ii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources); and

iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools.

Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.1) Is the SEA's process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, likely to succeed in improving such capacity?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.2) Is the SEA's process for ensuring timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools likely to result in successful implementation of these interventions and in progress on leading indicators and student outcomes in these schools?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.3) Did the SEA describe a process for the rigorous review and approval of any external providers used by the SEA and its LEAs to support the implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools that is likely to result in the identification of high-quality partners with experience and expertise applicable to the needs of the school, including specific subgroup needs?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.4) Is the SEA's process for ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources) likely to result in successful implementation of such interventions and improved student achievement?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.5) Is the SEA's process for holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools, likely to improve LEA capacity to support school improvement?

System of Support and Accountability

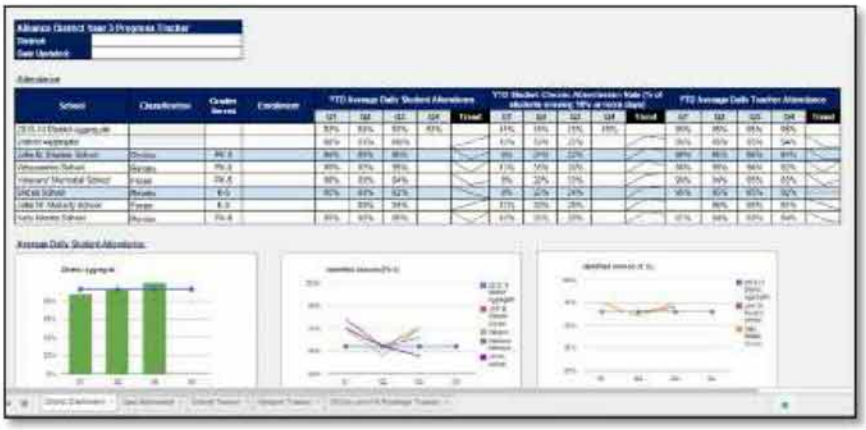
The CSDE is committed to supporting and facilitating continuous improvement in low-performing schools through a comprehensive system of support and accountability. *Table 2.7* summarizes support and performance management processes in place for Category 4 and 5 schools pursuing the various models outlined in Section 2.D. All resources and monitoring processes are aligned to the CSDE's framework areas: talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. This alignment promotes continuity through a consistent vernacular and coherent processes.

Importantly, certain school transformation models are intentionally designed to offer more intensive CSDE supports and facilitated performance management, whereas other models empower LEAs and/or external entities to organize technical and ongoing performance management. As described in Section 2.D, the various models represent tiered approaches, requiring varying degrees of intervention and changes in governance and management.

Table 2.16. System of Supports and Accountability		
Model:	**Supports and Resources:**	**Performance Management:**
District-led improvement plan	• Monthly Turnaround Office newsletter • Alliance District convenings • Essential School Systems website, tools, and templates • LEAD Connecticut, as enrolled •	• Alliance District quarterly reporting and quarterly monitoring meetings • 1003(a) grant reporting and monitoring, as appropriate
School Improvement Grant 1003(g)	• Monthly Turnaround Office newsletter • Alliance District convenings • NetStat sessions • School and classroom walkthroughs • Essential School Systems website, tools, and templates • LEAD Connecticut, as enrolled	• Alliance District quarterly reporting and quarterly monitoring meetings • Quarterly monitoring meetings • Midyear school audits
Commissioner's Network	• Monthly Turnaround Office newsletter • Alliance District convenings • NetStat sessions • School and classroom walkthroughs • Essential School Systems website, tools, and templates • LEAD Connecticut, as enrolled	• Alliance District quarterly reporting and quarterly monitoring meetings • Quarterly monitoring meetings • Midyear school audits
Reconstitution as an externally-operated school	• Monthly Turnaround Office newsletter • Alliance District convenings • Essential School Systems website, tools, and templates • LEAD Connecticut, as enrolled	• Alliance District quarterly reporting and quarterly monitoring meetings

The summaries below provide more information regarding the system of supports and accountability for Category 4 and 5 schools.

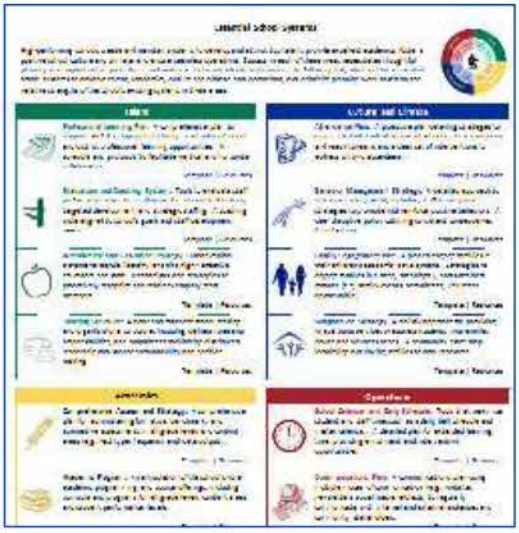
- **Alliance District and Network School Quarterly Monitoring:** On a quarterly basis, Alliance Districts submit progress updates to the CSDE via online trackers. Alliance Districts and Network schools (including Commissioner's Network and SIG 1003(g) schools) submit qualitative updates relative to plan implementation, progress, and challenges. Alliance Districts also submit quarterly aggregate district quantitative data, as well as data for identified low-performing schools. The online tracker solicits quarterly data for key leading and lagging indicators of improvement, including: student attendance, student chronic absenteeism, teacher attendance, behavior, math and reading proficiency on benchmark assessments, and math and reading growth on benchmark assessments. After submitting quarterly updates and data, districts meet with their CSDE designees to review progress, identify challenges, and strategize around solutions and next steps. This personalized form of data collection and accountability is meant to support continuous improvement and marks an important shift away from time-intensive compliance activities.



- **Alliance District Convenings:** On a quarterly basis, the CSDE invites teams from Alliance Districts to attend in-person convenings. During convenings, district teams attend workshops on topics pertaining to talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Workshops are facilitated by the CSDE, district leaders, and external experts. Alliance District convenings are designed to promote collaboration and best practice sharing across districts. The Turnaround Office has coordinated and offered Alliance District convenings for the past two years, and evaluations of the convenings are consistently positive.

- **NetStat Sessions:** On a quarterly basis, representatives from Commissioner's Network and SIG 1003(g) schools come together for NetStat sessions. Modeled after the successful CompStat process, NetStat sessions provide a structured opportunity for reflection and collaboration across schools. School teams analyze leading and lagging performance data in the four domain areas. School teams share best practices, discuss challenges, brainstorm solutions, and develop action plans around next steps to improve school data. NetStat also provides an opportunity for structured planning and professional development. The Turnaround Office organizes professional development, including by identifying presenters from among the Network schools, to share strategies and best practices aligned to the four domain areas and Essential School Systems.

- **Essential School Systems:** High-performing schools create and maintain systems to develop and attract top talent, provide excellent academics, foster a positive school culture and climate, and ensure seamless operations. Success in each of these areas necessitates thoughtful planning and sophisticated procedures and routines. The Turnaround Office has created a website with system templates, exemplars, and tools designed to support school teams as they work to create highly-effective systems and implement those systems with fidelity school-wide.

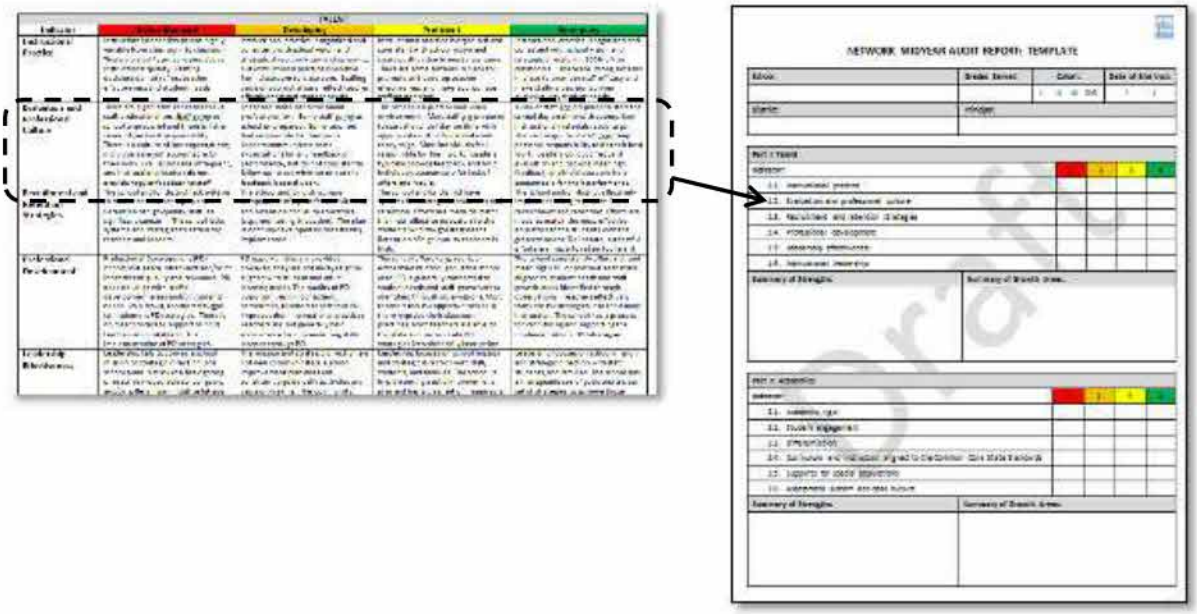


- **Midyear Audits:** Commissioner's Network and SIG 1003(g) schools participate in annual audits to benchmark school systems and performance in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Commissioner's Network schools also receive an audit as part of the initial intake and planning process; the initial audit serves as a baseline evaluation from which Turnaround Committees develop Turnaround Plans. Annual midyear audits – conducted by impartial, external auditors – allow schools and the CSDE to evaluate progress in each of the indicator areas, as well as identify areas for potential interventions or midcourse corrections. *Table 2.7* below outlines the indicators used in the audit process; these align to the Office's four domain areas. This audit tool and rubric is available for LEAs to use with their Category 1-5 schools.

Table 2.17. School Audit Domains and Indicators

Talent:	**Culture and Climate:**
• Instructional practice • Evaluation and professional culture • Recruitment and retention strategies • Professional development • Leadership effectiveness • Instructional leadership	• School environment • Student attendance • Student behavior • Interpersonal interactions • Family engagement • Community partners/Wraparound strategy
Academics:	**Operations:**
• Academic rigor • Student engagement • Differentiation • Curriculum and instruction aligned to CCSS • Supports for special populations • Assessment system and data culture	• Adequate instructional time • Use of instructional time • Use of staff time • Routines and transitions • Financial management

The audit generally consists of a 1-2-day site visit, whereby auditors collect qualitative and quantitative data through stakeholder surveys, interviews, focus groups, classroom observations, and school-wide observations. The Turnaround Office uses a consistent rubric and report template to provide a summation of school strengths and growth areas. The audits, which occur in the middle of the school year, allow for comparisons across schools and a longitudinal analysis of each school's progress over time. The Turnaround Office's school turnaround rubric (shown below) defines "Below Standard," "Developing," "Proficient," and "Exemplary" status for each of the indicators listed above. The rubric also allows schools to self-assess and monitor their own progress over time. The midyear audit process results in an audit report with specific short- and longer-term recommendations. This process initiates an annual plan amendment and budgeting process, as appropriate.



- **School and Classroom Walkthroughs:** Every Commissioner's Network and SIG 1003(g) schools is assigned a CSDE Network designee. He/She visits Network schools several times per quarter. During these visits, designees use a streamlined and non-evaluative walkthrough tool to identify school-wide trends and structure classroom observations. The walkthrough protocol provides as a real-time indication of school and classroom progress. The tool includes a subset of the audit indicators used during the formal midyear audit, focusing on those indicators that are observable in a fairly short school and classroom visit. The tool includes a checkbox format with "look fors" aligned to each of indicator area. Though the observer may not observe all indicators on a given walkthrough, the tool provide a clear set of school and classroom priorities aligned to the annual audit, which serves as the primary evaluative process for Network schools. The Turnaround Office internally aggregates and disaggregates walkthrough data to identify issue areas within individual schools, as well as Network-wide trends. This analysis then informs Network-wide supports and professional development topics addressed during NetStat sessions. Designees conduct school and classroom walkthroughs with school leadership, allowing for calibration and planning conversations, though this is not required. Importantly, the walkthrough tool is purposefully aligned to the SEED and Danielson evaluation frameworks.

LEAD Connecticut: Administrators overseeing school improvement efforts are encouraged to participate in turnaround principal development programs offered by LEAD Connecticut. Each spring, LEAD Connecticut will offer an 8-week intensive Spring Leadership Fellowship to prepare principals for the turnaround process. Through the intensive Spring Fellowship, turnaround leaders visit high-performing turnaround schools nationally and begin developing entry plans to launch the following school year in their buildings. LEAD Connecticut also offers its Community of Practice for sitting turnaround principals statewide. Through this program, principals join a powerful network of practitioners, receiving targeted trainings and embedded coaching throughout the school year. The program begins with a 2-week summer intensive focused on high-leverage leadership strategies and continues with site-based leadership coaching and monthly community of practice meetings throughout the year. LEAD Connecticut's website provides more information on these leadership development opportunities.

Connecticut's State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP): The U.S. Department of Education (USED) and its Office for Special Education Programs (OSEP) have revised its accountability system under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Results-Driven Accountability (RDA) shifts the Department's accountability efforts from a primary emphasis on compliance to a framework that focuses on improved results for children with disabilities, while continuing to ensure States meet IDEA compliance requirements. RDA emphasizes improving child outcomes such as performance on assessments, graduation rates, and early childhood outcomes. To support this effort, States are required to develop a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) as part of their State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR).

With the input of stakeholders and through the process of data analysis and infrastructure analysis, Connecticut has identified, as its State Identified Measurable Result for Children with Disabilities (SIMR), *early literacy as measured by third grade reading achievement.* In Connecticut, the SSIP process will provide universal (Tier 1) resources and supports relative to early literacy to all of the state's school districts. Each year, reading achievement data from approximately one third of the state's school districts will be reviewed specifically for the SSIP. Approximately 25 districts from this group will be selected to receive additional (Tier 2) supports and will be required to submit an electronic data wall that explains root cause(s) and the district's actions in response to low third grade reading achievement (and achievement gap - data) for students with disabilities. Tier 2 districts may be required to develop a theory of action and corresponding improvement plan subject to CSDE review. The review of data wall submissions by the CSDE will result in the identification of approximately six Tier 3 districts— that need more intensive support. These districts will be required to develop a theory of action and corresponding improvement plan in association with technical assistance and professional learning activities provided through the CSDE.

Connecticut expects that efforts and activities to strengthen early literacy for students with disabilities will be coordinated and meaningfully integrated with other school improvement activities being implemented in the district.

Reorganization of the CSDE: Building State Capacity

The CSDE is currently in the midst of significant organizational change designed to pivot the department into a more proactive stance. The reorganization, which has been approved by the SBE, will shift the organization's focus from monitoring for compliance and accountability to driving performance and continuous improvement.

The reorganized CSDE will include the following teams: Academic, Talent, Performance, and Turnaround. The Chief Operating Officer will be charged with improving the effectiveness, responsiveness, and efficiency of the CSDE's programs and services, including the removal of unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy that can impede student learning.

The Academic Team will align efforts around preparing students for college and career by working with school leaders to fully align the instruction, ongoing assessment, curriculum, and the CCSS.

The Talent Team will develop and attract a first-rate, diverse corps of educators to Connecticut's classrooms, principals' offices, and district offices by improving the entire professional experience and human resource system for teachers and leaders. This would include working collaboratively around the state to develop and expand robust and meaningful professional development to prepare teachers for Common Core standards and the 21st century classroom. This team will also engage the state's education stakeholders to produce a fair system of educator evaluation.

The Performance Team will ensure that, across multiple indicators, Connecticut's school districts receive actionable and timely information on student performance. This team will create a robust data infrastructure to help identify trends, problems, and opportunities in Connecticut's schools; it will develop metrics for status, progress, and goals for every school, district, and student group in the state.

The Turnaround Team will lead the design and administration of intervention and support strategies in low-performing schools and districts. This office will seek out effective practices from the state and the country and work to promote high-quality school models.

This reorganization will lay the essential groundwork for realizing reform. Establishing the four interrelated, strategically oriented teams—Academic, Talent, Performance, and Turnaround— will significantly increase the CSDE's capacity to drive school improvement throughout the state.

Building District Capacity

While districts will drive the interventions in low performing schools, the CSDE will support these efforts. Most of these high-need schools are concentrated in the 30 lowest-performing Alliance Districts.

In 2012 the General Assembly passed legislation increasing state funding to Alliance Districts. In the first three years of the Alliance District program, the state has awarded approximately $150 million in additional funds to Alliance Districts. This alliance of districts will partner with the state to undertake reforms, including strengthening their foundational reading programs to ensure reading mastery in kindergarten through grade 3; providing extended learning opportunities; developing recruitment, career ladder, and compensation strategies for teachers and school leaders; and coordinating community health, social, and wraparound services.

Another of the key reforms required for Alliance Districts is the development of a tiered approach to intervening in and supporting schools based on their performance. The districts' strategic plans will describe their approach to supporting each category of schools in their district and must be approved by the Turnaround Team. Districts can use a portion of the funding they receive through the Alliance District initiative to support their interventions in low-performing schools.

The CSDE has provided and will continue to provide a high level of supports to schools and districts that build capacity for embracing high expectations for all learners, close achievement gaps between groups of students through the implementation of college and career-ready standards. The work in this area has been outlined in Principle 1 (see Table 1.2: CCSS Implementation Timeline).

- Since fall 2013, the CSDE has provided unprecedented supports to schools and districts in the instructional shifts required to help students reach the promise of the new college and career-ready standards. To date, the CSDE has provided 336 professional learning opportunities (workshops and webinars) with over 10,030 attendees. Additionally, over 1,200 days of customized, in-district coaching and/or technical assistance (funded by the CSDE) will be delivered by the end of the 2014-15 school year to support local implementation efforts.
- Additional supports have also taken the form of a CCSS-dedicated website (CTcorestandards.org), substantial online and print resources and free on-demand, online courses for teachers.
- Schools and districts identified as Alliance or Priority Districts, as well as Turnaround or Focus schools receive guaranteed access to all of the above supports.

Removing Barriers and Duplication for Districts

The CSDE believes the state's school districts should focus on raising student achievement and preparing students for success in college and career, and the state should be a partner in that effort. But where state mandates, regulations, circular letters, and other requirements create unnecessary and overly burdensome barriers to districts' work, the state will examine its practices—and find ways to get out of the way. In a recent survey of the state's superintendents, two-thirds reported that the CSDE issues too many regulations. Over half of the superintendents identified state policies as a barrier to effectively recognize and promote staff.

Under P.A. 12-116, the CSDE aims to enhance processes related to certification and professional learning, as well as to empower districts to make these processes more meaningful. Specifically, the CSDE will:

- Replace seat-time based "continuing education unit" requirements with job-embedded professional learning;
- Enhance the quality of post-baccalaureate education by requiring a Master's degree for the attainment of a Professional Certificate, rather than the existing requirement of merely 30 graduate credits; and
- Reduce barriers to certification for out of state educators.

While many of the CSDE data requests have origins in state or federal law, the CSDE has implemented some requests in ways that create unnecessary burden and expense for district central offices and schools. From now on, the CSDE will:

- Consolidate the Alliance and Priority School District grant applications;
- Provide school and district applications earlier in the school and fiscal years;
- Coordinate school and district improvement planning processes and timelines;
- Consolidate the forms it issues to request data from districts;
- Inform districts of these interim streamlined data collection procedures; and

- Begin to convene periodic meetings with a focus group of superintendents and district business administrators to foster ongoing dialogue about streamlining data practices.

In response to the Governor's reform principle to *remove red tape and other barriers to educational success,* Connecticut convened a *Red Tape Reduction Task Force.* In response to the requests of this Task Force, the CSDE conducted an exhaustive review of its data collected and eliminated or streamlined approximately one third of data collection forms. Additional forms continue to be targeted for consolidation or elimination.

Data Governance: Strong data governance practices ensure that redundancies are prevented from being created in the first place. The CSDE has established and activated the following two committees to solicit robust feedback from both internal and external stakeholders:

- Internal: A Department-wide Data Governance Committee that includes representatives from all CSDE offices; and
- External: A Data and Reports Committee that is comprised of members from three professional associations – the CT Association of Public School Superintendents; the CT Association of School Business Officials, and the CT Association of Schools.

Both committees meet multiple times during the year; their ongoing feedback and input have been extremely valuable in ensuring that CSDE data collections are sensitive to district capacity and adequate for the CSDE to meet its reporting obligations.

Identifying External School Operators

The CSDE's Turnaround Team may conduct a request for information (RFI) process to identify external providers including universities, RESCs, nonprofits, charter management organizations (CMOs), CommPACT, or other providers with proven track records. The CSDE will establish a list of external providers that may be available to districts and schools to assist with specific areas of concern or to partner in turnaround efforts via contract or other mechanism with the state Turnaround Team, districts, and schools. This list, which will be updated, reviewed, and expanded over time, will provide a resource to districts for school turnaround.

Building Regional Capacity: RESCs

The CSDE recognizes that many Connecticut districts do not currently have the capacity to support and intervene in schools effectively, but the CSDE believes that Connecticut is well positioned to build on existing structures to increase district capacity. Connecticut has a State Education Resource Center (SERC) and a network of RESCs with a long history of providing information, professional development, and technical assistance to schools and districts.

RESCs promote cooperation and collaboration with local school districts to improve the quality of public education. Connecticut is host to six RESCs, representing 169 school districts throughout the state. RESCs were established under Connecticut General Statute 10-66 a-n, which permits local boards of education to establish a RESC as a "public educational authority" for the purpose of "cooperative action to furnish programs and services." RESCs act as intermediary units, in that they are smaller than state departments of education, yet larger than local school districts, and are used to deliver services in approximately 40 states.

While these organizations have been critical for supporting districts, the CSDE has not taken full advantage of their capacity. One function of the Turnaround Team will be to leverage the state's RESCs and SERC to drive school and district improvement. The Turnaround Team will ensure that SERC and RESCs' work with districts is aligned to the CSDE's key initiatives. These regional organizations will serve as the implementation arm of the state—operationalizing state policy by ensuring that districts have the technical assistance and information they need. Rather than all RESCs providing identical or overlapping services we will incent and fund each RESC with different resources and goals to tackle targeted aspects of our intervention and overall reform strategies.

District Accountability

Through the Turnaround and Performance Teams, the CSDE will partner with RESCs and districts to improve low-performing schools collaboratively. If necessary, however, the state is prepared to use its authority to ensure that districts implement the needed reforms to drive student achievement.

1. State Conditional Funding. As described in more detail above, Connecticut's 30 lowest-performing Alliance Districts will receive additional annual funding, if and only if they agree to enact a series of meaningful reforms. To receive its allotted increase, each Alliance District must submit a strategic plan that includes a description of how the district will implement a system of tiered interventions for schools based on school-level student performance. These Alliance Districts will be responsible for diagnosing, supporting, and—if necessary—intervening in Category 3, 4, and 5 schools within their jurisdictions.

2. Title I Funding. Some districts may contain Category 3, 4, or 5schools but are not among the lowest 30 districts in the state. These districts will be able to use up to 20% of their Title I funding to intervene in these schools. If districts do not support and intervene in their Category 3, 4 and 5 schools, then they will no longer be eligible to receive their Title I funds.

3. Statutory Authority. If a district that is not an Alliance District and that does not receive Title I funds contains a Category 3, 4, or 5 school, the state can exercise its statutory power to ensure that the district complies with the state policy requiring the LEA to diagnose the needs of the school, assist the school in developing an improvement plan, monitor the implementation of interventions, and maintain a plan on file that that may be subject to random state audit.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

3.A DEVELOP AND ADOPT GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding description and evidence, as appropriate, for the option selected.

Option A	**Option B**
☐ If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide: i. the SEA's plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year; ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14).	☒ If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide: i. a copy of the guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students; ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.A.1) *Option A* – If the SEA has not already developed and adopted guidelines consistent with Principle 3, is the SEA's plan for developing and adopting guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems likely to result in successful adoption of those guidelines by the end of the 2011–2012 school year?

Overview

Connecticut recognizes that teacher and administrator evaluation and support systems are a critical part of its comprehensive plan to build an environment that ensures equity and excellence in education for all Connecticut students. Since early 2012, the CSDE has engaged the leadership and expertise of a legislatively enacted council of educators, policymakers, and advocates, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), in the undertaking of a major reform effort to consult with the CSDE in the development of new Guidelines for the evaluation of teachers and administrators across the state.

In January 2012, after two years of discussions, PEAC took a major step toward creating a meaningful evaluation and support system when they unanimously recommended to the State Board of Education

(SBE) a new framework that places a strong emphasis on student achievement. The new evaluation and support system for teachers includes the following components:

1) Multiple student learning indicators: 45%, half of which are based on the state test for those teaching tested grades and subjects or another standardized assessment for those grades and subjects for which there is no state test, where available;
2) Teacher observation and professional practice: 40%;
3) Feedback from peers and parents: 10%; and
4) School-wide student learning indicators or student feedback: 5%.

The agreement was an historic achievement. As Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy noted in his press release, "Connecticut has taken a major step toward a meaningful teacher evaluation system. Today's consensus proposal has real potential to increase teacher effectiveness—and as a result, to elevate student achievement. This is a milestone in what I expect will continue to be a momentous year for education reform in Connecticut."

On February 6, 2012, PEAC agreed on the following design for the administrator evaluation and support system:

1) Multiple student learning measures/indicators: 45%, half of which are based on the state test and the other half to be locally determined, with parameters set by the state;
2) Observations of principal performance and practice: 40%, based on the six performance expectations in the Connecticut Leadership Standards; it includes a focus on all practices involving teacher quality and teacher evaluation;
3) Staff, community, and/or student feedback: 10%, based on all or some of the six performance expectations in the Connecticut Leadership Standards; and
4) Teacher performance growth and effectiveness outcomes: 5%, based on teacher effectiveness measures such as a) increasing the percentage of teachers making adequate growth in student achievement; or b) differing strategies for teachers at differing levels of effectiveness.

On February 10, 2012, the SBE approved the framework for the new evaluation and support system. Allan Taylor, chairman of the SBE, said that PEAC's unanimous agreement was "quite an impressive testament on their ability to come together on an important and controversial question." By spring 2012, the CSDE, in partnership with PEAC sub-committees, developed a model evaluation and support system, entitled the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) that is completely aligned to the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation and is available for any local educational entity (LEA) to adopt.

See the *Hartford Courant* for coverage of the PEAC agreement and the SBE approval.

Since this achievement, the CSDE has begun taking important steps to plan for and ensure that new evaluation and support systems are implemented in a timely manner and effectively by LEAs. The CSDE's overarching goal is to ensure Connecticut's new evaluation and support system serves as an effective tool for educators and administrators to measure their performance, identify where members need support, and provide appropriate professional development strategies. Evaluation is a tool for continuous improvement, which is only possible through identifying meaningful areas of strength and need. This is the work that the state's proposed system aims to accomplish. In the event that struggling educators do not respond to targeted support and development, the CSDE's new evaluation system provides the basis for fair and timely separation from service.

The state sees its role as providing the technical expertise, guidance, and resources and setting the standards for the systems. But the CSDE also strongly encourages districts to innovate and take ownership of their systems—within clear and rigorous state Guidelines—incorporating what is working well and taking existing evaluation and support systems to the next level.

Significant milestones in the CSDE and PEAC process include:

- Adoption of a set of principles and core requirements to guide the districts in the development of their evaluation systems (**Appendix 3.1- Guidelines for Educator Evaluation**).
- Agreement on the design approach for how local school districts may choose to develop their evaluation systems: districts can design and propose for state approval their own evaluation and support systems based on the Guidelines issued by the state or adopt the state model if they are unwilling or are unable to design their own within the timeline established by the state.
- Agreement on the required evaluation framework of the state model for the evaluation of teachers and administrators.
- Agreement on the required evaluation framework for the district-developed models.
- Approval of the PEAC-recommended state and local system core framework by the SBE on February 10, 2012.
- Consensus recommendation for the Guidelines presented to the SBE.
- Unanimous approval of the PEAC-recommended state and local model Guidelines by the SBE on June 27, 2012.

The CSDE submitted the additional Guidelines and specific requirements, including the state model, SEED (Appendix 3.2- SEED Handbook 2014), to the SBE for approval on June 27, 2012 and began to implement them in July 2012, as required by state statute.

The CSDE has followed a rigorous timeline for the implementation of the new evaluation and support systems, which has included a pilot during the 2012–13 school year, followed by a partial rollout in the following year, 2013–14, and full statewide implementation (with the exceptions noted on page 142) in 2014-15.

Flexibility on the Use of State Test Data in Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System for 2014-15 and 2015-16

As a result of Connecticut's education reform legislation (Public Act 12-116), passed in 2012, Connecticut LEAs are expected to incorporate state assessment data in Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system. As outlined in the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (June 2012), 45% of a teacher's annual summative evaluation is based on student outcomes as measured by standardized and non-standardized indicators. For teachers in tested grades and subjects, half of the 45% incorporates state assessment data.. Connecticut's administrator evaluation and support system requires 45% of the annual summative evaluation be based on multiple student learning indicators. Half of this component (22.5%) is determined using a district or school's progress from year-to-year and progress with subgroups through the District or School Performance Index (DPI or SPI), which is calculated using state assessment data.

On July 15, 2013, the SBE, in consultation with the PEAC, authorized the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to submit a flexibility request to the United States Department of Education (USED) that would enable districts, through a local process, to determine whether to use Common Core-aligned

assessments produced by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), the legacy state tests (CMT/CAPT) or both in the 2013-14 school year. On January 30, 2014, Connecticut's request for flexibility was approved, and the CSDE established procedures to guide local decision making, including stakeholder and local board chair input into the choice regarding state test administration. In addition, PEAC and the SBE authorized the CSDE to request a delay on the use of state test data in evaluation through 2014-15, as the state made the transition from the legacy assessment to the new Smarter Balanced assessment.

Connecticut's first operational administration of the Smarter Balanced assessment will be in spring 2015, and an additional administration in 2015-16 is necessary to establish baselines and determine appropriate student growth. Therefore, CT requests additional flexibility regarding the timeline for incorporating state test results. Connecticut will require that LEAs incorporate state test data in performance ratings to measure student growth beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.

In 2013-14, all Connecticut LEAs, including the Connecticut Technical High School System, were expected to implement Connecticut's new educator evaluation and support system with at least one-third of their certified staff, inclusive of administrators. While LEAs were provided this flexibility on the number of participating staff, of 181 LEAs, more than 100 committed to full implementation with all certified educators in 2013-14. In 2014-15, all LEAs were required to implement Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system with 100% of their certified educators. An exception to the above pertained to the following unique educational entities:

- Adult Education
- Unified School District #1 (Department of Corrections)
- Unified School District #2 (Department of Children and Families)
- Approved Private Special Education Facilities
- Pre-K
- Central Office and Charter School administrators

Given their unique structures and implementation considerations, the SBE, in consultation with PEAC, approved and adopted an exemption from implementation of the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (2012) through the 2014-2015 school year for educators in the aforementioned educational entities. However, those systems that are ready to proceed were enabled and encouraged to conduct permissive pilots during the 2014-15 school year. The CSDE has been gathering data about the pilot experience throughout the 2014-2015 school year and feels confident that the following entities are able to proceed with full implementation in 2015-16:

- Central Office and Charter School administrators

The CSDE is requesting an additional year required pilot to continue to explore solutions to the implementation challenges for the following entities:

- Pre-K
- Approved Private Special Education Facilities
- Adult Education
- Unified School District #1 (Department of Corrections)
- Unified School District #2 (Department of Children and Families)

However, in 2015-16, these systems will be required to proceed with a mandatory pilot of the educator evaluation and support system. The CSDE will incorporate these pilot programs into the monitoring protocol that is outlined on page 183.

During this period of transition in state testing from 2013-14 through 2015-16, the Guidelines provide for other assessments to be used in the absence of state assessment data. For instance, if a district doesn't require the use of state assessment data, then the 45% would be composed of 22.5% locally-available assessments (standardized assessments for those grades and subjects where available and appropriate) and the other 22.5% based on a minimum of one non-standardized indicator and a maximum of one additional standardized indicator (in accordance with the Guidelines). If there are no standardized assessments available and/or appropriate, then the educator's 45% would be based fully on non-standardized indicators.

The Guidelines provide for similar flexibility with respect to the administrator evaluation and support model. In the absence of SPI or DPI, the Guidelines state that, "…the entire 45% of an administrator's rating on student learning indicators shall be based on the locally-determined indicators [as] described in subsection [3.3(1)(b)]." This administrator rating on the 45% student learning component, in turn, would comprise the 5% Whole-School Student Learning Indicator rating for teachers, unless they have chosen to incorporate Student Feedback for the teacher's 5% component.

Technical assistance from the CSDE will be provided to districts to support the transition beyond this period of flexibility regarding the required use of state assessment data to measure student growth.

Background on Evaluation System Development

Prior to 2012-13, teachers and administrators in Connecticut were evaluated based on the Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development, which the SBE issued in 1999. In July 2010, in an effort to kick-start the reform of a decade-old system that many teachers and administrators have critiqued, the Connecticut legislature enacted Public Act 10-111. This important piece of legislation put in place a policy framework and a process to enact Connecticut's vision of creating a new evaluation system and support system that would enable the CSDE to provide the best professional development opportunities to teachers and administrators. In 2010, the SBE adopted the Common Core State Standards, which were reviewed and renamed the Connecticut Core Standards. As the CSDE continues to implement the Connecticut Core Standards, it is critical that it also aligns the objectives and modalities of evaluation systems with student learning goals as identified under the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching. It is equally important that the CSDE has well-trained evaluators, regular data reporting and analyses, and a clear process for teachers and administrators to receive feedback and be given the opportunities they deserve to continue to grow. Connecticut's education reform statute clearly states the following:

- The SBE's new Guidelines must provide guidance on the use of multiple indicators of student academic growth in educator evaluations, consider control factors tracked by the statewide public school information system that may influence educator performance ratings, and establish minimum requirements for educator evaluation instruments and procedures.
- Local and regional boards of education must develop and implement educator evaluation programs consistent with Guidelines established by the SBE.

- An evaluation of teachers and administrators should include, but need not be limited to, strengths, areas needing improvement, strategies for improvement, and multiple indicators of student academic growth.

To ensure effective execution of the reform mandate, the statutes included the establishment of PEAC and charged it with assisting the SBE in the development of new evaluation Guidelines and ongoing commitment to supporting and implementing the system. PEAC members are expected meet at least once every three months and must consist of the state Commissioner of Education or a designee, representatives from CABE, CAPSS, CAS, the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, CEA, AFT-CT, and others selected by the Commissioner of Education, including representatives from higher education and performance evaluation experts. Showing their commitment to education reform, in July 2011, Connecticut's legislature enacted Public Act 11-135 requiring that the SBE, in consultation with PEAC, expedite the process so that new Guidelines become effective by July 1, 2012—a year sooner than originally planned. For a list of PEAC members, see **Appendix 3.3**.

Connecticut moved to embark on this important reform initiative on the heels of the CSDE's unsuccessful Race to the Top (RTTT) application in March 2010. At the time of the RTTT application, the CSDE had a strong commitment to pursue reform, and it submitted a good plan with what it considered the most achievable goals at the time. Since then, the CSDE has taken major steps forward in revamping its system. PEAC consists of leading educators and policymakers in the state, strongly committed to fulfilling their statutory mandate to reform the teacher and administrator evaluation and support system. PEAC's rigorous working schedule, experienced leadership, strategic course of action, and concrete goals reflect not only the same level of commitment but also the clear strategy and strong capacity necessary to make this undertaking a great success. Policy advisors, education experts, and stakeholders have finalized the Guidelines, evaluation frameworks and implementation plans. Information about PEAC's working schedule, presentations and other related materials can be found on the CSDE website.

As outlined in Governor Malloy's 2012 reform plans and as adopted by the SBE, districts are allowed to develop local evaluation and support systems consistent with state Guidelines or adopt the state-developed model, SEED. If a district does not develop a local evaluation and support system or fails to win approval by the state for its proposed models, the district is required to use the state model. Under the evaluation framework adopted by the SBE, multiple indicators of student learning account for a substantial portion of an educator's evaluation, giving student achievement the priority it deserves. This approach ensures that across the state, districts have common and high expectations, and educators are evaluated in a fair and consistent way.

Districts are also required to provide effective and job-embedded professional development. This professional development must focus on strengths and needs identified through the CSDE's evaluation system. Under the new system, districts have greater flexibility to design and deliver customized professional development based upon evaluation data and focused on each educator's needs. Educators benefit from a system of continuous feedback and professional improvement delivered by coaches, mentors, and peers in teams and small groups. In exchange for that flexibility, districts are held accountable for providing effective professional development, especially to the teachers and administrators who have the greatest need for support.

Prompted by the Governor's school reform proposals, newly-adopted legislation reforms the state's tenure laws in a way that reflects the importance of student performance-centered evaluation. Tenure

is earned on the basis of effective practice, as informed by evaluations conducted through the new evaluation and support system. The law defines ineffectiveness, not merely incompetence, as a cause for termination. When dismissals must occur, the law streamlines the time and reduces the cost required to conduct due process proceedings and uphold the CSDE's commitment to fair treatment.

With the new requirements, the CSDE is aware of potentially overburdening districts, especially smaller ones with limited resources. The state has therefore included in this plan a measure of mandate relief by providing a ready-to-use state model, SEED, for those districts that want to adopt it while letting other districts develop and submit their own models for state review and approval. This process enables districts that have already reformed their evaluation systems to continue using them, provided they meet state standards as outlined in the Guidelines.

Using Evaluation Results to Inform Personnel Decisions

Under Connecticut's previous education statute, evaluations were ongoing but no time period was specified and implementation varied by district. Public Act 12-116 requires annual performance evaluations of principals, administrators, and teachers, based upon the framework recommended by the PEAC, adopted by the SBE, and pursuant to Guidelines issued by the SBE on June 27, 2012. It further required that the evaluation system be piloted in the 2012-2013 school year. The pilot represented a diverse group of 10 districts or consortia of districts. Public Act 12-116 also required that the results of the evaluations inform personnel decisions including professional development, tenure, and dismissal.

Professional Development. Under the previous statute, professional development was based largely on seat time: teachers were required to acquire a specific number of Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Public Act 12-116 overhauls this system of professional development, instead requiring that professional development activities be differentiated based on the results of evaluation, be job-embedded, and delivered primarily in small-groups. Public Act 12-116 also requires that teacher and administrator support and remediation plans be developed on the basis of evaluation results for those educators identified as "developing" or "below standard." Practitioner working groups, convened as part of the PEAC process, advised on the development of the Guidelines for the state model and reviewed how other school districts and states developed effective evaluation and remediation programs, including those in place in New Haven and elsewhere, where teachers and principals develop individualized improvement plans and each educator's targeted plan is informed by the results of his previous year's evaluation.

Connecticut's Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) will also provide technical assistance workshops for teachers and administrators to embed the system and process for evaluating data to professional learning into their local plans.

Draft *Connecticut Guidance for a Professional Learning System* was developed in May 2013. This document provides a new vision for professional learning as set forth in Public Act 12-116, now C.G.S. 10-148a. The development of the DRAFT *Connecticut Guidance for a Professional Learning System* (Appendix 3.4) continued through the summer and fall of 2014. A broad group of stakeholders, Professional Learning Advisory Committee (PLAC), convened to update and revise the 2013 draft of this document, *and* develop a definition of professional learning and standards for professional learning. The PLAC consists of representatives from the Connecticut Academy for Professional Learning, an intensive, six-day learning experience designed to develop and advance effective systems for professional learning. The broad group of stakeholders represented in the PLAC are teachers, administrators, and other educators from the following organizations: American Federation of Teachers – Connecticut (AFT-CT),

Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), Connecticut Education Association (CEA), Connecticut Federation of School Administrators (CFSA), Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) Alliance, and State Education Resource Center (SERC).

The primary work of the PLAC resulted in a DRAFT of the *Connecticut Definition for Professional Learning*, *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* and the revised *Connecticut Guidance for Professional Learning Systems*. Explanations of each topic are as follows:

1) ***Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning*** – *High-quality professional learning is a process that ensures all members of the school community have equitable access throughout their career continuum to relevant, individual and collaborative opportunities to enhance their practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes*.
2) ***Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*** -- Connecticut's standards for professional learning are informed by the work of Learning Forward. The eight standards are *Learning Communities*, *Leadership, Resources*, *Data*, *Learning Designs*, *Implementation*, *Outcomes*, and *Equity*. The standards were designed to support the development and delivery of high quality professional learning to enhance both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student.
3) ***Connecticut Guidance for Professional Learning Systems*** – Connecticut's definition, values and beliefs, standards for a professional learning system and guidance for Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs) to develop an effective professional learning system and plan.

Tenure and Dismissal. Public Act 12-116 includes significant provisions to reform the state's tenure law. Previously, tenure was attained on the basis of years of service: a teacher offered a fifth year of employment is automatically granted tenure. Prior state law was silent on the performance expectations of teachers who achieved tenure. Public Act 12-116 revises this definition, requiring that offers of a fifth year of employment and the granting of tenure be made on the basis of effective practice as informed by the evaluation system.

Past Connecticut law set "incompetence" as a cause for dismissal. This is too low of a bar. Public Act 12-116 also establishes "ineffectiveness," informed by the evaluation and support system, as a cause for dismissal.

Public Act 12-116 also streamlines termination proceedings. When the reason for termination is ineffectiveness, the termination hearing must be focused on whether the evaluation ratings are in accordance with the new evaluation program and are reasonable in light of the evidence. Public Act 12-116 also limits the number of hours of evidence and testimony at the termination hearings to six hours for each party. These changes allow for termination hearings to remain fair to all parties while taking less time in a more manageable process.

Connecticut's Plan of Action

Since 2012, the CSDE has executed a plan to develop and support the new evaluation systems. The plan is guided by a set of seven goals and extends beyond the development of the Guidelines alone. To date, the CSDE has met or made substantial progress towards all of these goals.

Goal 1. Involve Districts in Baseline Assessment of Evaluation Systems. The CSDE began the Guidelines development process in January 2011 with a stakeholder engagement effort involving the local educational agencies. The CSDE sent out a survey to all districts across the state, including approximately 200 districts, private schools, and charter schools, seeking their input on a number of issues related to teacher and administrator evaluation systems. The CSDE called those districts and schools that did not respond and encouraged submission as soon as possible. The CSDE tabulated and analyzed the feedback and posted a summary of the survey on the state website to share with the public and stakeholders.

Goal 2. Develop Guidelines Document for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation. In February 2012, PEAC and the SBE took significant action toward the completion of this goal with the adoption of the required evaluation framework. PEAC has made a number of important decisions concerning the Guidelines, including the principles guiding CSDE policies, lessons learned from state best practices, and most importantly, the Connecticut design approach, which is discussed in more detail later in this document. The CSDE has implemented the following three major activities:

1) Reviewed the Common Core of Leading-Connecticut Standards for School Leaders, the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching and the 1999 Guidelines for Teacher and School Leader Evaluation and Professional Development to develop the guiding framework;
2) Reviewed current research and literature on teacher and administrator evaluation issues; and
3) Researched and deliberated on key issues, such as student achievement measures and the fairness, reliability, and validity of these measures.

The SBE unanimously approved the Guidelines on June 27, 2012.

In an effort to continuously improve upon the Guidelines, PEAC reached consensus on the provision of flexibility regarding several components of the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (2012) on Wednesday, January 29, 2014. Subsequently, on February 6, 2014, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved and adopted PEAC's proposed flexibilities with some minor edits. The final SBE version of the flexibility language is contained in Appendix 3.5.

Local and regional board of education, in mutual agreement with their statutorily-required Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs) (Connecticut General Statute Section 10-151b), may choose to adopt one or more of the following flexibility components. These flexibility components represent new and alternative minimum requirements within the Guidelines. Districts may opt to pursue variations upon these specific flexibilities so long as they satisfy the minimum requirements. Districts, with their Professional Development and Evaluation Committees, may apply for flexibility during the remainder of the 2014-15 academic year or for the 2015-2016 year (or for both). Adopted Flexibilities to the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, address the following:

1. Number of Student Growth Goals
2. Decoupling of State Test Data in 2014-2015
3. Number of Observations

On Thursday, April 24, 2014, PEAC reached consensus on proposed revisions to three components of the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (June 2012). These revisions were adopted by the SBE on May 6, 2014 and are summarized below:

1. Dispute-Resolution Procedure:
    - Additional guidance, inclusive of an illustrative example, regarding the Dispute-Resolution Process required as part of district educator evaluation and support plans.

2. Rating System: Four Performance Evaluation Designators:
   - Clarification of the term "performance" as applied to the four summative performance level designators; and
   - A commitment to ongoing discussion between the CSDE and PEAC related to the "4-Level Matrix Rating" process during the course of the 2014-15 academic year.

3. Standardized indicators/Non-standardized Indicators:
   - Adjusted language with respect to the use of standardized and non-standardized indicators for the Student Growth and Development component of a teacher's evaluation, which consists of 45% of the final summative rating; and
   - A commitment to ongoing discussion between the CSDE and PEAC to examine and evolve the system of standardized and non-standardized student learning indicators, during the course of the 2014-15 academic year.

The revised language is captured in detail within **Appendix 3.6**.

Goal 3. Build Out Guiding Frameworks for a Model Educator Evaluation Program. In February 2012, PEAC and the SBE took significant action toward the completion of this goal with the adoption of the required evaluation framework. This framework specifies:

1) A new model for evaluating educators that includes, multiple indicators of student academic growth using summative, formative, interim, and benchmark assessment results that would establish a body of evidence. To consider indicators of student learning, the following assessment tools, among others, may be used: state assessment Vertical Scales (grades 3 to 8), the Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System, district student growth measures, grades K–2 interim assessments (math, science, and reading), the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Other examples of student learning indicators include curriculum-based assessments, portfolios of student work, performances rated against a rubric, and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). SLOs are used to determine student progress based on outcomes and objectives determined by the teacher in conjunction with the principal or other school administrator. These SLOs are based on current student functioning to determine appropriate, but ambitious goals for individual students, including for English Language Learners and students with disabilities. The CSDE also considered indicators for both individually attributed growth to evaluate a teacher's contribution to their assigned students' academic progress and collectively attributed growth to evaluate the contribution a group of educators makes to its students' academic progress. PEAC's working group provided guidance on the development of the above, and the SBE built out its approved and required framework with these elements explained and included.

A Closer Look at Assessments and Assessment Literacy

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is currently collaborating with colleagues at the national, state and local levels to determine the best approach to address assessment issues related to supporting effective instruction and leadership. The pilot evaluation system resulted in a heightened focus on current assessment practices at both the district and state levels. The CSDE Talent Office staff - responsible for the state model (SEED)

pilot and-full statewide implementation - have collaborated with assessment staff and have begun cross-divisional meetings with the Academic Office, Performance and Accountability Office and Turnaround Office to ensure that the assessment strategy that results is the one that meets the needs of each office, yet is aligned and coherent. As well, the staff has worked closely on developing additional technical assistance in partnership with the Northeast Comprehensive Center (NCC). The overall goal is to develop a strategy for enhancing existing assessment infrastructure, increasing assessment literacy and assisting districts with the development of comprehensive assessment systems.

The CSDE is collaborating with other states and national partners regarding larger assessment strategy and best practice, as well as more targeted assessment issues such as establishing cut scores in the four levels of performance in an educator evaluation system.

Though the CSDE has implemented an approach to measuring student growth, the CSDE has convened a workgroup to address the issue of assessment of student growth and development in non-tested grades and subjects. The Student and Educator Support Specialists' workgroup is comprised of practitioners from districts across the state who represent various disciplines, including library media specialists, school psychologists, school counselors, speech language pathologists, etc. The individuals representing their respective discipline have convened a group of stakeholders in similar roles to continue to develop guidance regarding issues related to SLOs and Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs), observation, performance, and practice. The goal is to develop statewide guidance to districts regarding assessment practice in non-tested grades and subjects and observation of teacher practice and performance to ensure fairness and validity.

Collaboration at the National Level:
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO): CSDE staff has contacted staff at the CCSSO in order to learn which states might be of assistance in developing the most appropriate assessment strategy and plan to address the specific assessment needs related to educator evaluation and support.

EducationCounsel: CSDE staff has contacted senior staff at the EducationCounsel in Washington, DC with specific assessment related questions as we continue to address specific assessment questions that have arisen during the SEED pilot and in subsequent years.

Race to the Top States: The CSDE has contacted several states that were the recipients of Race to the Top (RTTT) grant awards in order to explore the assessment strategy and practices they have implemented in the past few years using RTTT funds. CSDE staff traveled to Rhode Island to meet with leaders at the Rhode Island State Department of Education to discuss their guide, *Comprehensive Assessment System: Rhode Island Criteria and Guidance,* which the CSDE is currently reviewing to determine the suitability of amending the guide for use in Connecticut. CSDE staff are specifically interested in the Rhode Island strategy which focuses less on the publication of lists of tests and more on the development of broader assessment literacy among all educators. Rhode Island has chosen to focus on defining a process for how assessments are used to make educational decisions which they believe is critical to ensure that there is consistency of rigor and expectations across all buildings and levels within a local educational agency (LEA). The purpose of the guide is to outline the elements and features of a comprehensive assessment system, primarily as they apply to the roles and responsibilities

of district leadership.

In addition to Rhode Island, CSDE has also contacted the Illinois and Colorado State Departments of Education. Colorado has developed an Assessment Review Tool designed to help Colorado educators rate an assessment's potential for measuring student academic growth aligned to the state standards. A series of webinars and continued conversation is planned to explore the feasibility of Colorado's approach and tools for use in Connecticut. The CSDE is also questioning whether to release to the field a list of assessments for use by schools and districts as they seek the best assessment methods to determine student growth; the CSDE plans to acquire Colorado's fully vetted list of assessments for internal review and to determine the level of use of this list in Connecticut.

Collaboration at the State Level:
As stated previously, the goal of the CSDE is to develop a strategy for enhancing existing assessment infrastructure, increasing assessment literacy and assisting districts with the development of comprehensive assessment systems across the state. The CSDE has and will continue to collaborate with partners and stakeholders statewide. The CSDE will develop guidance and a system by which LEAs can take inventory of existing assessments to determine the appropriateness of each assessment to its intended purpose, as well as to assess gaps and/or duplication and redundancies. This will be achieved through various mechanisms as outlined below.

Student and Educator Support Specialists' Workgroup: This workgroup was originally convened as part of PEAC and has continued to meet in order to achieve the following goals: 1) identify appropriate assessments to measure student growth and development in non-tested grades/subjects and other disciplines (e.g., school counselor, library media specialist) and 2) identify appropriate protocols for the observation of practice and performance that align to both the standards and practice of each of these respective disciplines.

Critical Friends' Group: CSDE staff has invited practitioners with expertise in assessment from the field to join CSDE staff in a Critical Friends' group to continue to explore issues related to assessment and the desire to develop greater assessment literacy among all educators. The Critical Friends' group will be comprised of representatives from various districts across the state to ensure broad representation and the inclusion of all assessment-related issues.

CAPSS Assessment and Accountability Committee: The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) convenes committees to address various issues relevant to Superintendents. This subcommittee has been meeting for several years with the focus area changing based on the current context and education agenda in the state. Currently, the focus is on issues related to Smarter Balanced Assessments and more recently, to issues pertaining to assessment within the educator evaluation and support system.

Feedback from 2012-13 Districts Piloting SEED and Statewide Implementation: The CSDE has facilitated the collection of sample SLOs and IAGDs from many districts/consortia. The Department is interested in assessing current assessment practices being used to measure student growth and development. The NCC has helped the CSDE to build a template for the development of high-quality SLOs and IAGDs, along with helpful annotations to support teachers who review these examples. In summer 2014, the CSDE developed a comprehensive

Student Learning Goals/Objectives Handbook that was released to the field to support the work of developing high-leverage student goals and identification of appropriate measures.

Innovation Zones: The CSDE has allowed for a degree of flexibility and variation in the implementation of CT's educator evaluation and support system in order to support local districts in their desire to implement innovative practices that support educator effectiveness and student achievement. To that end, the CSDE has continually worked with districts statewide implementation in order to determine which practices may hold promise for expansion to other districts yet also meet the established core requirements as set forth in the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation.

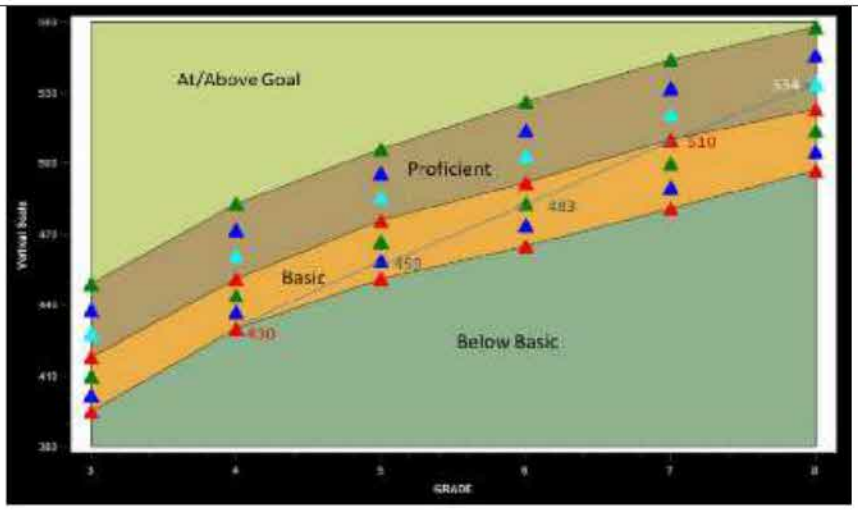
Connecticut's Approach to Measuring Student Growth

In Connecticut, the Smarter Balanced (SB) Assessment in English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics will be used for measuring student achievement growth. In spring 2015, Connecticut students will be taking the SB ELA/Literacy and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11. In both subjects, the test scores are vertically scaled across grades and would facilitate tracking student growth within the same subject across grades, despite differences in test content and difficulty.

Each vertical scale ranges from 2000-3000 score points. By subtracting a student's current score (e.g., a grade 5 score of 2400 in Mathematics) from the student's previous score in the same subject (e.g., a grade 4 score of 2300 in Mathematics), a teacher or administrator can assess the individual student's growth in Mathematics performance over a one year period (a growth of 100 points in this example). Teachers and administrators can use achievement growth information with other academic information about students to plan for student instruction.

The CSDE will utilize the vertical scale to create a growth model based on the expectation that all students in grades 4 through 8 should demonstrate growth each year in each tested subject. Desired and achievable growth targets will be set in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics for all students entering grades 4 through 8 to reach in that year.

The CSDE has a proven track record of successfully creating a vertical scale score based growth model. After constructing a vertical scale for its CMT assessment through a rigorous linking study in 2007, the CSDE analyzed CMT results to construct its growth model. In that approach, using achievement level cut scores on the vertical scale, two equidistant interim cut points were calculated for achievement levels of Basic, Proficient and Goal. This produced three gain-score targets, low, mid-, and high scores, for each of these CMT score bands. End-of-year achievement target scores were set for students in grades 4-8, based on scores and achievement levels from the previous year. Growth targets were set such that each student must grow one-third of the difference between adjacent performance levels (e.g., low to mid-basic, mid to high basic, high basic to proficient). The vertical scale, performance levels and intermediate level vertical scale cuts within each CMT achievement level for Mathematics is presented below. The paper titled "The Development of Connecticut's Vertical Scale and Growth Model" discusses the model and its development in great detail.



The development of the new growth model based on the SB assessment will incorporate the lessons learned from the development of the prior model. One expected enhancement is with respect to students performing at the lowest achievement level. In the prior model, students who performed at the lowest level in the CMT had a constant target of reaching the next level. In the new model, however, it is expected that students at the lowest achievement level will have targets that are based on their vertical scale scores. At the other end of the spectrum, it is expected that students performing at the highest level will also have growth targets to reach the following school year.

The primary aggregate metric that is expected to be generated from the growth model is termed the "Success Rate"; it is the percent of students in the group (e.g., district, school, subgroup, class) who meet their individual growth targets in the subject. A sample report provided in 2013 to districts that participated in the educator evaluation pilot is presented below.

STUDENT		2012 ACHIEVEMENT AND 2013 TARGET				2013 RESULTS		
SASID	NAME	SCORE	ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL	2013 TARGET SCORE	2013 TARGET LEVEL	SCORE	ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL	MET TARGET?
		415	MID PROFICIENT	448	HIGH PROFICIENT	485	LOW GOAL	YES
		419	MID PROFICIENT	448	HIGH PROFICIENT	488	HIGH GOAL	YES
		399	HIGH BASIC	434	LOW PROFICIENT	455	HIGH GOAL	YES
		505	ADVANCED	567	ADVANCED	567	ADVANCED	YES
		413	MID PROFICIENT	448	HIGH PROFICIENT	455	LOW GOAL	YES
		402	LOW BASIC	417	MID BASIC	426	LOW GOAL	YES
		458	MID GOAL	503	HIGH GOAL	531	ADVANCED	YES
		503	ADVANCED	567	ADVANCED	524	ADVANCED	YES
		402	LOW BASIC	417	MID BASIC	455	LOW GOAL	YES
		351	BELOW BASIC	417	LOW BASIC	396	BELOW BASIC	NO
		398	BELOW BASIC	422	LOW BASIC	409	BELOW BASIC	NO
		466	HIGH GOAL	567	ADVANCED	488	HIGH GOAL	NO
		437	LOW PROFICIENT	448	MID PROFICIENT	419	BELOW BASIC	NO
		474	MID GOAL	503	HIGH GOAL	484	MID GOAL	NO
		452	HIGH GOAL	567	ADVANCED	473	MID GOAL	NO
SUCCESS RATE: 60								

The individualized targets in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics will be established through ongoing collaboration with various stakeholders including classroom teachers, subject matter experts, school principals, superintendents, CSDE staff, policy leaders, and measurement

experts. CSDE will begin the process of engaging stakeholders after it receives the results from the first operational assessment. It is expected that the growth model will be finalized after the second administration of the Smarter Balanced assessment. Growth results on SB ELA/Literacy and Mathematics assessments will be incorporated into district/school accountability for the 2015-16 year (i.e., analysis to be conducted in summer/fall 2016) and into educator evaluation and support systems beginning in the 2016-17 school year.

Measuring Growth of Students with Disabilities

In the CMT, Connecticut offered two alternate assessments for students with disabilities: an assessment based on *modified* academic achievement standards known as the Modified Assessment System (MAS) and an assessment based on *alternate* academic achievement standards known as the Skills Checklist. Even with those two options, a majority of students with disabilities participated in the standard CMT assessment. In 2012-13, 61.8% of the over 36,000 students with disabilities in the tested grades were administered the standard Mathematics assessment; 27.5% were tested using the MAS while 10.6% were tested using the Skills Checklist. The corresponding numbers for Reading were 56.8% (standard), 32.5% (MAS) and 10.7% (Skills Checklist).

With the discontinuance of the MAS, it is expected that an even greater majority of students with disabilities will participate in the standard SB assessment. For these students, growth across grades/years will be measured using the growth model approach for the standard assessment.

Connecticut has partnered with the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) to develop the new Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) which will replace the skills checklist in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics. This assessment is designed for eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 3-8 and 11. If the CTAA does not enable the construction of a growth model, growth for students taking the CTAA will not be attempted; it will be expected that results from the CTAA will need to be incorporated into an IAGD using an approach similar to one used for non-tested grades/subjects.

Measuring Growth for English Language Learners

All English Language Learners who are not identified as a student with a disability are expected to take the standard SB assessment; therefore, growth across grades/years can be measured using Connecticut's growth model for the standard assessment. English language learners who are enrolled for the first time in a U.S. school for 12 calendar months or less may be excused from ELA/Literacy assessments; however, they do take Mathematics in the first Year which can form the basis for growth in Year 2 using Connecticut's growth model.

Smarter Balanced Assessments and Supports Designed for All Students

To ensure that all students can fully participate and demonstrate their abilities on the standard assessment, a research-based policy has been developed that outlines three categories of resources: universal accessibility tools; designated supports; and accommodations. It is expected that these resources will enable greater access to the standard SB assessment for both ELLs and students with disabilities.

The following from the Smarter Balanced Website (extracted on February 1, 2015) demonstrates why accessibility is one of their core principles.

> The [Smarter Balanced] assessment system uses technology to deliver assessments that fit the needs of individual students. Assessment items and performance tasks will be associated with a variety of accessibility tools and accommodations that can be delivered to students automatically based on their profile.
>
> All items and tasks will be reviewed for accessibility following the Smarter Balanced Item Specifications and Review Guidelines. Additional information about the development of items and tasks is available in a series of trainings for item writers and reviewers.
>
> In September 2013, Smarter Balanced Governing States unanimously approved *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines* for the assessment system, which will shape the delivery of online testing for all students, including those with visual, auditory, linguistic, or physical needs. The guidelines were developed in collaboration with member states and nationally recognized experts on English language learners and students with disabilities. The following three categories of resources distinguish between embedded tools included in the testing platform and non-embedded tools.
>
> 1. A set of universal accessibility tools—such as a digital notepad and scratch paper—will be available to all students.
> 2. Designated supports—like a translated pop-up glossary—will be made available to students for whom a need has been identified by school personnel familiar with each student's needs and testing resources.
> 3. Accommodations will be available to students with a documented need noted in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan. These tools include Braille and closed captioning, among others.

2) To develop the guiding frameworks, the CSDE reviewed:
   a) How the new statewide system of teacher evaluation and professional development relates to evaluation based on the Common Core of Teaching (2010), which defines effective teaching practice throughout the career continuum of educators in six domains: content and essential skill; classroom environment, student engagement and commitment to learning; planning for active learning; instruction for active learning; assessment for learning; and professional responsibilities and teacher leadership;
   b) Methods of measuring teacher effectiveness that the CSDE can monitor and report on quantitatively on an annual basis;
   c) Job-embedded professional development and training for administrators and principals targeted at both supporting the development of teachers and evaluating their effectiveness.
   d) Research from other districts and states on student growth in non-tested areas, combined with our use of pilot districts as testing grounds for determining student growth in non-tested grades to incorporate into future iterations of the teacher and administrator evaluation system.

e) Lessons learned from pilot districts and through forums where districts have an opportunity to discuss best practices.

A Closer Look at Linking Professional Learning to Evaluations

The CSDE began the process of redefining professional development and learning in Connecticut through the passage of Public Act 12-116 (effective July 1, 2012), which eliminated Connecticut's longstanding system for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) which awarded credits based on seat time. Educators holding a professional certificate were required to earn 90 hours of Continuing Education Units (9 CEUs) within a five year period. The legislative changes require that all districts develop a plan to provide 18 hours of on-going, job-embedded professional learning to every certified educator, including those holding an initial or provisional certificate. The statutory language states,

"Such program of professional development shall (1) be a comprehensive sustained and intensive approach to improving teacher and administrator effectiveness in increasing student knowledge achievement, (2) focus on refining and improving various effective teaching methods that are shared between and among educators, (3) foster collective responsibility for improved student performance, and (4) be comprised of professional learning that (A) is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards, (B) is conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by principals, coaches, mentors, distinguished educators, (C) occurs frequently on an individual basis or among groups of teachers in a job-embedded process of continuous improvement, and (D) includes a repository of best practices for teaching methods developed by educators within each school that is continuously available to such educators for commenting and updating."

The primary purpose of educator evaluation is to strengthen individual and collective practices in order to improve student growth. Connecticut's system for educator evaluation and support is designed to promote collaboration and shared ownership for professional growth, and establishes a clear connection between the results of educator evaluation and the professional learning that supports growth and development in areas identified in need of improvement at the individual, team, school and district levels. The professional learning opportunities identified for each educator should be based on the individual needs identified through the evaluation process.

A broad group of stakeholders, Professional Learning Advisory Committee (PLAC), convened to update and revise the 2013 DRAFT of the *Connecticut Guidance for Professional Learning Systems*, develop a definition for professional learning and standards for professional learning. A CSDE team, in collaboration with the PLAC, is revising the Guidelines to reflect legislative changes in order to provide guidance to all CT districts reflecting these legislative changes. Connecticut's vision for professional learning is that each and every Connecticut educator engages in continuous learning every day to increase professional effectiveness, resulting in positive outcomes for each and every student. The CSDE is committed to providing guidance and resources to the educators of the school and/or district community who are charged with the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive professional development plan for certified employees of the district, as represented by the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) (Connecticut General Statute Section 10-151b). This guidance will support the PDEC's work of developing and sustaining high-quality systems of professional learning that enhance educator practice, improve

student outcomes, and complement the educator evaluation and support system.

Differentiation for Educators across the Career Continuum
Improvement and Remediation Plans: If an educator's performance is rated as "developing" or "below standard," it signals the need for an administrator to create an individual improvement and remediation plan. The plan should be developed in consultation with the educator and his/her exclusive bargaining representative. Improvement and remediation plans must:

- Identify resources, support and other strategies to address documented deficiencies;
- Indicate a timeline for implementing such resources, support and other strategies in the course of the same school year as the plan is issued; and
- Include indicators of success, including a summative rating of "proficient" or higher at the conclusion of the improvement and remediation plan.

Career Development and Growth: Rewarding exemplary performance identified through the evaluation process with opportunities for career development and professional growth is a critical step in both building confidence in the evaluation system itself and building the capacity of all educators.

Examples of such opportunities include, but are not limited to observation of peers, mentoring early career teachers and administrators, participating in the development of educator improvement and remediation plans for peers whose performance is developing or below standard, leading professional learning communities, differentiate career pathways, and focused professional development based on goals for continuous growth and development.

Goal 4. Build Out Guiding Frameworks for Model Administrator Evaluation Program. Most of the activities under this goal took place between March and June 2012 and were based on the evaluation framework adopted by the SBE in February 2012. PEAC developed Guidelines for the following:

1) A new statewide system of administrator and principal evaluation and professional development as it relates to administrative evaluation based on the new Connecticut Standards for School Leaders and the Connecticut Common Core of Leading (2009);
2) Methods of measuring administrator and principal effectiveness based on the criteria above that the CSDE can monitor and report on quantitatively on an annual basis; and
3) Training for district superintendents and administrators targeted to supporting and evaluating school-based and central office administrators.

Goal 5. Advisory Teacher Evaluation Work Group to Develop Performance Criteria and Rubrics. A teacher evaluation work group was established to advise the development and implementation of the teacher evaluation system. Members began meeting in March 2012 and performed their tasks through June 2012. The charge for the teacher work group was to assist in the development of performance criteria, rubrics, and other tools based upon the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching standards and aligned with PEAC measures of effectiveness with a range for guiding evaluation decisions about teacher effectiveness. Frameworks for evaluations of teachers for ELs and students with disabilities were part of the teacher work group's agenda. PEAC reached a consensus agreement on the Guidelines for teacher evaluations, and these were approved by the SBE on June 27, 2012.

As an extension of this work group, the CSDE has been committed to enhancing the resources that support the teacher evaluation and support model. Based on feedback from the 2012-13 pilot year and the past two years of statewide implementation, the CSDE has convened practitioners from across the state to develop and refine a new rubric, directly aligned to the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT). CCT Foundational Skills (1999), revised and adopted by the SBE in February 2010, establishes a vision for teaching and learning in Connecticut Public Schools. State law and regulations link the CCT to various professional requirements that span a teacher's career, including preparation, induction and teacher evaluation and support. The six domains of the CCT outline the standards which articulate the knowledge, skills and qualities that Connecticut teachers need to prepare students to meet 21st-century challenges to succeed in college, career and life. Because teaching is a complex, integrated activity, the domain indicators from the original CCT were consolidated into four domains for the purpose of describing essential and critical aspects of a teacher's performance and practice. The four domains and 12 indicators (three per domain) identify the essential aspects of a teacher's performance and practice.

The rubric, now named the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*, integrates Connecticut Core Standards throughout its four domains. We are partnering with Professional Examination Services to conduct a validation study of this rubric, while simultaneously building out additional resources to support teachers and evaluators in the use of the rubric. The validation study which began in 2013-14 is expected to be completed in 2016. While districts have flexibility in selecting a rubric, 109 have indicated that they are currently using the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*.

CT Evidence Guides

As a companion to the CCT rubric, *CT Evidence Guides* were developed by teachers and school leaders in the summer of 2014. The guides include sample evidence, at each performance level, that might be seen during an observation of performance and practice. The guides span grades levels from Pre-K to 12, across all content areas. All guidance documents are currently available on the www.connecticutseed.org website.

Goal 6. Advisory Administrator Evaluation Work Group to Develop Performance Criteria and Rubrics. The administrators' working group was established to advise the CSDE on the development and implementation of the administrator evaluation system. The members met and performed their tasks from March through June 2012. The charge for the administrator work group was to develop performance criteria, rubrics, and other tools based upon administrator standards and aligned with PEAC measures of effectiveness with a range for guiding evaluation decisions about administrator and principal effectiveness, using student academic growth measure(s) as criteria. The Guidelines were approved by the SBE on June 27, 2012.

As with the teacher rubric, the CSDE has continued to invest resources to support the administrator model. Specifically, representatives of seven districts were convened in spring 2014 and have continued to work towards improving the existing *Leader Evaluation Rubric*, which serves as the tool for observation of practice and performance within the SEED model. This revised version of the rubric (expected release in spring 2015) will also initiate a validation study during the 2015-16 year in partnership with ProExamination Services.

Goal 7. Advisory Pupil Services and Implementation Work Groups. The advisory pupil services work group developed recommendations for the Guidelines of the evaluation and support system for support staff. The CSDE also convened an implementation work group to assist the SBE in the development of

rollout procedures and timelines. Members met from March 2012 and performed their tasks through June 2012. The Guidelines were approved by the SBE on June 27, 2012.

The CSDE provides dedicated support to educators who do not have traditional classrooms but serve a "caseload" of students. In 2013-14, the CSDE convened a widely representative stakeholder group to explore implementation options and provide guidance for these educators. This newly-formed Student and Educator Support Specialist (SESS) workgroup developed white papers and sample Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) to provide specific guidance for the following disciplines: Teachers of English Language Learner (ELL) Educators, Social Workers, School Psychologists, Library Media Specialists, School Counselors, Speech and Language Pathologists, Mathematics and English Language Arts Coaches, Transition Coordinators and Special Education Teachers. These white papers and sample SLOs are designed to guide administrators in conducting evaluations for individuals from these specific disciplines as part of a comprehensive evaluation and support system.

In addition to the white papers and sample SLOs, an adapted version of *The CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* was developed for use with some SESS educators, entitled the *CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery*. Specifically, this adapted rubric is identified for use with School Psychologists, Speech and Language Pathologists, Comprehensive School Counselors and School Social Workers, though it is available for other SESS educators to use. While these disciplines have agreed that the SESS-adapted rubric may appropriately assist an evaluator in examining their practice, the groups have recommended that the CSDE consider the use of nationally developed and vetted rubrics created by their respective national organizations which adhere to national standards and align to the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching. The School Psychologist work group has included, within their guidance document, a draft rubric aligned to their national standards for review and consideration as determined appropriate by the district. As with the teacher rubric, the CSDE is partnering with Professional Examination Services to conduct a validation study of this rubric. The study is expected to be completed in 2016.

The CCT/SESS adapted rubric is available as a resource for use by Connecticut school districts. Although ***not required***, the alignment of the SESS-adapted rubric to the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* will benefit evaluators as they engage in professional dialogues across all content areas. *CT Evidence Guides* were also developed by SESS educators in their specific content areas. All guidance documents are currently available on the www.connecticutseed.org website.

Development Plan and Timeline

The table below provides a high-level summary of the Connecticut plan for the development of evaluation and support systems across the state:

Table 3.1: Development of Guidelines and Implementation of New Evaluation and Support Systems

Activities	Accountable Party	Completed By
PEAC determines Guidelines, design approach, and framework for state and local evaluation systems.	PEAC members	January 2012
The SBE adopts framework for district evaluation systems.	CSDE and SBE	February 2012
Work groups convene and determine the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation for the state model and implementation plans.	PEAC members	March–June 2012
PILOT DISTRICTS TIMELINE (please refer to page 188 for detailed timeline)		
Districts apply for voluntary pilot program.	CSDE | District	April 2012
The CSDE reviews draft of the Guidelines of the state model, finalizes Guidelines, and plans for a pilot in 2012–13 school year.	CSDE leadership and staff	June 2012
The CSDE seeks educators' feedback on the Guidelines of the state model.	CSDE staff	June 2012
The CSDE submits the state model and Guidelines for the SBE to review and approve.	CSDE leadership	June 27, 2012
The SBE adopts and issues new Guidelines for teacher and administrator evaluations.	SBE members	June 27, 2012
CSDE and district staff trained for pilot district implementation of new evaluation systems.	CSDE | District	July–August 2012
Connecticut launches voluntary pilot district implementation of new evaluation systems.	CSDE | District	September 2012
NON-PILOT DISTRICTS TIMELINE (please refer to pages 188-189 for detailed timeline)		
All districts not participating in the pilot develop a new teacher and administrator evaluation system that meets state standards and requirements.	District leadership	Fall 2012-April 15, 2013
Training takes place for evaluators on how to use the new teacher and administrator evaluation systems.	CSDE | District	Summer 2013
All districts must have in place an evaluation system that includes processes to report, review, and use evaluation data to support teachers and administrators in professional development with a goal to improve the quality of instruction and ultimately student learning.	CSDE | District	Fall 2013

Activities	Accountable Party	Completed By
DETAILED ASSESSMENT TIMELINE		
CSDE engages the Northeast Comprehensive Center (NCC) to provide additional guidance and support with developing student learning goals/objectives as measured by indicators of academic growth and development. NCC provides guidance on the use of assessments and partners with the CSDE to develop assessment literacy modules. The CSDE consults with other states (Rhode Island, Illinois, Colorado and Delaware) to learn what assessment tools they use. An extensive bank of student learning goals/objectives in all grades and multiple content area is developed by teachers and administrators and is posted on the www.connecticutseed.org website.	CSDE	January 2013-April 2013 and ongoing
Student and Educator Support Specialists' Workgroup provides CSDE with "deliverables," including appropriate student learning goals/objectives and differentiated protocols for observation of practice and performance (40% practice rating).	CSDE	Fall 2013 and ongoing
The CSDE provides guidance on the use of complementary observers as an additional source of human capital for contributing evidence in the observation of teacher performance and practice (40%).	CSDE	Fall 2013 and ongoing
DETAILED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TIMELINE		
The CSDE internal team convenes to explore the changes to current Professional Development Guidelines prompted by Public Act 12-116.	CSDE	December 2012
The CSDE convenes a group of external stakeholders representing various educator roles from across districts, union representation from CEA and AFT, and a representative from the RESC Alliance to develop a new DRAFT Guidelines for Professional Learning in Connecticut.	CSDE	January 2013 and ongoing
Professional Learning Critical Friends' Workgroup convenes to develop a new DRAFT Guidelines for Professional Learning in Connecticut.	CSDE	January 2013-May 2014
Convene an internal CSDE focus group to include CAS/CAPSS, CEA/AFT representatives and a statewide focus group consisting of teachers to review and offer feedback on DRAFT Guidelines. Make revisions as appropriate.	CSDE	April 2013

Activities	Accountable Party	Completed By
Present finalized Guidelines in public forums	CSDE	Late April 2013
Present finalized Guidelines for Professional Learning to the SBE.	CSDE	March 2015
The CSDE convened the Connecticut Academy for Professional Learning, facilitated by Learning Forward's senior advisor, Joellen Killion, and senior consultant, Victoria Duff. The Academy supports the CSDE's goal of developing a statewide system of professional learning that enhances educator practice and student outcomes. The Academy provides an intensive, six-day learning experience designed to: – develop the capacity of educators to participate in designing high-quality systems of professional learning; – examine successful models of professional learning that support educator growth; – explore how adult learning theories influence decisions and practices regarding professional learning; – examine how stakeholders support, facilitate and evaluate effective professional learning; – develop guidance to support PDECs as they develop and update Educator Evaluation and Support plans; and – explore potential policy implications at the state and local levels.	CSDE	September 2014-March 2015
DRAFT of the *Connecticut Guidance for a Professional Learning System* developed that aligns the guidance with the new vision for professional learning as set forth in Public Act 12-116, now C.G.S. 10-148a.	CSDE	May 2013- continue through 2014
A broad group of stakeholders, Professional Learning Advisory Committee (PLAC), convened to update and revise the 2013 DRAFT of the *Connecticut Guidance for Professional Learning Systems*, develop a CT Definition for Professional Learning and CT Standards for Professional Learning.		October 2014 - Ongoing

Activities	Accountable Party	Completed By
The PLAC consists of representatives from the Connecticut Academy for Professional Learning, an intensive, six-day learning experience designed to focus developing effective systems of professional learning. The broad group of stakeholders represented in the PLAC are teachers, administrators, and other educators from the following organizations: American Federation of Teachers – Connecticut (AFT-CT), Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), Connecticut Education Association (CEA), Connecticut Federation of School Administrators (CFSA), Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) Alliance, and State Education Resource Center (SERC). The primary work of the PLAC has resulted in a DRAFT of the *Connecticut Definition for Professional Learning*, *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* and the revised *Connecticut Guidance for Professional Learning Systems*. These proposed resources will go before the SBE for review and adoption. The PLAC will then support the statewide rollout of this new vision for a high-quality professional learning system.	CSDE	March 2015
Upon approval by the SBE, CSDE disseminates the new professional learning guidance statewide and working with the PLAC, provides training and technical assistance to districts to assist in developing revised district plans aligned to the new guidance.	CSDE	2015-16 School Year

PEAC Achievements

Prior to the historic agreement on evaluation Guidelines, PEAC completed the following tasks:

1. Principles for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Systems. PEAC took the important step of adopting the principles that will guide the development of the evaluation systems at local district levels and inform policy decisions. Below are the ten principles PEAC adopted:

1) The primary purpose of evaluation is to strengthen individual and collective practices to improve student learning.

2) Evaluation systems should include multiple indicators of student academic growth and development while taking into account measurable student characteristics.
3) Evaluation systems should be standards-based using the Common Core of Teaching, state-adopted leadership standards, etc.
4) When weaknesses are identified, the educator should seek resources and support, including peer assistance and resource opportunities and support provided by the district.
5) Local district evaluation plans should be developed collaboratively by educators and administrators.
6) Professional learning plans should reflect the needs of individuals and groups of educators identified through the evaluation process.
7) Evaluation systems should include opportunities for formative assessments, summative assessments, and self-evaluation.
8) Districts should provide regular and ongoing professional learning opportunities and allocate time for educators and evaluators to collaborate to promote effective implementation of the evaluation plan.
9) Evaluation plans should include a process for resolving disputes in cases in which the educator and evaluator disagree on goal setting, formative or summative evaluation, and/or the improvement plan.
10) Districts should review and revise their evaluation plans at a minimum of every five years, using current research and best practice.

2. Design Approach for Evaluation and Support Systems. To select the design approach, PEAC closely considered various approaches for how districts may develop their teacher and administrator evaluation system using the Guidelines the CSDE provides. The CSDE looked at approaches that other states commonly use, such as the following:

1) A *prescriptive approach* uses specific percentages for multiple measures of student growth, teacher and administrator observation, and other components;
2) A *moderate approach* with minimum requirements provides approved components for evaluation and minimum percentages for some components;
3) A *state "default" approach with locally development options*, which offers a well-developed state model with the option for districts to design their own evaluation systems that meet the Guidelines.

In December 2011, PEAC reached consensus that the third option was the best approach for Connecticut. On January 25, 2012, PEAC reached unanimous agreement on the required evaluation framework for teacher evaluation, and on February 6, 2012, PEAC reached unanimous agreement on the required evaluation framework for administrator evaluation. On June 27, 2012, the SBE adopted the guidelines, recommended by PEAC, for a system for teacher and administrator evaluation and support. Subsequently, a comprehensive state model, known as the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED), was developed for use by the pilot districts in the 2012-2013 year. The guidelines continue to serve as the requirements that all educator evaluation and support plans must meet. Districts that do not choose to create their own evaluation system may choose to use the state model, SEED, in its most updated iteration, or they may choose to propose variations upon the teacher and administrator model to create a district-developed evaluation and support plan, so long as the plan is consistent with the state's Guidelines for Educator Evaluation

3. Guidelines for District-Developed Evaluation and Support Systems.

Educator evaluation and support guidelines developed by PEAC and adopted by the SBE in 2012, provide direction to school districts in the development and adoption of new systems of educator evaluation and support. These guidelines aim to ensure that districts have common and high expectations that educators are evaluated in a fair and consistent manner. The requirements include issues such as what process districts take to develop evaluation systems and their implementation plan, what constitutes high-quality observations, what are the appropriate sources of student learning indicators, what is appropriate training for evaluators, and what are appropriate professional development strategies. Below is a summary of the Guidelines adopted by the SBE:

1) Four-level rating system: Teachers and administrators are rated at four levels: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, and Below Standard.
2) High-quality observations of performance and practice:
   a) Guidelines require that i) observations are rated against a standards-based rubric, ii) observations result in useful feedback, and iii) evaluators receive training in observation and scoring and how to provide high-quality feedback.
   b) The state model provides i) the number and duration of formal vs. informal observations, ii) pre- and post-conference specifics, and iii) detailed observation rubrics tied to the Connecticut teaching and leadership standards.
   c) Annual observations are required, with at least three observations in class for first- and second-year teachers and "below standard" and "developing" teachers.
3) Multiple student learning indicators:
   a) Guidelines require i) multiple indicators that are fair, valid, reliable, and useful; ii) a minimum number of indicators for all educators; iii) safeguards for student characteristics, attendance, and mobility; and iv) an explanation of how these indicators will be selected and assessed throughout the school year.
   b) Guidelines provide examples of acceptable student learning indicators while the state model provides specific multiple student learning indicators that can be used for teachers of different grades and subjects.
4) Other evaluation components:
   a) Guidelines require that student, parent, peer, community, or staff surveys used are fair, valid, reliable, and useful.
   b) The state model, SEED, provides specific surveys that districts can adopt if they so choose.
   c) Training for evaluators: Training is provided by the CSDE for evaluators, the CSDE has trained district staff, and built the capacity of local partners, especially RESCs, to provide training. This state-sponsored training is optional. All districts must describe their training program and commitment to ongoing calibration in their annual evaluation and support plan submitted for review and approval by CSDE.
5) Evaluation-based professional development:
   a) Guidelines require that high-quality professional development accompany the evaluation system so educators receive useful feedback and improvement opportunities.
   b) Districts and schools shall provide professional learning opportunities for teachers, pursuant to subsection (b) of Sec. 10-220a of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.), based on the individual or group of individuals' needs that are identified through the evaluation process. These learning opportunities shall be clearly linked to the specific outcomes of the evaluation process as it relates to student learning results, observation of professional practice or the results of stakeholder feedback. The Professional Learning Advisory Committee (PLAC) has develop a definition for professional learning and standards for professional learning which will guide districts in the development of their professional learning plans.
6) State review and approval of evaluation and support plans developed by districts:

a) Educator evaluation and support systems plans or revisions to such plans must be approved by the CSDE prior to district implementation. The process is an iterative one between the CSDE and district superintendent, or in the instance of a consortium of districts, superintendents, until the CSDE approves the teacher and administrator evaluation and support system's plan.
b) The State Department of Education informs districts of the approval process timeline.

Update: Upon completion of the Neag School of Education Pilot Implementation Study (see Appendix 3.7) on January 1, 2014, PEAC convened to review the study results and recommendations. On Wednesday, January 29, 2014, PEAC reached consensus on the provision of flexibility regarding several components of the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (2012) based on the Neag study and other stakeholder feedback. Subsequently, on February 6, 2014, the SBE approved and adopted PEAC's proposed flexibilities with minor edits. Local and regional school districts, in mutual agreement with their Professional Development and Evaluation Committees, may choose to adopt one or more of the approved flexibility components. These flexibility components represent new and alternative minimum requirements within the Guidelines. Districts may opt to pursue variations upon these specific flexibilities so long as they satisfy the minimum requirements. The adopted flexibilities are outlined below.

Adopted Flexibilities to the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (as of February 6, 2014)

1. Number of goals/objectives educators are required to set: While the existing Guidelines allow for at least one (1) but no more than four (4) goals/objectives for student growth, the amendment clarifies and emphasizes that the minimum number of goals/objectives required for each educator can be **one (1).** For each goal/objective, each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator must select multiple Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGD).

2. Use of state standardized test data in compiling educators' summative ratings: As noted above, for each goal/objective, each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator, will select Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGD). One half (22.5%) of the IAGDs shall be based on available standardized state test data (CMT, CAPT or SBAC). Districts have the option of decoupling state standardized test indicators from educator evaluation in the 2013-2014 and in 2014-2015 school years.

3. Specific requirements for the number of observations based on teachers' experience and performance ratings: PEAC recommended providing districts with the flexibility to reduce the number of required formal observations for teachers. Specifically, teachers who are not first- or second-year teachers and who receive and maintain an exemplary or proficient annual summative rating (or the equivalent annual summative rating in a pre-existing district evaluation plan) may receive a minimum of one (1) formal in-class observation at least every three years and three (3) informal in-class observations in all other years. In all years, at least one (1) review of practice is required. For non-classroom teachers, the above frequency of observations shall apply in the same ways, except that the observations need not be in-classroom (they shall instead be conducted in appropriate settings). Teachers with proficient or exemplary designations may receive a formal in-class observation if an informal observation or review of practice in a given year results in a concern about the teacher's practice.

In addition, the SBE approved language that addresses the use of data management systems as a part of the educator evaluation and support process in order to address system efficiencies and ensure confidentiality and security. While not a requirement, many districts have procured a data management system to assist with the management of evaluation data. On or before September 15, 2014, Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs) are responsible for reviewing feedback and reporting to their boards of education on the user experience and efficiency of the district's data management systems/platforms being used by teachers and administrators to manage evaluation plans. The data management systems/platforms shall be selected by boards of education with consideration given to the functional requirements/needs and efficiencies identified by professional development and evaluation committees.

For implementation of local evaluation and support plans for the 2014-2015 school year, and each year thereafter, educator evaluation and support plans shall contain guidance on the entry of data into a district's data management system/platform being used to manage/administer the evaluation and support plan and on ways to reduce paperwork and documentation while maintaining plan integrity.

Additional language was added to address the security of identifiable student data, access of teacher or administrator data and the sharing or transference of individual teacher data as a part of the evaluation and support system.

4. State Model Evaluation System for Teachers and Administrators.

The Connecticut State Department of Education considers the input from teachers, administrators and superintendents, as well as other stakeholders, to have been instrumental in the development of the state model, Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED). Four working groups - consisting of teachers, principals, and superintendents, as well as representatives from the American Federation of Teachers, the Connecticut Education Association, the Connecticut Association of Schools, the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, the Connecticut Federation of School Administration, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, the Connecticut Board of Regents, and Connecticut's higher education institutions centered around the following four areas:

1) Teachers
2) Administrators
3) Student & Educator Support Specialists
4) Implementation

Through consensus, these working groups provided significant input on 1) developing the process for setting student learning goals/objectives and 2) selecting observation standards and shaping corresponding rubrics. This input was leveraged by PEAC in its development of the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation. PEAC developed and advanced the evaluation Guidelines by consensus and forwarded its recommendation for adoption to the SBE. Throughout the development process, all PEAC meetings were open to and attended by the public. With significant input from teachers, principals, superintendents, and representatives from other stakeholder groups, the SBE adopted the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation on June 27, 2012.

While deliberating on the teacher evaluation components that would be required of all local evaluation models and the state model, PEAC members looked at the components commonly used by state and local education authorities across the country in evaluating teachers: 1) observations of teacher practice, 2) indicators of professional responsibility, 3) peer feedback, 4) student feedback, 5) parent feedback, and 6) multiple indicators of student learning.

With the understanding that observations are a near-universal component of teacher evaluation systems, much of the discussion on observations focused on the frequency and length of observation, on who conducts them, and on how to ensure evaluators have proper training. PEAC members recognized that teachers are likely to improve their performance with appropriate and quality feedback and that observations can be a good way to provide that feedback. Most of the CSDE's advisors agreed that observations should be conducted multiple times each year and by more than just the school principal. The CSDE continues to look at current research to understand approaches to conducting observations and to determine what good instruction looks like. This information informs continuous improvement of observation rubrics and training materials for evaluators.

On peer feedback, the sentiment among the CSDE's advisors was that teachers particularly appreciate hearing from their colleagues, and many benefit by learning from their peers. Student and parent feedback was also seen as an important element of learning for teachers and administrators, provided it is collected regularly and systematically.

Student learning is considered one of the more important components of teacher evaluation. The CSDE's research on effective practices shows that it is important to include multiple indicators of student learning as they capture a range of teaching behaviors and ensure more effective evaluations for a broader range of teachers, not just those in select subjects and grades. The CSDE believes effective evaluation systems use indicators that are fair, valid, reliable, and useful. All student learning indicators used for evaluations must have these qualities.

In January and February 2012, PEAC reached an agreement on the components and weighting for teacher and principal evaluation systems, as described in prior sections.

In 2012, PEAC came to a consensus on the details of the Guidelines of the observation protocol, that teachers have at least three observations per year, at least three observations taking place in class for first- and second- year teachers and teachers that have been rated "below standard" or "developing," and at least one observation taking place in class for other teachers. The Guidelines also identify survey tools that districts and schools may use to collect data on student, parent, and peer feedback. One of the issues PEAC members addressed is how to measure student achievement for non-tested grades and subjects. The Guidelines provide examples of other standardized assessments teachers can use if the state standardized tests are not available for their grade or subject.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.A.2) Does the SEA's plan include sufficient involvement of teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines?

Stakeholder Engagement

As previously mentioned, PEAC executed its action plan and introduced the Guidelines on June 27, 2012. As PEAC worked on various components of the Guidelines, members spent a large amount of time

reviewing research, listening to state and national experts on educator evaluation, and discussing the issues and challenges they face at the local level. Once the decisions regarding components and indicators were discussed with the members, the CSDE convened separate workgroups representing teachers, administrators, and student and educator support specialists to develop performance criteria, rubrics, and other tools based upon the Common Core of Teaching, Connecticut's teacher standards, and the Common Core of Leading, Connecticut's leader standards.

Connecticut sought, and continues to seek, the involvement of teachers, administrators, and district personnel. The CSDE conducted-a series of surveys, which were designed, and to determine supports and resources most needed in the field. Teachers, principals, superintendents, and representatives from the stakeholder groups listed above continue to be involved in the implementation of the evaluation system. The CSDE partnered with the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut to evaluate the pilot system throughout 2012-2013 to study, research and evaluate the implementation of the evaluation and support system in pilot districts. The results of this study have informed iterations of the Guidelines of Educator Evaluation. The Neag evaluation required frequent and ongoing feedback from superintendents, principals and teachers solicited immediately after key milestones throughout the implementation process. These key milestones included, but were not limited to: 1) the goal-setting process, which includes an orientation on process, a goal-setting conference, and evidence collection and review; 2) the mid-year check-ins; and 3) the end-of-year summative review, which includes a teacher self-assessment and an end-of-year conference. In addition, during the pilot year, the CSDE facilitated regularly scheduled calls (approximately every two weeks) with superintendents to discuss the pilot implementation. Moreover, during the pilot and in subsequent years, each district is assigned a CSDE consultant who is available to work with the district and serve as a resource. In addition, each district has a designated point person from their respective RESC; these designated point people meet regularly with stakeholders within districts and host separate regional meetings for superintendents and teachers to solicit feedback that is relayed directly to the CSDE.

In addition, the CSDE has consulted with and engaged the involvement of teachers' unions to seek feedback for incorporation into policy decisions at every stage of Guideline development and implementation thus far, through representation on PEAC and individual meetings with representatives.

Outside of PEAC, the CSDE is engaging a broader network of stakeholder groups for input. The Consultation section includes a complete list of groups and activities the CSDE has done or will be doing to seek comments and feedback from its stakeholders. The stakeholder groups with whom the CSDE continues to consult are parents, community-based organizations, students, advocates for ELs, advocates for students with disabilities, business organizations, the general public, the Connecticut Committee of Practitioners, civil rights groups, and legislators.

At the public comment sessions held in early February 2012 at the CSDE's regional facility in Middletown, the CSDE presented PEAC's plan and latest progress to an audience consisting of teachers, superintendents, parents, and representatives of the community and of research organizations. The feedback the CSDE received mainly concerned three issues: 1) how to evaluate non-classroom teachers, 2) how student learning is measured, and 3) how to ensure that the process is not burdensome to teachers. PEAC convened three evaluation workgroups to develop separate models for administrators, teachers, and support staff. The evaluation for non-classroom teachers was addressed by the teacher group. As for measuring student learning growth, the state requirements, which have been approved by the SBE, also specify that of the 45% that these account for in a teacher's performance, half (or 22.5%) must be based on the state test or a standardized test in grades and subjects for which no state test

exists while the other half must include other reliable and valid qualitative measures. Finally, to address the concern that the system will be burdensome for teachers, the CSDE clarified that it plans to provide additional resources to support the implementation of the new evaluation system and associated professional development. Specifically, the 2013-14 and 2014-15 legislative package significant funding for technical assistance for districts as they develop their own evaluation systems and additional funding for professional development support before the implementation of the evaluation system.

3.B Ensure LEAs Implement Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

3.B Provide the SEA's process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA's adopted guidelines.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.1) Is the SEA's process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA's adopted guidelines likely to lead to high-quality local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.2) Does the SEA have a process for reviewing and approving an LEA's teacher and principal evaluation and support systems to ensure that they are consistent with the SEA's guidelines and will result in the successful implementation of such systems?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.3) Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that an LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems with the involvement of teachers and principals?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.4) Did the SEA describe the process it will use to ensure that all measures used in an LEA's evaluation and support systems are valid, meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA (i.e., process for ensuring inter-rater reliability)?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.5) Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that teachers working with special populations of students, such as students with disabilities and English Learners, are included in the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation and support systems?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.6) Is the SEA's plan likely to be successful in ensuring that LEAs meet the timeline requirements by either (1) piloting evaluation and support systems no later than the 2013–2014 school year and implementing evaluation and support systems consistent with the requirements described above no later than the 2014–2015 school year; or (2) implementing these systems no later than the 2013–2014 school year?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.7) Do timelines reflect a clear understanding of what steps will be necessary and reflect a logical sequencing and spacing of the key steps necessary to implement evaluation and support systems consistent with the required timelines?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.8) Is the SEA plan for providing adequate guidance and other technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems likely to lead to successful implementation?

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.9) Is the pilot broad enough to gain sufficient feedback from a variety of types of educators, schools, and classrooms to inform full implementation of the LEA's evaluation and support systems?

The shared vision and collective effort of Connecticut's educators, administrators, and policymakers, coupled with the support of the CSDE's stakeholders, including teachers, principals, and superintendents, are advancing this reform. However, the CSDE must acknowledge the importance of execution and the need for a thoughtful process in place to ensure the implementation achieves the same level of rigor and success. As the CSDE further considers its plans for successful implementation, its approach is to support districts with tools, information, training, and support while holding local leaders accountable with clear timelines, processes, and requirements. The CSDE believes local ownership is critical to statewide success; to encourage that ownership, Connecticut strives to offer the appropriate balance between support and accountability.

PEAC established a working group specifically charged with advising the state on the implementation of the pilot and rollout of the new evaluation systems. PEAC finished its main charge concerning the development of the state model and the Guidelines for the new system. Since the June 27, 2012 adoption and issuance of new Guidelines for Educator and Administrator Evaluations, the CSDE has:

1) Made Guidelines and customized rubrics for the development of state model evaluation systems available to districts for the evaluation of teachers, principals, and other support personnel, and for districts that choose not to adopt the state model, made available the Guidelines that govern the content, process, and standards for all evaluation systems developed by districts;
2) Collected feedback from teachers and principals on the state model and Guidelines; and
3) Developed and executed an implementation plan for Connecticut's rollout of new evaluation systems that includes a timeline, a pilot, training plans, a procedure for capturing educators' feedback, and a state review and approval process. This work is supported by the ongoing Educator Evaluation and Support Development Team which meets monthly and consists of representatives from the CSDE, the RESC Alliance, and the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS).
4) Provided additional supports to assist districts in the ongoing implementation of the educator evaluation and support system via RESC technical assistance, webinars, a state-wide conference on developing coherence and continued training and resources available through our website.

The CSDE will continue to work with teachers, administrators, and their representatives as it refines evaluation Guidelines and state models and works with districts to pilot and implement evaluation systems.

Developing the Guidelines and State Model:

At the time of the PEAC consensus recommendation, PEAC also advised that practitioner working groups should be established to specify the details of the evaluation and support system. Teacher, administrator, and student and educator support specialists evaluation working groups were established as well as a working group in the area of implementation. These groups met every two weeks beginning March 2012, with more working group subcommittee meetings also taking place. Teachers and administrators were represented on each of the working groups:

1) Teacher Working Group – members include teachers, superintendents, union leaders, representatives of state organizations, RESC leaders, and university faculty; three active subcommittees focused on observations, surveys, and multiple student learning indicators.
2) Principal Working Group – members include principals, representatives of teachers, superintendents, representatives of state organizations, RESC leaders, and school board members; two active subcommittees focused on rubrics and evaluation process.

3) Student & Educator Support Specialists Group – members include teachers, administrators, local board members, representatives of state organizations, and RESC leaders.
4) Implementation Working Group – member include teachers, union leaders, superintendents, representatives of state organizations, university faculty, and RESC leaders; focused on pilot program, training, and peer review.

The consensus agreement made by PEAC provided these working groups with the necessary framework to guide their work and make progress. PEAC members were active participants in the working groups, and they were joined by educators, practitioners, and evaluation specialists from across the state and nation. This broad cross-section of educators has ensured that voices of teachers, administrators, support staff, and policy experts informed the design of the Guidelines of the state model for evaluation and support and that will apply to districts that opt to develop their own evaluation model. Based on the participation of working group members, PEAC was able to make a recommendation on the Guidelines of the state model of evaluation, SEED, to the State Board of Education on June 27, 2012, which was within the timeframe established in state statute.

LEA Development of Local Plans Consistent with the Guidelines:
The CSDE and the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), a PEAC member, hosted information sessions with superintendents about the new evaluation system.

The state Guidelines, developed and informed by the work of PEAC working groups, provide guidance on how the evaluation components will be combined and then converted into an "Exemplary," "Proficient," "Developing," and "Below Standard" rating so that there is consistency across districts. PEAC studied the summative rating matrices in use in New Haven, CT, Rhode Island, and other states. The pattern of summative ratings will be utilized by each district to define effectiveness and ineffectiveness.

In accordance with the state statute, all educator evaluation and support plans must be developed through mutual agreement between the local or regional board of education and the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) for the school district. If the local or regional board of education is unable to develop a teacher evaluation and support program through mutual agreement with the PDEC, then the board of education and PDEC may consider adopting the state model, SEED. If they cannot reach mutual agreement on the adoption of the state model, then the local or regional board of education may develop, adopt and implement a plan developed by the local or regional board of education provided it meets the Guidelines.

The CSDE has and will continue to ensure that the LEA-designed models meet the PEAC Guidelines. Given the detailed nature of this work, the CSDE will continue to provide follow-up support and guidance to school districts and their PDECs as they work to develop, refine, and implement evaluation and support systems consistent with the Guidelines.

Piloting Evaluation Systems:
PEAC's implementation working group developed the supports necessary for successful implementation of the 2012-13 pilot and statewide rollout. This has included a robust training process, which the RESCs have assisted in providing. RESCs have been trained to train the pilot districts beginning July 3, 2012 and continue throughout subsequent school years. The train-the-trainer model has allowed for sustainable supports for districts and included variety in geography, size, and design (state and LEA-designed). The pilot allowed the CSDE to learn and, if necessary, recalibrate to ensure the best evaluation and support systems for the state.

Implementation Plan

Direct responsibility for rolling out the new evaluation systems falls to the Bureau of Educator Effectiveness and Professional Learning, which sits within the CSDE Talent Office, a new unit created through the CSDE reorganization process and headed by the Chief Talent Officer. The implementation plan has consisted of the following key components:

1. State Review and Approval Process. The CSDE review of district evaluation and support plans is critical to ensuring that Connecticut's evaluation systems allow for local development but are fair and consistent across the state. While the CSDE provides Guidelines and specific instructions regarding the process, a review and approval process ensures that the district evaluation systems meet the state standards and that the systems are developed with the involvement of teachers and principals through the PDEC, as well as input from other stakeholders. Criteria for approval and guidance for reviewers to assess the local models is based on the Guidelines and the implementation guide.

The CSDE focuses its review of the local systems on the following aspects:

1) Key components of the evaluation system comply with the Guidelines and state standards (e.g., percentage accounted for by student learning growth vs. percentage accounted for by observations);
2) Indicators of teacher and principal performance, including multiple indicators for assessing student academic growth and learning, and are developed through mutual agreement between the educator and his or her evaluator;
3) The district involves teachers, principals, and other stakeholders in the development process; and
4) That systems are designed with a level of consistency that enables the CSDE to compare evaluation results across jurisdictions.

The CSDE review and approval process typically takes place in the spring and districts have an opportunity to submit a revised system based on CSDE feedback if their first submission is not approved. Reviews will be done by either the CSDE Talent Office or a panel of state and local experts that are approved by the CSDE.

2. Timeline for Districts to Develop and Adopt New Evaluation Systems. Connecticut's Public Act 10-111 (Sec. 4 Section 10-151b) mandated that all districts develop and implement teacher evaluation programs consistent with the Guidelines established by the SBE. It stopped short of imposing a deadline for districts.

The 2012-2013 pilot and 2013-2014 full rollout of the evaluation is dictated by Public Act 12-116. However, this did not preclude non-pilot districts from implementing the pilot evaluation system in 2012-2013. To ensure that all districts had an appropriate evaluation system in place or piloted by the 2013–14 school year, the CSDE Talent Office developed a separate timeline for districts with specific milestones and deadlines. The CSDE anticipated and addressed issues typically causing delays—such as human resource constraints, unforeseen political obstacles, and underestimation of the workload—as well as identified the risks and dependencies to address them as they arose.

At the state level, the CSDE worked with the following implementation timeline:

Pilot Districts:

- May 2012: Planning completed for implementation of pilot and rollout
- May 2012: Districts submitted application for pilot participation
- June 4, 2012: 10 consortia of districts (comprised of 14 districts total) selected for pilot program. These districts were:
    - Bethany
    - Branford
    - Bridgeport
    - Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
    - Columbia, Eastford, Franklin, and Sterling
    - Litchfield and Region 6
    - Norwalk
    - Waterford
    - Windham
    - Windsor
- June 27, 2012: SBE adopted the CT Guidelines for Educator Evaluation
- July–August 2012: Training took place for pilot districts and first group of evaluators
- September 2012: Pilot implementation started in 10 districts and consortia of districts
- September 2012-August 2013: CSDE/CAS/RESC training and technical assistance to pilot districts to support planning and implementation
- December 2012: First Neag School of Education Implementation Study Executive Summary Report due to the CSDE. This report summarized findings from Phase One (Planning and Goal Setting)
- March 2013: Second Neag School of Education Implementation Study Executive Summary Report due to the CSDE. This report-summarized findings from Phase Two (Mid-Year Check-In)
- June 2013: Neag School of Education administered a survey to all pilot district schools.
- July 2013: Third Neag School of Education Executive Summary Report due to the CSDE. This report summarized findings from Phase Three (End of Year Review).
- January 1, 2014: Final Neag School of Education report submitted to the CSDE, PEAC, and SBE.

Non-Pilot Districts:

- September 2012-January 2013: CSDE/CAS/RESC technical assistance to non-pilot districts to assist with decision-making about adopting the state model (SEED), a modified version, or a district alternative evaluation and support plan
- January 15, 2013: Deadline for all Connecticut districts and charter schools to submit election sheet to the CSDE to indicate intent to adopt the state model, a modified version, or a district alternative
- April 15, 2013: Deadline to submit final selection of a district's evaluation support plan to CSDE for review and approval
- April 2013-August 2013: Proficiency/Calibration Training provided to all prospective evaluators in all districts (including complementary observers) and other schools that select to participate in SEED; as well districts were required to select the percentage of certified educators expected to participate in the new educator evaluation and support system in 2013-14 (minimum requirement: no less than one third of teachers and administrators within the district)
- April 15, 2013-August 15, 2013: The CSDE convened teams to review district evaluation support plans. For all hybrid components and district alternatives, each component of the plan must meet on a rubric aligned to the models or proposals as approved by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC)

- June 30, 2013: The CSDE notified districts about approval of their district plans or need for revisions
- July–September 2013: Training for remaining evaluators and district personnel; districts provided orientation and other required training to all staff as required by statute
- September 2013: Statewide rollout of new evaluation systems across; districts adopt state model or develop their own (minimum requirement: no less than one third of teachers and administrators within the district)
- September 2014: All districts have in place a high-quality evaluation and support system that meets state Guidelines and proves to be effective for teachers and administrators (with the exception of certain educational entities that were provided with additional time- see page 142)

3. Technical Assistance for Districts.

1) A Strong and Effective Communication Strategy. Much of the communication about the implementation of new evaluation systems began before actual activities took place. A communication plan was developed to articulate the reform vision to local leadership and stakeholders, keeping them abreast of the implementation plan and timeline, and setting goals and targets for achievements. It outlined the process for the pilot implementation, training plans, and the process for developing a district evaluation system. Another important aspect of the communication plan was to create a knowledge transfer process whereby district leadership and stakeholders would have access to the information and lessons that members of PEAC and the CSDE learned throughout the development and implementation planning process. Finally, the CSDE prioritized the introduction of the new evaluation systems as not simply a change on paper, but a transformative change that affects how teachers and administrators work and how they align their work to students' learning goals. This has been an important message the CSDE continues to convey to teachers, principals, and support personnel managed under the new evaluation frameworks.

On a more practical level, the communication plan also allows the CSDE to address questions and concerns early in the process to ensure seamless coordination and execution of activities throughout implementation. Communication is already underway in the following ways:

- During the pilot in 2012-13, the CSDE published a weekly newsletter for the pilot districts in order to continuously inform all stakeholders throughout the pilot year about additional resources and management strategies that were developed by the CSDE, as well as shared promising practices generated from teachers and leaders within the pilot districts. The newsletter was disseminated to superintendents and other key staff in the pilot districts, as well as to key stakeholders and partners including members of the Development Team, leadership from the two Connecticut unions (CEA and AFT), and leaders at the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) and the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE).
- During statewide implementation in 2013-14, a monthly statewide memo was developed and disseminated to superintendents and other key stakeholder and partners including members of the Development Team, leadership from the two Connecticut unions (CEA and AFT), and leaders at CAPSS, CAS, and CABE. The superintendent memo continues to be used to keep LEA leadership informed about district evaluation and support plan development, budget guidance and opportunities for training and technical assistance, as well as policies, requirements, resources, and other timely information that is necessary to ensure effective implementation.

- In addition to the superintendent memo, a Talent Office newsletter has also been developed for all educators. The first edition was disseminated via our website with an option to subscribe to future issues. This newsletter is intended to communicate information in a consistent manner to all stakeholders across the state relative to the implementation of evaluation. A key feature of the newsletter is a spotlight on promising practices where districts leaders volunteer to share their implementation strategies.
- The CSDE, RESC Alliance and CAS have been providing personal visits to districts and professional organizations across the state, upon request, to conduct information sessions, review existing evaluation plans and assist in aligning the evaluation plans to the core requirements as stated in the Guidelines.
- The CSDE developed a comprehensive user-friendly website- www.connecticutseed.org- designed to provide current information related to all components of the evaluation and support system, as well as resources for developing a high-quality professional learning system. All resources developed by the CSDE are posted on the website including answers to frequently asked questions, research, and trainings/events offered.
- The CSDE set up a telephone hotline and a dedicated email for educators to get timely responses to their questions.
- The CSDE provides opportunities for districts to pose questions to superintendents in all RESCs to provide information about the evaluation system and engage in discussions about district implementation. Ongoing discussions with superintendents are planned.

The CSDE's goal is to make sure its communication tools meet the following requirements:

- Offer multiple channels to reach target audiences (such as e-mail, online forms, or hotline telephone numbers).
- Provide a means for timely, effective delivery of information up, down, and across levels (e.g., teachers must have a way to communicate directly with the SBE and the CSDE without having to go through their internal chain of communication).
- Establish a process to alert responsible parties, track status of inquiries, and collect and store information communicated for analysis and feedback.

The CSDE publishes communication materials both in print and online as well as in different formats such as PowerPoint presentations, FAQs, instructional videos, and toolkits.

***2) Training and Implementation Support for Districts*.** The CSDE's training program leverages both direct training of evaluators and district personnel by the state (in conjunction with external partners) and a train-the-trainer component to generate district-based training capacity for future support needs. The Educator Evaluation and Support Development Team was formed during the pilot in July of 2012 and is comprised of representatives from the six regional education centers from across the state, known hereafter as the RESC Alliance, representatives from the CT Association of Schools (CAS) and staff from the CSDE's Talent Office. Their role was to identify needs, develop trainings, identify lessons learned, and ensure that trainings are offer to meet the needs of the LEAs. They continue to meet regularly to discuss all matters related to the implementation of the evaluation and support system throughout the state and to review, update and develop all of the trainings. Beginning with the pilot in 2012 the CSDE in partnership with the RESC Alliance developed and delivered a training program for the pilot districts evaluators, using the Guidelines adopted by the SBE, the state developed model, SEED, and state recommended observation rubrics. Training was provided during to superintendents, administrators, and principals of districts participating in the pilot on how to apply the new Guidelines

and frameworks to develop local evaluation systems. To ensure consistency across the RESCs and CAS individuals responsible for local implementation and technical assistance, the CSDE conducted a "Training of Trainers" session for a cadre of 45 individuals. This group of 45 individuals includes six Connecticut State Department of Education employees that serve as the core team for implementing the pilot and 39 trainers based in the RESCs that have a direct link to every pilot district and can provide in-time response and personalized support. Once trained, CSDE consultants provided support to pilot districts and the RESCs and CAS in turn provided training and follow-up technical assistance in the various components of CT's evaluation and support system, including student growth and development (45%), observation of teacher practice and performance (40%), parent or peer feedback (10%) and student feedback and/or whole school indicator (5%). In the 2013 training was revised based on the lessons learned from the pilot districts and rubrics for observation-were developed based on the CT Common Core Standards for Teaching (CCT). The culmination of the training requires evaluators to demonstrate proficiency in conducting observations. An external vendor, TrueNorthLogic/TeachingLearningSolutions, was secured to develop and deliver this training in the "Training of Trainers" model to the previously trained Trainers. In 2014, the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* went through a validation study resulting in revisions to the rubric. Training was again revised to incorporate this change and continues to be offered to new administrators who will be conducting evaluations. As a companion to the rubric, in the summer of 2014, teachers, administrators and other educators convened to develop grade level/content specific evidence guides. Training was developed on the *CT Evidence Guides* and delivered throughout 2014-15. The *CT Evidence Guides* will be integrated into the training of evaluators. Additional in-person and online trainings have been developed on setting goals, using surveys, supporting central office administrators, evaluating student educator support specialists, and using the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* and the *CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery*.

The CSDE has provided fiscal support to the six RESCs and CAS for training and technical support. Since September 2012, the RESC/CAS trainers have held regional meetings within their respective RESC regions in order to assist these districts in planning for implementation in their districts during the 2013-14 school year. They continue to provide technical support and training for their respective regions to assist districts in ongoing implementation.

In addition to providing support to the RESC Alliance and CAS for planning and implementation, CSDE leadership and staff have offered support to any district who requested assistance with planning for implementation in 2013-14. These requests were primarily for assistance in presenting an overview of the new evaluation and support system to the local Board of Education, or to meet with the Central Office administrative team and/or the evaluation planning committee to do a preliminary review of district evaluation and support plan.

The CSDE is currently developing the plan for training and technical assistance to support all CT districts with implementation in the next school year and beyond. The state is exploring various options to provide training in developing and assessing ongoing administrator/evaluation proficiency. The CSDE currently provides training in calibration for 26 districts and is exploring options for extending this support in the coming years.

The indicators that the CSDE is using to track and measure the success of its training efforts include feedback forms at the end of trainings, focus groups, and survey data to gauge whether trainings meet the needs of the participants and to determine future trainings needs.

3) Materials to Accompany Training and for Districts to Use. Under the Connecticut approach, districts can choose to develop their own evaluation system or use the state model. Depending on which option the districts choose, the CSDE recognizes that they will need different kinds of support. For those that use the state model, they need help conducting the evaluations and incorporating the task into regular activities. Those who choose to develop their own, however, need technical support with both the development and implementation processes.

The CSDE provides written instructions to guide the districts through the process of developing and implementing a LEA educator evaluation and support system. In addition, to ensure that districts proceed successfully, the CSDE has and will continue to provide content and process-related materials in a ready-to-use format for district and school leaders. These include:

- A state model for teacher evaluation, principal evaluation, and evaluation of support personnel that include validated indicators;
- An implementation guide, including examples of acceptable performance indicators and effective evaluation-based professional development;
- PowerPoint presentations or FAQs that district and school leaders use for training and communication purposes. The availability of these materials help to ensure the key information and messages are delivered accurately to teachers, educators, and administrators at local levels. They also save local leaders time from recreating what the state has done;
- Various forms and worksheets that may be helpful to the process of developing and implementing the evaluation system;
- Guidance on the CSDE review and approval process, including online checklists that will help districts in reviewing their own plans; and
- Resources to assist PDECs in developing and updating their district plans for submission to the CSDE for review and approval.

The CSDE also provides districts with guidance on options for evaluating teachers of non-tested grades and subjects, including teachers of students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

Practitioners, including professionals who serve all populations of children including special populations of students, are included in the educator evaluation system and are engaged in the development process. Each of the four PEAC workgroups – teachers, administrators, student and educator support specialists and implementation – had overlapping representation at their individual meetings to ensure the evaluation systems were aligned while also allowing for differentiation. Within the teacher work group, teachers of SWD and of ELL are represented on the committee. The student and educator support specialists group included representatives from the following disciplines that serve special populations: school psychology, speech and language pathology, social work, occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing, transition coordination for students with disabilities, and school counseling. The administrator group also included program administrators and service providers for special education students and English Language Learners.

PEAC working groups also worked to refine the framework for teachers who do not teach a state-assessed grade or subject. PEAC decided to have teachers in non-tested grades and subjects use other standardized indicators that are broadly administered and are aligned to a set of academic or performance standards.

4) ***Technical Assistance and Support for Non-tested Grades and Subjects***

As previously noted, the PEAC formed four working groups to make recommendations regarding specific components of Connecticut's system for educator evaluation and support. The Student and Educator Support Specialist (SESS) group was convened and consisted of membership from the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Connecticut Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) Alliance, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, the Connecticut Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists, the Connecticut Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the Connecticut School Counselor Association, the Connecticut Association of School Social Workers, the Connecticut Association of School Librarians, the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education, the Connecticut Physical Therapy Association, the Connecticut Occupational Therapy Association, the Connecticut Council of Career Development and Transition, and the State Vocational Federation of Teachers. In addition, mathematics and literacy coaches and special education teachers were represented.

The original SESS workgroup convened in spring 2012 to consider how the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) state model could be applied in a fair and meaningful way to their respective disciplines. On June 18, 2012, a white paper was released to outline specific considerations when applying SEED to Student and Educator Support Specialists.

Recognizing that within some of these positions, the specific job roles and/or functions may vary, several recommendations emerged from the SESS workgroup, including:

1) Every individual being evaluated needs to have a clear job description and clear delineation of their role in the school to guide the setting of student learning objectives, observation of practice and stakeholder feedback.
2) The SESS educator and the evaluator need to discuss the unique characteristics of the educator's role, including the characteristics of the population served, to determine the appropriate application of standardized and non-standardized measures of student growth to this individual.
3) The SESS educator and evaluator need to determine the appropriate venue for observation and the rubric by which the observation will be conducted.
4) In partnership with the regional educational service centers (RESCs), the CSDE should establish formal regional networks of professionals within these positions who can assist with individual or group support and evaluation.

As a result of these discussions and recommendations, the CSDE has released a series of documents to guide the evaluation of SESS in the following roles:

- English language learner educators;
- social workers;
- school psychologists;
- library media specialists;
- school counselors;
- speech/language pathologists;
- mathematics and English language arts coaches;
- transition coordinators; and

- special education teachers.

All documents are designed to supplement Connecticut's SEED state model. These guidance documents include a description of the varying roles that these educators serve within a district, as well as sample student learning goals/objectives that are rigorous and comparable across learning environments.

Each guidance document is written in a similar format to facilitate clarity and ease of use for both educator and evaluator and includes the following features:

- Description of the varying roles the SESS educator may serve within the school and/or district community
- Sample student learning goals/objectives description of student population served baseline student data rationale for the goals sample Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs) assessments connected to measureable targets Connecticut Core Standards and/or discipline specific standards addressed

SESS educators fall under the broader umbrella of educators within non-tested grades and subjects. Measuring student growth in non-tested grades and subjects requires the identification and/or development of alternative measures of student learning and performance that are rigorous and comparable across learning environments. Student learning goals/objectives can be based on appropriate standardized assessments, but they also may be based on district-, team- or teacher-developed classroom assessments.

The CSDE has worked to ensure that the student learning goals/objectives process, as it applies to all educators, is clearly defined and allows for the measurement of student progress over two or more points in time, using assessments that measure meaningful changes in student achievement in the discipline/subject area, either in comparative terms or growth toward a standard. A Student Learning Goals/Objectives Handbook has been created for use by all educators, including non-tested grades and subjects, to provide guidance in the development of rigorous and attainable student learning goals/objectives and IAGDs. Student learning goals/objectives and IAGDs are developed collaboratively between an educator and his/her evaluator during the goal-setting phase of the evaluation and support process.

In 2013-14, both the SESS workgroup and other non-tested grades and content area workgroups continued to define principles to guide an approach to selecting and designing assessments for use by these educators. As Connecticut continues its work with the SESS workgroup, the CSDE facilitated stakeholder groups representing art, music, physical education and health educators to develop guidance documents similar to those developed by the SESS workgroup.

To support observation of educator practice and performance, which comprises 40% of an educator's summative rating, the SESS workgroup developed an alternative rubric called the *Common Core of Teaching (CCT) Rubric for Student and Educator Support Specialists* and in 2013-14, the rubric was revised and renamed, the *CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery*. This rubric is tightly-aligned to the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* that is used for observation of educator practice and performance in the state model, SEED. It was determined that the *CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery* was most applicable to school psychologists, social workers, school counselors and speech and language pathologists. All other groups agreed that the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* would

provide for fair and accurate observation of their practice and performance though both rubrics are available as option for educators to use based on role and function.

Both CCT rubrics are structured to collect evidence within four domains; 1) Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning; 2) Planning; 3) Service Delivery/Instruction; 4) Professional Responsibilities and Leadership. In the SESS-adapted rubric, language across the four-point continuum of performance was customized so as to be applicable to those professionals who primarily work within a service delivery model.

Training in the use of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* occurred throughout summer 2013 and 2014 and will continue into the coming academic years. Technical support will be provided by the RESCs to develop a deeper understanding of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery*. Additionally, the CSDE, in partnership with the RESCs, is developing training for Complementary Observers. Developing the role of Complementary Observer is especially valuable as a key strategy for observation of professional practice and performance. The training will represent a blended learning design that includes face-to-face presentation and collaboration, as well as web-based support, information and supplemental tools. There are opportunities for individual and team learning to include both print and web-based resources for skill development as well as simulations to model skills and procedures to guide practice. These are key aspects of professional learning design guided by the *CT Standards for Professional Learning*.

The CSDE recognizes the potential of unintended consequences of the new educator evaluation and support system, including the possible exclusion of certain subgroups; specifically students with disabilities and English language learners. The CSDE and respective workgroups will continue to explore the topic of non-tested grades and subjects with various stakeholders in order to expand and improve upon guidance documents, the SEED state model, and the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (June 2012), as appropriate.

5) Ensuring Meaningful Measures and a Strong Data System. By establishing the state review and approval process and providing districts with technical support and materials to use in the development of local systems, the CSDE builds into its process mechanisms to ensure the performance measures are valid and meaningful in improving teachers' and administrators' quality as well as student learning.

The CSDE will continue to use standardized and non-standardized indicators to determine student growth throughout implementation. The CSDE commits to working with all districts and consultants to further define the acceptable non-standardized indicators and measures that meet the criteria set forth in the Guidelines; indicators should be fair, reliable, valid and useful to the greatest extent possible. These terms are defined as follows:

1) Fair to students – The indicator of academic growth and development is used in such a way as to provide students an opportunity to show that they have met or are making progress in meeting the learning objective. The use of the indicator of academic growth and development is as free as possible from bias and stereotype;
2) Fair to teachers – The use of an indicator of academic growth and development is fair when a teacher has the professional resources and opportunity to show that his/her students have made growth and when the indicator is appropriate for the teacher's content, assignment and class composition;
3) Reliable – Use of the indicator is consistent among those using it and over time;

4) Valid – The indicator measures what it is intended to measure;
5) Useful – the indicator may be used to provide the teacher with meaningful feedback about student knowledge, skills, perspective and classroom experience that may be used to enhance student learning and provide opportunities for teacher professional growth and development.

For English Language Learners and students with disabilities, the CSDE has specific internal consultants working with the implementation teams to advise the pilot districts as to how to identify appropriate student learning objectives and use appropriate indicators to measure students' academic growth.

For career and technical education, existing nationally-normed state assessments for the 20 courses offered will be used to determine teacher effectiveness.

The insight on how effective the system is and whether these performance measures provide meaningful feedback also depends on how data are collected, processed, and used by the school and district leaders and managers. The CSDE believes this important and often-overlooked step in the reform process requires thinking and careful execution.

Currently, the CSDE manages all education-related data it collects on student performance through tests and from school districts in a new data warehouse, formally known as the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Connecticut legislation (Public Act 10-111) specifically mandated that by July 1, 2013, the CSDE must expand the current statewide public school information systems to "track and report data relating to student, teacher and school and district performance growth and make such information available to local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating educational performance and growth of teachers and students."

In August 2010, the CSDE launched a website called Connecticut Education Data and Research (CEDaR) to provide the public with access to the data. The CSDE keeps the SLDS database current by enabling direct feeds of student-related data from various sources. Teachers' data, which are reported at the individual level and include data regarding years of experience, degree earned, and assignment, are maintained in a different source called the Certified Staff File. The CSDE uses this file to make determinations about whether a teacher is highly qualified pursuant to the NCLB Act, but it also uploads the data from this file into the warehouse described above. It is also used to determine levels of certification and compliance.

The CSDE is currently updating the data warehouse to link teachers' information with the students they teach and to make available student transcript data, including courses taken and grades earned. Access to performance data will be disparate depending on the role of users. The CSDE plans to make the same data tools available to all users, but data accessibility should be customized for different user types as follows:

- CSDE personnel responsible for teacher and administrator evaluations can access all data;
- District directors can see all observation data in their district and statewide benchmarks;
- Administrators can see the observation forms for all teachers in their schoolwide and districtwide benchmarks;
- Evaluators can see only the observations forms for which they are responsible; and
- Teachers can see only their own observation data and districtwide benchmarks.

Once the students and teachers' and administrators' performance data are linked, the next step is to define how the system should serve performance management activities. The CSDE's goals are to:

- Provide responsible personnel at state, district, and school levels with reports to use in monitoring completion status and results associated with evaluations;
- Enable school principals to access teacher evaluation data by individual teacher or by group for professional development purposes;
- Enable teachers to view their own evaluation data, including observation forms, scores, and effectiveness rating; and
- Provide overall scores based on observation data that evaluators submit and data on student learning and other indicators.

6) Change Management and Performance Management Support. As Connecticut rolled out the new evaluation and support system, the CSDE anticipated the need for change management and performance management support at the district level. Even with the stakeholder engagement the CSDE conducted, the introduction of new evaluation frameworks required a shift in thinking and practice at various levels. For some districts, the change represented modifications to mission and strategy. For some, the new evaluation models required operational changes, such as new technology, new processes, or new skills. And for others, the new systems signified a shift in values and philosophies regarding how teachers, administrators, and support staff work with each other, how they manage their own work, and how they define their success or failure in helping students improve learning was affected.

The change management has occurred partly through communication, for which a strategy is outlined in the beginning of this section. In addition, the CSDE Talent Office has explored using a combination of tools, techniques, and support to local leaders in data-driven performance management, that is, how to incorporate the use of data into their work and in showing benefits to productivity and student achievement. Though evaluation is not new to Connecticut educators, the use of student learning and feedback data has posed a challenge to some in understanding what narratives and analyses they can draw from the data, how they can use the data for understanding individual educator effectiveness, and how they can begin to incorporate additional measures to drive their school-based implementation. The CSDE believed that educators needed some time to learn and understand what the growth and observation data is telling them about their students and their teachers and leaders. The CSDE's process provides time for learning to take place as well as feedback and adjustment to occur.

The CSDE Talent Office has incorporated change management strategies into trainings to accommodate this learning in the later stages of systems implementation. The CSDE also anticipates the need to develop knowledge and skills at the state and district level that can lead a statewide effort in building a data-driven performance culture. The CSDE is engaging the expertise of organizations that are leaders in this field to further develop approaches in this area.

7. Assessing Implementation of Evaluation Systems:

As previously noted, the CSDE continues to work with the RESCs, CAS and other partners to train districts to ensure fidelity of implementation and incorporate feedback from year to year. The CSDE also supports enhanced reporting requirements on the implementation of the evaluation and support system and aggregate ratings. LEA-designed models were vetted by the CSDE to ensure the PEAC Guidelines are met on an annual basis. The Neag School of Education conducted a study of the implementation of the evaluation and support system in pilot districts, which has informed, and will continue to inform, continuous improvement of the system.

In 2013-14, the CSDE assessed the implementation of Connecticut's new system for educator evaluation and support to ensure that each LEA developed, adopted, and implemented high-quality educator evaluation and support systems consistent with the CSDE's adopted Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (June 2012). The 2013-14 school year was the first year of statewide implementation following a full year pilot in ten districts/consortia during the 2012-13 school year. In accordance with Public Act 13-245, LEAs are required to include the PDEC, which must include representatives selected by the collective bargaining unit, in the development of the district's educator evaluation and support plan. The PDEC be consulted when revisions/amendments to an approved evaluation plan are being considered.

The CSDE, in partnership with the Community Training Assistance Center (CTAC), is in the process of developing a comprehensive system to assess fidelity to the implementation of district plans. The system is comprised of differentiated levels as follows, with the expectation that the system will be implemented beginning in 2015-16:

Level I: All Connecticut districts and charter schools will be required to complete a comprehensive progress report aligned to the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation for both the teacher and administrator models in order to assess implementation progress and fidelity. Each district will be required to complete and submit the progress report to the CSDE. While still in development, the review protocol will address the major components of the system, as well as specific questions related to students with disabilities, English Learners (ELs) and non-tested grades and subjects.

Level II: Upon submission of the progress report to the CSDE and/or appropriate partners, approximately 30 districts, including charter schools, will be randomly selected for a more in-depth assessment via a desk monitoring process similar to the USED process for monitoring states' ESEA Flexibility Waivers. This represents approximately twenty percent of Connecticut LEAs. The random selection process will be designed to ensure approximately equal representation from each of the six RESC regions. Additional districts and charter schools may be assessed if the CSDE has questions or concerns regarding the district's responses during the Level I review process.

The desk monitoring process will be conducted via telephone with district teams representing both school level and district representatives. The protocol for use in the desk monitoring process is currently under development. The desk monitoring process will be conducted by CSDE staff. While still under consideration, it is likely that the desk monitoring team may also include representatives from the six RESCs, the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), and both state teachers' unions (CEA and AFT).

Following the desk monitoring process, the CSDE and/or appropriate partners will provide the district with a report to highlight commendations and areas in need of improvement. The report may also include suggestions about the district's implementation of Connecticut's system for educator evaluation and support.

Level III: In addition to the districts selected for more in-depth desk monitoring, between five and ten districts and/or charter schools will be selected for a full site visit. The protocols, as well as the site visit process are still under development. However, the process will include paper review, as well as on site visits to include classroom visits, 1:1 semi-structured and focus group interviews. The site review teams will be comprised of various stakeholders, including but not limited to representatives from various offices of the CSDE, including Talent, Academic, Turnaround and the Office of Student Supports, as well as representatives from the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), the

Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), the RESC Alliance and the state teacher and administrator unions.

Following the site visit, the CSDE will provide the district with a report to highlight commendations and areas in need of improvement. The report may also include suggestions about the district's implementation of Connecticut's system for educator evaluation and support.

This tiered system outlined will serve as the formal assessment of statewide implementation. In addition to the formal process, the CSDE has begun to develop several systems that are scheduled to begin immediately.

Beginning in 2013-14, the Talent Office has supported an Educator in Residence program. Currently, two teacher-leaders-in-residence and one principal-leader-in-residence spend a percentage of their time in the CSDE Talent Office. The Educator-in-Residence's main focus is to elevate *educator voice* to inform both policy and practice. One initiative has been the development of several focus groups, developed and implemented in collaboration with the RESC Alliance and CAS. The focus groups are primarily intended to tap the expertise of practitioners in the field in informing the on-going developments of Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system, as well as other initiatives related to educator effectiveness. While some of the focus groups will be heterogeneously grouped, others, including educators of students with disabilities, English Language Learners and educators in non-tested grades and subjects, will be homogeneously grouped in role-alike groups. The results of these focus groups will be compiled and comprise part of a district's overall assessment process.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (7) Is the pilot broad enough to gain sufficient feedback from a variety of types of educators, schools, and classrooms to inform full implementation of the LEA's evaluation and support systems?

Pilot Implementation in Academic Year 2012–13

The CSDE conducted a pilot in 10 districts or consortia of districts (14 districts total) with two primary goals: 1) to test the components and requirements of the new evaluation systems (both the state model and local development of new systems); and 2) to identify districts' needs for technical assistance and ongoing support, regardless of whether they choose the state model or design their own systems. The CSDE-also studied the pilot to gain insight into whether the implementation plan for the full rollout in 2013–14 was appropriately designed.

Districts were invited to apply for participation in the pilot in May 2012. Ten districts or consortia of districts were selected. Selected districts underwent training in the summer of 2012, with a goal to start developing a new evaluation system in September 2012. The CSDE partnered with industry-leading organizations that have successfully assisted other states to research best practices, design processes, and plan for the pilot.

Below are some features of the pilot implementation:

- **Pilot participation**: Districts were invited and selected based on the level of interest and readiness to ensure success. The CSDE considered size, geography, performance, and capacity to accommodate as broad a group as possible.

- **Communication**: Materials about the pilot clearly state the goals, benefits, and responsibilities of participating districts. Throughout the process the CSDE creates reporting and communication channels to keep track of progress, address questions and concerns, and share lessons learned across piloting districts.
- **Data collection**: To achieve the goals mentioned above, data collection is critical. The Talent Office will set up processes and tools to monitor and document aspects of the implementation process for learning and improving in the rollout. More importantly, the CSDE will work with pilot schools to collect the assessment data for the production of growth measures and the piloting of the student roster validation process. This will let the CSDE test assumptions about how different teaching structures (e.g., co-teaching, group teaching, looping) will or will not be allowed in the new evaluation system as well as for which subjects and grades will be counted and how.
- **Support**: Piloting sites will get regular on-site visits and check-ins by Talent Office personnel.
- **Non-consequential outcome**: If the evaluation identifies underperforming teachers or administrators, these individuals will be reevaluated using the current system before any actions are taken. The CSDE wants to make sure everyone involved in the process, from evaluators to those being evaluated, understands the system first before it holds anyone accountable for the outcome.

The CSDE has engaged the services of the Center for Education Policy and Analysis at the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut (UConn Neag Report) to conduct a formal implementation study during the pilot year. A team of eight researchers from UConn collected data in the ten pilot districts/consortia. Data collection was done primarily through focus group interviews with staff in each of the pilot districts, which provided the opportunity for both teachers and administrators to provide feedback about the implementation in their schools/districts and guided revisions to the evaluation system.

Revisions of the model were made throughout the implementation of the pilot based on results of the pilot study that was conducted by the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut. The study conducted by the Neag School of Education also informed future iterations of the Guidelines. Upon completion of the study in January 2014, the Neag School of Education submitted, to the State Board of Education, the results of the study and recommendations concerning the validation of the teacher evaluation and support program Guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.

The results of the study helped determine changes needed to improve the evaluation system in the immediate. For example, after goal-setting was complete, the Neag School of Education study determined the degree to which teachers were setting ambitious, quantifiable goals for student achievement and informed revisions in the immediate to adjust goals in order to meet the Guidelines.

Additionally, the CSDE or a third-party designated by the CSDE will audit evaluations ratings of exemplary and below standard to validate such exemplary or below standard ratings by selecting annually ten districts at random and reviewing evaluation evidence files for a minimum of two educators rated exemplary and two educators rated below standard in those districts selected, including at least one classroom teacher rated exemplary, at least one teacher rated below standard, at least one administrator rated exemplary and at least one administrator rated below standard per district selected. In addition to the form study being conducted by the Neag School, CSDE leadership convened stakeholder groups in order to seek input regarding implementation issues, challenges, concerns and

ideas. Information gathered from these meetings, as well as the information gathered from individual district further informed changes to the system beyond the pilot.

The CSDE's commitment to providing ongoing support during implementation was made possible only with the assistance of RESCs and the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS). The CSDE utilized RESCs and CAS to spearhead local evaluation implementation and ensure lessons learned are incorporated in districts' evaluation system plans. Along with the CSDE, RESCs will be responsible for reviewing the Guidelines with districts and providing technical assistance that reflects the Guidelines to assess the quality of local plans.

Conclusion

It is well documented that the best predictor of student learning, achievement, and success is the quality of the teachers in the classroom, and that principals are uniquely pivotal players in ensuring schools' success. Without strong educators, Connecticut cannot reach its goals of preparing students for success in college and careers and achieving better results for all students, including ambitious levels of growth for the CSDE's lowest performers. The CSDE's adoption of evaluation Guidelines and robust road map for implementation, as well as its commitment to continuously improving it with the input of educators, leaves Connecticut well positioned to provide educators with the meaningful evaluation and support system they deserve.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

TO: Connecticut Students, Parents, Education Stakeholders, and Community Organizations

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Interim Commissioner of Education

DATE: March 6, 2015

SUBJECT: ESEA Flexibility Renewal and Stakeholder Feedback

In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) granted the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) a three-year flexibility request from certain requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The waiver provided Connecticut educators with the ability to advance state and local efforts for school improvement and utilize federal resources to support learning for all students. As part the flexibility request, CSDE developed a state plan designed to ensure that all students are prepared to succeed in college and careers, to close achievement gaps through proven and impactful interventions in low performing schools and districts, and to support educators in reaching high professional standards and receiving meaningful development opportunities in order to ensure all students have access to effective instruction. The USED has invited the state to renew our request for an additional three years in order to sustain our progress towards these goals.

The flexibility renewal submission continues many of the major initiatives outlined in Connecticut's approved plan and seeks to strengthen and evolve others. Many of the proposed modifications have been presented and discussed at various stages with some educational stakeholders. At this time, the CSDE is soliciting public comment from all interested parties and persons regarding the proposed ESEA flexibility request. The Department invites you to provide feedback on the proposed renewal request which addresses the USED's three prescribed principles. Please find documents for your review posted on the CSDE website at http://www.ct.gov/sde/commentsESEA, which includes:

- An overview of Connecticut's progress made to date in the implementation of the existing, approved ESEA flexibility request;
- A listing of the USED's required components that must be addressed in the ESEA flexibility waiver renewal application; and
- An overview of the key initiatives to be continued or modified that address the required components in the renewal application.

Please submit all comments to: ESEAFlexRequest.SDE@ct.gov, by March 20, 2015. This will allow time to synthesize and consider the comments prior to the renewal submission.

DW:gp
cc: Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer, CSDE
Sarah Barzee, Chief Talent Officer, CSDE
Ellen Cohn, Interim Chief Academic Officer, CSDE
Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Interim Chief Performance Officer, CSDE
Glen J. Peterson, Director, Sheff Office & RSCO, CSDE

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CSDE)

ESEA Flexibility Renewal

Charlene Russell-Tucker
Chief Operating Officer

Presentation Outline

- ESEA Flexibility Renewal Overview
- ESEA Flexibility: Background
- ESEA Flexibility: Progress to Date in Connecticut
- The Importance of ESEA Flexibility Renewal
- Principles 1, 2, 3 Requirements
- Stakeholder Engagement
- ESEA Flexibility Renewal Process
- ESEA Flexibility Renewal Elements
- ESEA Flexibility Timeline

ESEA Flexibility Renewal Overview

The 2015 Flexibility Renewal process will allow Connecticut to deepen its commitment to academic standards aligned to success in college and career, a multi-variable approach to educator evaluation and support, and a school accountability system that goes beyond standardized test scores.

ESEA Flexibility: Background

- In 2011, the U.S. Education Department (USED) announced that it would allow states to request flexibilities, or waivers, from certain parts of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
  - Connecticut was granted its waiver in June of 2012.

- The process is designed to free states from some of the most out of date and inflexible aspects of 2001's No Child Left Behind Act.

- Waivers allow states to define their own high expectations for student and school success, to develop school accountability systems to track progress in meeting state-defined goals, and to let school districts decide how best to spend certain federal funds.

- USED only provides flexibility in specific, defined areas. States must meet key requirements to qualify for a waiver.

ESEA Flexibility: Background

- USED requires states to make commitments to three core principles to qualify for ESEA flexibility, and to engage in robust stakeholder outreach.

  - Principle 1: College and Career Ready Expectations for All Students
  - Principle 2: State-Developed Systems of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support
  - Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership
  - *Principle 4: Reduce Duplication and Unnecessary Burden*

ESEA Flexibility: Progress to Date in Connecticut

Since 2012, the CSDE has successfully followed through on its waiver commitments.

Principle 1: College and Career Ready Expectations for All Students

- Provided districts with high-quality Common Core resources via a new website, ctcorestandards.org
- Created a system of statewide Common Core professional learning including in-person trainings; school-embedded coaching; online, on-demand professional development modules; and trainings tailored to the needs of teachers serving English learners and students with disabilities
- Implemented the Smarter Balanced Field Test in the vast majority of school districts; alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities and a more rigorous assessment for language acquisition for English learners

ESEA Flexibility: Progress to Date in Connecticut

Since 2012, the CSDE has successfully followed through on its waiver commitments.

Principle 2: State-Developed Systems of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

- Implemented a revamped school accountability system that provided more meaningful school classifications and took into account previously hidden achievement gaps
- Identified districts and schools with low achievement or achievement gaps; and deployed resources and new initiatives to assist with school and district turnaround, including through the Commissioner's Network, Alliance Districts program, and other efforts
- Published improved, accessible school and district Performance Reports as resources for parents

ESEA Flexibility: Progress to Date in Connecticut

Since 2012, the CSDE has successfully followed through on its waiver commitments.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

- Developed and adopted guidelines for local teacher and administrator evaluation and support systems
- Implemented a process to involve educators in the development and continuous improvement of these guidelines
- Ensured that each district develops, adopts and implements, with the involvement of teachers and administrators, (including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve), high-quality educator evaluation and support systems consistent with the CSDE's adopted guidelines.

The Importance of ESEA Flexibility Renewal

Failure to renew Connecticut's waiver would result in:

- A return to a limited and unhelpful system for measuring school and district performance.
  - NCLB measured a school's performance based solely on the number of students that met proficiency targets. It failed to emphasize graduation rates, student growth across performance levels, and other measures for college and career readiness.
  - ESEA flexibility enables Connecticut to take into account a broader array of measures to determine how well a school is performing, and to shine a spotlight on achievement gaps that lurked underneath NCLB-era data.
  - The waiver also empowers Connecticut to highlight the successes of schools that are closing achievement gaps or performing at a high level.

The Importance of ESEA Flexibility Renewal

Failure to renew Connecticut's waiver would result in:

- The return of restrictions on how federal funds are used.
  - NCLB required districts to spend Title I funds on federally mandated programs, regardless of whether they aligned with the community's needs and strategies for closing achievement gaps.
  - Waivers allow high-poverty districts to exercise local control to use federal funds on programs responsive to the community's needs.
  - NCLB required the CSDE to use all 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding on activities provided only during non-school hours. The waiver enabled Connecticut to use a portion of these funds to help districts extend the school day.

The Importance of ESEA Flexibility Renewal

Failure to renew Connecticut's waiver would result in:

- Virtually 100% of schools labeled as failing.
  - NCLB required that 100% of students be able to perform at grade level in English language arts and mathematics. This meant that the vast majority of schools would be considered "failing."
  - Because the vast majority of schools would be deemed failing, resources would be required to be spread thin across schools regardless of specific need.
  - When all schools are labeled as failing, the labels are not helpful for the parents and other stakeholders.
  - The waiver enables Connecticut to provide parents with more meaningful identifications for schools.
- Prescriptive consequences for failing schools.
  - Under NCLB, there were a series of inflexible consequences for failing schools.
  - The waiver enables the CSDE to work with schools to determine the appropriate interventions based on the specific needs of each school.

Principle 1: Connecticut is Required To…

- Update its plan to describe how it will ensure all students graduate from high school ready for college and a career through the implementation of college- & career-ready standards and high-quality, aligned assessments.

- Describe how CSDE will continue to support all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, low-achieving students, and economically disadvantaged students, and teachers of those students.

Principle 2: Connecticut is Required To…

- Demonstrate continuous improvement (CI) of the recognition and accountability system, and ensure that the system incorporates student achievement, graduation rates, and school performance and progress over time, for all students and subgroups.

- Not assign schools the highest rating if significant graduation or achievement gaps exist across subgroups.

- Provide updated lists of turnaround and focus schools and provide a timeline for interventions in these schools.

- Consider if there have been any significant changes to the state's accountability system and ensure the description accurately reflects how the state plans to make annual accountability determinations.

Principle 2: Connecticut is Required To…

- Describe the process for identifying any schools that, after 3 years of interventions, have not made sufficient progress to exit priority or focus status.

- Describe how CSDE will ensure increased rigor of interventions and supports in these (non-exiting) schools by the start of the 2015-16 school year.

- Update its plan for providing incentives and supports to other Title I schools to include a rigorous process for ensuring that districts provide interventions and supports to low-achieving students.

- Describe statewide strategy to support and monitor districts' implementation of the system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support, including the process for holding districts accountability for improving school and student achievement.

Principle 3: Connecticut is Required To…

- Assure that the state is on track for full implementation of teacher and principal evaluation and support systems.

or

- Indicate if requesting a one-year delay in incorporating student growth based on state assessments into educator ratings for teachers and principals of tested grades and subjects because of the transition to new assessments in 2014-15. *[Since PEAC has determined that Connecticut will request a one-year delay to incorporating state assessment results into teacher and principal evaluations, CSDE will so indicate in the flexibility request.]*

- Work with stakeholders on modifications to develop the most effective models to evaluate the teachers of special populations of students.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Connecticut is required to describe a meaningful process of soliciting input from LEAs, teachers and their representatives, administrators, students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities, organizations representing English Learners, institutions of higher education, business organizations, and Indian tribes.

- A stakeholder engagement process in line with federal guidance will be developed and rolled out in January 2015.

- CSDE will seek to enable multiple avenues for feedback, with particular focus on the areas for which substantive modifications are permitted.

ESEA Flexibility Renewal Process

- USED has asked states to amend their previously approved ESEA Flexibility requests. States must respond to prompts regarding Principles 1, 2, and 3, and provide evidence of meaningful consultation with stakeholders.

- The CDSE is working collaboratively across all divisions on the Flexibility Renewal.

- The Northeast Comprehensive Center (NCC) has been engaged to assist with project management. NCC is a federally funded center that provides free technical assistance to states.

- Consultation with stakeholders about the components of ESEA flexibility implementation has been on ongoing process, and stakeholder engagement regarding the renewal is an extension of that continuous process.

ESEA Flexibility Renewal Process

ESEA Principle	Lead Offices
Principle 1: College and Career Ready Expectations for All Students	Academic Office
Principle 2: State-Developed Systems of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support	Performance Office & Turnaround Office
Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership	Talent Office
Stakeholder Engagement	Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness

ESEA Flexibility Timeline

- January 7th: Initial presentation to Connecticut State Board of Education

- January and February
  - Continued and renewed consultation with stakeholders
  - Amendments to sections drafted

- March 4th: Connecticut State Board of Education Presentation

- March 31st: Flexibility Renewal Application due to USED

VII. E.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
HARTFORD

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Interim Commissioner of Education

DATE: February 4, 2015

SUBJECT: Discussion Materials: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility (Waiver) Renewal Discussion with the State Board of Education

Executive Summary

Introduction/Background

Through its iterative Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility process, the U.S. Education Department (USED) has enabled states to replace selected components of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act with state-developed solutions. In return for this flexibility, USED required states to develop and implement plans that maintain a high bar for student achievement and accountability.

Specifically, USED requires each waiver state to adopt and use high-quality, college- and career-ready standards and assessments; to create a strong system of school accountability that highlights achievement gaps and enables interventions in low-performing schools; and to implement educator evaluation and support systems. Specific programmatic requirements are associated with each of these commitments.

Connecticut's flexibility request was granted in June 2012. To keep and extend its waiver, Connecticut must submit a Flexibility Renewal Request by March 31, 2015, that will cover the academic years through 2017-18. This Flexibility Renewal Request must highlight proposed modifications to our original request approved in June 2012 and document the engagement of stakeholders.

Connecticut's request, like the state's initial application, is divided into three sections, or principles. Summaries of the key components of each principle and the modifications currently under consideration follow below.

Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

Principle 1 requires waiver states to adopt college- and career-ready academic standards, as well as high-quality assessments aligned to these standards.

Connecticut's 2015 renewal request will document the CSDE's continued implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards and the associated Smarter Balanced Assessment system, which will

be administered statewide in March 2015. Activities launched to help teachers and school systems transition to the new standards and assessments will also be detailed.

As part of its commitment to high-quality standards and assessments, the CSDE has undertaken the following ongoing activities:

- Actively engaged stakeholders using multiple pathways, including meetings, committees, councils, conferences, surveys, newsletters, the launch of the website ctcorestandards.org, communication toolkits, and parent materials translated into the top seven languages spoken by Connecticut students.
- Worked with the Governor's Common Core State Standards Taskforce, which studied successful implementation practices and made recommendations to highlight needed strategic actions.
- Provided unprecedented supports for standards implementation in the form of hundreds of teacher minigrants up to $2,000 each; 1,200 days of customized, in-district coaching and technical assistance; teacher access to the Smarter Balanced Digital Library of resources; $34 million in technology upgrades for local education agencies; and 20,000 copies of an instructional guide for school and district leaders.
- Deployed a statewide professional development system focused on the significant instructional shifts needed to achieve mastery of new standards at each grade level; delivery of supportive instruction for English learners (EL) and students with disabilities; and the strategies, tools, and knowledge school and district administrators will require to lead the transition to the new standards. To date, over 1,000 coaches have been trained, and thousands of educators have participated in regional and/or online professional development.
- Provided dozens of workshops on the Smarter Balanced Assessment System, including assessment literacy, digital library resources, and critical training titled, "Connecting the Assessment Claims to Classroom Instruction." This training emphasizes that the best preparation for annual testing is high-quality curriculum and teaching to the standards.
- After receiving federal approval to grant local district choice on the administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) Field Test or legacy assessments in 2014, Connecticut successfully implemented the Smarter Balanced Field Test to 90% of Connecticut school districts.
- The first operational administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment for students in Grades 3-8 and 11 will occur in spring 2015.

To obtain continued approval from the USED, Connecticut must make the following commitments:

- Connecticut will adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards and will administer similarly aligned ELP assessments.
- Connecticut will administer alternate assessments aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- Connecticut will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each local education agency (LEA) and public high school.

The CSDE plans to propose the following in its 2015 Flexibility Renewal Request:

- Continue with the Connecticut Core Standards, new standards in other academic areas, and the Smarter Balanced Assessments.
- Pending the recommendation of the High School Assessment Working Group, potentially seek flexibility to use an alternate assessment in lieu of the Grade 11 Smarter Balanced test.
- To exempt recently arrived English learner (EL) students who have attended schools in the United States for fewer than two years from the performance component of the state's accountability system.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Principle 2 provides states with the opportunity to propose to the USED the creation of customized accountability systems for schools and districts. Marking a significant break from the one-size-fits-all approach of NCLB, these systems may use multiple measures to recognize school and district performance, and enable tailored interventions and supports.

Following its initial waiver approval in 2012, Connecticut began implementing a new accountability system in fall 2012 that introduced a performance index, raised expectations, integrated all tested subjects, made achievement gaps more transparent, and classified all schools.

Over the past two years, the CSDE has actively sought feedback regarding this system through close collaboration with district and school leaders and other stakeholders, forums for Connecticut educators, consultation with state and national experts, input from Department staff, and analysis of the system's implementation. This process revealed several areas for further refinement and improvement.

As part of the efforts to implement Connecticut's next-generation accountability system, the CSDE undertook the following activities:

- Implemented a post-NCLB accountability system in 2012.
- Identified low-performing districts and schools to enable interventions and supports, including the Commissioner's Network.
- Classified all schools and issued new performance reports, along with a companion document for parents to assist in understanding the new reports.
- Consulted extensively with stakeholders and analyzed the effectiveness of the new system.
- Created and implemented a plan to align data reporting with accountability.

To obtain continued approval from the USED, Connecticut must make the following commitments to USED:

- Demonstrate continuous improvement to its accountability system.
- Ensure that the system continues to incorporate for all students and subgroups: student achievement, graduation rates, and school performance and progress over time.
- Update the list of Turnaround and Focus schools, as well as identify new Schools of Distinction, using results from the new model by January 31, 2016.

- The accountability system will not assign schools to the highest category if there are significant achievement or graduation rate gaps.

The CSDE plans to propose the following in its 2015 Flexibility Renewal Request:

- Changes to Connecticut's school and district accountability system to provide a more holistic, multifactor perspective of district and school performance. The elements of the proposal are as follows:
    - Include academic growth of the same students over time.
    - Refine existing metrics to better reflect overall performance and make subgroup performance metrics more impactful and actionable.
    - Add indicators for college- and career-readiness.
    - Incorporate indicators focused on the delivery of a well-rounded education such as civics, arts, and fitness.
    - Adjust the classification methodology to better represent overall school performance and to better target interventions and support.
- Update exit criteria for schools identified in the 2012 waiver as Focus, Priority, and Review schools:
    - Turnaround schools
        - Turnaround schools identified before the 2015-16 school year that perform above the bottom 10 percent of schools on statewide assessments in math and English language arts (ELA) will exit Turnaround status.
        - Turnaround schools newly identified under the proposed model before February 2016 will exit Turnaround status after demonstrating three consecutive years of progress in the following ways:
            - Increases in overall percentage of points earned.
            - Meeting annual performance index targets for all students in all applicable subject areas.
            - High schools must also meet the six-year cohort graduation rate target for all students.
    - Focus schools
        - Focus schools identified before the 2015-16 school year with High Needs subgroups performing better than the bottom 10 percent on statewide ELA and math tests will exit the Focus category.
        - Focus schools newly identified under the proposed model before February 2016 will exit the Focus category if they have met their High Needs subgroup performance targets for the most recent two consecutive years.
            - Elementary schools must meet their High Needs subject area targets.
            - High schools must meet their High Needs subgroup subject area targets and six-year cohort graduation rate targets.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

Principle 3 concerns the development, adoption, and implementation of a high-quality evaluation and support system for all certified teachers and administrators below the rank of superintendent.

The 2015 Flexibility Renewal Request will document the state's ongoing work with stakeholders to administer and improve Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system.

To meet the USED's waiver requirements, Connecticut undertook the following:

- Developed, adopted, and moved forward with 2014-15 statewide implementation of Connecticut's new educator evaluation and support system, with the exception of some unique educational entities.
- While early adoption focused on the mechanics of the system, progress continues to be made toward realizing a new vision of professional learning to support educators across their career continuum.
- Through collaboration with stakeholders and a commitment to continuous improvement, several refinements have been made to the initial pilot of the educator evaluation and support system; comprehensive training programs and technical supports have also been provided to all local education agencies (LEAs).

To obtain continued approval of the USED, Connecticut must make the following commitments:

- Continued involvement of educators in the development and continuous improvement of the guidelines.
- Ensure that each LEA develops, adopts, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and administrators—including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve—high-quality educator evaluation and support systems consistent with the CSDE's adopted guidelines.
- Incorporate student growth based on state assessments into educator ratings.

The CSDE plans to propose the following in its 2015 Flexibility Renewal Request:

- The USED has allowed states to request an additional one-year delay on the incorporation of student performance on statewide assessments into educator evaluations. The CSDE will request this continued flexibility until the 2016-17 school year.
- Provide an additional one-year waiver for implementation with Pre-K, adult education, Unified School District #1/Unified School District #2, and Approved Private Special Education Programs (APSEPs) until 2016-17.
- Require the implementation of the guidelines for charter school and central office administrators in 2015-16.
- Update the resources provided to support students with disabilities, English language learners, and nontested grades and subjects.
- Continue advancing our professional learning work, inclusive of a statewide rollout in spring 2015.

CSDE

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ESEA Flexibility Renewal Information for Stakeholders

March 3, 2015

ESEA Flexibility Renewal Overview

The 2015 ESEA Flexibility Renewal process will allow Connecticut to deepen its commitment to academic standards aligned to success in college and career, a multi-variable approach to educator evaluation and support, and a school accountability system that goes beyond standardized test scores.

ESEA Flexibility Renewal Overview

USED requires each waiver state to:

- Adopt and use high-quality, college- and career-ready standards and assessments;
- Create a strong system of school accountability that highlights achievement gaps and enables interventions in low-performing schools; and
- Implement educator evaluation and support systems.

ESEA Flexibility Renewal Overview

Timeline

- Connecticut's flexibility request was granted in June 2012.
- Flexibility renewal request is due by March 31, 2015.
- Period of renewal: 2015-16 through 2017-18.

ESEA Flexibility: Background

USED requires states to make commitments to three core principles to qualify for ESEA flexibility, and to engage in robust stakeholder outreach.

- Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students
- Principle 2: State-Developed Systems of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support
- Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

Principle 1: College- & Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

Principle 1 requires states to adopt college- and career-ready academic standards, as well as high-quality assessments aligned to these standards.

Principle 1: College- & Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

For Principle 1 Connecticut is required to:

1. Update its plan to describe how it will ensure all students graduate from high school ready for college and a career through the implementation of college- and career-ready standards and high-quality, aligned assessments.
2. Update its plan to describe how it will continue to support all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, low-achieving students, and economically disadvantaged students, and the teachers of those students.
3. Adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards, and will administer similarly aligned ELP assessments.
4. Administer alternate assessments aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
5. Report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each local education agency (LEA) and public high school.

Principle 1: College- & Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

Progress to date to implement Principle 1:

- Launched a resource website ctcorestandards.org
- Provided communication toolkits, and parent materials translated into the top seven languages spoken by Connecticut students.
- The Governor's Common Core State Standards Taskforce
- Standards Implementation:
  - Hundreds of teacher mini-grants up to $2,000 each;
  - Since November 2013, 360+ educator workshops for over 10,000 attendees;
  - 1,200 days of customized, in-district coaching and technical assistance; teacher access to the Smarter Balanced Digital Library of resources;
  - $34 million in technology upgrades for local education agencies; and
  - 10,000 copies of an instructional guide for school and district leaders.

Principle 1: College- & Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

Progress to date to implement Principle 1 (cont.):

- Provided dozens of workshops on the Smarter Balanced Assessment System.
- Successfully implemented the Smarter Balanced Field Test to 90% of Connecticut school districts.
- First operational administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment for students in Grades 3-8 and 11 is ready to occur in spring 2015.
- In response to stakeholder feedback, CSDE assembled the High School Assessment Working Group to explore options for an alternate assessment in lieu of the Grade 11 Smarter Balanced test.

Principle 1: College- & Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

The CSDE plans to propose the following in its 2015 Flexibility Renewal Request (P1):

1. Continue with the Connecticut Core Standards, new standards in other academic areas, and the Smarter Balanced Assessments.
2. Propose adoption of new English language proficiency (ELP) standards aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards, and administer similarly aligned ELP assessments.
3. Connecticut will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each local education agency (LEA) and public high school.
4. Pending the recommendation of the High School Assessment Working Group, the CSDE will potentially seek flexibility to utilize an alternate assessment in lieu of the Grade 11 Smarter Balanced test.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Principle 2 requires states to develop and maintain a process for data-driven continuous improvement of systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support for schools and districts.

Please note: In this presentation Principle 2 is divided into two sections: Accountability and Turnaround.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Progress to date for Principle 2 – Connecticut's accountability system for schools and districts:

- Implemented a post-AYP accountability system starting in 2012-13;
  - Identified low-performing districts and schools to enable interventions and supports, including the Commissioner's Network;
  - Classified all schools and issued new performance reports, along with a companion document for parents to assist in understanding the new reports;
  - Created and implemented a plan to align data reporting with accountability; and
- Consulted extensively with stakeholders and analyzed the effectiveness of the new system.

State Board of Education Vision:
Connecticut students will think critically, learn joyfully, express themselves creatively, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Connecticut schools will prepare every learner for success and fulfillment in college, careers, and life.

Three ambitious goals designed to realize the vision.

Improve overall academic achievement and reduce academic achievement gaps

- Academic Achievement (Status)
  - All Students Subject Index
  - High Needs Subject Index
- Academic Growth (Longitudinal)
  - All Students
  - High Needs Subgroup

Produce college- and career-ready graduates

- Attendance/Chronic Absence
  - All Students
  - High Needs Subgroup
- Preparation for Postsecondary and Career Readiness
  - Coursework
  - Exams
- Graduation
  - On Track in 9th grade
  - All Students Four-year Rate
  - High Needs Six-Year Rate
- Postsecondary Success
  - Entrance

Prepare well-rounded, civically engaged students

- Civics - TBD
- Arts
  - Course Access
- Physical Fitness
  - Fitness Assessment
- Grit/Persistence/Personal Development - TBD

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

The CSDE plans to propose the following changes to Connecticut's school and district accountability system.

- Include academic growth of the same students over time.
- Refine existing metrics to better reflect overall performance and make subgroup performance metrics more impactful and actionable.
- Add indicators for college- and career-readiness.
- Incorporate indicators focused on the delivery of a well-rounded education such as civics, arts and fitness.
- Adjust the classification methodology to better represent overall school performance and to better target interventions and support.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

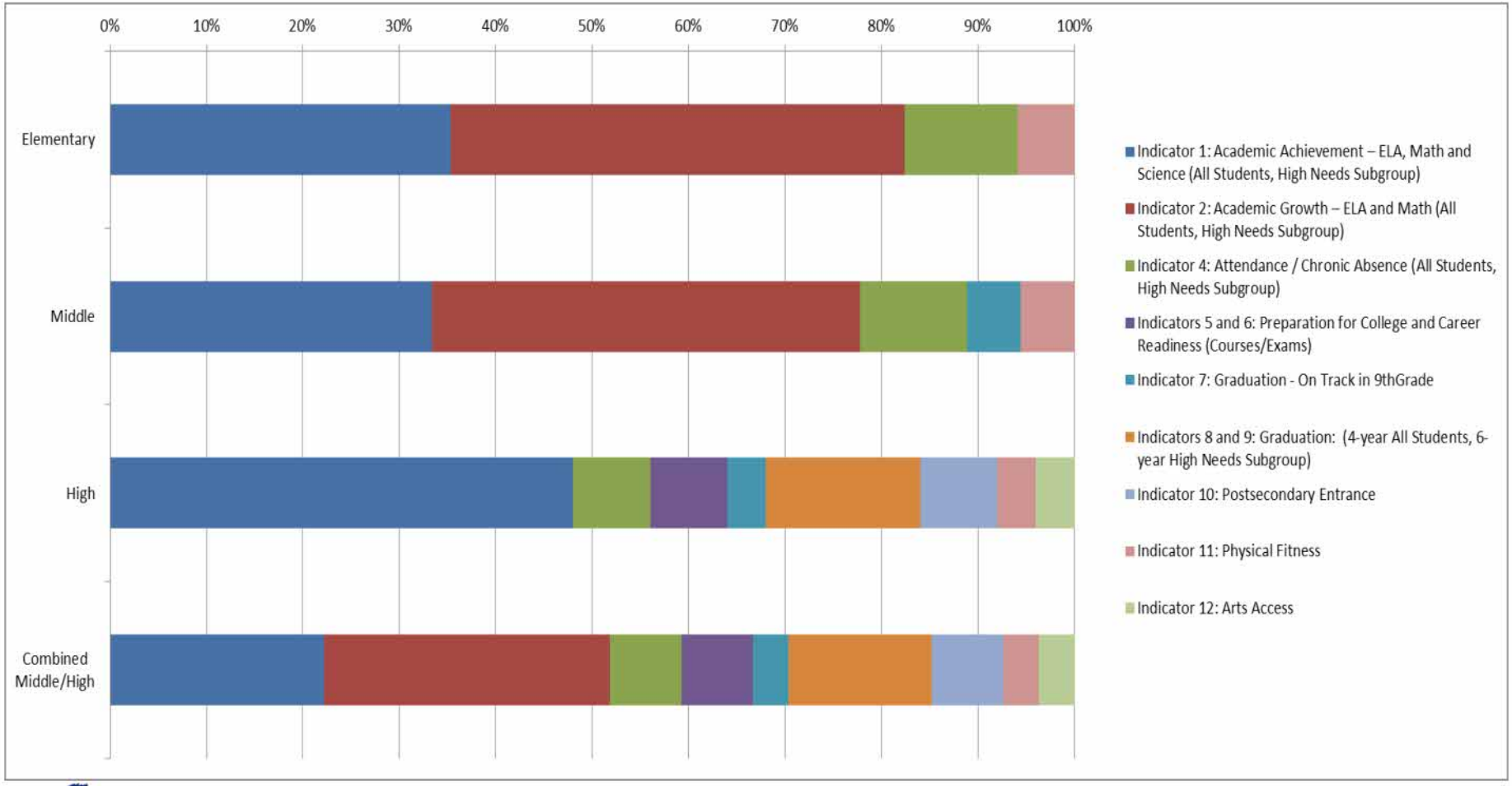
The CSDE will propose the following points for indicators in the system:

	Elementary	Middle	High	Middle/ High
Indicator 1: Academic Achievement – ELA, Math and Science (All Students, High Needs Subgroup)	300	300	600	300
Indicator 2: Academic Growth – ELA and Math (All Students, High Needs Subgroup)	400	400	*n/a*	400
Indicator 4: Attendance / Chronic Absence (All Students, High Needs Subgroup)	100	100	100	100
Indicators 5 and 6: Preparation for College and Career Readiness (Courses/Exams)	*n/a*	*n/a*	100	100
Indicator 7: Graduation - On Track in 9thGrade	*n/a*	50	50	50
Indicators 8 and 9: Graduation: (4-year All Students, 6-year High Needs Subgroup)	*n/a*	*n/a*	200	200
Indicator 10: Postsecondary Entrance	*n/a*	*n/a*	100	100
Indicator 11: Physical Fitness	50	50	50	50
Indicator 12: Arts Access	*n/a*	*n/a*	50	50
Total Possible Points	**850**	**900**	**1250**	**1350**

Note: Indicator 3 is the participation rate.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

The points in the accountability system are expressed as percentages:



Proposed School Classification Approach

Overview

- Five categories per state law.
- **Turnaround School**: Overall low performing. Bottom 5% based on percentage of eligible points earned. Includes SIG Tiers I and II as well as high schools with 6-yr graduation rate that is less than 70% for all students in two recent cohorts.
- **Focus School**: Has the lowest academic achievement or graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup statewide. Selected from bottom 3 quartiles. Includes schools with lowest High Needs subgroup index scores as well as high schools with 6-yr graduation rate for the High Needs subgroup that is less than 70% in two recent cohorts.

During 2015-16

- **Category 1** – Top quartile – not in category 4 or 5; also if outlier in achievement or grad rate gap, then classified as 2
- **Category 2** – Two middle quartiles; not in category 4 or 5
- **Category 3** – Bottom quartile; not in category 4 or 5
- **Category 4 –** Newly identified Turnaround and Focus Schools
- **Category 5** – Previously identified Turnaround and Focus Schools that haven't exited.

Beyond 2015-16

- Use multiple years weighted data to update categories 1, 2, 3

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

For Principle 2 (Accountability) Connecticut is required to:

- Demonstrate continuous improvement (CI) of the recognition and accountability system, and ensure that the system incorporates student achievement, graduation rates, and school performance and progress over time, for all students and subgroups.
- Not assign schools the highest rating if significant graduation or achievement gaps exist across subgroups.
- Provide updated lists of Turnaround and Focus schools and provide a timeline for interventions in these schools.
- Consider if there have been any significant changes to the state's accountability system and ensure the description accurately reflects how the state plans to make annual accountability determinations.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

For Principle 2 (Turnaround) Connecticut is required to:

- Describe the process for identifying any schools that, after 3 years of interventions, have not made sufficient progress to exit priority or focus status;
- Describe how CSDE will ensure increased rigor of interventions and supports in these (non-exiting) schools by the start of the 2015-16 school year;
- Update its plan for providing incentives and supports to other Title I schools to include a rigorous process for ensuring that districts provide interventions and supports to low-achieving students; and
- Describe the statewide strategy to support and monitor districts' implementation of the system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support, including the process for holding districts accountability for improving school and student achievement.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Progress to date for Principle 2, Turnaround:

- CSDE created the Alliance District program for the 30 lowest-performing districts in the state. These districts have received an additional $250M in grant funding over the past three years.
- CSDE launched the Commissioner's Network as a statewide network of low-performing schools collaboratively pursuing evidence-based strategies to dramatically improve student achievement. 16 schools currently participate in the Network and have received upwards of $26M in grant funding over the past 3 years.
- In 2014, CSDE launched new and competitive school-level grants. Between SIG 1003(g), SIG 1003(a), and the high school redesign competition, the CSDE awarded over $11M to 29 schools in 10 districts.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Progress to date for Principle 2, Turnaround (cont.):

- CSDE streamlined, shortened, and aligned all school and district application and monitoring processes using a consistent framework for school and district improvement.
- CSDE Turnaround Office staff conduct quarterly monitoring meetings with school and district teams, and adopted an online reporting platform.
- Teachers and administrators in Alliance Districts receive preferential admission to all professional development activities provided by the CSDE Academic and Talent Offices.
- To support district efforts to attract, retain and develop leadership, the CSDE in collaboration with the Connecticut Center for School Change and its partners (UCONN, CAS CAPSS, CABE, New Leaders) developed LEAD Connecticut.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Category 1-5: Requirements for Planning and Continuous School Improvement

Category:	Degree of Intervention and Planning and Submission Requirements
Category 1	Locally-determined process to support continuous improvement. No state stipulations or submission requirements. CSDE school improvement plan (SIP) and needs analysis templates provided as guidance.
Category 2	Locally-determined process to support continuous improvement. No state stipulations or submission requirements. State SIP and needs analysis templates provided as guidance.
Category 3	SIP and needs analysis must be developed and maintained locally, using CSDE-provided templates. Districts may seek a waiver to use locally-developed templates. CSDE will not collect Category 3 SIPs; however, LEAs must maintain SIPs on file and may be subject to random state audit. Alliance Districts must identify Category 3-5 school improvement strategies in annual Alliance applications.
Category 4	SIPs must be submitted to the state every two years; annual updates may be required, depending on school data. Districts may seek a waiver to use a locally-developed SIP template. The needs analysis process may be conducted locally or organized by the CSDE, as determined by the CSDE. SIPs must be submitted to the CSDE for review.
Category 5	SIPs must be submitted to the state every year for review. The needs analysis process may be conducted locally or organized by the CSDE, as determined by the CSDE. SIPs must be submitted to the CSDE for review.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Category 4 and 5 Transformation Overview

Category 4 and 5 schools must develop a SIP, subject to CSDE review, identifying (a) a model for improvement; (b) strategies aligned to school needs; and (c) adequate financial resources to implement strategies and interventions.

- **Model:** The overarching approach (pedagogical and structural) identified to transform school performance and advance student achievement.
- **Strategies:** The actionable programs, interventions, and strategies the school will pursue in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations to accelerate measurable improvement of teaching and learning.
- **Resources:** The financial resources (e.g., local, state, and federal) available to support and sustain school improvement efforts.

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

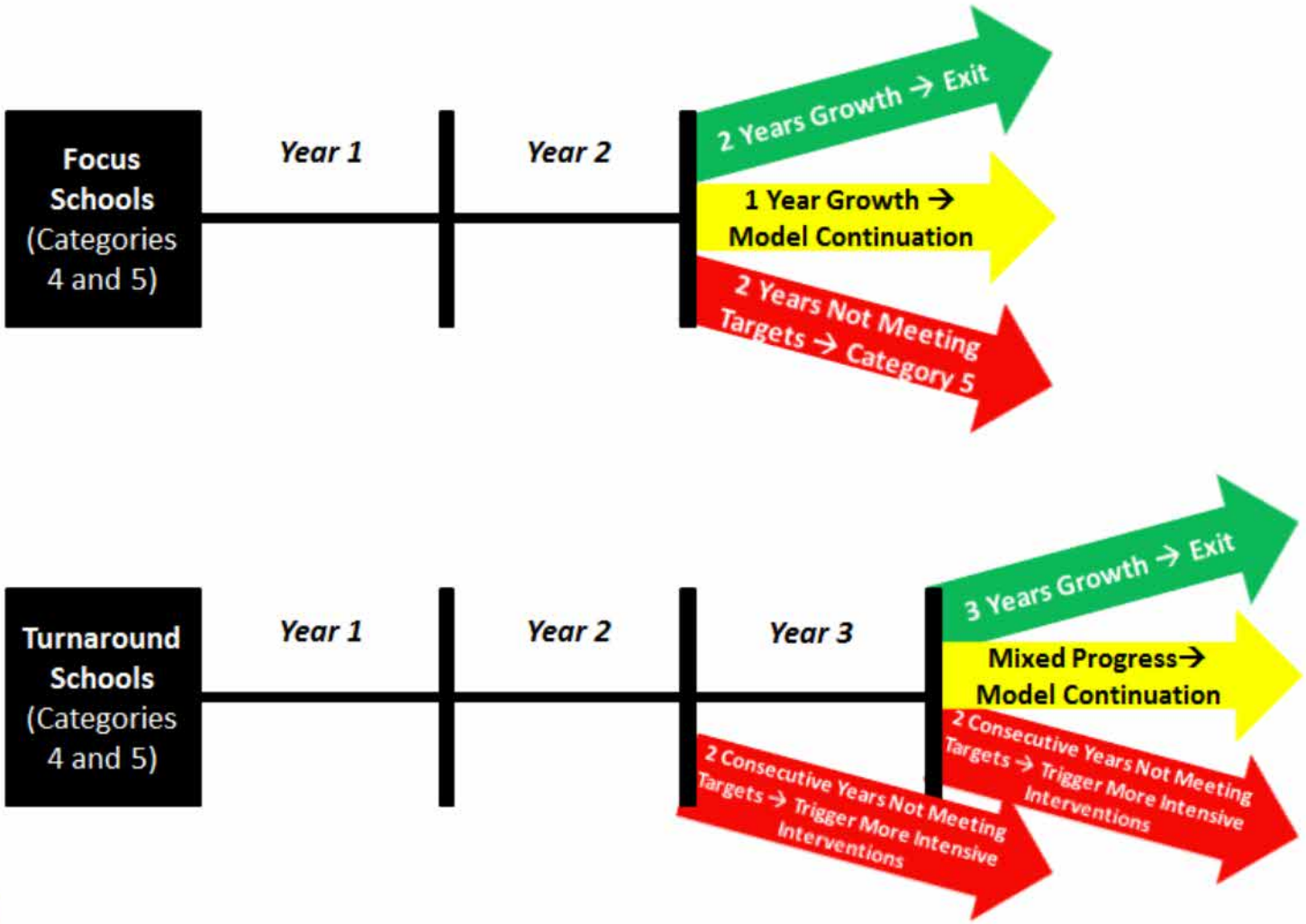
Category 4 and 5 Transformation Models

Category 4 and 5 schools must show annual progress relative to the new accountability system. State and local authorities must take collective responsibility for Turnaround schools that fail to meet local and state targets for two consecutive years by following one of the triggered pathways prescribed below.

Category 4 and 5 LEA Choice Models:	All LEA Models, Plus:
❑ District-led improvement plan ❑ School Improvement Grant 1003(g) ❑ Commissioner's Network ❑ Innovation school ❑ CommPACT school ❑ School reorganization model ❑ Community school	❑ Reconstitution or restructuring based on a CT State Board of Education-approved plan ❑ Commissioner's Network

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Category 4 and 5 Transformation Timelines



Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Category 4 and 5 Transformation Strategies Menu

Regardless of model, schools must identify strategies to advance talent, academics, climate, and operations aligned to U. S. Department of Education's requirements. The CSDE will provide a research-based menu of interventions (elective for Focus schools and more prescriptive for Turnaround schools).

CSDE Performance Framework:	USED Turnaround Principles:
Talent: Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.	1. Strong leadership 2. Effective teachers
Academics: Design and implement a rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels.	3. Rigorous and aligned instructional program 4. Use of data for continuous improvement
Culture and Climate: Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.	5. Safe and healthy students 6. Family and community engagement
Operations: Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.	7. Redesigned schedules for additional instructional time

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Category 4 and 5 School System of Support and Accountability

Support/Accountability System:	Description:
Alliance District Convenings and NetStat Sessions	Quarterly sessions designed to engage school and district teams in meaningful best practice sharing, professional development, and quantitative analyses of leading and lagging indicators of turnaround.
Quarterly Monitoring	Quarterly data submission process, following by in-person progress check-ins to discuss successes and challenges rooted in (1) data, (2) plan implementation, and (3) year-to-date grant spending. Process to support continuous improvement.
Essential School Systems	Planning templates aligned to the Essential School Systems framework (e.g., PD calendar, behavior plan, assessment system), and supporting tools and exemplars.
School and Classroom Walkthroughs	Informal school site visits and classroom observations used to gauge improvements in school climate and teaching and learning.
LEAD Connecticut	Intensive 2-month spring fellowship for new turnaround leaders; ongoing community of practice and job-embedded leadership coaching throughout the school year.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

Under Principle 3, states have committed to implementing new teacher and principal evaluation and support systems based on multiple measures. These include student growth as a significant factor and other measures of professional practice based on rigorous performance standards that meaningfully differentiate performance and evaluate educators on an annual basis.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

Educator evaluation and support systems should support continuous improvement in educator practice and instruction and include:

- Multiple measures of teacher and leader performance;
- Methods to meaningfully differentiate performance; and
- Methods that provide actionable information and feedback to inform professional learning and other support to educators.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

For Principle 3, Connecticut is required to:

☐ Assure that the state is on track for full implementation of teacher and principal evaluation and support systems,

or

☑ **Request modifications** to the evaluation and support system OR implementation timelines that require additional flexibility beyond the original waiver flexibility (and subsequent updates from USED).

CT plans to request modifications and therefore must provide a narrative response that addresses:

(a) progress made to ensure that each LEA is on track to implement a high quality evaluation and support system;

(b) proposed changes, with rationale for each change; and

(c) steps the CSDE will take to ensure continuous improvement of evaluation and support systems that result in instructional improvement and increased student learning.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

Progress to date to implement Principle 3:

In collaboration with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) and with approval from the State Board of Education (SBE), the CSDE developed and implemented Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support system and the state model, the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) as follows:

- 2012-13: Pilot implementation of CT's state model, SEED, in ten districts and consortia of districts;
- 2013-14: Partial implementation in all CT LEAs and charter schools; and
- 2014-15: Full implementation in all LEAS and charter schools. *

*In May 2014, PEAC recommended and the SBE approved a one year waiver to allow for time to work with stakeholders and study the implementation challenges in the following unique educational entities: Adult Ed, Pre-K, Private Approved Special Education Facilities, Unified School District #1, and Unified School District #2. Additionally, flexibility was approved to allow additional time to implement with charter school and central office administrators.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

Progress to date to implement Principle 3:

In collaboration with PEAC, and with approval by the SBE, the CSDE has continuously refined CT's Educator Evaluation and Support system and the state model (SEED). Among those refinements were:

- The request to allow LEAs and charter schools the flexibility to "decouple" the required use of state test data to measure student growth in educator evaluation for educators in tested grades and subjects through the 2014-15 school year;
- Adjustments to the number of student growth goals required; and
- Additional flexibility regarding the number of required annual observations.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

Progress to date to implement Principle 3:

The CSDE engaged a broadly representative group of stakeholders to collaborate on the development of a new system for professional learning to support educators across their career continuum. The following represent some of the accomplishments to date:

- Convened the CT Academy for Professional Learning;
- Convened the Professional Learning Advisory Council (PLAC); and
- In collaboration with the PLAC, the CSDE has:
  - developed a new definition of professional learning consistent with the vision outlined in PA 12-116;
  - reached consensus on CT Standards for Professional Learning; and
  - Developed a DRAFT of the *Connecticut Guidance for a Professional Learning System*

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

The CSDE plans to propose the following relating to Principle 3:

- Continued flexibility, through at least the 2015-16 school year, regarding the requirement to incorporate the state test as a measure of student growth in educator evaluation for teachers and administrators in tested grades and subjects; and
- Adding additional one-year waiver for full implementation of CT's Educator Evaluation and Support system in the following unique settings:
  - Pre-K;
  - Adult Education;
  - Unified School District #1;
  - Unified School District #2; and
  - Approved Private Special Education Facilities.

PLEASE NOTE: CSDE will require that each of these systems implement a pilot in 2015-16.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

The CSDE plans to propose the following relating to Principle 3 (cont.):

- Require full implementation of CT's Educator Evaluation and Support system as outlined in the CT Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (June 2012) for charter schools and central office administrators in all LEAs beginning in the 2015-16 school year;

- Continue to develop and update the resources provided to support educators of students with disabilities, English learners, and educators of non-tested grades and subjects; and

- Continue to advance the work to transform CT's systems for professional learning and develop new tools and resources to assist schools and districts.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction & Leadership

As required under Principle 3, the CSDE will implement a statewide system to monitor implementation of CT's Educator Evaluation and Support system as follows:

- Annual monitoring through a three–tiered approach
  - Level 1: All LEAs and charter schools will submit a progress questionnaire as part of the annual submission of their educator evaluation and support plan
  - Level 2: A survey of educators from a sampling of CT LEAs and charter schools (representing both Alliance and Non-Alliance districts)
  - Level 3: On-site visit for up to ten districts annually based on the findings from Level 2
- Implementation Timeline:
  - 2015-16 Plan Submission: LEAs and charter schools will be **strongly encouraged** but not required to participate
  - 2016-17 Plan Submission: All LEAs and charter schools **will be required** to participate as outlined above.

The Importance of ESEA Flexibility Renewal

Failure to renew Connecticut's waiver would result in:

- A return to a limited and unhelpful system for measuring school and district performance;
- The return of restrictions on how federal funds are used; and
- Prescriptive consequences for failing schools.

The Importance of ESEA Flexibility Renewal

Stakeholder Feedback Requested

Thank you for taking the time to view this presentation regarding Connecticut's proposed 2015 ESEA Flexibility Renewal.

We would appreciate you e-mailing any feedback you would like to share to **ESEAFlexRequest.SDE@ct.gov**.

List of Organizations Invited to the ESEA Event

CABE

Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO)

Urban League of Greater Hartford

American Civil Liberties Union of CT

CT Civil Rights Council

The Institute of American Indian Studies

African American Affairs Commission

State of Black Connecticut Alliance

Office of Protection and Advocacy

African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities (AFCAMP)

Developmental Disabilities Council

Council on American-Islamic Relations of CT

Human Rights Institute – UCONN

CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

Connecticut Afterschool Advisory Network

CAPELL

Bridgeport After-School Network

Child and Family Agency, Groton

Connecticut Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC)

Educational Resources for Children

CT Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Center for Community Engagement

Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center

Bridge Family Center

Welcome Center – Family Services – Hartford

CT Council on Developmental Disabilities, Hartford

Connecticut Association for Human Services

Literacy Volunteers of Central Connecticut

Connecticut Education Association

Families in Crisis

Community Renewal Team, Hartford

CT Autism Spectrum Resource Center

CT Coalition of Inclusive Education

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Teachers and Leaders

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Alliance District Webinar on Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for ELA and Mathematics	Alliance districts	12/10/13	CSDE Consultants
Regional Education Service Center (RESC) Language Arts Council Presentation on K-3 Literacy updates, CCSS Systems of Learning and Smarter Balanced updates	RESCs	1/5/2014 2/27/2014 3/24/2014 3/25/2014	CSDE Consultants
Teacher of the Year (TOTY) Quarterly Meetings: CCSS Shifts	TOTY group	2/24/14	CSDE Consultants
Presentation for Albertus Magnus students on Close Reading	Graduate class	6/24/14	CSDE Consultants
ConnTeach AFT Presentation on CTCoreStandards.org	College students	8/6/14	CSDE Consultants
Evidence Guide Writing for Library/Media	Teachers and administrators	8/12-13/14 8/25/14	CSDE Consultants
Library/Media Specialist Council meeting on website resources and Smarter Balanced update	CREC Library/Media Specialists, Teachers	9/24/14	CSDE Consultants
SLD/Dyslexia Workgroup	Teachers, administrators and parents	9/25/14 11/20/14	CSDE Consultants
Fall 2014 LA Council Meetings on website resources and Smarter Balanced update	RESCs	9/29/14 10/3/14 10/6/14 10/20/14 11/3/14	CSDE Consultants
SRBI Practitioner Working Group	Teachers and administrators	10/6/14	CSDE Consultants
Alliance District Convening presentation on CTCoreStandards website	Alliance districts	10/13/14	CSDE Consultants
CT Reading Association Conference presentation on CT Core Standards Toolbox	Teachers and administrators	10/24/14	CSDE Consultants
Early Childhood Standards alignment work	Teachers	12/8/14	CSDE Consultants
Collaboration with District Literacy Leads regarding the menu of approved reading assessments and criteria for identifying "substantially deficient" readers in grades K-3	Priority school districts	9/2014	CSDE Consultants
Collaboration with District Literacy Leads providing information about the development of the CSDE data portal.	Priority school districts	10/2014	CSDE Consultants
Collaboration with District Literacy Leads providing guidance for the submission of Fall Reading Assessment.	Priority school districts	2/2015	CSDE Consultants
District Test Coordinator Workshops	District test coordinators	1/21,22,23,/2015 2/24,26/2015	CSDE Consultants
Humanities Unit Newsletter	ELA/social studies	Posted monthly	CSDE

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	teachers and administrators	9/30/14 - present	Consultants
Student Assessment Newsletter	District test coordinators	Weekly during testing Feb.-June 2014 Feb.-June 2015	CSDE Consultants
Eleventh Grade Assessment Working Group to explore all options for college and career ready standards and assessments.	CAPSS, CABE, CEA, AFT, Higher Education	11/21/14 1/21/15	CSDE Consultants
Assessment Literacy Workshop	Administrator and teachers and educators	November 13,14,18,19/2013 January 13-14, 2014	CSDE Consultants
Conference on Educating Deaf and hard of Hearing Students	Special educators and administrators	1/10/14	CSDE Consultants
Presentation: CT Reading Association	Teachers/Instructional Coaches	10/17/13	CSDE Consultants
Training: Connecting the Claims Workshops for LEA	Teachers and Leaders	9/25/14 10/3/14	CSDE Consultants
Smarter Balanced Overview	CAS Community of Practice	10/15/13	CSDE Consultants
RESC Math Council Meetings	Teachers and district leaders	9/27/13 10/4,18/2013 11/22/13 1/10/14 3/28/14 9/22/14	CSDE Consultants
CT CCS Algebra 1 Curriculum Regional Training Sessions	District/charter school mathematics leaders and teachers of Algebra 1	9/21/13 1/24,25/14 2/7,8/14	CSDE Consultants
ATOMIC Board Meeting discussions and annual conference activities in support of CCSSM implementation	CT K-16 teachers and leaders of mathematics	9/3/13 10/7/13 12/3/13 1/15/13 4/22/14 11/18/14 12/2/14 1/14/15	CSDE Consultants
District Implementations Survey Circulated	K-12 Administrators and teachers	9/2013	CSDE Consultants
NGSS Content Crosswalk Report Published	K-12 Administrators and teachers	10/2013	CSDE Consultants
CT Science Supervisors Association Presentation	District science leaders	10/2013	CSDE Consultants
CT Science Teachers and Supervisors Association Executive Board Meeting Presentations (4)	District Science Leaders and science teachers	November 2013 - March 2015	CSDE Consultants
RESC Science Council Presentations (12)	District science leaders	September 2013 – February 2015	CSDE Consultants
Next Gen Science Assessment Committee	K-12 science teachers	August, October 2014 January 2015	CSDE Consultants

Introduction to NGSS for District Leaders (full-day workshops)	K-12 district leaders	11/25/14	CSDE Consultants
CT TOTY Focus Group	Teachers	10/2014	CSDE Consultants
SDE NGSS Newsletters	K-12 administrators, teachers, IHE science education faculty, informal science centers	Quarterly	CSDE Consultants

Boards of Education

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Lighthouse Meetings	CABE Lighthouse Workgroup	1/21/2014 2/20/2014 3/13/2014 4/4/2014 4/17/2014 6/18/2014 9/10/2014 9/17/14 10/6/14 10/16/14 11/6/14 12/10/14 1/13/15 1/22/15 2/18/15	CSDE Consultants
Eleventh Grade Assessment Working Group to explore all options for college and career ready standards and assessments.	CAPSS, CABE, CEA, AFT, Higher Education	11/21/14 1/21/15	CSDE Consultants

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Superintendents

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Eleventh Grade Assessment Working Group to explore all options for college and career ready standards and assessments.	CAPSS, CABE, CEA, AFT, Higher Education	11/21/14 1/21/15	CSDE Consultants
Smarter Balanced Overview	CAPSS Assessment Committee	10/17/13	CSDE Consultants
Smarter Balanced Overview	CREC Curriculum Council	11/7/13	CSDE Consultants
Smarter Balanced Digital Library Introduction	CT Science Supervisor Association	10/1/14	CSDE Consultants
Smarter Balanced Digital Library Introduction	Career Tech Ed Conference	10/22/14	CSDE Consultants
Academic Office Update and Smarter Balanced Update	LEARN Curriculum Council, Assistant Superintendents and Curriculum Directors	11/21/14	CSDE Consultants
ACES Math Council – CCSS and Smarter Balanced Update	Mathematics educators	3/28/14	CSDE Consultants
Smarter Balanced Overview for CEA	Teacher Union	6/11/14	CSDE Consultants
EASTCONN Math Council – CCSS and Smarter Balanced Update	Mathematics educators	6/5/14	CSDE Consultants
CREC Curriculum Council – Smarter Balanced Update	District Curriculum Leads	10/2/14	CSDE Consultants
CES Math Council – CCSS and Smarter Balanced Update	Mathematics educators	10/9/14	CSDE Consultants
Connecting the Smarter Balanced Mathematics Claims to Instruction TOT	RESC Professional Development Staff	10/23/14	CSDE Consultants
RESC Curriculum Council Presentations (2)	Assistant Superintendents	February 2014- February 2015	CSDE Consultants
District Advisory Council Surveys (70 districts represented)	District leaders	August and October 2014	CSDE Consultants

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Families and Community

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Teachers of the Deaf	Certified TOD	6/5/14	CSDE Consultants
K-3 Reading Assessment list Data Clinic with Discovery Communities	Members of Discovery Communities (nonprofit organization)	7/2/14	CSDE Consultants
Coalition for Educating Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in CT	Members	12/10/14	CSDE Consultants
Cromwell High School: CT PTA and NEA	Educators and parents	1/25/14	CSDE Consultants
CT Education Foundation	Members	9/30/14	CSDE Consultants
Collaborate with PTA President, CSDE school-parent-community partnerships consultant and the Hartford and Wallingford school and district personnel on communicating with and supporting parent/family understanding of the Common Core State Standards for Math	CT School Leaders and Family Resource Centers	5/22/2014 6/9,30, 2014 9/19,25, 2014 10/10/2014 11/5/14	CSDE Consultants
CCSS: Preparing All CT Students for a Better Tomorrow	Faith, Family and Community Conference	10/23/14	CSDE Consultants
Align the Early Learning and Developmentally and Emotionally Standards with the K-3 CCSS	PK-3 educators and families	12/18/14	CSDE Consultants

Higher Education

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Council of Leaders of Mathematics – Re: Implementing the CCSSM and CSDE Supports	CT school, IHE and district leaders of mathematics	10/2/14	CSDE Consultants
CCSSM Alignment with Preparation Curriculum	CCSU Elementary and secondary pre-service teachers and instructional staff	2/20/15	CSDE Consultants
MSP-funded NGSS Professional Development Projects	IHE science education faculty and K-12 science teachers	January 2014-September 2015	CSDE Consultants

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Industry

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Teleconference with Rep. Elizabeth Estey's office regarding MSP connections to CCSS and STEM career readiness	CBIA CT employers	9/21/13	CSDE Consultants

CT Association of Schools Meetings (Principals)

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
What We Learned in Year One/Making the Case for the Common Core	Principals/School Administrators	9/29/15	Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell; Board Chair Allan Taylor
CT Common Core "Look Fors"	Principals/School Administrators	11/24/14	Ellen Cohn and CSDE Consultants
Implication for Special Education, SRBI/EL	Principals/School Administrators	12/15/14	CSDE Consultants Hartford and Windsor Public Schools Staff
Relating the CCS to Curriculum Development	Principals/School Administrators	1/20/15	CSDE Consultants
Digital Library and the Formative Assessment System	Principals/School Administrators	1/23/15	CSDE Consultants

English Language Learners

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Introduce English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards	ESL and bilingual teachers and leaders	11/24/14 1/16/15 3/9/15	CSDE Consultants

ELP Standards.pdf

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ESEA Flexibility Application
Consultation Activities and Timeline

SDE Office: Performance Office

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS): Assessment and Accountability Committee	Primarily Superintendents	October 17, 2013	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Alliance District Convening	District leaders from Alliance Districts (included district test coordinators, curriculum leaders, principals, etc.)	January 16, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Parent Advocacy Convening	Informational session regarding the 2013 School and District Performance Reports for parents and family/community organizations	January 22, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
CAPSS: Assessment and Accountability Committee	Primarily Superintendents	March 6, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
External Accountability Advisory Group	LEA staff including research directors, test directors, and building principals	March 17, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Connecticut Arts Administrators Association	Arts Administrators	March 20, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
External Accountability Advisory Group	LEA staff including research directors, test directors, and building principals	May 1, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
CAPSS Assessment and Accountability Committee	Primarily Superintendents	May 15, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
External Accountability Advisory Group	LEA staff including research directors, test directors, and building principals	May 29, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
External Accountability Advisory Group (virtual meeting)	LEA staff including research directors, test directors, and building principals	June 11, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Hartford Area Superintendents' Association (HASA)	Superintendents	June 12, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
LEARN Region Superintendents' Meeting	Superintendents	June 20, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan

ESEA Flexibility Application
Consultation Activities and Timeline

SDE Office: Performance Office

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Expert Guidance	National experts, UConn faculty, CCSSO and Smarter Balanced representatives, and selected Superintendents	July 25, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Commissioner's Superintendent Roundtable	15 Selected Superintendents	September 30, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Alliance District Convening	District leaders from Alliance Districts (included district test coordinators, curriculum leaders, principals, etc.)	October 15, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS): Assessment and Accountability Committee	Primarily Superintendents	October 30, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Connecticut State Board of Education November Meeting	State Board of Education Members (televised on the Connecticut Network)	November 3, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
External Accountability Advisory Group	LEA staff including research directors, test directors, and building principals	November 6, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)/CAPSS Convention	Superintendents and Local School Board Members	November 14, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Northeastern Region Superintendents' Advisory Meeting	Superintendents	November 20, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Connecticut State Board of Education December Meeting	State Board of Education Members (televised on the Connecticut Network)	December 3, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
West Haven Data Team Meeting	65 educators including central office staff, teachers, instructional support, etc.	December 5, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
ConnCase	LEA Directors of Special Education	December 8, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Southeastern Connecticut Superintendents' Association	Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Chief Academic Officers, and other Central Office leaders	December 12, 2014	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Hartford Area Superintendents' Association (HASA)	Superintendents	January 8, 2015	Ajit Gopalakrishnan

ESEA Flexibility Application
Consultation Activities and Timeline

SDE Office: Performance Office

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Meeting with Sheff Coalition Representatives	Two members of Coalition including the Outreach Coordinator	January 12, 2015	Charlene Russell-Tucker
Meeting with Union Representatives	CEA and AFT-CT Representatives	January 12, 2015	Charlene Russell-Tucker
Alliance District Convening	District leaders from Alliance Districts (included district test coordinators, curriculum leaders, principals, etc.)	January 14, 2015	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Western Connecticut Superintendents' Meeting	Superintendents	January 23, 2015	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Presentation at monthly CAPELL meeting	CT Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL)	February 6, 2015	Ajit Gopalakrishnan and Marie Salazar-Glowski
Presentation for Institutes of Higher Education	Deans from Higher Education	February 13, 2015	Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Sarah Barzee, and Shannon Marimon
Science Accountability Focus Group Discussion	District Science Supervisors	March 3, 2015	Ajit Gopalakrishnan and Elizabeth Buttner
Litchfield County Superintendents' Association Meeting	Superintendents	March 13, 2015	Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Connecticut Education Association (CEA)	CEA Staff and Classroom Teachers	March 16, 2015	Ajit Gopalakrishnan

ESEA Flexibility Application Consultation Activities and Timeline

SDE Office: Turnaround

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VII** Report of the Commissioner: Letters of Interest/Prospective Charter School operators.	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	January 9, 2013	Chief Turnaround Officer Debra Kurshan
Schools of Distinction Forum	Schools of Distinction Superintendent's and leadership, Students, Internal CSDE Leaders, State Board	February 26, 2013	Chief Turnaround Officer Debra Kurshan
Cohort I NetStat Session	District and School Leadership from Cohort 1 Commissioner's Network Schools	May 22, 2013	Debra Kurshan, Chief Turnaround Officer
SIG SchoolStat Session	Districts and School Leadership seeking to form Cohort II	June 3, 2013	Debra Kurshan, Chief Turnaround Officer
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VI.4** Approval of Standing Committees and Assignments: Accountability and Support Committee **Agenda Item VI.B** Approval of Commissioner Network Turnaround Plans: 1. Dunbar School, Bridgeport 2. Wilbur Cross High School, New Haven 3. DiLoreto Magnet School, New Britain **Agenda Item VI.D** Approval of Brass City Charter School, Waterbury **Agenda Item VI.E** Approval of Path Academy Charter, Windham **Agenda Item VII.A** Update on Alliance Districts	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	June 5, 2013	Chief Turnaround Officer Debra Kurshan
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VI.D** Commissioner's Network Plan: Briggs School, Norwalk **Agenda Item VI.E** Commissioner's Network Plan: Walsh Elementary School, Waterbury **Agenda Item VI.F** Commissioner's Network Plan: Crosby High School, Waterbury	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	July 15, 2013	Andrew Ferguson, Turnaround Office Michelle Rosado, Turnaround Office
Accountability and Support Committee Meeting **Agenda Item II** Review of Alliance District Plans Review Process - PowerPoint presentation	Accountability and Support Committee, Internal CSDE Leaders	August 23, 2013	Andrew Ferguson, Turnaround Office
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting	State Board, Public, Internal	October 2, 2013	Morgan Barth,

Agenda Item VI.B Approval of Staffing Flexibility Agreement: Elm City Montessori School, New Haven	CSDE Leaders		Turnaround Division Director
Cohort I & II NetStat Session	Commissioner's Network Cohort I and II School and District Leadership	October 9, 2013	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Alliance Districts Year 2 Kickoff Convening	Alliance District Superintendents and District Leadership	October 17, 2013	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VII.A** Update on Student Suspensions	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	December 4, 2013	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VII.D** Update on Commissioner's Network Schools	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	January 8, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Alliance District Convening	Alliance District Superintendents and Leadership	January 16, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
NetStat Session – Diagnosis and Problem-Solving	Commissioner's Network Cohort I and II School and District Leadership	January 23, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VI.B** Renewal of Charter: Highville Charter School **Agenda Item VI.C** Renewal of Charter: Park City Preparatory Charter School	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	February 5, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Accountability and Support Committee Meeting **Agenda Item IV** Update on Commissioner's Network and Alliance Districts	Accountability and Support Committee, Internal CSDE Leaders	March 31, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VI.C** Consideration of Charter School Applications 1.Booker T. Washington Academy 2.Great Oaks Charter School 3.Stamford Charter School for Excellence 4.Capital Prep Harbor School	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	April 2, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Cohort I & II NetStat Session	Commissioner's Network Cohort I and II School and District Leadership	April 10, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Alliance District Convening	Alliance District Superintendents and leadership	May 1, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VII.B** Approval of four Applications for the Commissioner's Network 1. Lincoln-Bassett School, New Haven 2. Robert J. O'Brien STEM Academy, East Hartford 3. Luis Muñoz Marin School, Bridgeport 4. Uncas School, Norwich 5. Clark School, Hartford	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	May 7, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director

Schools of Distinction Forum	Schools of Distinction Superintendent's and leadership, Students, Internal CSDE Leaders, State Board	May 8, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VI.A** Approval of Revised Turnaround Plan for Years 2 and 3 of the Commissioner's Network: Windham Middle School, Windham	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	June 4, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
NetStat School Readiness Workshop	Commissioner's Network and SIG School and District Leaders	June 9, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Special State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item II** Discussion and potential action: operations and governance of Family Urban Schools of Excellence, Jumoke Academy, and charter schools	State Board, Internal CSDE Leaders	June 30, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Accountability and Support Committee Meeting **Agenda Item II** Update on Commissioner's Network Presentation **Agenda Item III** Alliance Districts Presentation	Accountability and Support Committee, Internal CSDE Leaders	July 30, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Special State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item III** Hearing on Charter Modification Request Submitted by Booker T. Washington Academy	State Board, Public, CSDE Leaders	August 4, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
NetStat Essential School Systems Workshop	Commissioner's Network and SIG School and District Leaders	August 13, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting **Agenda Item VII. A** Update on Crosby High School Turnaround Planning Process **Agenda Item VII.B** Update on Network Schools and Alliance Districts **Agenda Item IX** Update/Status report on Booker T. Washington Academy's readiness to open	State Board, Public, CSDE Leaders	September 3, 2014	Morgan Barth, Division Director, Turnaround Office, and Waterbury Superintendent of Schools Kathleen Ouellette Mark Linabury-Bureau Chief
Alliance District Convening	Alliance District Superintendents and leadership	October 15, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Accountability and Support Committee Meeting **Agenda Item II.B/C** Turnaround Office Update that focused on leading indicator data as reported by Commissioner's Network and SIG schools and by the state's 30 Alliance Districts	Accountability and Support Committee, Internal CSDE Leaders	December 11, 2014	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director Michael Kent, Consultant, Turnaround Kaylan Ricciardi, Consultant, Turnaround
Network NetStat Session	Commissioner's Network	December 10,	Morgan Barth,

	and SIG School and District Leaders	2014	Turnaround Division Director
Alliance District Convening	Alliance District Superintendents and leadership	January 14, 2015	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director
Connecticut State Board of Education Meeting - Agenda Item VI.C Approval of Crosby High School (Waterbury) Turnaround Plan	State Board, Public, Internal CSDE Leaders	February 4, 2015	Morgan Barth, Turnaround Division Director

Stakeholder Group	Date	Person responsible/presenters	Key Activity/Meeting
Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC)	2/4/13; 7/10/2013; 1/29/14; 4/24/14	Sarah Barzee/Shannon Marimon	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings
Educator Evaluation and Support Development Team (staff developers from each RESC, CAS, and CSDE reps)	monthly meeting	Shannon Marimon	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings
The Coalition for Public Education (CEA, AFT, CAPSS, CABE, CAS, PTA)	ongoing	Sarah Barzee/Shannon Marimon	General topics
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) Meeting	02/13/15	Sarah Barzee/Shannon Marimon	Deans of education preparation programs
CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) Board of Directors	ongoing	Sarah Barzee	Regular updates from the CSDE
CAPSS Superintendent Roundtable	monthly meeting	Sarah Barzee	Regular updates from the CSDE
Superintendents and/or Designees	9/19/14; 11/21/14	CTAC/Shannon Marimon/Teresa Boyd Cowles	Focus Groups for Monitoring Fidelity of Educator Evaluation & Support Implementation
Regional Educational Service Center(RESC) Curriculum Council meetings	2-3 times annually	Shannon Marimon	Opportunity for the CSDE to provide regular updates to educators within the 6 RESC regions
Approved Private Special Education Program (APSEP) administrators	varies	Shannon Marimon/Sharon Fuller	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings-consideration of adaptations and supports
Unified School Districts #1 (Correctional Facilities) and USD #2 administrators (Dept of Child and Family Services)	varies	Shannon Marimon/Sharon Fuller	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings-consideration of adaptations and supports
Adult Education representatives	varies	Shannon Marimon/Sharon Fuller	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings-consideration of adaptations and supports

Central Office Administrators	varies	Shannon Marimon/Sharon Fuller	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings-consideration of adaptations and supports
Charter School Administrators	varies	Shannon Marimon/Sharon Fuller	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings-consideration of adaptations and supports
Student and Educator Support Specialists	ongoing	Kim Wachtelhausen	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings-consideration of adaptations and supports
Pre-K-3 Advisory Council/National Governor's Association (NGA)	varies	Kim Wachtelhausen	Educator Evaluation and Support Meetings-consideration of adaptations and supports
CT Academy for Professional Learning (consists of CABE, CAPSS, CAS, Higher Education, CCER, CEA, AFT, SERC, Educator Leaders in Residence)	9/15-9/16/15; 11/18-11/19/14; 3/9-3/10/15	Shannon Marimon/Kimberly Audet	Stakeholder convening to focus on expanding CT's vision for high-quality professional learning
Professional Learning Advisory Council (consists of CABE, CAPSS, CAS, Higher Education, CCER, CEA, AFT, SERC, Educator Leaders in Residence)	10/30/14; 12/23/14; 1/9/15; 1/16/15; 1/20/15; and 2/17/15	Shannon Marimon/Kimberly Audet	Working group to develop definition, standards, and guidance document to support CT's vision for high-quality professional learning
LEAD Connecticut Partners (Center for School Change, CABE, CAPSS, CAS, New Leaders, UConn Neag School of Education)	Quarterly meetings	Anne McKernan	CSDE leadership development initiative
Teachers of the Year Quarterly Meetings	Quarterly meetings; focused discussion on 2/10/15	Sarah Barzee/Ellen Cohn	TOY finalists and semi-finalists are invited to take part in quarterly meetings with CSDE staff
CAPSEF Annual Conference	Annually	Sarah Fuller/Shannon Marimon	CAPSEF Annual Conference
Connecticut Association of School Personnel Administrators Meeting	03/14/14	Sharon Fuller/Kim Wachtelhausen	Connecticut Association of School Personnel Administrators Meeting

Log of ESEA Renewal Feedback E-mails sent to ESEAFlexRequest.SDE@ct.gov

Entry #	Stakeholder Category	Position and Organization	Date
1	Administrator	Director of Teaching & Learning/ LEA	3/5/15
2	Administrator	Asst. Superintendent/ LEA	3/5/15
3	Administrator	Asst. Principal/ LEA	3.5/15
4	Administrator	Principal/LEA	3/8/15
5	Administrator	Principal/ LEA	3/9/15
6	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/11/15
7	Administrator	Principal/ LEA	3/13/15
8	Teacher	Teacher/LEA	3/15/15
9	Superintendent Organization	Director/ CT Association of Public School Superintendents	3/16/15
10	Administrator	Asst. Supt/ LEA	3/16/15
11	Teacher	School Counselor/ LEA	3/18/15
12	Administrator	Asst. Supt/ LEA	3/19/15
13	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/19/15
14	Administrator	Principal/ LEA	3/19/15
15	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/19/15
16	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/19/15
17	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/19/15
18	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/19/15
19	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/19/15
20	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/19/15
21	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/19/15
22	Advocacy Organization	President/ Public Square Partnership	3/20/15
23	Administrator	Principal/ LEA	3/22/15
24	Administrator	Superintendent/ LEA	3/22/15

25	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/24/15
26	Teacher	Teacher/ LEA	3/24/15
27	Administrator	Superintendent/ LEA	3/25/15
28	Teacher Union	Representative/ CT Education Association	3/26/15
29	Advocacy Organization	Director/ Absolute Standards	3/26/15
30	Administrator	Science Supervisor/ LEA	3/26/15
31	Administrator	Principal/ LEA	3/27/15
32	Administrator	Superintendents/ Two LEAs	3/27/15
33	Educational Organization	Director/ ConnCAN	3/27/15
34	Administrator	Director of Research/ LEA	3/27/15
35	Board of Education Association	Director of Policy/ CT Association of Boards of Education	3/27/15
36	Educational Organization	Director/ Connecticut Council for Education Reform	3/27/15

CEA
Advocating for teachers and public education

Connecticut Education Association

Governance
Sheila Cohen, President
Jeff Leake, Vice President
Pat Jordan, Secretary
Thomas Nicholas, Treasurer
John Horrigan, NEA Director
Gary Peluchette, NEA Director

Executive Office
Mark Waxenberg
Executive Director

Policy, Research & Reform
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An affiliate of the
National Education Association

Testimony of

Ray Rossomando

Connecticut Education Association

Before the

State Board of Education

Re: *The ESEA Waiver and Measuring the Multiple Missions of Connecticut Schools*

March 4, 2015

Good afternoon Chairman Taylor, Interim Commissioner Roberge-Wentzell, and members of the State Board of Education. My name is Ray Rossomando, Research and Policy Development Specialist with the Connecticut Education Association. CEA represents 43,000 active and retired teachers across the state.

I am testifying today on the state's application for a waiver under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

I want to first share my appreciation for the work that the State Department of Education staff has undertaken in preparation of the application. Staff members have set aside time to explain the department's direction on the waiver, which in turn better enables our organization to seek and share input from teachers. We are very appreciative of their efforts and continual communication.

Additionally, teachers look forward to more fully discussing Principle 2 of the application, which will address the factors that best indicate whether our schools are meeting their mission, the interests of parents, and the goals of students. We thank Mr. Gopalakrishnan for setting aside time in his busy schedule to listen to teachers, specifically on Principle 2.

The work that has already been shared with State Board members at the December meeting provides a promising sketch of how we can measure school quality in the future. It recognizes that we have invested far too many resources and too much learning time on single high-stakes standardized test scores – tests that serve only as a snapshot in time, and a dipstick on a school system. There is so much more to schooling, and the new measures appear to be taking that into consideration.

As we move forward, we hope that a new measure of school accountability will be able to address the many things we expect our schools to do. After all, tax payers spend billions of dollars on Connecticut schools and deserve an accountability system that recognizes the many goals that they expect their local schools to achieve. They expect schools to prepare each child to participate in democratic institutions, attain productive employment, and to otherwise contribute to the state's economy, and, if they desire, to progress on to higher education.

In addition to the criteria already under consideration by SDE, ***our school accountability system should aspire to account for the multiple missions of schools. A new, more innovative accountability system must also consider these two critical objectives.***

1) To fully prepare students, our schools must focus on more than a score – they must provide all students the opportunity to:
   - Maximize their critical thinking skills
   - Employ creativity
   - Demonstrate an ability to collaborate and communicate effectively
   - Exhibit self-direction and persistence in the pursuit of continued learning and enrichment
   - Engage in civic, community, and global interests and issues.
2) To accomplish these student-focused objectives, Connecticut schools must also promote learning environments that are equitable, safe, welcoming, and engaging to students and their parents.

By focusing on student-centered objectives, we have an opportunity to be bold, innovative, and a national leader in measuring school quality. CEA and our 43,000 teacher-members look forward to participating in that process.

CCER
Connecticut Council for EDUCATION REFORM

Public Comment on Connecticut's ESEA Renewal Request
March 27, 2015

The Connecticut Council for Education Reform (CCER) is very pleased to see that the CSDE will be monitoring schools through numerous indicators: academic achievement and growth, attendance, preparation for college and career, graduation rates, postsecondary entrance, physical fitness, and the arts. We think that this holistic approach to tracking school performance will be beneficial to students and will help schools to focus on providing students with enriching and supportive environments that produce high-quality learning.

We appreciate the emphasis on making subgroup performance data more impactful and actionable in this "Next Generation Accountability Model." Specifically, the model calls for holding schools more accountable by creating a "High Needs" subgroup so that the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) can capture performance data for additional groups of underserved students. We are also pleased to see that the request maintains a lowered minimum subgroup size, in order to make subgroup performance more visible. We need access to these types of high quality data so that we can focus on the needs of schools, and identify the students who need the most support. We also need high-quality data to monitor Connecticut's progress in narrowing its widest-in-the-nation achievement gap.

In addition, we are supportive of the use of a holistic framework for accountability that captures multiple measures of student achievement growth. This inclusion of multiple metrics will help various practitioners to focus on the most important aspects of their work (e.g. teachers focused on teaching quality curriculum). It is also our hope that educators will increasingly see this information as an important tool for data-based decision-making, rather than merely a punitive measure.

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium test represents a tremendous step forward in assessment technology because it is vertically scaled across grades and allows us to track student growth within subject-areas. This new ability to measure growth with validity and reliability will allow for greater focus in our accountability model. It will help to monitor all students' growth, whether they are low-performing, high-performing, or somewhere in between.

The request for additional flexibility for English Language Learners (providing two years prior to required testing) is consistent with research on second language acquisition and has the potential to improve the overall accuracy of the accountability system.

We were also impressed with the emphasis in the renewal request on both collaboration and transparency. Accountability is extremely important to our system, but we need to ensure that those who will be implementing our public education system believe the indicators are fair. Greater transparency will serve to further the spirit of collaboration and professionalism in this state. It will make the work of improving our public schools more credible and engaging for all stakeholders.

With respect to producing college- and career-ready graduates, we agree that it is critical for the state to address chronic absenteeism. None of our efforts to improve public schools can

have an impact if students do not attend the schools in the first place. There is an undeniable association between chronic absenteeism and the achievement gap.

Finally, we are generally pleased to see that the CSDE is refining its system for accountability in a manner that reflects a critical and honest look at the way implementation of state policies has actually been carried out. Policy is only effective if it is well received and properly implemented at the local level. We appreciate the CSDE's willingness to keep improving these systems so that they have a positive impact on Connecticut's students.

From: Coppola, Paul
To: Gopalakrishnan, Ajit; Savoie, Renee
Subject: Thank You - CEA/SDE ESEA Flexibility Meeting
Date: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 3:25:42 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Mr. Gopalakrishnan and Ms. Savoie,

I wanted to thank the both of you for meeting with all of us and discussing the SDE's direction regarding school accountability. The opportunity to become involved in the promotion of such essential work regarding school quality and student learning has reinvigorated my work as an educator. I am certain you were able to see how passionate we are in Madison about the innovative, guided work that is being implemented in our schools and other districts around the state. It has been such an incredible process to deeply define the right work and to change the culture. It has also been, however, an exciting progression for so many of us as we promote this type of teaching and learning.

Universal improvement/growth in student outcomes at the micro level and turning around schools at the macro level remains this ultimate goal. The forward thinking of the SDE regarding the importance of broadening the definition of student learning and school quality is certainly the progress all stakeholders can support. The 21st Century Capacities are able to define the right work and what is most important to our students college, career, and civic preparedness. This has been able to define how educators want to identify and focus on the most important student strengths and needs. The fear continues to be a system which focus solely on easily measureable "snapshot" standardized results, giving us the same socio-economically divided measures of school accountability.

Yesterday was a great learning experience and opportunity for me to see that so many around the table believe in this process. I thank you for moving in that right direction. Although the process may define a culture shift and require more innovative definitions of school quality and student learning, it will be the work which allows the vision statement in most every school to truly live in every classroom. I thank you again for all that you do to involve educators. I hope that I may have the opportunity to participate in more of these opportunities. Please contact me if you have any additional questions or would like to learn more about Madison's vision and implementation.

Sincerely,

Paul

(b)(6)

Paul R Coppola
K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Lead – Daniel Hand High School
Madison, CT

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MEMORANDUM: ESEA Flexibility Request Renewal for Comment
FROM: Jennifer Alexander, ConnCAN
TO: Interim Commissioner Wentzell, Connecticut State Department of Education
DATE: 3/27/15

Introduction

ConnCAN is a non-profit education advocacy organization that is leading a movement to improve educational outcomes for Connecticut's children. We believe that every child deserves a quality education that will prepare them for lifelong opportunity and success, regardless of family income, race, or zip code. Over the last 10 years, we have worked to change state policy to achieve that goal, close our state's worst-in-the-nation achievement gap and ensure that all children have the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for college and career.

We have made some progress in recent years, but, as you know, we still have a long way to go. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide feedback on Connecticut's ESEA Flexibility Request Renewal, as this waiver will guide our state's efforts to ensure that all students have access to a great education.

As your office revises and finalizes Connecticut's flexibility request renewal from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 from the United States Department of Education, we recommend that Connecticut maintain the following key approaches:

- The development and implementation of a comprehensive and robust statewide accountability system that expects and supports all students to graduate from high school ready for college and career, and provides publicly available, accessible, and transparent information about school and district performance to the public;
- Implementation of a teacher and administrator evaluation system of multiple measures and indicators, including student achievement growth;
- Accountability ratings based on student performance, achievement and growth on annual statewide assessments in grade 3-8, high school graduation rates, and other measures of college and career readiness for all groups of students; and
- Flexibility to reward schools that perform well for all groups, while providing supports and interventions in those schools in which any student group consistently underperforms.

Summary

In 2011, the United States Department of Education (USDE) announced that it would allow states to request flexibilities, or waivers, from certain parts of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB).[1] USDE required each waiver state to adopt and use high-quality, college and career

[1] *See* Conn. Dept. of Educ.: Request for comment: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request renewal, *available at* http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=333862.

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ready standards and assessments; create a strong system of school accountability that highlights achievement gaps and enables interventions in low-performing schools; and implement educator evaluation and support systems.[2] USDE requires states to make commitments to three core principles to qualify for ESEA flexibility: 1) College and Career Ready Expectations for All Students, 2) State-Developed Systems of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support, and 3) Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership.[3]

In 2012, USDE granted Connecticut a three-year flexibility request from certain requirements of ESEA in exchange for state-developed solutions to address those components.[4] As a condition of receiving the waiver, Connecticut committed to developing and adopting college and career ready standards, a comprehensive school and district accountability system that identifies low-performing schools and districts in need of interventions and supports, and a revised teacher and administrator evaluation system that includes student achievement and growth data as a component.[5] Although Connecticut has implemented some policies and initiatives to align to these identified conditions, namely through the passage and implementation of Public Act 12-116, *An Act Concerning Educational Reform,*[6] we still have a long way to go and must implement strategies and initiatives to ensure that all kids in have access to great public schools.

To renew its waiver, Connecticut must submit a flexibility renewal request that covers the academic years 2017-18 and highlights proposed modifications to the original request and document the engagement of stakeholders.[7] Per the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) March 4th solicitation for public comment regarding the draft ESEA flexibility request renewal,[8] the Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now (ConnCAN) submits the following comments.

Principle 1: College and Career Ready Expectations for All Students

Principle 1 requires waiver states to adopt college and career-ready academic standards, as well as high-quality assessments aligned to these standards. On July 7, 2010, the Connecticut State Board of Education (SBE) unanimously approved the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), for English language arts and mathematics.[9] These new academic standards establish what Connecticut's public

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[2] *Id.*
[3] *Id.*
[4] *See* Conn. Dept. of Educ.: Request for comment: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request renewal, *available at* http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=333862 and linked documents.
[5] *Id.*
[6] *See* Pub. Act 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform, http://www.cga.ct.gov/2012/ACT/PA/2012PA-00116-R00SB-00458-PA.htm
[7] *See* Conn. Dept. of Educ.: Request for comment: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request renewal, *available at* http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=333862 and linked documents.
[8] *See id.*
[9] See Executive Order No. 41, Mar. 11, 2014, *available at* http://www.governor.ct.gov/malloy/lib/malloy/EO_41_Educators_Common_Core_Implementation_Taskforce.pdf.

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school students should know and be able to do as they progress through Grade K-12, and allow the state to compare student performance across states. The state administered the Common Core-aligned Smarter Balanced field test in the 2013-2014 school year, of which approximately 90% of districts participated, and will administer the full assessment statewide in the spring of 2015.[10] These new assessments are a critical step in making sure all of Connecticut's students receive access to the high-quality public education they deserve and are prepared for college and careers. The state still has more to do in this area, however, including developing new standards in other academic areas not included in the standards, and continue implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

ConnCAN supports continued implementation of the Common Core State Standards and urges the state to maintain our current implementation timeline for the Standards and aligned assessments. To ensure all students are prepared for success after high school graduation, the Common Core establishes a set of clear, consistent guidelines for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level in math and English Language Arts. Whether students choose to enter college or the workforce after high school, the Common Core State Standards help ensure those students will be prepared to achieve their goals. The Standards will help ensure that all children--regardless of race, wealth, or zip code--have access to an education that will help them learn the core skills and knowledge they need in order to succeed in college and career.

The fact is that by 2018, 65% of Connecticut jobs will require some form of post-secondary education.[11] And yet, too many students, especially students of color and students in poverty are not graduating from high school. Of students who do graduate, more than 65% need remedial coursework once they get to college.[12] This is demoralizing to students and costs our state dearly. Our students and their families deserve better. They need to know that if they meet expectations set out for them from kindergarten through high school, they will be ready for the challenges ahead.

Ensuring students are college and career ready would result in a significant boost to our economy. If Connecticut increased its overall graduation rate to 90%, these 5,900 additional graduates would likely generate as much as: $86 million in increased annual earnings and $14 million in annual state and local tax revenues; 450 new jobs and a $108 million increase in the gross state product; and $293 million in increased home sales and $9.7 million in increased auto sales.[13]

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[10] *See* Conn. State Dep. of Educ., CMT and CAPT Reports, 2013-2014. August 2014. http://www.cmtreports.com, http://www.captreports.com; Conn. State Dep. of Educ., Turnaround Office Update. Presented to Connecticut State Board of Education Accountability Committee. July 30, 2014, http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=335278.

[11] *See* A Field Guide to Education in Connecticut, *available at* http://conncan.org/field-guide.

[12] *Id.*

[13] *See* Alliance for Excellent Education: Connecticut High Schools, *available at* http://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Connecticut_hs.pdf.

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For these reasons, **Connecticut must stay the course on implementing the Common Core State Standards and aligned assessments on the current implementation timeline** to ensure that we do not delay or move back from these high standards and assessments, particularly for the state's lowest performing schools and districts. These standards help ensure that all our children, no matter their neighborhood or background, have access to the world-class education they deserve. These assessments offer an important way of knowing how well our students are being prepared to succeed in college and for the jobs of tomorrow, a way of identifying and intervening for students that are falling behind, and determining whether our significant investments in education are delivering results for kids. We owe it to Connecticut's children to ensure they have the opportunity to succeed, and tests help identify how to make that a reality, and a robust accountability system will provide the necessary tools to help us get there.

Principle 2: State-Developed Systems of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Principle 2 allows states to develop comprehensive and customized school and district accountability systems that use multiple measures to recognize school and district performance and growth, and enable tailored interventions and supports.

Connecticut initiated this work through the introduction of school and district performance indices by integrating all tested subjects, measuring student growth across performance bands, classifying schools, and identifying achievement gaps across student groups. Now, **Connecticut must ensure that such an accountability system targets and addresses low-performing schools and districts in need of support, provides high-performing districts with flexibility, and addresses the state's achievement gaps to improve student achievement and performance growth among its Black, Hispanic, English-Language Learner and low-income student populations. This system must prioritize student achievement growth over time, and should also include other measures that matter to families and communities, such as graduation rates, college persistence and graduation rates, and school climate.** We also recommend strengthening the laws and policies for programs designed to target our lowest-performing schools and districts, such as the Commissioner's Network and the Alliance District grant program, in order to maximize the impact and effectiveness of these efforts. Our recommendations for improving the Commissioner's Network are provided in Appendix A.[14]

ConnCAN also supports the state's recommendations to simplify the school classification system to make it more transparent and less confusing to the public. The proposed changes would eliminate the confusing names, and all schools will be placed among 5 categories, numerically classified as category1 through 5. This system should clearly inform the public about how Connecticut's schools are

[14] *See Addressing Connecticut's Education: Improving Turnaround Measures for Our Lowest Performing Schools*, ConnCAN, *available at* http://www.conncan.org/turnarounds.

performing for all groups of students, identify which schools and districts are low-performing and require intensive interventions and support, which schools are showing growth and must be supported, and which are high-performing schools that may benefit from additional flexibility.

Principle 3): Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

Principle 3 concerns the development, adoption, and implementation of a high-quality evaluation and support system for certified teachers and administrators.[15] As a condition of its previous waiver, Connecticut committed to implementing new statewide teacher and administrator evaluation and support systems based on multiple measures.[16] These measures include student achievement growth as a significant factor and other measures of professional practice based on rigorous performance standards that meaningfully differentiate performance and evaluate educators annually.[17] To allow states and educators time to adjust to new assessments, the USDE has allowed states to request an additional one-year delay on the incorporation of student performance on statewide assessments into educator evaluations.[18]

While we support allowing educators and leaders fair time to adjust to new assessments, we also must ensure that Connecticut fully implements the educator evaluation system in a timely manner and does not back away from accountability for results. We know that great teachers and school leaders can change the lives of their students. Research is clear on the long-term positive impacts of effective teachers, as well as the long-term negative impact on kids of ineffective teachers. Educator evaluations will help schools and districts identify and support Connecticut's best teachers, provide professional development to those educators who need it, and effectively remove those educators who consistently fail to improve. Providing this feedback is a core responsibility of our schools and districts, and we cannot dial back our efforts aimed at ensuring all kids have access to great teachers and principals - we owe it to our kids to keep moving forward.

In 2012, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) developed and the State Board of Education (SBE) approved Connecticut's revised teacher and administrator evaluation system, and created a state model system, the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED).[19] In 2012-2013, Connecticut piloted the program in ten consortia districts, enacted partial implementation statewide in 2013-14, and this year (2014-15) is the first year of full statewide implementation in all districts.[20] However, this implementation does not currently include student growth on state assessments. In January 2014, at the recommendations of the Governor and the PEAC,

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[15] *See* Conn. Dept. of Educ.: Request for comment: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request renewal, *available at* http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=333862.
[16] *Id.*
[17] *Id.*
[18] *Id.*
[19] See Conn. State Dept. of Educ., Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development, *available at* http://www.connecticutseed.org.
[20] *Id.*

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the State Board of Education provided for more flexibility so that educators could adjust to the new Common Core State Standards and aligned assessments.[21] We expressed support for this decision as we recognized the hard work and challenges for educators who are moving forward simultaneously with these critical programs, and recognized the need for adjustment while these programs are implemented.

Ultimately, however, we cannot back down from changes that raise standards and support teachers and kids. We must not indefinitely delay these efforts. Under the state's current proposal, the absolute earliest that the state could link student achievement growth data to the evaluation system is the 2016-2017 school year.[22] We fear that this further delay could be too long and that additional delays will be added so that we ultimately never link student outcomes to accountability. This would be a huge setback. We urge the state to chose a deadline and stick to it.

We must move forward with these programs, not only in a manner that is fair and balanced, but also with an unequivocal commitment to making sure all kids have access to great teachers, principals, and public schools. Additionally, if we expect teachers and principals to perform at their highest levels, they deserve consistent feedback and support, based in part on student achievement growth. Every year that we delay is a year that Connecticut slows down efforts to ensure that it is bringing the best and brightest to lead our classrooms, and is also a year that teachers and principals can't use this data feedback to improve their practice and benefit our state's kids.

Connecticut must implement on time, and with fidelity, an evaluation system that incorporates student growth based on state assessments into educator ratings, and the system must ensure that we can properly identify and develop great teachers for every classroom and administrators to lead those efforts, and ensure swift, reasonable dismissal for those who can't improve after receiving support. Every town and city in Connecticut can and should be able to offer their students the highest quality educators, and that begins with evaluations.

Conclusion

We have made some progress to improve public education in Connecticut, but we still have a long way to go to build a prosperous economic future and ensure that every child gets an excellent education. With the nation's largest achievement gap and nearly 40,000 children attending chronically underperforming schools,[23] Connecticut must do

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[21] See ConnCAN Press Statement: ConnCAN on Statewide Educator Evaluations and Common Core Implementation, http://www.conncan.org/media-room/press-releases/2014-01-statement-conncan-on-statewide-educator-evaluations.
[22] *See* Conn. Dept. of Educ.: Request for comment: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility request renewal, *available at* http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=333862.
[23] 38,967 students are enrolled in 63 schools that receive a School Performance Index of 50 or below, which means that on average, many students are below proficient. 115,778 students are enrolled in 201 schools that receive a School Performance Index below 67, which means that on average, students are below proficient. *See* Conn. State Dept. of Educ.: District and School Performance Reports 2012-2013, http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/performancereports/20122013reports.asp.

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more. The social and moral costs of this persistent failure are high and unacceptable, with billions of dollars lost in lifetime earnings, increased healthcare costs, and tens of millions of dollars flowing out of the state's economy annually. Turning this crisis around will require our leaders to unite around bold and proactive solutions.

We need our state leaders to continue upon the progress made, not back away from it. ConnCAN urges the State Department of Education to ensure that this flexibility request moves towards: **implementing a more comprehensive and robust school and district accountability and performance system; identifying the highest needs schools and districts to drive resources and supports; providing additional flexibility for high-performers, and implementing a robust teacher and administrator evaluation system that includes student achievement growth as a component of this system.**

As Connecticut drafts the flexibility request renewal, we urge the state to enact bold change to improve education for all children and ensure Connecticut remains a place where people want to live and work and where communities thrive.

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Appendix A: Policy Recommendations for the Commissioner's Network

	Recommendations	Current Law	Rationale For Change
1	Prioritize and intervene in the lowest performing schools in the state.	Law requires the Commissioner to give preference to eligible schools that volunteer to participate and have mutual agreement of bargaining unit.	Schools that volunteer and have mutual agreement of the bargaining unit may not be the schools most in need of state intervention.
2	Remove the caps on the number of schools per district and overall.	Law allows only 2 schools per district per year and up to 4 schools per district total. It also limits participation to 25 schools overall.	These arbitrary limits inhibit the state's ability to intervene in the lowest performing schools.
3	Provide a standard block of waivers or "slim contract" for turnaround schools that includes full and unhindered autonomy in staffing, scheduling, budgeting, and programming.	Law requires a modified but still cumbersome version of collective bargaining in developing the turnaround plan and imposes the current district collective bargaining agreement as a default.	The negotiation process and default to the district contract reduces the likelihood that turnaround plans will be bold enough to result in dramatic gains in student achievement.
4	Change the composition of turnaround committees to ensure that they have: 1) members with the necessary expertise in school turnaround to develop a strong turnaround plan; 2) local school community participation; and 3) union member participation (not majority representation).	Law requires 6 committee members – 3 union selected (a majority), 2 district selected, and 1 Commissioner or designee. All committee members are currently selected from the district level, with no specified representation from parents and the school community.	The current composition does not ensure that committees have the necessary expertise to develop effective turnaround plans, excludes parents, and provides the union with a voting majority which makes it difficult for the committees to make changes to existing union agreements and other important elements.
5	Recruit and identify effective turnaround leaders and operators to work in Commissioner's Network schools through an annual state review and pre-approval process.	Supply and capacity of turnaround leaders and operators is not currently addressed in the law. The law limits the number of the Network schools that can be managed by operators to five.	There are not currently enough effective turnaround leaders and operators to run Network schools. Other states have actively recruited and identified proven leaders and operators for state turnaround interventions.
6	Set standards for performance on annual and interim achievement assessments and leading indicators of turnaround success.	Not addressed in the law.	Setting standards for performance and using interim and annual data to drive state intervention decisions will ensure a higher rate of turnaround success.
7	Streamline the turnaround plan development process by ensuring that: 1) the state sets clear parameters for turnaround models; 2) turnaround committee takes one consensus vote on the plan prior to submitting it to state; and 3) Commissioner retains authority to approve or deny the turnaround plan.	The law states that only certain models can be used, but does not provide adequate clarity about the components of each. The law includes a cumbersome process for negotiation and ratification of turnaround plans. When the union and district cannot agree on components of the turnaround plan, they select a referee to arbitrate the process.	Setting clear parameters for school turnaround and implementing a rigorous approval process aligned with those parameters will increase the quality of turnaround plans and reduce the amount of disagreement among the turnaround committees.
8	Allow successful schools the option to stay in the Network with ongoing autonomy and accountability. The state should appoint a proven turnaround leader, lead partner, or charter management organization to operate unsuccessful schools in the Network.	The law specifies schools remain in the Network for a period of 3 years, with two possible 1-year extensions and then return to the district. The law does not specify what happens when schools are successful or unsuccessful in turning around achievement in 3-5 years.	The state needs a clear plan for continuing successful interventions and changing unsuccessful interventions in Network schools.

March 27, 2015

Connecticut State Department of Education
Attn: ESEA Renewal Request Committee
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept the following comments regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) renewal request. These comments specifically address Principle 2: Develop and implement a state-based system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support. Overall we applaud the Department's efforts to create an accountability system that is based on multiple measures, rather than state assessment results alone. What follows are comments specific to each indicator described in Principle 2.

Indicator 1: Academic Achievement (Status)

We support the shift to subject specific performance indices opposed to one overall performance index that combined the subjects. Subject specific indices provide better information to assist districts with targeting their supports towards the right subject areas. We also appreciate the request to extend the exemption in English language arts for English language learners to 24 months as opposed to 12 months. Given the recent recommendations from the ELL Advisory Committee, we would recommend the months be extended as described in the committee's recommendations.

The proposal for determining the achievement gap measure is to create a high needs subgroup, comprised of any student who is low income, English language learner, or special education, and compare to the "all students" group. Points will be assigned based on the size of the achievement gap. The students in the "high needs subgroup" are also counted in the "all students" group, and therefore factor in twice for determining the achievement gap. The true achievement gap is between those in the "high needs" subgroup and those students who are not considered "high needs." If the *intent* of the new accountability system is to draw attention to a true achievement gap, we recommend that the groups that are compared are mutually exclusive.

Indicator 2: Academic Growth

The proposed metric for determining academic growth is to calculate the percentage of students who meet their growth target, also called the "success rate." Schools will be assigned index points based on this percentage. We applaud the incorporation of a growth measure because it provides credit for schools and districts that are successful in improving the academic achievement of *all* students, not just for reaching a certain proficiency level. We suggest, however, that there are clear instructional tie-ins with this growth indicator, to operationalize for educators the relationship between a student's growth target and the skills needed, by subject, to reach that target. In addition, we request that the incorporation of the growth measure in the accountability system is delayed one year, to the 2016-17 school year. Schools and districts need the first set of results from the Smarter Balanced Assessments to determine instructional needs, and act on the data so that student growth can occur. Having the extra year before growth is included allows for adjustments to happen.

Indicator 3: Participation Rate

The proposed renewal request states that a school that would have otherwise been classified as Category 1 or 2 (the highest level of classification), will be classified in the next lowest level if the participation rate is below 95 percent. While we understand the importance of having a sufficient number of students assessed in order draw valid inferences about the assessment results, we question the classification of a school as "lower" because of participation only. In the old AYP model this same problem occurred, in which a school could be deemed "in need of improvement" based on participation rate alone. The new proposed renewal does not eliminate this problem. Classifying in a manner that denotes academic weaknesses because the participation rate fell to 94 percent threatens the validity of the accountability system, if in fact the intent of the accountability system is to describe the academic well-being of a school or district.

Indicator 5: Preparation for Postsecondary and Career Readiness – Coursework *and* Indicator 6: Preparation for Postsecondary and Career Readiness – Exams

We support the incorporation of multiple types of courses into this indicator, as opposed to relying solely on Advanced Placement or other college-level courses. However, we question the validity of these as true indicators of "postsecondary" or "career readiness." As an example, Dartmouth no longer accepts AP credits as evidence of college-level work. Students who do not typically perform well on standardized assessments will potentially fall in the proportion of students deemed "not ready" for college and career. The danger is in labeling a student based on an exam score. We question the validity of these indicators.

Indicator 7: Graduation – On Track in 9th Grade

Our criticism of Indicator 7 is the accountability that is placed on the school where grade 8 is the terminal grade, for the performance of the grade 9 students. In the time that a student leaves 8th grade, and ends his/her 9th grade year, several factors can occur that will impact a student's grades and course completion, that are far beyond the grade 8 school's control. In addition, unless a true matched cohort is analyzed, it is possible that the "feeder" grade 8 school could be held accountable for grade 9 students that the school did not educate as grade 8 students. We recommend that this indicator is changed to reflect the school that educated the students in grade 9 only.

Indicator 10: Postsecondary Entrance Rate – All Students

Postsecondary education is just one of several avenues a student can take upon graduating from high school. The language in the proposed renewal recognizes the limitation of this indicator because it does not provide credit for students who graduate and enter the military or the workforce. Given the acknowledged limitation, we suggest this indicator be removed. A high stakes accountability should not include indicators with such significant caveats and limitations. Additionally, the focus on postsecondary education in Indicator 10 negates the focus of the coursework outlined in Indicators 5 and 6 (which include *career* readiness).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathy Greider, Superintendent
Farmington Public Schools

Dina Crowl, Superintendent
CREC Magnet Schools

(b)(6)

Sarah Vocca, Director Research and Technology
CREC Magnet Schools

Sample of the ESEA Feedback received by the CSDE by e-mail

From Patrice McCarthy, CABE, 3/27/15

The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education supports the Connecticut Department of Education ESEA Flexibility Renewal Request. SDE has engaged in an inclusive, collaborative process with all relevant stakeholders to implement education reform in Connecticut. This request for flexibility reflects the ongoing efforts to create and sustain an effective education system.
>>
>> CABE particularly supports the following specific aspects of the request:
>> - The use of the High School Assessment Task Force to develop a proposal for flexibility in this area
>> - Inclusion of academic growth of the same students over time
>> - Incorporation of indicators of a well rounded education, including civics and the arts
>> - Implementation of the Connecticut Professional Learning guidelines
>>
>> We look forward to continuing to work closely with the SDE and other stakeholders.

From: Joseph Cirasuolo, CAPSS 3/16/15

The CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) supports the CT State Board of Education's flexibility request of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). CAPSS is particularly pleased that the request contains the following components.

- **The provision to exempt state tests from the evaluation of teachers and administrators in school year 2015-16.** The CT state tests are now the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC). School year 2014-15 is the first year during which all students in grades three through eight and in grade eleven are being administered SBAC. As a result, there is still incomplete information regarding how well the actual implementation of the SBAC will proceed and regarding when and how results will be received. It would be inappropriate, therefore, for local school districts to be required to use SBAC results for evaluation purposes until this information is complete and that will not be the case prior to the 2015-16 school year.
- **The provision that would allow CT to substitute another test for the SBAC in Grade Eleven**. If there has been any noticeable resistance to the SBAC in CT it has occurred among eleventh grade students and their parents. The major impetus of the resistance has been the fact that eleventh grade students already are subjected to other testing systems such as the SAT and the AP battery of assessments. CT, therefore, has formed a working group and charged it with recommending whether another assessment system should replace SBAC in grade eleven and if so what that other system should be. The working group will not complete its work prior to the deadline for submission of the flexibility request to the USDE. CT, therefore, should not be required to wait another year to implement any recommendation to change the state test for eleventh grade students.

I would be happy to discuss these comments.

Joseph J. Cirasuolo

From: Stephen Arpie, M. S., Director, Absolute Standards, 03/26/2015

CT State Department of Education:

I am not in favor of renewal of the ESEA flexibility.

Our schools need accountability, our children deserve a fair shot at an education.

With economic diversity so large in CT, there must be someone helping the underserved child.

The only leverage these communities have is the the federal law.

I was a recipient of Head Start in the 1960's. I had 4 real math teachers in that program. I know the value of an education. Instead of figuring ways out of compliance, we should spend time getting federal dollars to support education. Our leaders need to be highly vocal and strong advocates for full funding.

Please do not ask for anymore delays or flexibility.

Sincerely,

Stephen J. Arpie, M.S.

From: Laurie Pallin, Asst. Superintendent, Monteville Public Schools 3/19/15

The Montville Public School District supports including a change in the grade 11 state assessment from the Smarter Balanced Assessment to the SAT in the state's ESEA Flexibility Request.

Our reasons for believing that the SAT should be used as the state assessment include:

- The revised PSAT and SAT accurately measure college readiness and student achievement of Common Core standards. The exams call for evidence-based reading and writing about topics including science and social studies content, founding documents, and great global conversations. Not only will students receive scores for reading and writing, but they will also receive sub-scores for analysis in science and analysis in social studies. Students will complete an essay in which they analyze the way an author builds an argument in a non-fiction text. The math SAT will change to include more multi-step, real-life application problems which include analysis of charts, graphs, and passages.
- Versions of the PSAT can be offered to students in grades 8-11 and they will be scored on the same scale as the SAT. This provides a continuity in standardized assessments available for students from grades 8-11 instead of having a gap of three years between middle school and high school standardized assessments.
- We receive extensive data (question by question analysis for each student and the school) regarding our students' learning based upon PSAT administration and can use it to craft teachers' SLGs and accurately measure student progress annually.
- We already administer the PSAT to all students in grades 10 and 11; it is viewed as a productive use of time by our students, faculty, and parents.
- The SAT can be given on the same date for all students…the wide window in Smarter Balanced administration is very problematic for comparison of data over years and across districts. It can

be completed in one day and therefore does not interrupt the schedule of AP Exams and final exams the way the Smarter Balanced tests do.

- The SAT is widely accepted and has been administered since 1926. Its research base is solid.
- Since the SAT is used for college admissions, we believe that students will put more effort into the test because they understand that the test results are directly relevant to them. Lack of student investment in state assessments is a significant issue at the high school level.
- Students' test results will be paired with Kahn Academy so that students will have access to video tutorials which directly target their areas of weakness. The link to Kahn Academy tutorials provides the opportunity for differentiated practice for students in addition to classroom instruction.
- Using the SAT supports the state's initiative to help districts reduce the total number of assessments administered. The Smarter Balanced test would have to be administered in addition to the SAT whereas the SAT could replace the Smarter Balanced assessments

There are several features of the Smarter Balanced test that are more attractive (e.g. its adaptive nature and the fact that it is untimed for all students), however we believe that the benefits of the SAT outweigh these features.

Sincerely,

Laurie Pallin

Assistant Superintendent

Montville Public Schools

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TO: Common Core District Leads

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Interim Commissioner of Education, *DRW*
Ellen E. Cohn, Interim Chief Academic Officer, *EEC*

DATE: January 14, 2015

RE: January Newsletter

ACADEMIC NEWSLETTER

This is the January 2015 installment of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Academic Office monthly newsletter. We hope you will find helpful information within the newsletter that will support your district's implementation efforts of the Common Core State Standards as well as other key standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment topics.

Leadership Appointments

At their regular meeting on January 7, the State Board of Education appointed Dianna R. Wentzell to the position of Interim Commissioner of Education and Ellen E. Cohn to the position of Interim Chief Academic Officer. They will serve in these interim roles until the position of Commissioner of Education is filled.

Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards Success for English Learners and Students with Disabilities

The CSDE is pleased to present a three-module series for school teams supporting inclusive environments and standard focused instruction for English Learners (ELs) and students with disabilities. Our goal is to empower educators to implement CT Core Standards aligned curriculum, instructional practices, and assessments to meet the needs of a wide variety of learners. National experts in special education and English as a second language have designed a series of three professional learning modules for school teams. Please see the attached flyer for more information and contact Jennifer.Michalek@ct.gov

Assessment News

Spring 2015 will be the first operational year for the Smarter Balanced Assessments in English language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics. Our 2015 Assessment Calendar and other information about all of the operational assessments are available on the Student Assessment page of the CSDE Web site. Additionally, District Test Coordinators receive a weekly newsletter, Student Assessment News that supports administration of the state assessments. These newsletters are also archived on the Student Assessment page.

Assessment Participation

By federal and state law, universal student assessment is required in ELA and Math in Grades 3-8 and once in high school annually. Also by federal and state law, assessment is required in science once in each school level (elementary, middle, and high school). In Connecticut, students participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessments in ELA/literacy and mathematics. These assessments are given in Grades

3-8 and 11. In science, students participate in the Science CMT in Grades 5 and 8 and the Science CAPT in Grade 10. Some students with disabilities participate in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment and the CMT Science Skills Checklist or CAPT Science Skills Checklist. Both the CSDE and each LEA are legally responsible to administer these assessments to all students.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA)

Connecticut has partnered with the National Center and State Collaborative to develop our new Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). This assessment is designed for eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 3-8 and 11 and will be administered beginning in March 2015. This new assessment is aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics. It replaces the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist. Eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities will continue to be assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist in science. Attached please find a chart that illustrates key changes in this assessment system. Questions may be directed to Janet.Stuck@ct.gov

Interim Assessments (Smarter Balanced)

Introductory information about the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments is now available. The Interim Assessments will be released in late January 2015. We have compiled a user-friendly ***Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)*** document. Questions are paired with concise "jargon-free" answers, as well as considerations and cautions for Connecticut's district and school leaders. More information about the Interim Assessments is available on the Interim Assessments page of the Smarter Balanced Web site

New Materials at CT Standards Website

Our Academic Office website is dedicated to materials, resources, and professional learning opportunities in support of standards implementation in your district. This Web site is refreshed three times each week and there is always **NEW** material. Please consider submitting a unit that your teachers have created. Our team will provide feedback to you and possibly feature the work of your teachers on our site! We are happy that our resource list includes work developed by our teachers. Questions about the Web site should be directed to Jennifer.Webb@ct.gov the Web site is found at: http://ctcorestandards.org/

Webinar Series for Principals

The Academic Office will continue to host a webinar series for principals to support Common Core implementation in schools. The webinars are live the last Wednesday of each month. If you miss the live webinar, you can access the webinars at our Web site: http://ctcorestandards.org/

COMMON CORE TASK FORCE

A Plan for Moving Forward…

Executive Order 41

The Taskforce shall:

- Identify **challenges and gaps** in Common Core preparation and make recommendations for improving the quality and consistency of implementation efforts;
- Consider ways to **advance the translation of CCSS into curricula**;
- Consider ways to **strengthen the professional development** opportunities available to classroom teachers and school leaders;
- Identify and **highlight best practices and lessons** learned by teachers, schools and school districts across the state and nation; and
- **Deliver recommendations** on how CCSS implementation can be improved to the Governor, the General Assembly and the State Board of Education

*A **Plan** for Moving **Forward**...*

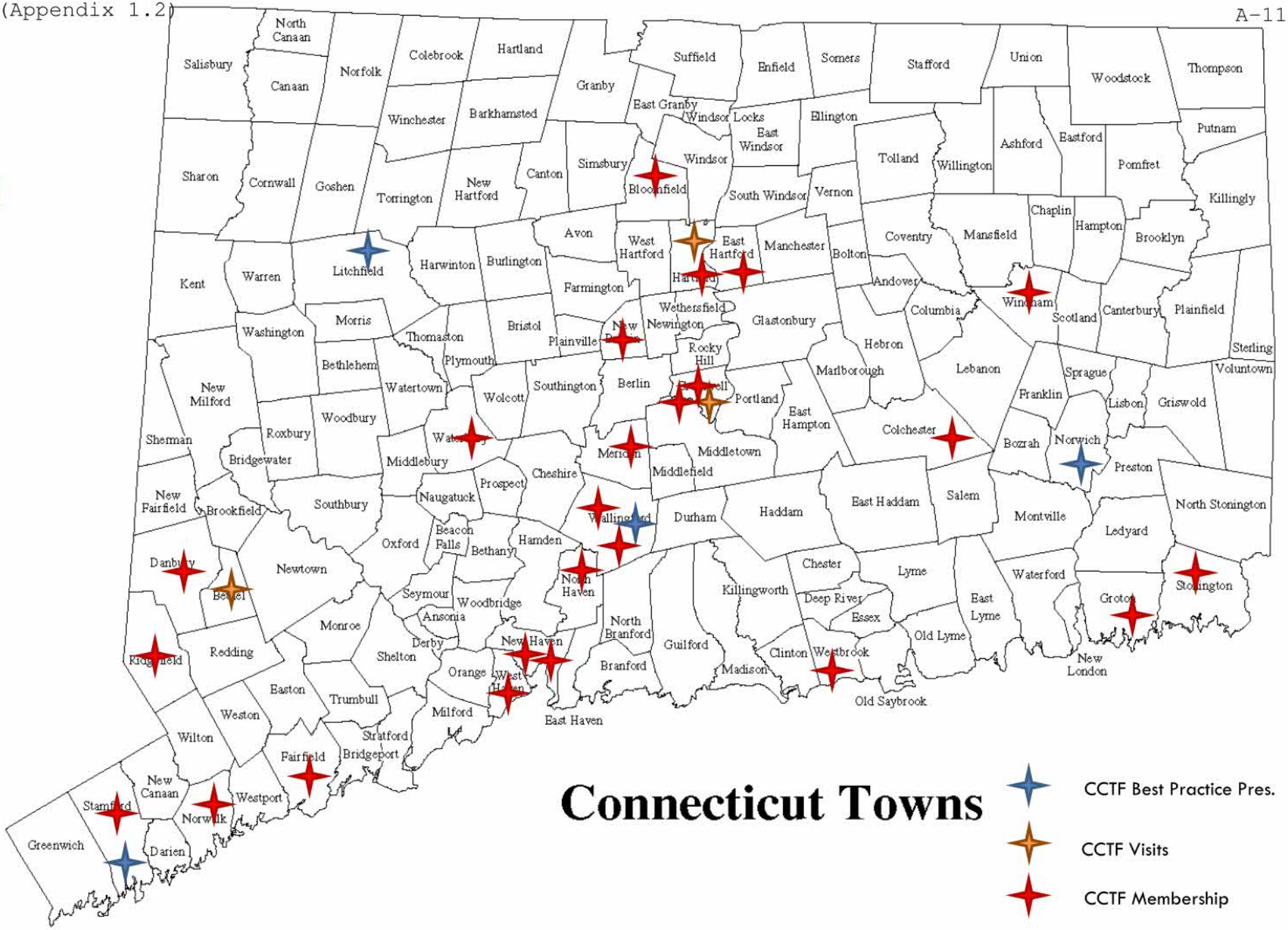
5 Facts to know on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

3

5

- The CCSS are **expectations** of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.
- The standards were developed in a **state-led process** under the leadership of governors and chief state school officers with participation from 48 states.
- The CCSS focuses on developing the critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical **skills** students will need to be successful.
- The CCSS is **not a curriculum** but a standards-based approach to measuring student growth
- The Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the standards on **July 7, 2010**.

*A **Plan** for Moving **Forward**...*


Connecticut Towns
CCTF Best Practice Pres.
CCTF Visits
CCTF Membership
North Canaan
Salisbury
Canaan
Norfolk
Colebrook
Hartland
Granby
Suffield
Enfield
Somers
Stafford
Union
Woodstock
Thompson
Putnam
Eastford
Ashford
Pomfret
Killingly
Sharon
Cornwall
Goshen
Torrington
New Hartford
Canton
Simsbury
Bloomfield
Windsor
East Granby
Windsor Locks
East Windsor
Ellington
Tolland
Willington
South Windsor
Vernon
Chaplin
Hampton
Brooklyn
Kent
Warren
Litchfield
Harwinton
Burlington
Avon
West Hartford
East Hartford
Manchester
Bolton
Coverntry
Mansfield
Andover
Columbia
Windham
Scotland
Canterbury
Plainfield
Sterling
Voluntown
Washington
Morris
Thomaston
Bristol
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Plainville
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Marlborough
Lebanon
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Lisbon
Griswold
Bethlehem
Plymouth
Watertown
Wolcott
Southington
Berlin
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East Hampton
Colchester
Bozrah
Norwich
Preston
New Milford
Woodbury
Roxbury
Sherman
Bridgewater
Middlebury
Cheshire
Meriden
Middletown
Middlefield
Naugatuck
Prospect
Southbury
New Fairfield
Brookfield
Oxford
Beacon Falls
Bethany
Hamden
Wallingford
Durham
Haddam
East Haddam
Salem
Montville
Ledyard
North Stonington
Danbury
Bethel
Newtown
Seymour
Woodbridge
Ansonia
North Haven
Chester
Lyme
Killingworth
Deep River
Essex
Waterford
Groton
Stonington
East Lyme
Old Lyme
Ridgefield
Redding
Monroe
Derby
Shelton
New Haven
North Branford
Guilford
Clinton
Westbrook
Madison
Branford
Orange
West Haven
East Haven
Old Saybrook
New London
Easton
Trumbull
Milford
Weston
Wilton
Stratford
Fairfield
Bridgeport
New Canaan
Stamford
Westport
Norwalk
Greenwich
Darien

Common Core Task Force (CCTF)

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Meeting Location	Cromwell High School Library, 1 Donald Harris Drive, Cromwell, CT	
Meeting Time	4:30-6:30	
Meeting Date	Topic	Presentation
March 25	Introduction/Opening	
April 9	Success/Concern: Root Cause Analysis	
April 23	Success/Concern: Logic framework	Wallingford Public Schools
April 30	Recommendation Rubric Areas of Best Practice	Norwich Public Schools
May 7	Core Findings: Targeted Focus Groups Areas of Best Practice	SDE Website Review
May 14	Core Findings: Targeted Focus Groups Areas of Best Practice	Litchfield Public Schools Stamford Public Schools
May 21	Areas of Best Practice: review of scalability	CCTF Team 1- Bethel PS (May 9th 1:00 pm) CCTF Team 2- Cromwell PS (May 15th 9:00 am) Presentation from CEA/AFT: Abacus Associates
May 28	Recommendation Review	CCTF Team 3- Hartford PS (May 20 10:00 am)
June 4	Preliminary Report Draft Presentation Report Workshop Session	
June 11	Preliminary Report Draft Presentation Report Workshop Session	

Task Force Norms

- Actively **Participate**
- **Listen** with **Respect**
- Be **solution** based
- Put **kids** front and center

CCTF Outcomes: A Walking Timeline

- 3/25 — CCTF convenes
- 4/9 — Team identifies past practice/activity at local level
- 4/9 — Team adopts CCTF Logic Framework
- 4/23 — Team conducts gap analysis of state and local CCSS implementation
- 4/23 — Team develops root cause analysis of success/concern
- 4/30 — Team adds additional dates to schedule
- 4/30 — Wallingford PS presents to CCTF
- 4/30 — Team applies root cause analysis to logic framework
- 5/7 — Norwich PS presents to CCTF
- 5/7 — CCTF Reshuffles/performs CCTF Logic Frame Deep Dive
- 5/7 — CCTF begins development of Rec. Criteria
- 5/7 — SDE presents on state action/website to CCTF
- 5/14 — CCTF compares/contrasts best practice presentations (3)
- 5/14 — CCTF begins development of Rec. Criteria
- 5/21 — Litchfield PS presents to CCTF
- 5/21 — Stamford PS presents to CCTF
- 5/21 — CCTF reviews Rec. Criteria
- 5/28 — CCTF visiting team presents on Bethel and Cromwell visits
- 5/28 — Abacus Assoc. present on AFT/CEA survey
- 5/28 — CCTF adopts Rec. Criteria and begins drafting recs.
- 6/4 — CCTF visiting team presents of Hartford visit
- 6/4 — CCTF develops recommendation drafts through station activity
- 6/11 — CCTF engages in Final Report Draft Review
- 6/11 — Team finalizes report

*A **Plan** for Moving **Forward**...*

Task Force Logic Framework

- **5 Buckets for Analysis/Discussion:**

- **Knowledge of CCSS**
- **Curriculum Writing/Integration at local level**
- **Development of Instructional Competencies**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Resource Commitment**

Lessons Learned

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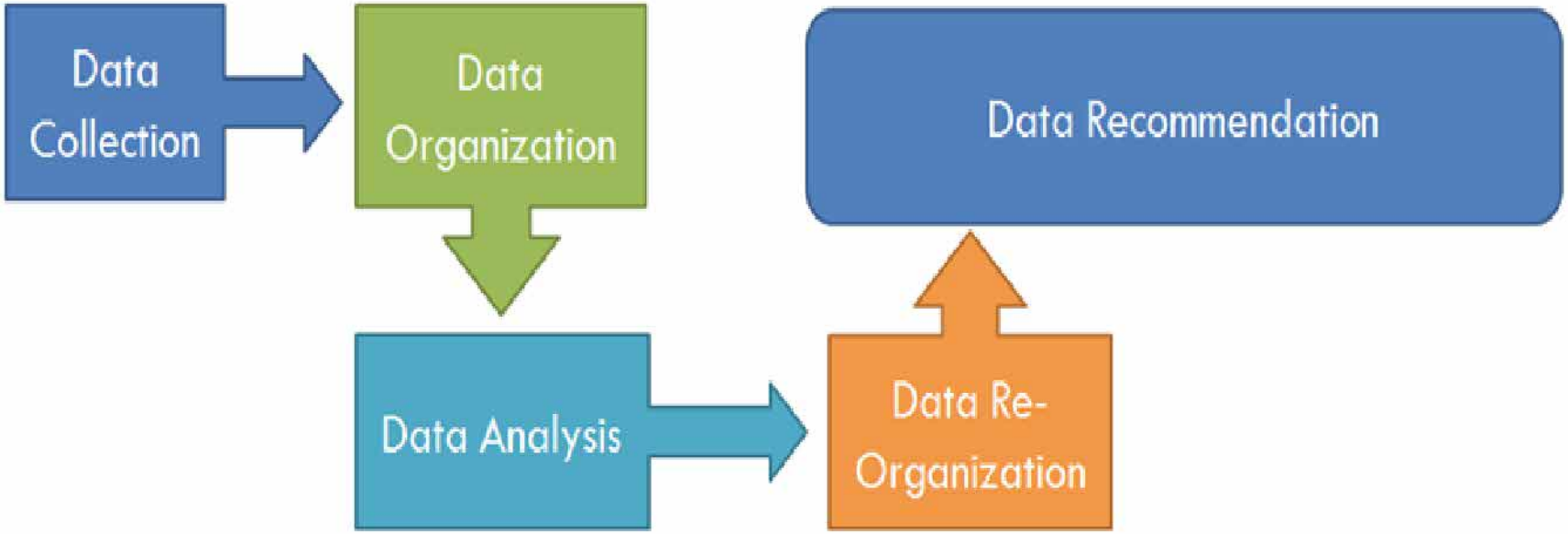
- Leadership Matters
- Strategic Planning Matters
- Professional Development Matters
- Communication Matters
- Time Matters
- Resources Matter

*A **Plan** for Moving **Forward**...*

Task Force Recommendations



*A **Plan** for Moving **Forward**...*

Task Force Recommendations

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- Develop clear and consistent **knowledge** of CCSS at the classroom, school, district and state level.
- Provide the necessary support and training to effectively transition the CCSS into district defined **curricula**.
- Support all teachers and instructional staff in developing the capacity to master the **instructional shifts** that the CCSS necessitates.
- **Engage** all stakeholders in a rich dialogue regarding the CCSS that is marked by multiple points of interaction and jargon free communication.
- Provide the necessary **resources** to support effective implementation of the CCSS across all state districts and schools.

*A **Plan** for Moving **Forward**...*

CSDE Efforts to Support CCSS Implementation

- **Ask, don't assume**

  ✔ Superintendent's Survey ✔ Curriculum Councils ✔ Teacher Union Meetings ✔ Superintendents' Regional Visits ✔ Subject Area Councils ✔ Parent Groups ✔ Communities of Practice

- **Different supports for different stakeholders**
- **Concrete, just-in-time resources that match needs during the school year** (through Academic Newsletter)
- **Context-specific supports** (parent publications available in 6 languages)
- **Multiple media and platforms** (webinars, live workshops, recordings, on-demand learning, video, print, hard copies, etc.)

Supporting CCSS Implementation

- **CCSS Systems of Professional Learning**

  Modules 1-5 - 1400 School and District Coaches

- **Math and ELA Offerings** - 600 Teachers
- **Smarter Balanced Series**
  - Digital library
  - Connecting the Claims
  - Interim Assessments
  - District test Coordinators
- **Teachfest Events** – 100 Dream Teamers, 900 Teachers
- **Summer Academies – New and Novice Teachers, TEAM & Cooperating Teachers**
- **Higher Education Series**
- **Principal Supports**
  - **CAS Community of Practice**
  - **Webinars**
  - **Teachfest principal Academy**

CT Core Standards Website

www.ctcorestandards.org

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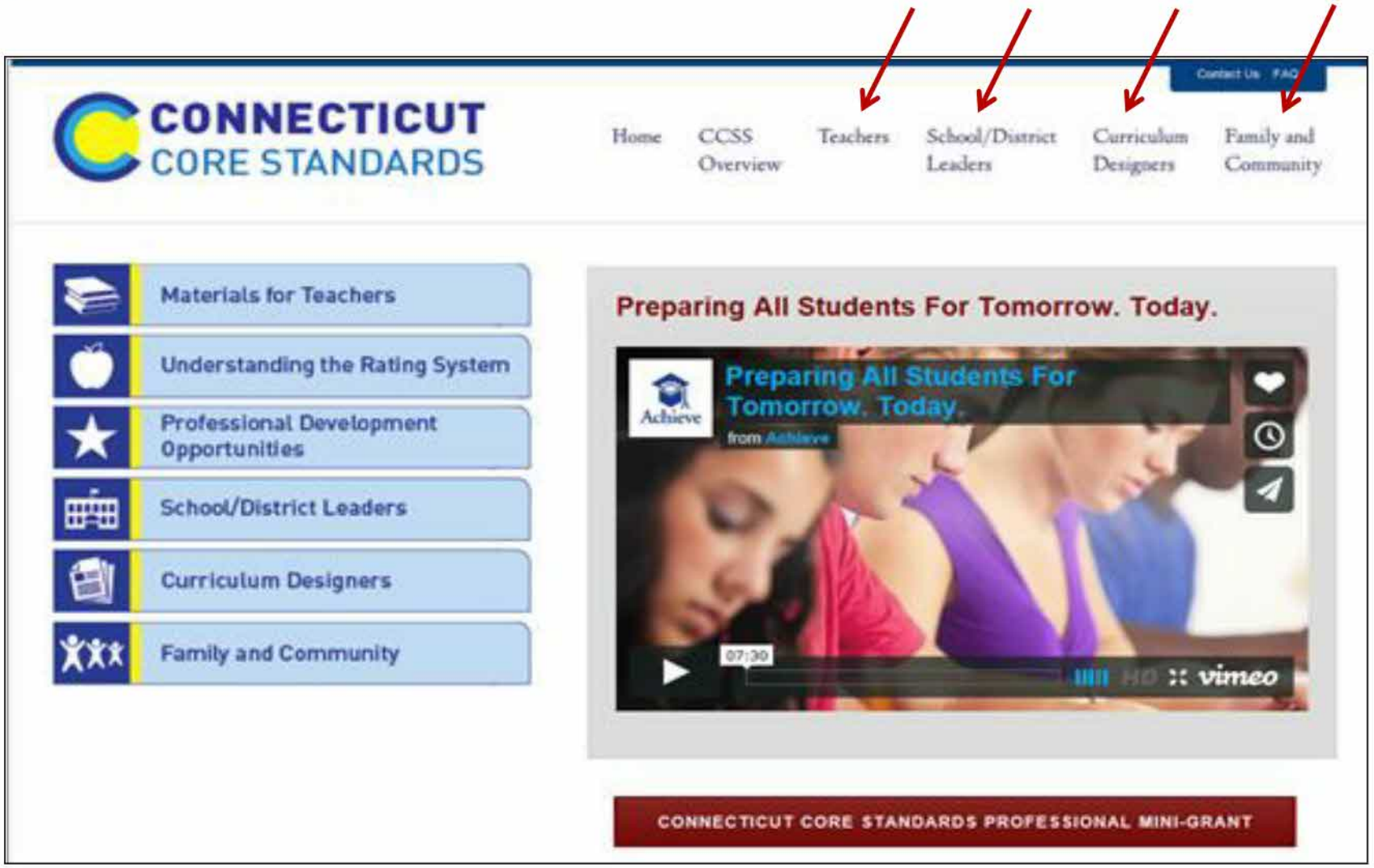


Professional Development Offerings

Contact Us FAQ

CONNECTICUT CORE STANDARDS

Home | CCSS Overview | Teachers | School/District Leaders | Curriculum Designers | Family and Community

Home / Professional Development Opportunities and Support Materials

Professional Development Opportunities and Support Materials

- CSDE Principal Webinar Series
  School Leaders as Catalysts for Instructional Change:
  Transition to the CT Core Standards
- Teachfest Connecticut: Principals Academy
- Smarter Balanced Assessment System:
  Using the Digital Library to Support
  Teaching & Learning
- Smarter Balanced Assessment System:
  Connecting the Claims to Classroom Instruction
- Systems of Professional Learning Module 5
  ELA: Focus on Deepening Implementation
  Math: Focus on Sustaining Change
- Connecticut Core Standards Higher Education Fall Institute

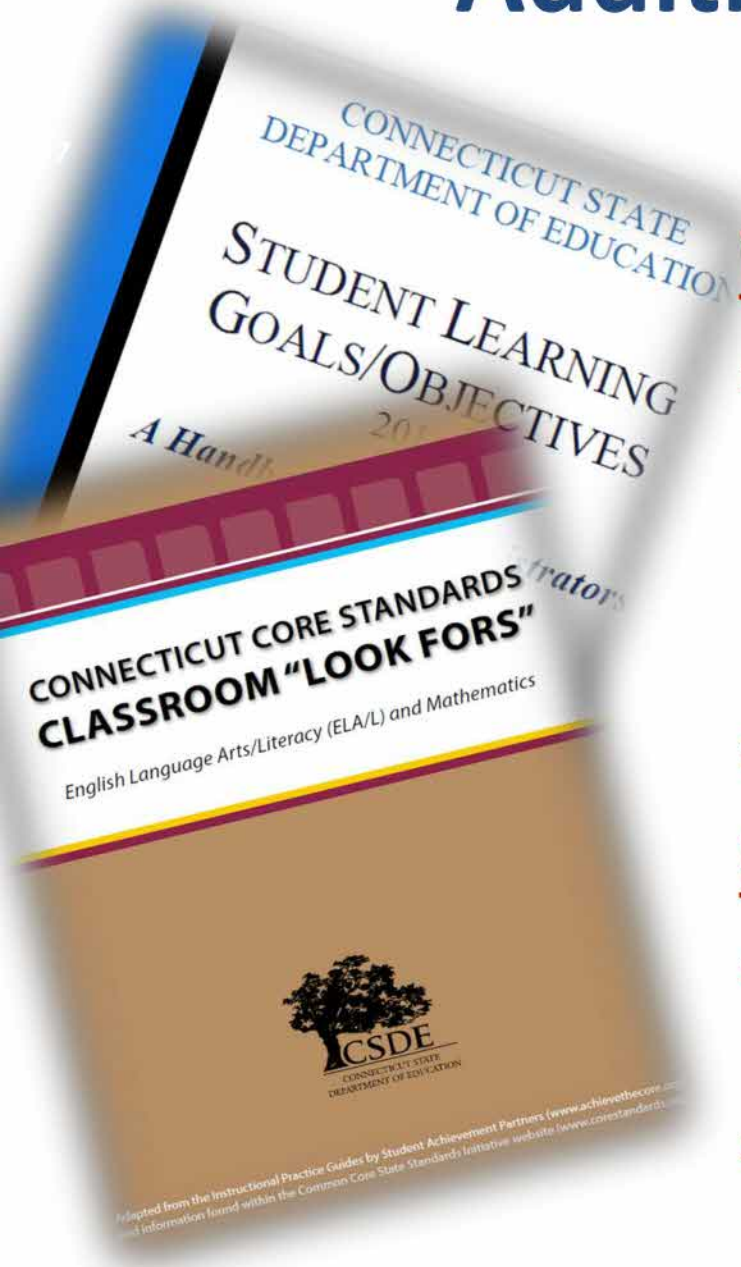
Library of Professional Learning Materials

On-Demand Professional Learning

Fall 2014 – June 2015

- **CCSS Teacher Mini-Grants**
  - Individuals up to $500
  - Groups up to $2000
- **1200 Days - In-district Coaching / Technical Assistance**
- **Modules 4 and 5 of CCSS Systems of Professional Learning**

Additional Resources:



In Process:

Workshops:

1. Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards for Educators of English Learners and Students with Disabilities (expected December 2014)
2. Using SBAC Interim Assessments

Online Courses:

1. CCSS Systems of Professional Learning (Modules 1-5)
2. Meeting the Challenge

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Closing:

"I want to make a difference with people who want to make a difference, doing something that makes a difference."

~John C. Maxwell

Report of the

Educators' Common Core Implementation Task Force

Established by Executive Order 41
State of Connecticut
Governor Dannel P. Malloy

June 2014

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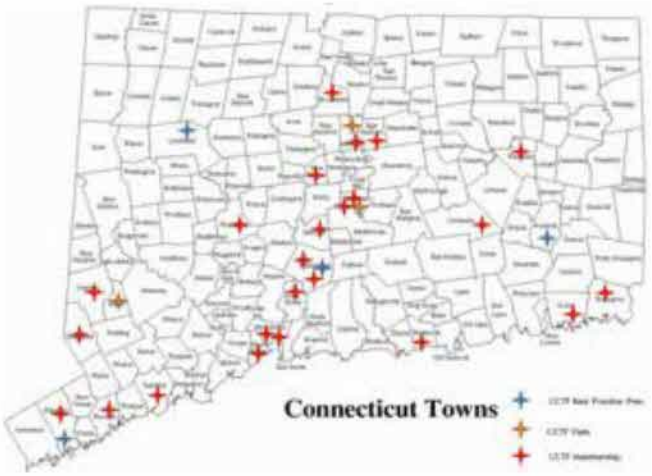
COMMON CORE TASK FORCE (CCTF) MEMBERSHIP



Name	Role	Home District
Jim Accomando	Parent	Fairfield
Liz Brown	Board of Education Member	Waterbury
Diana Burns	Elementary Teacher	Westbrook
Ken Daly	High School Teacher, Language Arts	Wallingford
Anthony Ditrio	Principal	Norwalk
Patti Fusco	Elementary Teacher	West Haven
Don Harris	Board of Education Chairman	Bloomfield
Juanita Harris	School Counselor/Special Education Teacher	Danbury
Anne Jellison	Principal	Meriden
Barbara Johnson	Librarian/Teacher; Pre-K–Grade 6	Colchester
Edith Johnson	Principal	New Haven
Sue Loud	Department Head English & Social Studies	Hamden
Sean McKenna	Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum	Groton
William McKinney	High School Teacher	New Haven
Andrea Middlebrooks	Middle School Teacher, Life Sciences	Cromwell
Elizabeth Misiewicz	Middle School English Teacher	Ridgefield
Nathan Quesnel (co-chair)	Superintendent	East Hartford
Victoria Reed	Principal (K–2)	Wallingford
Dianna Roberge-Wentzell	Chief Academic Officer	State Department
Susan Schmidt	Middle School Literacy Teacher	New Britain
Paula Talty	Superintendent	Cromwell
Ivelise Velazquez	Director of Reading & Social Sciences	Windham
Erin Wilson (co-chair)	Instructional Coach	Hartford
Bruce Yarnall	Middle School Teacher, Special Education	Stonington
Candy Yeager	Parent	Stamford

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the recommendations generated by the Governor-appointed Common Core Task Force (CCTF) that was initiated through Executive Order 41 in March 2014. The Task Force was convened at the request of Governor Dannel P. Malloy based on feedback from educators and parents regarding the amount of change occurring in Connecticut's classrooms. Much of this change stems from reform efforts included in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This Task Force was specifically charged to review state implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), study best practices in that implementation effort and make specific recommendations as to implementation improvements moving forward.

Through a series of workshop activities, the Task Force worked to develop recommendations that would provide a road map for educators, policy leaders, and community members to improve the process of state and district implementation. The Task Force recommendations are grounded in the lessons learned regarding strong leadership, clear strategic planning, quality professional development, strong communication, and a continued commitment of state and local resources. These recommendations recognize the complex nature of change and the ongoing iterative process that must be the hallmark of effective and lasting change.

The specific recommendations the Task Force generated fall under the umbrella of these five, broad recommendations. They address actions that can be taken by all stakeholders, including the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), each individual school district and the community. These are recommended:

1. Develop clear and consistent knowledge of Common Core State Standards at the classroom, school, district and state level. This knowledge is defined as an awareness of the standards and an understanding of the associated changes in instruction that are required by shifting from the old standards to the new Common Core State Standards. In addition, this knowledge speaks to the development of leadership and importance of strategic planning necessary to implement the standards effectively.
2. Provide the necessary support and training to effectively transition the Common Core State Standards into district-defined curricula.
3. Support all teachers and instructional staff in developing the capacity to master the instructional shifts that the standards necessitate. Capacity building is frequently achieved through professional development, but also occurs through ongoing job-embedded activities, such as professional learning communities or time reserved for a focus on instructional improvement and change.
4. Engage all stakeholders in a rich dialogue regarding the Common Core State Standards that is marked by multiple points of interaction; jargon-free communication; and a commitment to keep teachers, parents and community members informed, knowledgeable and participating in the process.
5. Provide the necessary resources to support effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards across all state districts and schools. Resources defined in this recommendation are money, time, and technical support that are key and vital elements for educators to make an effective and positive transition to the standards.

These recommendations are intended to affirm and strengthen the good work currently happening in the state while providing a structure for districts that are not as far along with the transition to the new standards. The implementation of these standards is ongoing, and it is clear that collaboration among all stakeholders is necessary for success in our classrooms.

As a cornerstone principle of this work, the Task Force insisted on a child-centered approach to all Task Force discussions and decisions. As you review this report, we urge you to "remember why you started" and keep Connecticut kids front and center.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 41

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

DANNEL P. MALLOY

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 41

WHEREAS, improving the education level of Connecticut's population is a basic and fundamental obligation of state government;

WHEREAS, Connecticut's economic growth depends upon a well-educated workforce, prepared for the challenges of a global economy;

WHEREAS, Connecticut has one of the widest and most persistent educational achievement gaps in the nation;

WHEREAS, providing a quality education for students requires rigorous instruction and a wide range of experiences, benchmarked to college and career readiness standards, from kindergarten through 12th grade;

WHEREAS, in May 2009, Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell and Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan signed a memorandum of agreement on the Common Core State Standards and the State Board of Education passed a resolution to adopt such standards on July 7, 2010;

WHEREAS, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council allowed school districts to exclude the Smarter Balanced assessment from teacher evaluations for the school years 2013–14 and 2014–15, and the State Department of Education requested a waiver allowing for flexibility from federal education requirements on February 28, 2014;

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut has committed funds to support professional development and investments in new technology in order to help school districts prepare for implementation of the Common Core State Standards;

WHEREAS, Connecticut teachers and education professionals have raised legitimate concerns that preparations for the implementation of Common Core State Standards and the incorporation of Common Core State Standards into the teaching curriculum have been uneven across the state; and,

WHEREAS, I respect and understand the concerns raised by Connecticut teachers and education professionals and believe that the implementation of Common Core State Standards can be improved by establishing a task-force to share lessons-learned, and that Connecticut teachers and students alike will benefit;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DANNEL P. MALLOY, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of the State of Connecticut do hereby **ORDER AND DIRECT:**

1. There is established an Educators' Common Core Implementation Taskforce (the Taskforce), composed of education professionals and other stakeholders, that shall examine gaps in existing common core implementation at the school, district and state level, and identify opportunities to share best practices across schools and school districts.

2. The Taskforce will be administered through the Office of the Governor and the Office of the Governor and the State Department of Education will jointly provide staffing support.

3. The Taskforce shall:
   a. Identify challenges and gaps in Common Core preparation and make recommendations for improving the quality and consistency of Common Core implementation efforts;
   b. Consider ways to advance the translation of Common Core State Standards into curricula;
   c. Consider ways to strengthen the professional development opportunities available to classroom teachers and school leaders;
   d. Identify and highlight best practices and lessons learned by teachers, schools and school districts across the state and nation; and
   e. Deliver recommendations on how Common Core implementation can be improved to the Governor, the General Assembly and the State Board of Education no later than June 30, 2014 for the 2014–15 school year.

4. The Taskforce shall be comprised of 25 individuals as follows:
   a. Twelve practicing teachers or education professionals who teach in elementary, middle or high school, and represent the geographic diversity of Connecticut,
   b. Four principals from either an elementary, middle or high school, and represent the geographic diversity of Connecticut,
   c. Four Superintendents or district curriculum leaders,
   d. Two parents, each from a different school district within Connecticut,
   e. Two members of local boards of education, each from a different school district, and
   f. The Chief Academic Officer of the State Department of Education.

5. The Governor shall appoint two co-chairs of the taskforce from among its membership.

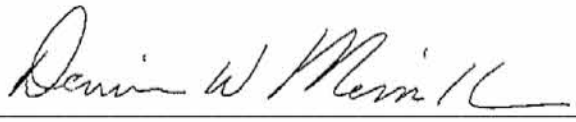
6. The Taskforce shall terminate no later than June 30, 2014.

This Order shall take effect immediately.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut this ____day of March, 2014.

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

By His Excellency's Order



Denise Merrill
Secretary of the State

TASK FORCE OVERVIEW

Common Core State Standards Definition/Background

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are expectations of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. These college- and career-ready standards were drafted by experts and teachers from across the country and are designed to ensure that students are prepared for today's entry-level careers, freshman-level college courses and workforce training programs.

The standards were developed under the leadership of governors and chief state school officers with participation from 48 states. The process included the involvement of state departments of education, districts, teachers, community leaders, experts in a wide array of fields and professional educator organizations.

The Common Core focuses on developing the critical-thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills students will need to be successful. The standards also provide a way for teachers to measure student progress throughout the school year and ensure that students are on track to meet grade-level expectations. The Common Core is not a curriculum but a standards-based approach to measuring student growth on the K–12 continuum of learning that emphasizes the importance of learning concepts and skills.

The Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the standards on July 7, 2010. Following adoption, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), local boards of education, school administrators and teachers have worked together in the process of implementing these standards in Connecticut's classrooms. These efforts include major legislation to support school reform and funding, the reorganization of the CSDE, the revision of local district curriculum to align to the Common Core State Standards, and significant training and support programming for teachers. While these significant efforts across the state must be recognized and celebrated, much work remains to be done.

Task Force Rationale

In response to concerns voiced by stakeholder groups, the Task Force was charged with the responsibility to develop recommendations that would serve as a resource and guide to the state, school administrators, teachers and parents to improve and build on current practice of implementation. To this end, the Task Force focused its work on a careful review of implementation practices that had been enacted following the July 2010 adoption. To ensure the development of comprehensive, actionable recommendations to improve implementation in the coming school year, the work and discussion focused deliberately and exclusively on the implementation of the standards across Connecticut per the charge of the Governor's Executive Order 41. Task Force members actively participated, listened with respect, focused on solutions and, most importantly, were driven by doing what is best for Connecticut's children. Throughout Task Force meetings, conversation and discussion focused on both the strengths and gaps of implementation with a desire to replicate what works throughout the state.

Task Force Selection

Following the guidelines set forth in Executive Order 41, a diverse team of parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, board of education members and state department representation was selected through the Office of the Governor with the purpose of closely examining Connecticut's process of implementing the Common Core State Standards. This team was selected through recommendations made by various stakeholder groups across the state. These stakeholder groups included the Connecticut Parent Teacher Association (CT-PTA), the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut (AFT-CT), the Connecticut Education Association (CEA), the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), the Connecticut Association of School Administrators (CASA), the Connecticut Association of School Librarians (CASL), the Connecticut Teacher of the Year Council and the Connecticut State Department of Education. Through its diversity, the Task Force intentionally represented an extensive and collective knowledge of standards implementation from 21 different school districts in Connecticut with vast experience critical to identifying implementation strengths and concerns from the ground level.

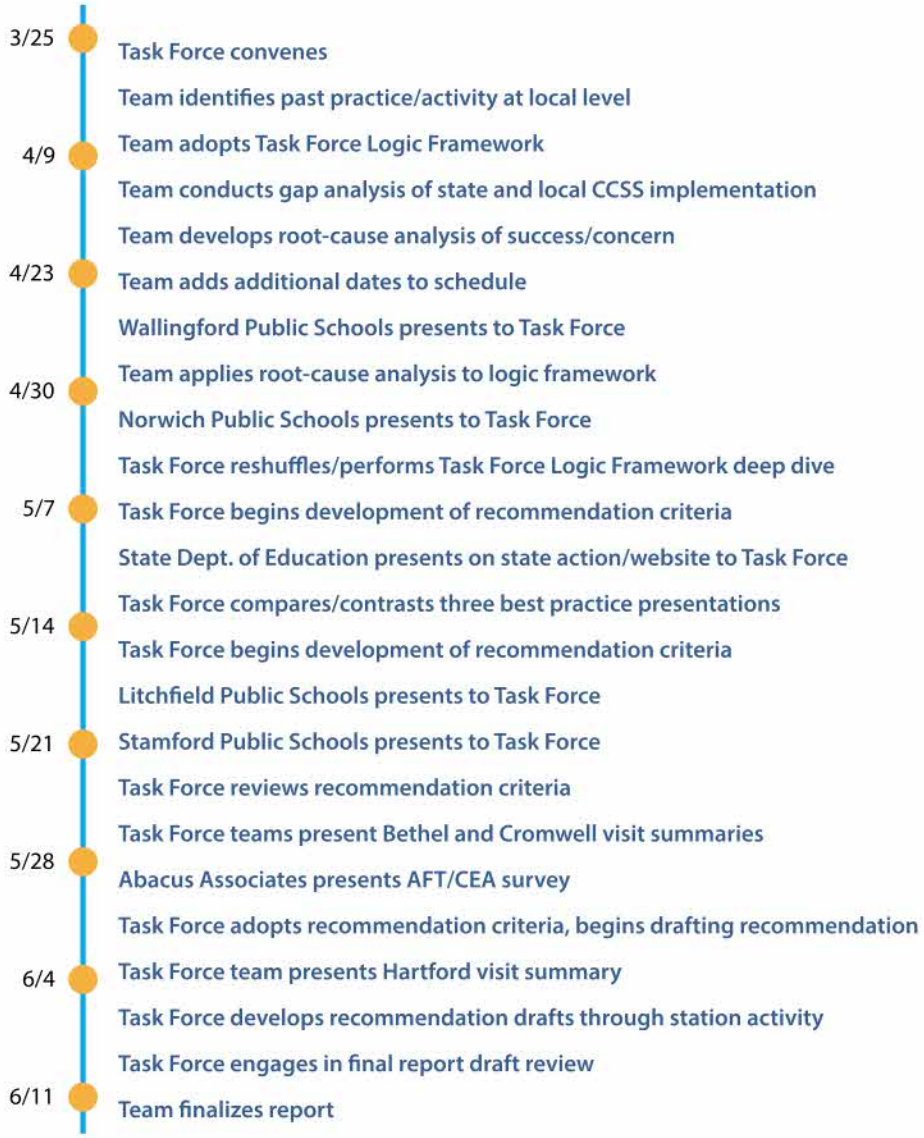
TASK FORCE PROCESS

Overview of Process

Beginning in March 2014 and continuing into June, the Task Force engaged in a weekly series of meetings (10) that were designed to promote investigation, discussion, analysis and an actionable plan to improve implementation. Included in the process was a focus on capturing community and educator understanding and knowledge. The Task Force also hosted visiting school teams representing four local districts within the state to share best practices regarding CCSS implementation. These presentations were viewed through the lens of how these successful structures could be brought to scale and to better understand missteps, implementation flaws and lessons learned moving forward. Beyond the presenting districts, the Task Force also sent visiting teams to three districts within the state with the continued goal of identifying "what was going well" and "what might be done better." Finally, the Task Force reviewed implementation data collected in surveys, including one by AFT-CT/CEA, and one by CAPSS. With this collection of data (both quantitative and qualitative), the Task Force developed a series of recommendations designed to improve and enhance the implementation of the college- and career-ready standards across Connecticut.

Task Force Actions

Core to the premise and mission of the Task Force was the belief that through the eyes of practitioners, implementation of the standards could be improved and made more efficient for educators, students and parents. As part of this fact-finding mission designed to lead to meaningful recommendations, the Task Force engaged in multiple activities intended to develop a data set that represented the "eyes on the ground."



Initial Gap Analysis

The 25 Task Force members, representing 21 different school districts and the Connecticut State Department of Education, incorporated lessons learned from their own districts, guest presenters and from the state to conduct a gap analysis of the implementation process. The Task Force members constructed a timeline of implementation steps within their own districts and matched it with a timeline of state actions the CSDE provided. Several gaps emerged as a result of the analysis:

1. The state's actions to implement the Common Core State Standards and the actions taken by some districts to implement were not always in sync. The state adopted the standards in July 2010 and immediately began working on suggested English language arts and mathematics curriculum with content experts and began the professional development transition. While some districts began their curriculum writing in 2011, many waited until 2012 with the process continuing well into 2014. The CSDE continues to sponsor the design of Common Core-aligned curriculum and professional development; however, individual districts are implementing new curriculum and professional development at varying paces.
2. Significant variance exists among districts in their preparedness for the standards and in their adoption of best practices exhibited by many of the most successful districts. While successful districts began to undertake the transition early, other districts have followed different timelines regarding their implementation of the new college- and career-ready standards. Some districts have taken advantage of new resources through a variety of sources, such as grants, state funding and local budget support, while others have worked within existing resources to prepare for the standards. That variance in preparedness, planning and resources has resulted in the unevenness that the Task Force observed in district adoption of the standards.
3. While successful districts benefited from established benchmarks and strategic plans mapped out over several years, the realization of uniform implementation would have benefited from a strong, benchmarked implementation plan provided by the state.
4. Through a survey commissioned by both teachers' unions, AFT-CT and CEA, their members expressed concerns about the lack of time that they had to learn, develop and implement the new standards since they were adopted. Teachers expressed a desire for more examples, guides and preparation time to develop units and lessons. In addition, they expressed a desire for more school-based instructional support and training on the new standards. Again, wide variance emerged across the state between teachers in districts with resources allocated for Common Core State Standards and those with fewer available resources.
5. The successful introduction of a new, comprehensive set of grade-level expectations requires clear, consistent communication. The communication effort between the state and local districts and between local districts and their communities has room to improve. Strong, continuous communication between successful districts and their teachers, support staff, students, parents and communities was crucial to their success. The state also engaged in ongoing communication efforts with educators and district leaders, but did not fully realize the potential of their position to support the districts' efforts to raise public awareness regarding the new college- and career-ready standards in their local communities.

TASK FORCE LOGIC FRAMEWORK

One of the major structures developed early in the Task Force process was a logic framework designed to provide the Task Force with a tool to organize data, guide analysis and provide a starting point for developing recommendations. The logic framework outlined five specific categories called "buckets" that were designed to center our conversations and provide a clear framework for our pending recommendations. The Task Force Logic Framework was used throughout the three-month process to ground and facilitate Task Force member discussions and provide a foundation for all Task Force activities.

The five "buckets" were created based on the following categories: Knowledge of the Common Core State Standards, Curriculum Writing and Integration of the Common Core at the Local Level, Developing Instructional Competencies, Community Engagement and Resource Commitment.

Knowledge of the CCSS	Curriculum Writing/ Integration at the Local Level	Development of Instructional Competencies	Community Engagement	Resource Commitment
The process of developing state, district or community understanding of the CCSS	The process of moving the CCSS into district curriculum documents	The process of training teachers to teach to the standards of CCSS (instruction)	The process of engaging community stakeholders in CCSS implementation	The resources committed by both the State Department of Education and districts to implement the CCSS

- ***Knowledge of the Common Core State Standards*** is a prerequisite to successful implementation of the standards at the classroom, school, district and state level. The Task Force prioritized this bucket with the understanding that successful implementation stemmed from a clear understanding of the standards. Knowledge of the Common Core State Standards is defined as awareness of their content and an understanding of the associated changes in instruction and materials that support the implementation of the standards. In addition, knowledge of the standards was also determined by closely examining a district's commitment and strength in leadership as evidenced by strategic implementation planning.
- ***Curriculum Writing and Integration of the Common Core at the Local Level*** is an essential implementation function of any set of academic standards. The Task Force closely reviewed this bucket by looking at the process and progress of local districts to revise and rewrite their curriculum documents in alignment with the new college- and career-ready standards. In Connecticut, curriculum is developed and approved at the district level. New standards in any academic discipline prompt a realignment and possible revision of district curriculum in that area. Curriculum is the plan for what students will learn and how teachers will help them learn it. Curriculum documents generally organize the learning into yearlong plans. Yearlong curriculum plans are frequently organized into units of instruction. Teachers design lesson plans based on these yearlong plans and instructional units to deliver the curriculum on a daily basis.

- ***Developing Instructional Competencies*** is necessary for implementing Common Core State Standards with fidelity across Connecticut classrooms. This bucket provided an opportunity for the Task Force to look closely at the districts' efforts to build the capacity of their staff to master the required instructional shifts that the standards necessitate. Capacity building is frequently achieved through professional development, but also occurs through ongoing job-embedded activities, such as data-focused instructional teams or time reserved for instructional improvement and change.
- ***Community Engagement*** is a necessary focus for the implementation of any change in our schools. This bucket allowed the Task Force to look closely at how a district engaged each stakeholder during the implementation process. Community engagement speaks to the efforts of an organization to keep stakeholders informed, knowledgeable and participating in the process. An engaged, informed and focused community is a critical asset to improving outcomes for our students and supporting our teachers and leaders. An engaged community provides support for its teachers, students, staff and administrators, thereby greatly increasing the likelihood of successful outcomes.
- ***Resource Commitment*** provides a focus on the state, district and local stakeholder commitments in terms of providing the finances, staff, time and materials necessary to support effective implementation. This bucket allowed the Task Force to carefully review how resources were identified, sought out, accessed and deployed throughout the implementation process across the state.

TASK FORCE LESSONS LEARNED

Over the three-month period of Task Force meetings, rich discussions, information collection and analysis, the Task Force members had a unique opportunity to learn many valuable lessons regarding the characteristics of successful implementation across the state since the adoption of the new standards in 2010. As the Task Force performed its Initial Gap Analysis, a significant level of variance across the state in terms of implementation effectiveness was clearly noted. In response to this lesson, the Task Force focused its attention on districts that had been successful vs. less successful over the past three years to understand best practices better. The Task Force is fully aware that the focus and scope of this Task Force did not include a detailed study of why other districts did not find success. However, the Task Force's goal was to carefully examine the roadmaps that successful districts provided and to develop actionable recommendations that could bring these spotlighted areas to scale and consistency in districts across the state. With this lens, the Task Force lessons learned captures similarities between districts that can provide the state with an example of how a district might act to improve efficiency for implementation of the new standards. It should be noted that while the Task Force made an effort to cast a wide net of observation across the state in terms of geographic location, demographic conditions and district size, these lessons learned do not tell the story of every school district. These lessons learned, vetted through a variety of discussions and angles, provide an important and summative story for Connecticut as we look toward the next steps of implementation.

The lessons learned, organized into larger categories below, were gathered from membership input, best-practice presentations, team observations from local district visits and from the qualitative surveys' data points. The Task Force urges policymakers, educators and all stakeholders to review the lessons learned carefully with the mindset of "success breeds success." These lessons, presented in the format of "what matters," speak to successful implementation and beg for further steps to be taken to reduce the variance that was evident across the state. By learning from each other and working to bring "good ideas to scale," Connecticut will unleash expertise, innovation and the technical competence needed to accomplish this substantial shift.

Leadership Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation all had strong leadership at both the district and school level. This leadership was characterized by a commitment to the standards and the technical capacity to lead its schools towards the shifts and changes necessary to make sure the standards became a part of the school community culture. Strong leaders included superintendents, principals and teachers who possessed both a developed understanding of the standards and clarity of vision to support the work needed to get the job done. Strong leadership was demonstrated through articulated and strategic district/school plans for implementation; coherent, ongoing communication to all stakeholders; and a willingness to adjust and maintain flexibility when changes needed to be made. Strong leadership involved teachers, built stakeholder ownership and developed a systematic approach to the work necessary for successful implementation. Strong leaders got on board early and stayed the course through challenges.

Strategic Planning Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation all developed strategic plans that carefully addressed all aspects of the work. These plans specifically addressed each of the "buckets" of the Task Force Logic Framework and provided a scripted roadmap for district staff to follow. The plans all included a sequential "phase in" process where specific actions were taken, benchmarks established and pace determined. The plans also included references to how resources would be procured and applied to support district work. Central to the plans was an emphasis on the development of district capacity for college- and career-ready standards implementation. Most often mentioned was high-quality professional development in a variety of formats, but usually including "Common Core Specialists/Coaches" that provided district staff with professional learning opportunities during the school day. Strategic plans included a dynamic plan to communicate shifts and changes to a variety of stakeholders, including teachers, parents, students and the larger community. Finally, the strategic plans all showed a commitment to flexibility and continual adjustment based on unknown or previously determined conditions. This commitment to remaining nimble in the face of challenge was cited as a major strength to the success of district strategic plans.

Professional Development Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation all shared a stakeholder-wide commitment to improving and growing staff capacity at all levels. From successful districts, it was noted that significant time and resources were devoted to developing an understanding of the standards, as well as working with teachers specifically to adjust to the shifts needed in daily classroom instruction. Professional development in successful districts included a commitment to working with the CSDE, outside partners and internal experts to carefully map out the implementation plan prior to moving ahead. Professional development typically followed the format of developing leadership teams within the district and then using these teams to train the entire staff. In addition, successful districts invested significant resources in professional development positions, such as "Instructional Specialists, Common Core Coaches or Theme Coaches." Teacher sabbaticals or significant release time were also provided to allow the necessary time, focus and quality of skills to help all district staff manage the change. On a logistical side, while all districts demonstrated an insistence on finding time for staff to learn, collaborate and work together, there was variance and uniqueness in the manner in which this time was reserved. To this end, some districts used time in the school day, after school, on weekends or during the summer to ensure that their staff received both the knowledge and the know-how to execute the standards successfully.

Communication Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation of the new standards all shared an advanced awareness and prioritization for the importance of communication with stakeholders regarding the adoption and implementation of the standards. Of note, in the collected notes from best-practice presentations, the common quote of "we made an effort to communicate throughout the process and that is why we have not experienced widespread resistance," was captured in nearly all presentations. Communication plans from successful districts focused first on communicating internally within the district, and then each included an external focus that engaged the board of education, parents, policy leaders, business community, senior community, etc., and, most importantly, students. Channels for communication across districts varied based on resources and availability, but all included the trends of mass communication and individual communication. Internally, successful districts prioritized the importance of the educator voice, valued their input and feedback on the adoption and implementation of the standards and meaningfully engaged teachers in "the work." For external communication, districts spent considerable time developing materials to educate parents both through workshops, "Parent Academies," or school-based events through mediums and in languages that made this communication accessible to all parents in the district. In all districts, a pattern of transparency, customer service, and a method to provide accurate information to incorporate all stakeholders and get buy-in from parents and the community were critical factors to their success.

Time Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation of the standards all devoted enough time for teachers to learn, develop and implement the standards in their classrooms. These districts provided time for teachers to prepare units and lessons individually, working with fellow teachers and with the support of coaches and designated curriculum writers. School-based instructional support and training for all staff was found to be most helpful. Teachers felt that they benefited the most when provided time to work with other teachers at their grade level as well as those teaching the grades immediately preceding and following theirs. Successful districts found a variety of ways to provide the necessary time for the development of these important instructional competencies. Districts provided early release days, late start days and paid time during the summer for curriculum writing, professional development and teacher collaboration. The Task Force learned that it is equally important for administrators and principals to have dedicated time for professional development to best support those that they work with in implementing the standards. Finally, successful districts also benefited from time investments made by parents and other community members. In successful districts, students, parents and the community took the time to learn about the standards. In one district, administrators solicited student and parent time in reviewing curriculum based on the standards, and their feedback enriched curriculum implementation. The business community, local leaders and seniors gave their time to learn about the changes taking place in classrooms and engaged in a dialogue about what was important from their point of view.

Resources Matter

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation all shared a commitment to the procurement and allocation of resources to support implementation of the standards. These resources, described as financial, technical assistance and beneficial partnerships, provided the backbone and necessary support for districts to implement the changes in this initiative. The successful districts demonstrated a clear understanding that this change would require additional funding, assistance and partnerships that their standard operating business did not require. In light of this shared understanding, all districts mapped out a strategic budget to seek and deploy resources that supported their aforementioned strategic plan. A wide variety of examples emerged from Task Force members' feedback and best-practice presentations regarding resource acquisition. These examples ranged from reallocations of the local budget, significant grant funding and the use of state funding through the Alliance District

grants. Resources supported a variety of procurements including materials that would align to the standards, professional development, additional staffing and technology needed to deploy the new state assessment system. In purchasing resources, multiple districts urged caution in the purchase of new "Common Core-aligned" materials and felt it more relevant to have staff develop and build the needed resources. Finally, successful districts all demonstrated various ways to leverage resources to support implementation with an emphasis on various funding sources. These districts demonstrated a shared commitment of district and local policy leaders to make the investment necessary to accomplish the district's strategic goals.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation Overview

The Task Force developed recommendations based on evidence gathered from its members, their study of effective practices in Connecticut school districts, and the surveys AFT-CT/CEA and CAPSS provided on teacher and superintendent perceptions, respectively. The recommendations are organized in alignment with the Logic Framework and are intended to provide educators and policymakers with a concrete structure for decisions regarding next steps in supporting successful implementation.

Task Force Recommendation Criteria

As a guide for developing quality recommendations, the Task Force developed recommendation criteria, through consensus, that was used to measure and weigh the recommendations that were developed. The Task Force felt strongly that all quality and meaningful recommendations must be evidence based, actionable, inclusive of all stakeholders and measurable. By challenging and refining all recommendations to meet these criteria, the Task Force believes that the following recommendations provide a clear path forward for implementation of the new standards.

Task Force recommendations regarding implementation of the Common Core State Standards must be:			
Evidence Based Recommendations must stem from an identified challenge/concern in implementation substantiated by data.	**Actionable** Recommendations must be obtainable, actionable, and grounded in solid educational practice. Recommendations must be specific and targeted. Recommendations must be sustainable over time.	**Inclusive of All Stakeholders** Recommendations must include opportunities for participation by multiple stakeholder groups. Recommendations must focus and provide solutions that improve learning for students.	**Measurable** Recommendations must be measurable in regard to their effectiveness. Recommendations must provide a clear deliverable/measure regarding their long-term impact/success.

Task Force Recommendations

1	**Develop clear and consistent knowledge of Common Core State Standards at the classroom, school, district and state level. This knowledge is defined as an awareness of the standards and an understanding of the associated changes in instruction that are required by this shift. In addition, this knowledge speaks to the development of leadership and importance of strategic planning necessary to implement the standards effectively.**
CSDE	• Provide clear and consistent messaging and information for districts and communities regarding the standards through a variety of channels (professional development workshops, print, media and digital platforms). • Develop and fund differentiated leadership-training modules, including the use of digital platforms that incorporate various stakeholder groups (superintendents, principals, teachers, school governance leaders, etc.) that focus on developing skills and abilities for effective standards implementation.
District	• Develop comprehensive, strategic, coherent and time-bound implementation plans that include benchmarks, deliverables and plans for differentiated professional development and communication to all stakeholders. • Provide professional development for district and school leaders and teachers on both the knowledge base of the standards as well as the skills required to develop a strategic action plan for district implementation. • Engage students, where age appropriate, regarding how the standards have affected their learning and how districts can better support this transition.
Community	• Community members should be encouraged to attend and participate in state- and district-provided workshops that deliver information about the standards.
2	**Provide the necessary support and training to effectively transition the Common Core State Standards into district-defined curricula.**
CSDE	• Provide multiple opportunities for districts to collaborate and share best practices in terms of developing standards-aligned curriculum. These opportunities should include both traditional professional development workshops and online learning. Provide and continuously expand an online library of Common Core-aligned units/lessons that can provide models for teacher use across content areas. • Provide funding and guidance for consultation at the district level to support the revision and development of standards-aligned curriculum.
District	• Ensure that curriculum maps are vertically and horizontally aligned to standards and developed with the collaboration of all stakeholders. Create (or adopt) district-specific standards-aligned curriculum and corresponding assessments, paying close attention to learning progressions across grade levels. • Engage teacher voice in a needs assessment of current curricular alignment to standards as well as develop a plan for next-step revisions and improvements. This may include the identification and establishment of exemplar certified Connecticut teacher-leaders to write standards-aligned curriculum and standards-based assessments at the district level. • Engage in shared collaborative discussions with other districts in curriculum review and development.

Community	• Inform and engage the community in learning about the new standards and the instructional shifts involved in those standards. • Enable students to participate in a variety of opportunities to showcase their learning aligned with standards with parents, teachers, principals, administrators and members of the school community.
3	**Support all teachers and instructional staff in developing the capacity to master the instructional shifts that the Common Core State Standards necessitate. Capacity building is frequently achieved through professional development, but also occurs through ongoing job-embedded activities, such as professional learning communities or time reserved for a focus on instructional improvement and change.**
CSDE	• Appropriate funding for differentiated, high-quality professional development as determined by each district's Professional Development and Evaluation Committee. This professional development should include a series of modules for teachers focused on the required instructional shifts of the standards and be provided across the state at multiple times and venues. • Provide training and support for the development of an instructional coaching model throughout the state that provides the resources, training and funding for staffing of exemplar certified Connecticut teachers who can support colleagues to build instructional competencies related to implementing the standards.
District	• Create multiphase professional development plans that reflect a commitment to ongoing, differentiated professional development based on individual district needs. These professional development plans may emphasize job-embedded instruction, collaborative sharing and opportunities for peer-to-peer interaction, both vertically and horizontally aligned, along with other research-based strategies. • Develop and pursue talent-development strategies that support instructional leaders within the district. This talent-development strategy may include implementing an instructional coaching model within K–12 schools.
Community	• Inform and encourage community members to use tools and resources provided by teachers, schools, districts and the state to support learning outside of school.
4	**Engage all stakeholders in a rich dialogue regarding the Common Core State Standards that is marked by multiple points of interaction; jargon-free communication; and a commitment to keep teachers, parents and community members informed, knowledgeable and participating in the process.**
CSDE	• Invest in a comprehensive communication plan designed to inform, clarify and educate Connecticut on the rationale behind the standards as well as current implementation steps. This communication plan should provide a toolkit to districts for best practices in engaging the community and provide clear and concise communication for communities. The communication plan should provide clear, jargon-free and customer-friendly communications about the standards in multiple languages. • Provide a state-level umbrella and organization for efforts made to support implementation of the standards that provides a way to access areas of best practice. This umbrella would provide educators and local districts with a clear sense of what was going on within the state and align efforts without duplication. This umbrella would provide opportunities for the CSDE, local school districts and teacher groups to work together to ensure effective implementation.

District	• Employ active community engagement strategies with all members of the school community as defined by students, parents, business community and senior citizens. In this communication strategy, multiple venues and channels should be used to ease accessibility and improve outreach. Communication strategies may include college- and career-ready standards workshops, parent academies, media engagement, presentations to business community leaders and forums to better understand community concerns or questions. Communication must be clear, jargon free as well as provided in multiple languages. • Engage students, where age appropriate, with teachers regarding their perceptions and understanding of the standards in classroom activities. Students should be an active voice for districts and schools in how the process of implementation can continue to be improved.
Community	• Parents and community members should be encouraged to attend events and seek engagement with district leaders to build understanding of the standards.
5	**Provide the necessary resources to support effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards across all state districts and schools. Resources defined in this recommendation are money, time and technical support that are key and vital elements for educators to make an effective and positive transition to the Common Core State Standards.**
CSDE	• Continue and expand funding for implementation of the standards at the district level. This support could mirror the process developed in the Alliance District grant process of conditional funding. • Continue to provide and fund a variety of opportunities for staff to convene and receive professional development, including funding the use of digital platforms, libraries, summer institutes and webinars to enhance collaboration and sharing. • Provide technical assistance to districts to ensure necessary time is allotted, first, during the school day and, second, outside of school hours for writing curriculum and developing instructional competencies for standards implementation. • Provide districts with vetted recommendations for standards-aligned resources (textbooks/ programs).
District	• Support standards implementation by continuing to access both operating-budget funding as well as using state and private grant opportunities. Prioritize standards implementation in the local budget process and develop a clear district strategy for how funding will enhance implementation. • Analyze and review current building schedules and focus on finding ways to increase teacher opportunities to engage in high-quality professional development and peer-to-peer collaboration. Focus on the use of time first within the school day and second beyond the school day as opportunities for staff to engage and participate in implementation. These opportunities should include cross-grade and cross-curriculum collaboration.
Community	• Communities should be keenly aware of the financial impact on their district in order to support the district and its effort to target funding toward standards implementation. This support could be demonstrated during the local district budget process by supporting programming, staffing and resources needed to support effective standards implementation.

CONCLUSION

Change is challenging; however, change is the promise of something new, something hopeful and something bright for the future of our children. In the face of change, Connecticut is moving forward, committed to the process of making good great, and better the best. We are resolute in our core belief that under the stressors of difference, we all do our best work when we are working together. Guided by this important principle, our 25-member Task Force crafted these recommendations to ensure a continued, thoughtful and coherent implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

We believe our recommendations serve as a next step in the ongoing journey for our state as we continue to move forward, making progress and working hard to improve the lives of our children. We recognize that our document is neither the beginning nor the end, but rather a small piece of the continuum of learning that makes our state a leader in our great country. In light of this acknowledgment, we recognize that future work and focus (outside the charge of our Task Force) needs to occur to help and support children and educators. We embrace and celebrate how far we have come—we know the next step awaits.

Next Steps

As Connecticut continues to grow, improve and succeed, more work and learning needs to be done by all stakeholders in the areas of the Common Core State Standards implementation, specifically in their relation to the following:

- Instructional support necessary for students with special needs to access the standards
- Developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and standards to engage students of all grade levels
- Formative and summative assessment, including Smarter Balanced Assessments
- Simultaneous and interdependent initiatives, such as teacher evaluation
- Continuing evaluation of the standards

This document will be shared with policy leaders, superintendents, principals, educators and the community and viewed in the spirit in which it was written through both effective implementation and appropriate funding. This document will help continue this important work and foster collaborative partnerships and communication throughout the state.

We hope that the children we represent speak loudly through this document and encourage us all to keep their future *front and center.*

APPENDIX 1

Survey of American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut (AFT-CT) and Connecticut Education Association (CEA) members

ABACUS ASSOCIATES

Strategic Research
Polling
Focus Groups

Priorities And Concerns Among Connecticut Teachers Responsible For Implementing CCSS

CEA
Advocating for teachers and public education

AFT Connecticut
A Union of Professionals

May 21, 2014

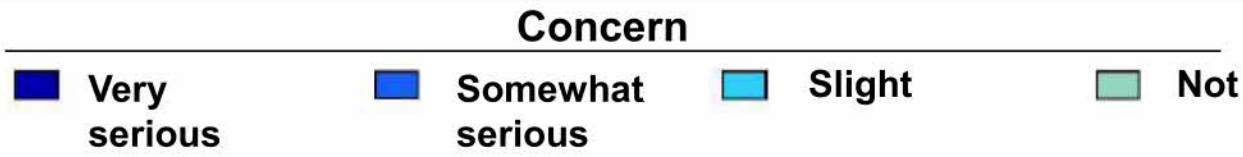
136 West Street · Northampton · Mass · 01060 · 413–727–8664
www.AbacusAssoc.com

Research Design

- Survey of 500 CEA & 100 AFT-CT members who are responsible for implementing Common Core State Standards:
  - Data weighted to match population distribution of school level among CT Teachers (58% Elementary, 19% Middle School, 23% High School)
  - Data weighted to reflect balance of CEA & AFT implementers (79% CEA & 21% AFT)
- 9 minutes in length.
- Margin of error is +/-4.0%
- Fielded April 3-8 (CEA) and April 29-30 (AFT), 2014

Teachers Are Concerned About Many Aspects Of CCSS; Most Concerned About Having Enough Time

All Members



How would you characterize the…

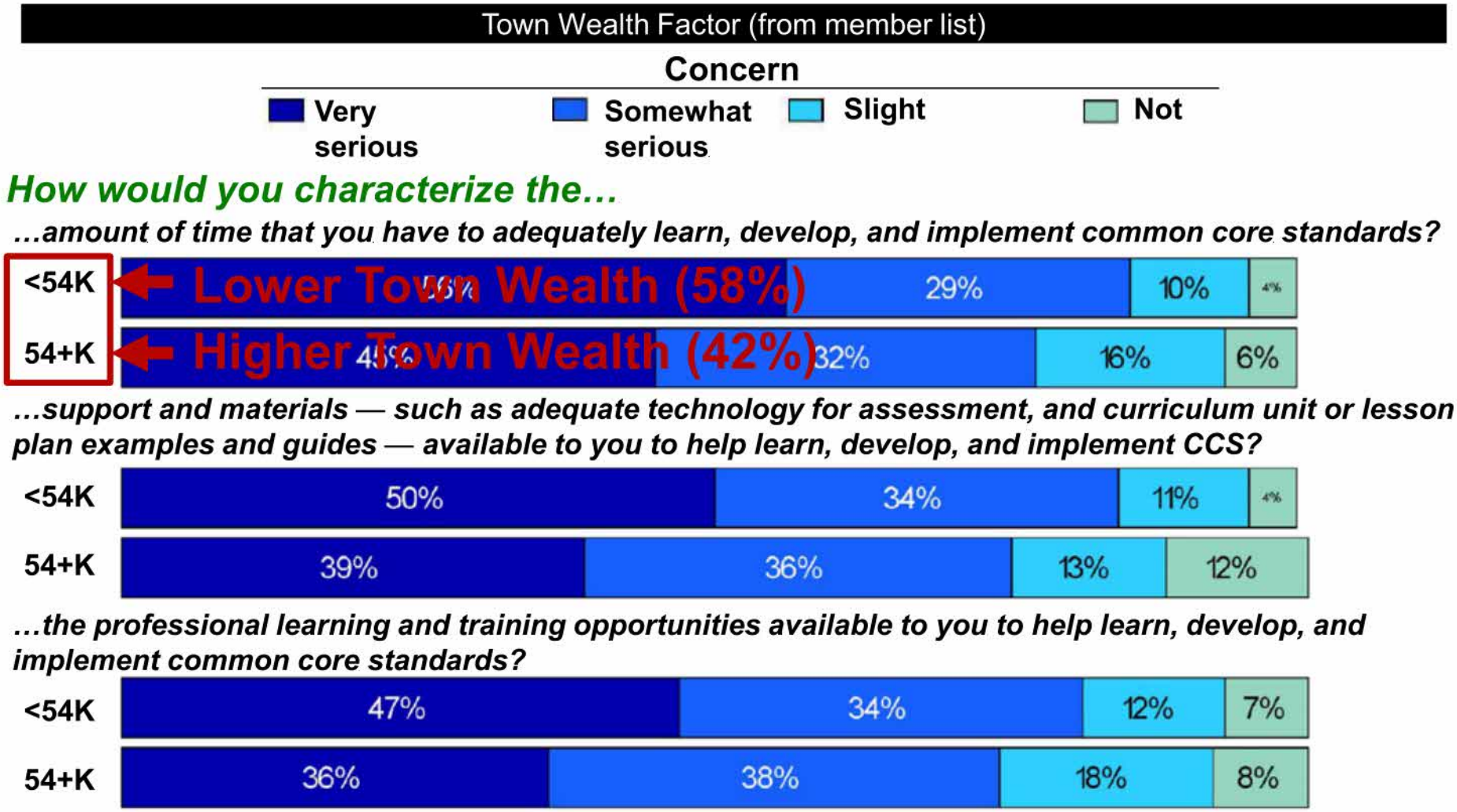
…amount of time that you have to adequately learn, develop, and implement common core standards?

…support and materials — such as adequate technology for assessment, and curriculum unit or lesson plan examples and guides — available to you to help learn, develop, and implement common core standards?

…the professional learning and training opportunities available to you to help learn, develop, and implement common core standards?

Remainder "Not sure."

Teachers In Towns With Lower Wealth Are Much More Concerned About All Aspects Of Implementing CCSS

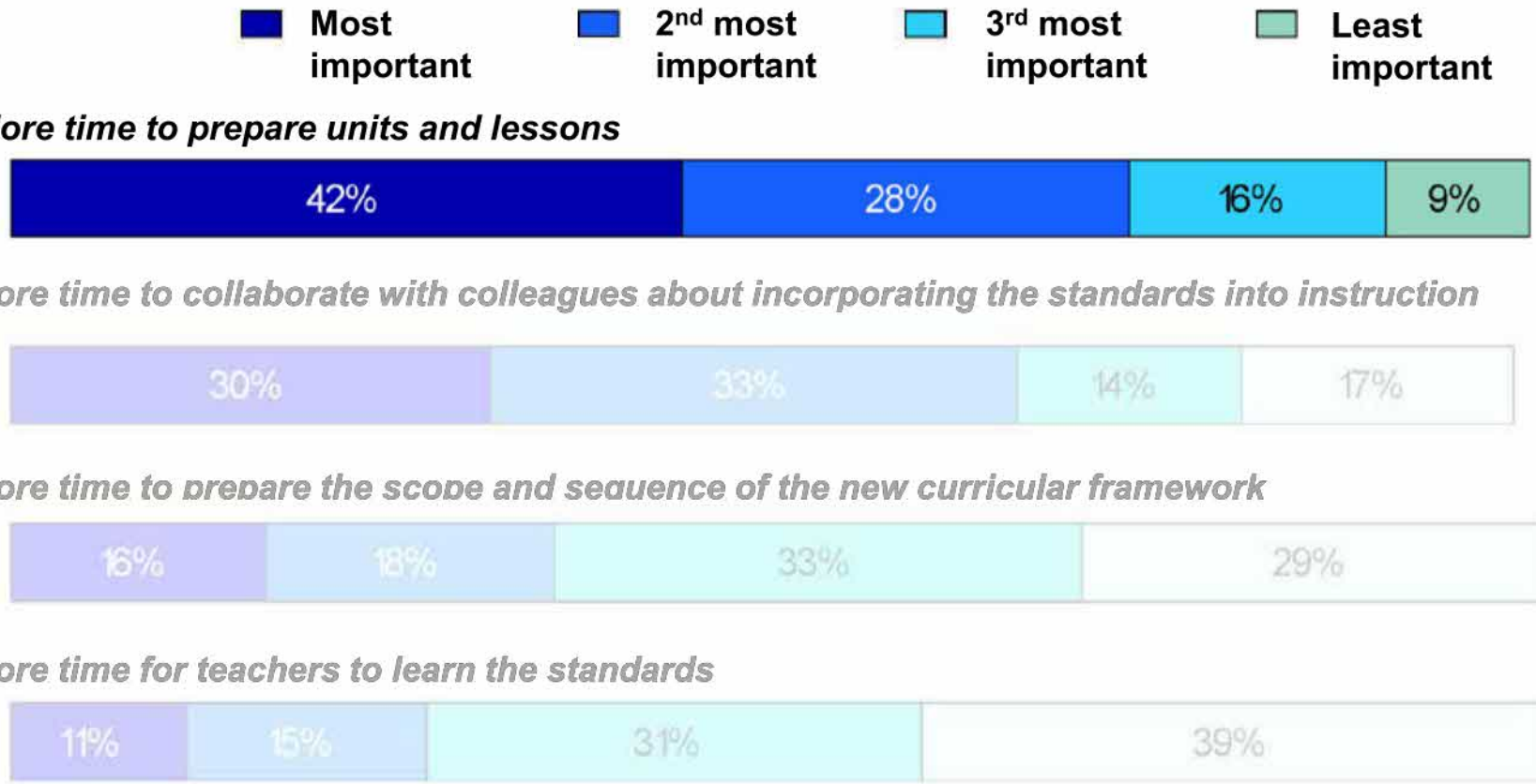


Remainder "Not sure."

Of The Ways In Which Time To Implement CCSS Can Be a Factor, Time To Prepare Units & Lessons Is Most Important

Question

Q6. Which of these four aspects of the implementation of common core standards do you consider to be most/2nd/3rd/least important?

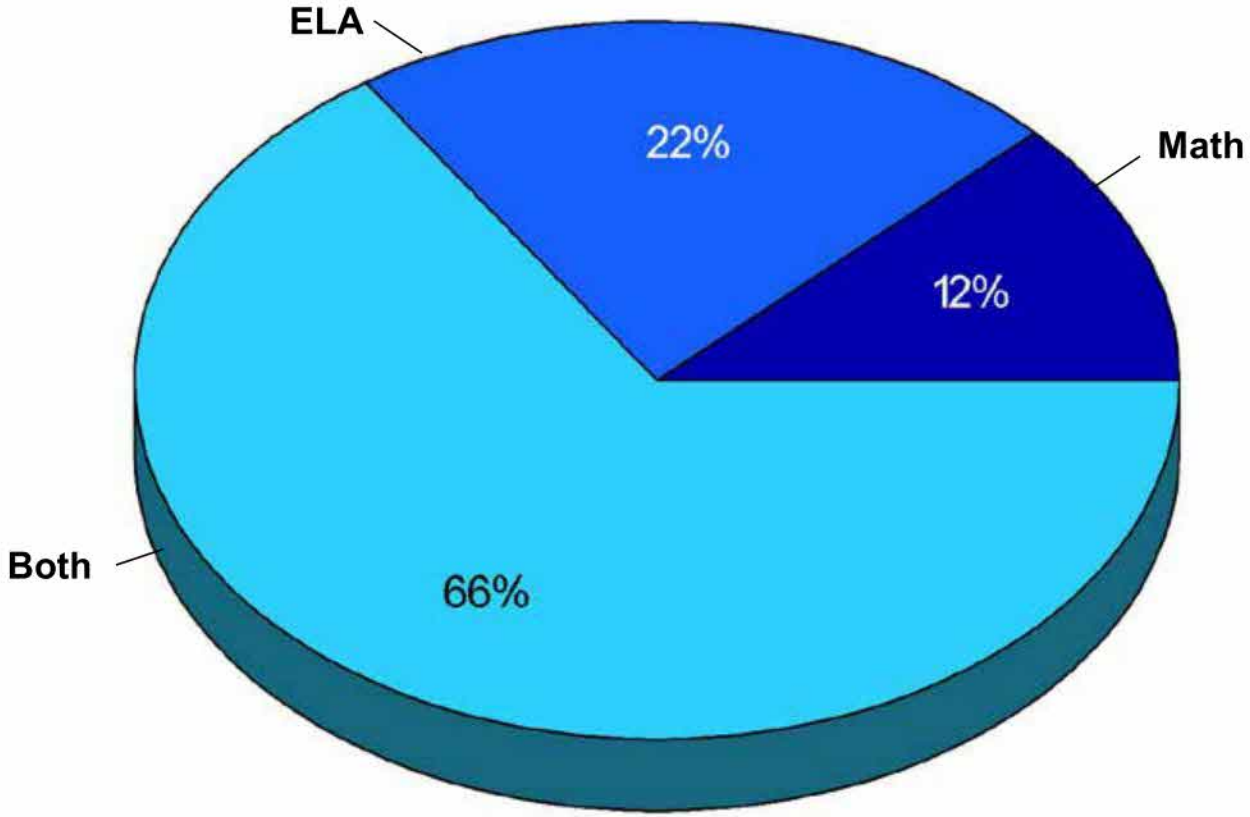


Remainder "Not sure."

Of Teachers Responsible For Implementing Both Math & ELA, 2/3 Say The Time Needed Is Equally An Issue For Both

Question

Q7. Is the time needed for implementation of common core state standards more of an issue for the Math standards, the ELA standards, or is it equal for both?



Asked only of teachers who are responsible for implementing both math and ELA CCSS.

Most Important Materials & Support: More/Better Curriculum Unit & Lesson Plan Examples; Guides For Teachers

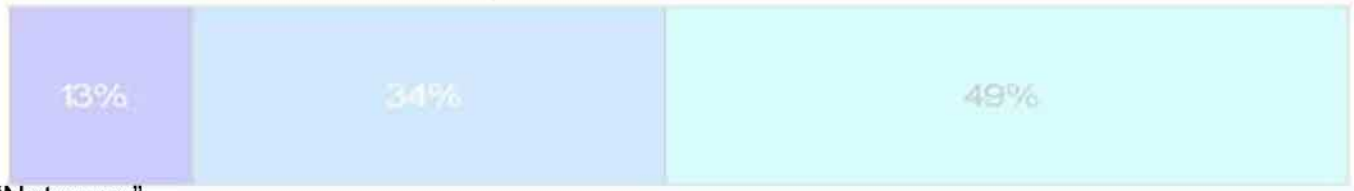
Question

Q8. Which of these three types of materials and support needed for implementation of common core standards is the most/2nd most/least important?

More or better curriculum unit and lesson plan examples and guides for teachers

Better technology to administer the computer-based assessments

An effective district communication plan so that parents and communities receive information about the changes in standards and their impact on schools and students



Remainder "Not sure."

For Most Important Professional Learning: More School-Based Instructional Support & Training For New Standards

Question

Q9. How important is each of these priorities for implementing common core standards for you?

Topmost important | Very important | Somewhat important | Not important

a. More school-based instructional support & training for teachers to learn how to teach new standards

c. Opportunities to participate in out-of-district activities to learn how to teach the new standards

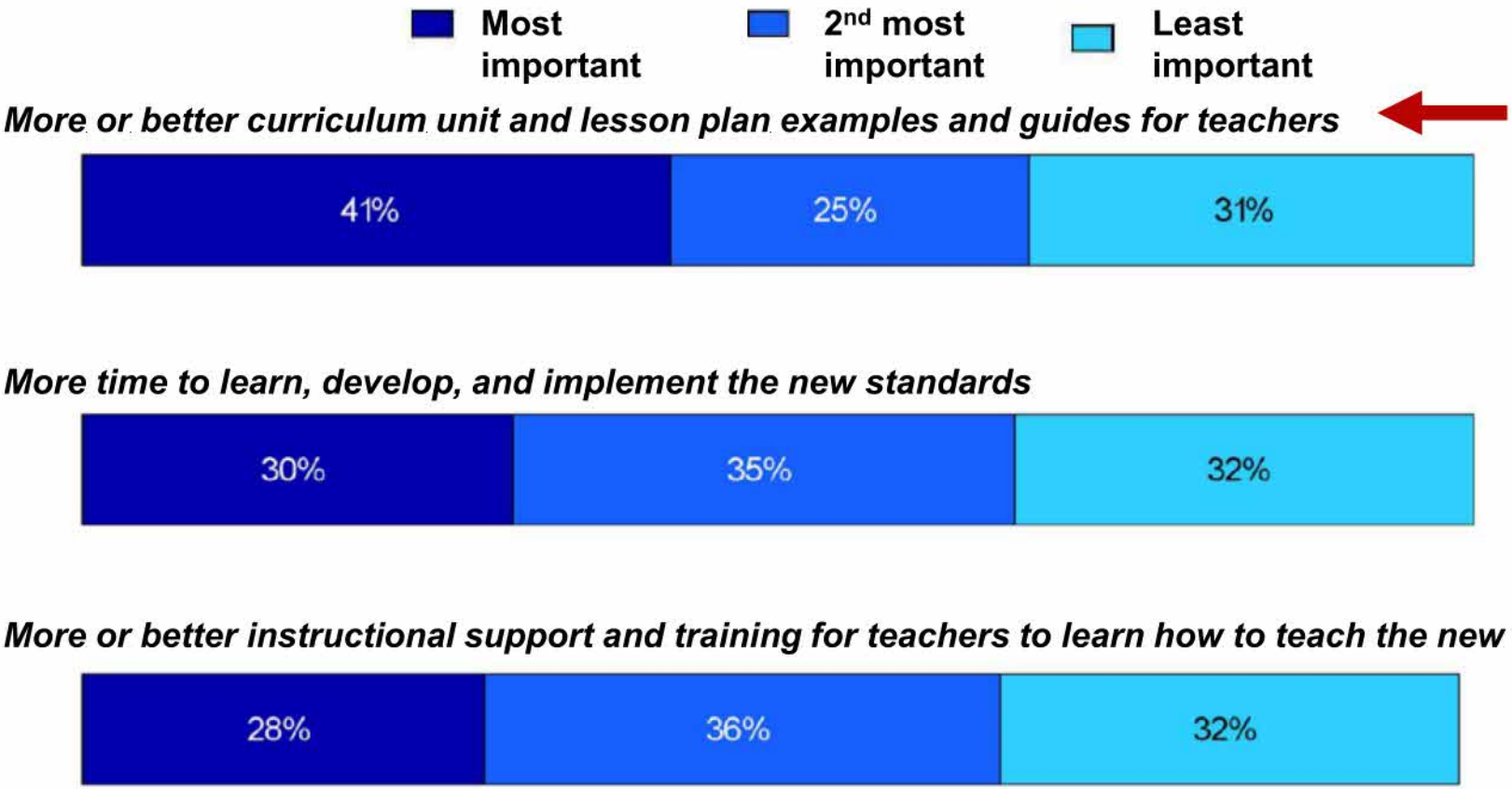
b. Training to administer the computer-based assessments

Remainder "Not sure."

Teachers Divide Over Unit/Plan Examples & Guides, Time, & Support & Training; Plurality See Former As Most Important

Question

Q10. Which of these three needs for learning, developing, and implementing common core standards is the most/ 2nd most/ least important?

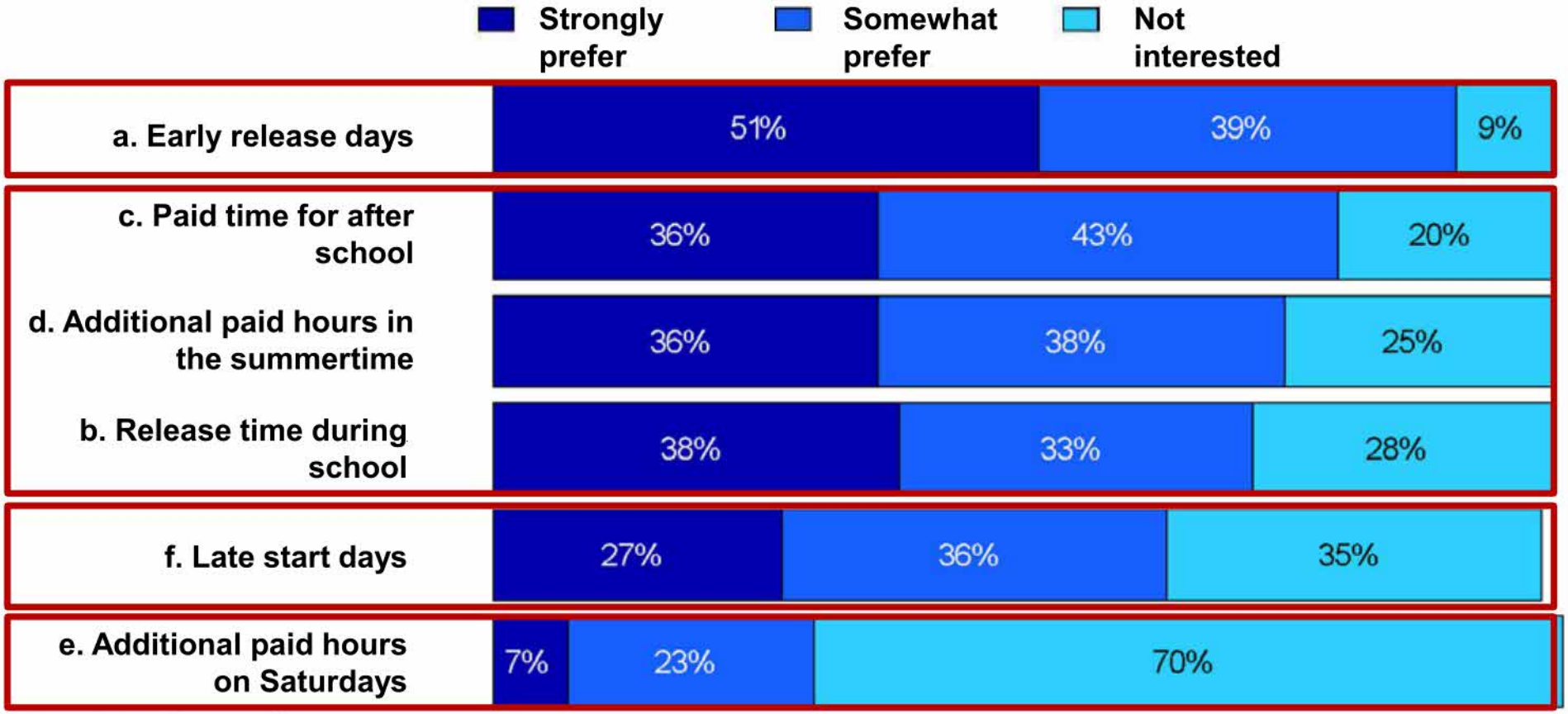


Remainder "Not sure."

Early Release Days Are The Most Preferred Option For Creating More Time To Implement CCSS

Question

Q11. How much do you prefer this option for creating more time or contractual hours that a teacher could opt to choose?



Remainder "Not sure."

Summary

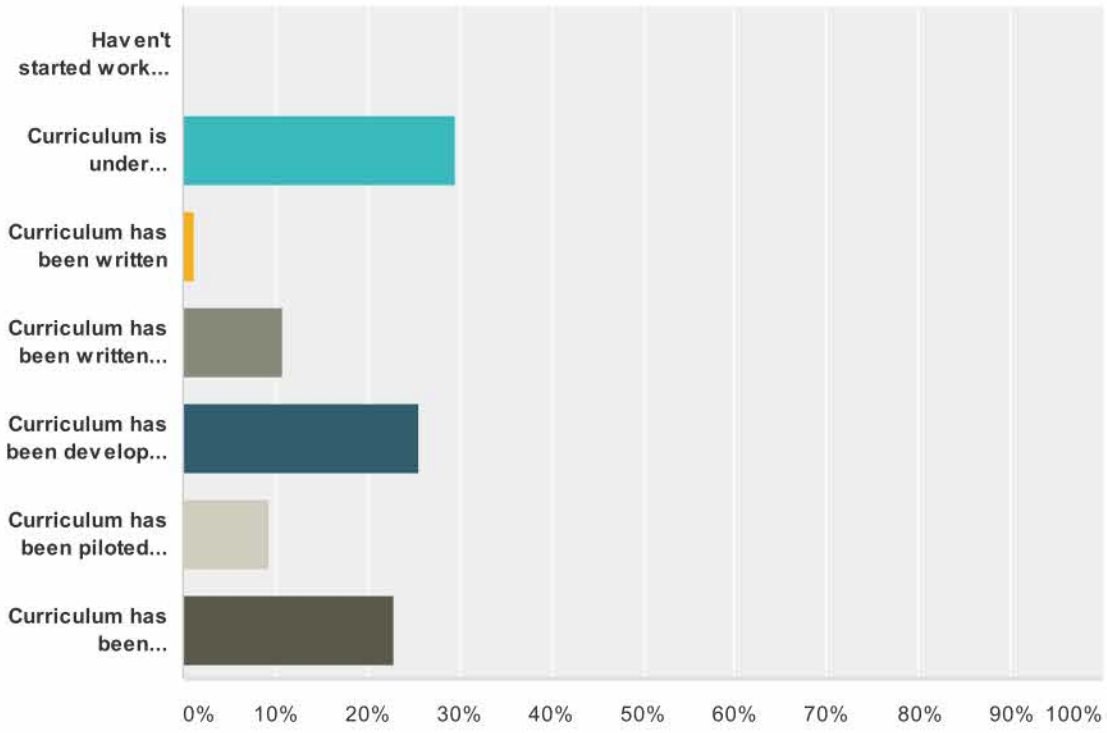
- Teachers are concerned about all aspects CCSS implementation
- Concerns are greatest in low wealth school districts
- Time and more or better curriculum unit and lesson plan examples and guides for teachers are biggest concern
- Teachers strongly prefer early release days to alleviate the problem of finding more time
- Teachers strongly oppose paid Saturdays as a way to create more time

APPENDIX 2

Survey of Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS)

Q1 How far along is your district with the implementation of CCSS in English Language Arts?

Answered: 74 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
Haven't started work yet	0.00%	0
Curriculum is under development	29.73%	22
Curriculum has been written	1.35%	1
Curriculum has been written and teacher training is underway	10.81%	8
Curriculum has been developed and teachers have been trained and are now piloting	25.68%	19
Curriculum has been piloted and we are completing implementation	9.46%	7
Curriculum has been implemented assessments under development	22.97%	17
Total		74

#	Comments	Date

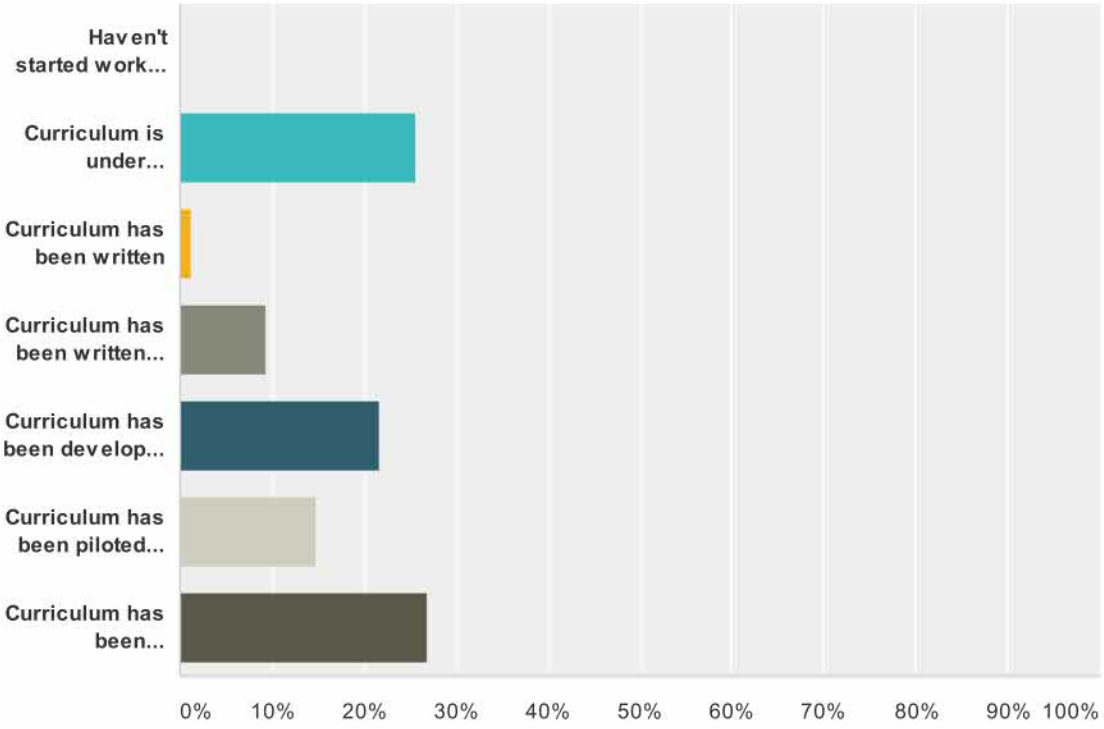
1	Common Core East Hartford Public Schools began work on revising and writing curriculum that address the ELA standards of the Common Core upon state adoption in 2010. The initial work centered on developing district expertise regarding the state standards and a critical look at our existing curriculum to identify where the changes needed to be made. This involved members of our district leadership team participating on key groups at the State Department as the changes and shifts were laid out and reviewed. Over the past four years, we have worked hard as a district to make the transition and while work continues (especially at the secondary level) we are proud of the progress we have made. Teacher training regarding this process followed slightly behind curriculum development. Our most intensive training focused on school year 13 and has continued in to the current year. With the onset of our new Teacher Evaluation model, we have found that performance evaluation based on the rubric has significantly changed and deepened the conversations regarding practice. This year (SY14) our continued work regarding CCSS implementation are priority focus areas in our district improvement plan. We believe deeply in the opportunity to raise the standards of expectation for our students and recognize that this shift in plan and practice will not be without the challenge that significant change creates.	3/5/2014 1:11 PM
2	1. We continue to refine our curricculum to be sure it aligns withthe CCSS. 2. We continue to work with the consultants from Columbia University's Reading/Writing Project to implement the language arts standards through a workshop model. 3. Performance based assessments continue to be developed.	2/28/2014 6:11 PM
3	The process is more fluid and less sequential than implied by the questions above. For example, teacher training has been on-going for the past few years. This year, district-wide, an hour of professional development time each week has been added to the teacher schedule through teacher negotiations. Much, although not all, of the time is spent on CCSS-related topics. Curriculum writing really depends on the grade level; it is a process - some grade levels need more revising/updating or adding new than others. Also - the aspects of reading, writing, and listening/speaking are sometimes developed separately from one another Elementary Teacher training on-going. Curriculum has been developed, teachers have been trained, and are now piloting Assessments are being piloted. We are building on Readers and Writers workshop model to adapt CCSS standards Addition of literacy coaches Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics Middle School Teacher training is on-going, curriculum development varies between grade levels - it is evolving, - we are revising/adding/deleting/shifting - Middle school curriculum development is somewhat behind elementary/high school at this point in time Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics High School Teacher training on-going. curriculum is both being developed and piloted; and is now being piloted; assessments are being developed and piloted. Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics	2/28/2014 12:25 PM
4	As a small district we have no Curriculum Director/Coordinator. We have taken advantage of our RESC's offerings etc and have hired an outside consultant to work alongside teachers. We use a formative assessment product, STAR, but my concern is its alignment with SBAC tests and the CCSS. Teachers in this district work hard to implement programs despite the failings of SDE and local funding. I don't see any attempt statewide to show the links between the standards, the curriculum that needs to be developed and the assessment practices. This is not a one year implementation phase. What exists out here are some districts planning, some implementing on a "pilot-type" basis and some in a close to full implementation phase. No wonder teachers are not onboard. Beside the work that was done in 2009/10 prior to adoption of CCSS in CT, that brought together practitioners from a variety of districts to align CCSS (ELA & Math) with existing CT Curriculum standards, the state has been negligent in promoting curriculum development and implementation. We have been on our own, largely. (Except for Alliance Districts)	2/28/2014 12:07 PM
5	Common assessments are also being developed and piloted across the district.	2/28/2014 11:49 AM
6	We began this process in 2011 and have made steady progress. We began with ELA because historically our reading performance has been lower than mathematics. We did this with no support from the CSDE.	2/28/2014 9:07 AM
7	Crafting CCSS-aligned units.	2/27/2014 11:53 PM
8	The K - 12 curriculum has been implemented in all grades and assessments have been developed also.	2/27/2014 9:28 PM
9	Units have been completed in K-8. Almost all reading teachers in grades in K-8 have been training in text complexity, close reading, writing rubrics, and performance tasks that include multipole sources. High school teachers have begun work but have been in denial.	2/27/2014 8:02 PM

10	None of the answer choices really convey our reality. We are farther along at some levels (elementary and middle school) and in some disciplines (math). We had to make choices about where we would place our most valuable resources, money and certified staff time because it could not be addressed well in all subject areas at once.	2/27/2014 4:55 PM
11	Language Arts CCSS have brought a positive contribution to our curriculum and instruction. We are achieving much better vertical and horizontal alignment among grades and teachers, plus the level of instructional challenge is boosted.	2/27/2014 4:15 PM
12	Some grades complete- training under way.	2/27/2014 3:31 PM
13	LA K-12 has been written last and this year the district has developed an online tool to monitor implementation. Performance assessments alinged with the CCSS and SBAC specs will be developed this spring and throughout next year.	2/27/2014 2:48 PM
14	We are in our second full year of implementation, including CFA's and lesson development. We are in a full revision cycle based on what we learned last year. there were 45 teachers involved ion the intiial writing and there are now over 50 teachers involved in revisions Pre K - 12 Windsor Locks	2/27/2014 1:34 PM
15	comment is accurate for math,L.A.is further behind	2/27/2014 1:23 PM
16	We have implementing the following model for curriculum development: map standards at each grade level/department; develop unit of study (including standards for instructional focus, performance assessment, essential questions, lessons that develop skills and competencies that will be assessed in the unit, academic vocabulary,, instructional strategies, materials and resources); implement unit; evaluate effectiveness; revise as needed. At this point, our goal is to be at least a third of the way towards having curriculum fully developed, K-12, by the end of this school year.	2/27/2014 1:16 PM
17	Only the core subjects of ELA, Math, Science and social studies has begun the transition to and integration of CCSS	2/27/2014 1:05 PM
18	Selecting just one option for this question does not accurately reflect our district's progress with CCSS implementation. Our district has spent this school year training teachers on the instructional shifts required by the CCSS and assessments by providing both in-house staff development and outside consulting. We are currently in the ELA Program Adoption phase. We have developed and adminstered several performance task assessments at each level to support CCSS instruction and in preparation of Smarter Balanced Assessments. We are aligning our instruction at this time to our standards based report cards.	2/27/2014 12:49 PM
19	Began implementation of the Common Core beginning last school year.	2/27/2014 12:19 PM
20	This whole change has been hard to implement as we just seem to finish and understand the New CT State Standards which are not OLD? The press on this change has not been good and seems to be getting worse. The SDE has not been very helpful in getting us assistance in a timely fashion. Hard to with new SEED and SBAC going on at same time. We cannot shut down schools or departments as industry would do when changing widgets.	2/27/2014 12:17 PM
21	Actually several of these apply: Curriculum is underdevelopment Teacher training is underway We are now piloting two programs Some assessments have been developed. (Unfortunately, you have the survey set so that the respondent can only pick one, instead of 'click all' that apply)	2/27/2014 12:15 PM
22	The majority of our K-12 curriculum has been revised to CCSS. We have performance assessments and tasks for units and teachers have been piloting them this year and giving us feedback to improve and further revise the units.	2/27/2014 11:58 AM
23	Teachers at every level have been involved in the curriculum development since 2011. Units were piloted in 12-13, revised and implementing this year.	2/27/2014 11:46 AM
24	It would be more appropriate to allow multiple responses to this question. Each grade and course is on a different continuum.	2/27/2014 11:42 AM
25	Assessments have been developed, all curriculum and assessments are being reviewed and refined based on teacher and curriculum leader input. Next steps include development of rubrics and calibration of rubrics.	2/27/2014 11:22 AM
26	We are moving along and have begun to implement changes.	2/27/2014 10:57 AM

27	My answer really needs to be a combination of those above. We have been engaged in the development of units of study by teachers aligned with the common core. Teachers are developing lesson plans as well. Some units have been implemented, some performance tasks have been developed. We are still working on these aspects of the curriculum development and implementation process. To date, we have had very little support in this effort from the State or anyone else. We do expect to have curriculum fully aligned in English Language Arts and Math for initial implementation in 2014-15 although some of the later sequenced material may still need some work early in 2014-15.	2/27/2014 10:44 AM
28	Varies with content.	2/27/2014 10:30 AM
29	K-4 full implementation underway.....5-12 curriculum being piloted this year	2/27/2014 10:27 AM
30	ELA is in good shape. We are piloting the revised curriculum this year and there have been various training sessions for teachers. We have a Literacy Coach from Teachers College working with grades 3-5 teachers.	2/27/2014 10:20 AM
31	The CCSS Curricular revisions are far from complete. The process we have decided upon is to develop CCSS aligned units of study in grade levels. Teachers are receiving some training and implementing. At the end of units, curriculum teams are reviewing data and adjusting. Much work still to do.	2/27/2014 10:18 AM
32	Began this year	2/27/2014 10:14 AM
33	This response is only for the writing implementation Reading will begin next year.	2/27/2014 10:11 AM
34	Colebrook started working on ELA beginning the 2011-12 school year. We are 2.5 years into the effort and our well on our way to full implementation. Working on assessments	2/27/2014 10:10 AM
35	We are progressing through a series of rounds where we pilot units of study at each grade level then revisit and modfiy them as necessary. This process has been underway since CT adopted CCSS in July of 2010.	2/27/2014 10:08 AM
36	We have worked with EASTCONN to provide teacher training and PD for the Common Core; in tandem with that work we have developed units of instructions for Common Core ILA	2/27/2014 10:06 AM

Q2 How far along is your district with the implementation of CCSS in Mathematics?

Answered: 74 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
Haven't started work yet	**0.00%**	0
Curriculum is under development	**25.68%**	19
Curriculum has been written	**1.35%**	1
Curriculum has been written and teacher training is underway	**9.46%**	7
Curriculum has been developed and teachers have been trained and are now piloting	**21.62%**	16
Curriculum has been piloted and we are completing implementation	**14.86%**	11
Curriculum has been implemented assessments under development	**27.03%**	20
Total		**74**

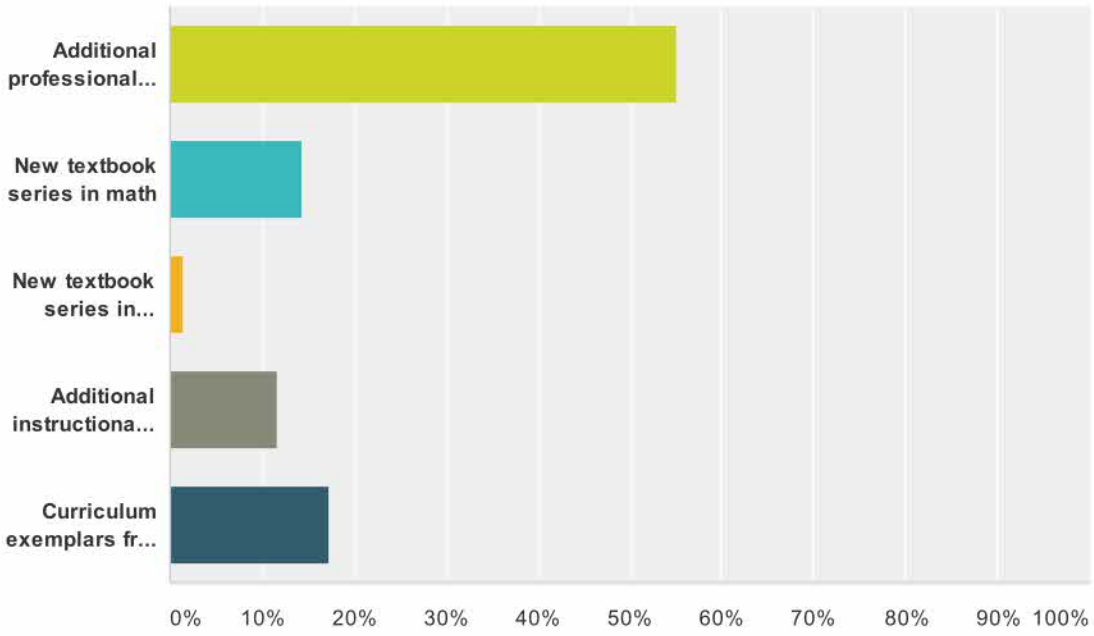
#	Comments	Date

1	See previous comment: East Hartford Public Schools began work on revising and writing curriculum that address the Mathematics standards of the Common Core upon state adoption in 2010. The initial work centered on developing district expertise regarding the state standards and a critical look at our existing curriculum to identify where the changes needed to be made. This involved members of our district leadership team participating on key groups at the State Department as the changes and shifts were laid out and reviewed. Over the past four years, we have worked hard as a district to make the transition and while work continues (especially at the secondary level) we are proud of the progress we have made. Teacher training regarding this process followed slightly behind curriculum development. Our most intensive training focused on school year 13 and has continued in to the current year. With the onset of our new Teacher Evaluation model, we have found that performance evaluation based on the rubric has significantly changed and deepened the conversations regarding practice. This year (SY14) our continued work regarding CCSS implementation are priority focus areas in our district improvement plan. We believe deeply in the opportunity to raise the standards of expectation for our students and recognize that this shift in plan and practice will not be without the challenge that significant change creates. We acknowledge that that our Math implementation lags our literacy implementation and the sequential nature of the content area has provided a greater issue in regards	3/5/2014 1:11 PM
2	1. Curriculum is implemented and assessments are being developed. 2. In the primary grades there is clearly less of a gap because all instruction has been focused on the Common Core. There was no need to transition. 3. Assessments contnue to be developed, used and refined.	2/28/2014 6:11 PM
3	Please see comments above: the process is more fluid than sequential. Again, teacher training has been on-going for the past few years. This year, district-wide, an hour of professional development time each week has been added to the teacher schedule through contract negotiations. Much, although not all, of the time is spent on CCSS-related topics. For math, textbook adoption also has played a major role at the elementary and middle school level in terms of aligning texts and materials to curriculum. Elementary All teachers being trained, existing texts/materials adapted as practicable, new textbook roll-out being phased in Grades 3 - 5 - adoption of new text (Math in Focus) with extensive training Addition of math leaders (stipends for classroom teachers to lead the new text implementation) Assessments being piloted We are using structures from Readers' Workshop model to assist with math Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics Middle School Teacher training is on-going, existing texts/materials adapted as practicable, new textbook roll-out being phased in Grade 6 - adoption of new text (Math in Focus) with extensive training New courses/sequences in process of BOE-approval (Grade 6 last year; Grade 7 this year) Assessments being piloted Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics High School Teacher-training is on-going; emphasis on "shifts" in instruction; texts and materials adapted; curriculum being revised - depending on grade level/topic. Course sequences under examination.	2/28/2014 12:25 PM
4	See above in ELA	2/28/2014 12:07 PM
5	Math common assessments are in the process of being developed.	2/28/2014 11:49 AM
6	K-5 is completing the piloting this year and then the rest of the K-5 teachers will implement next year...there wasn't a bubble that really matched that. 6-8 is just beginning development. High school is completed.	2/28/2014 9:07 AM
7	Crafting CCSS-aligned units	2/27/2014 11:53 PM
8	We began revising units two years ago in grade K-8. We have created assessments and revised our scope and sequence last year. High school curriculums have also been revised and we began participating in the Algebra I SDE curriculum.	2/27/2014 8:02 PM
9	Mathematics CCSS have brought a positive contribution to our curriculum and instruction. We are achieving much better vertical and horizontal alignment among grades and teachers, plus the level of instructional challenge is boosted.	2/27/2014 4:15 PM
10	Some grades complete and training under way.	2/27/2014 3:31 PM
11	Math K-12 has been written last and this year the district has developed an online tool to monitor implementation. Performance assessments alinged with the CCSS and SBAC specs will be developed this spring and throughout next year	2/27/2014 2:48 PM
12	We are in our second full year of implementation, including CFA's and lesson development. We are in a full revision cycle based on what we learned last year. there were 45 teachers involved ion the intiial writing and there are now over 50 teachers involved in revisions Pre K - 12 Windsor Locks	2/27/2014 1:34 PM

13	Two years ago, our district provided professional development on the Math instructional shifts required by the CCSS and standardized tests. We completed a two year Math Program adoption process and selected Math Expressions which is tightly aligned to CCSS. We provided staff development to our teachers presented by both our in-house staff using a train the trainers model and by contracting with outside consultants recommended by the publishing company. We adminster district benchmark assessments including performance tasks. Math instruction is aligned to our Math program, assessments and to our standards based report cards.	2/27/2014 12:49 PM
14	Not sure a choice above captures our status. The district continually updates curriculum and part of this work has been to study and integrate as appropriate new standards, be they ccss or science or ss..... our curriculum work, training and development of assessments are ongoing...if have to capture I would put well underway to extent we have standards available in stable format. It is problematic when this is described as a linear and not cyclical process and there is a difference between being well underway with standards integration vs prepared for a set of new state assessments. People are using CCSS as an umbrella term and it is misleading.	2/27/2014 12:42 PM
15	Same as in comments for number 1	2/27/2014 12:17 PM
16	We are actually beyond the choices here. We are in the second year of curriculum implementation, but our assessments have already been developed and we have a standards-based report card in Math.	2/27/2014 12:15 PM
17	The majority of our K-12 curriculum has been revised to CCSS. We have performance assessments and tasks for units and teachers have been piloting them this year and giving us feedback to improve and further revise the units.	2/27/2014 11:58 AM
18	Grade 5 has received some training; curriculum materials will be implemented in 2014-15. All other grades revised and implemented new curriculum either in 2012-13 or 2013-14.	2/27/2014 11:46 AM
19	It would be more appropriate to allow multiple responses to this question. Each grade and course is on a different continuum.	2/27/2014 11:42 AM
20	Assessments have been developed, all curriculum and assessments are being reviewed and refined based on teacher and curriculum leader input. Next steps include development of rubrics and calibration of rubrics.	2/27/2014 11:22 AM
21	Again, we are taking this slowly and trying to work with students as we implement the change.	2/27/2014 10:57 AM
22	For K - 8 curriculum has been piloted and teachers have been trained and are now completing implementation. Curriculum is under development 9 - 12.	2/27/2014 10:45 AM
23	My answer really needs to be a combination of those above. We have been engaged in the development of units of study by teachers aligned with the common core. Teachers are developing lesson plans as well. Some units have been implemented, some performance tasks have been developed. We are still working on these aspects of the curriculum development and implementation process. To date, we have had very little support in this effort from the State or anyone else. We do expect to have curriculum fully aligned in English Language Arts and Math for initial implementation in 2014-15 although some of the later sequenced material may still need some work early in 2014-15.	2/27/2014 10:44 AM
24	K-8, Algebra I , II and Geometry curricula has been developed and is being being piloted. Teachers at all levels have been receiving training. We have a Mathematics Coach from CREC working with grades 6-12 teachers on performance tasks.	2/27/2014 10:20 AM
25	Same as above...	2/27/2014 10:18 AM
26	Began this year	2/27/2014 10:14 AM
27	We starting working on Math the beginning of 2012-13. We are implementing the new program this year. Working on assessments.	2/27/2014 10:10 AM
28	We are progressing through a series of rounds where we pilot units of study at each grade level then revisit and modfiy them as necessary. This process has been underway since CT adopted CCSS in July of 2010.	2/27/2014 10:08 AM
29	The District has worked with EASTCONN to evaluate the instructional units in EVERYDAY math to determine alignment with the Common Core. We have developed a scope and sequence for instruction and have begun evaluating supplementary text	2/27/2014 10:06 AM

Q3 Which of the following were or are necessary to ensure the successful implementation of CCSS?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 7



Answer Choices	Responses	
Additional professional development for teachers	**55.07%**	38
New textbook series in math	**14.49%**	10
New textbook series in reading	**1.45%**	1
Additional instructional materials	**11.59%**	8
Curriculum exemplars from the State	**17.39%**	12
Total		**69**

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	All of the above	3/5/2014 2:32 PM
2	To ensure the successful implementation of the CCSS, the state needs to continue the support the district has received through the Alliance Grant. Specifically, all of the bulleted items including professional development, new text resources and exemplars will be necessary. Of note the state needs to be vigilant regarding any intent of municipalities to use these grant funds to supplant the local board budget. This funding has provided the opportunity for districts to focus on reform work that is so necessary in the Alliance districts and must be preserved as such.	3/5/2014 1:11 PM
3	The radio button does not permit multiple responses in this category. It should. In addition to pd, the following also are necessary: new texts for reading additional instructional materials	3/4/2014 7:17 PM

4	Other: 1. We need continued professional development in the area of mathematics, because mathematics instruction has been transformed. 2. Exemplars from the state would be beneficial for all administrators and teachers. A set of exemplars would provide a framework for developing rubrics. 3. There is so much change coming from the state at the same time, e.g. (a.) Educator Evaluation accompanied by massive amount of time needed for training; (b.) implementation of SBAC in a random fashion; (c.) major work in Common Core. 4. We recommend that the state improve the implementation process. All 3 of the above should not be happening at the same time. We suggest focusing on the Common Core first. SBAC can follow.	2/28/2014 6:11 PM
5	All of the above (except we are not adopting a textbook series for reading). Curriculum materials come from a range of sources Exemplars come from a range of sources Professional development has been on-going for the past few years focused on CCSS standards and shifts in instructional practice - there is a wide-range of sources for PD, from presenters to on-going job-embedded coaching We have incorporated CCSS into Readers' and Writers' workshop model from K-5 ELA We have borrowed from Readers' and Writers' workshop model to help deliver CCSS math standards This year, district-wide, an hour of professional development time each week has been added to the teacher schedule through teacher negotiations. Much, although not all, of the time has been focused on CCSS-related topics.	2/28/2014 12:25 PM
6	Whatever PD is developed must be specific to the needs of the district. We are all in different places in development and/or implementation. The RFP that I have seen from SDE and awarded to the RESC Alliance and an out of state group looks to me to be a "cookie-cutter " approach. Certainly not what we need. Better to allocate the funds to each of the RESCs and have them work directly with their districts in developing quality, meaningful support. The CALI model would have been the ideal vehicle for this approach. Are we going to repeat this process for Science & Social Studies?	2/28/2014 12:07 PM
7	Actually, all of the above with the exception of a new text series in reading.	2/28/2014 11:49 AM
8	I was not able to check more than one, we also needed a new textbook series in math and additional instructional materials.	2/28/2014 9:07 AM
9	In many instances materials are needed, more non-fiction materials and mathematics materials. Greatest need is professional development at all levels - reading across the content-area and conceptual understanding of mathematics.	2/27/2014 11:53 PM
10	Professional development for administrators and teachers.	2/27/2014 9:28 PM
11	Assessment truly drive instruction. Teachers are only beginning to take the CCSS seriously because the SBAC is year. We need to stay the course and we'll get there!	2/27/2014 8:02 PM
12	All of the above.	2/27/2014 6:30 PM
13	I am only able to check one box but I think ongoing professional development for teachers AND administrators as well as exemplars and more time would be helpful.	2/27/2014 4:55 PM
14	The survey design only allowed one check of the 5 choices above. However, in addition to choice 1 above, I would also have liked to have checked choices 4 & 5, too.	2/27/2014 4:15 PM
15	also additional PD for teachers	2/27/2014 3:52 PM
16	Time and money for curriculum development.	2/27/2014 2:48 PM
17	Brooklyn is in need of new textbook series in math and reading as well as additional instructional materials. We also need curricular exemplars from the state.	2/27/2014 2:39 PM
18	The question only allows one to be checked. In addition to professional development, we have new math text and additional instructional materials.	2/27/2014 2:08 PM
19	We also purchased a new math series and purchased additional instructional materials.	2/27/2014 1:45 PM
20	We're progressing without support and are happy at this point to be left alone. If exemplars are available we would love to see them. We have actually had inquiries to purchase our curriculum.	2/27/2014 1:34 PM
21	wereceived more direction in math.>inELA.publishers have not developed a basal program for reading which makes it more difficult for tchs.to implement	2/27/2014 1:23 PM
22	Our biggest obstacle has been lack of time for teachers to collaborate on this work. With so much focus on teacher and administrator evaluation, we feel that curriculum development has been neglected - resources and support from the SDE have been minimal.	2/27/2014 1:16 PM
23	We would have checked all of the above had the system permitted us to do so!	2/27/2014 1:14 PM

24	The box does not allow you to click multiple indicators. Additional PD for teachers and curriculum exemplars are also necessary	2/27/2014 1:05 PM
25	All of the above, I wish I could have selected several of these options. New programs are definitely needed. Ones that are closely aligned to CCSS and support an instructional model that promotes rigor, higher order thinking skills and the gradual release of responsibility to students. Professional development is paramount and needs to be customized and individualized based on district needs. A one size fits all model of instruction or PD is wanted nor needed.	2/27/2014 12:49 PM
26	Al of the above were necessary but I am unable to select that as an option.	2/27/2014 12:44 PM
27	The district continually updates materials so we did not buy significantly more materials but let our customized integration of CCSS help inform resource selection. The state materials have not been particularly helpful with exception of science and current work being produced re cross walks etc.	2/27/2014 12:42 PM
28	I think additional PD for teachers is necessary but as I mentioned we are working with SEED and SBAC too. We are looking a new textbooks for math and maybe reading as well as additional instructional materials. The SDE could do exemplars but it better be quick!!	2/27/2014 12:17 PM
29	(Unfortunately, you have the survey set so that the respondent can only pick one, instead of 'click all' that apply) We have needed the first four of these: 1. PD 2. New series in math 3. New series in LA 4. Additional materials	2/27/2014 12:15 PM
30	I would check multiple items here but the tool does not allow it.	2/27/2014 11:58 AM
31	There is also the need for exemplars and instructional materials to support the implementation and shifts needed in instruction	2/27/2014 11:58 AM
32	Ongoing PD for teachers will be needed. Exemplars from the state will be helpful.	2/27/2014 11:46 AM
33	multiple answers should be allowed here.	2/27/2014 11:42 AM
34	With the anticipated approval of new science & social studies standards we need to consider how to align to CT Core Standards and related PD and materials. PD will continue to focus on improved instructional strategies relative to the standards/curriculum/assessments. We look forward to using the SBAC interim assessment bank and other digital tools to further enhance our in-district work.	2/27/2014 11:22 AM
35	Certainly #1 and #5 apply. The remaining items may apply, but it is too soon to know.	2/27/2014 11:12 AM
36	All but curriculum exemplars from the state were necessary and have been implemented in Bristol. I could only check one of the options. Thank you - Ellen Solek	2/27/2014 11:01 AM
37	You should allow me to answer more than one. We need PD and new text and additional materials. We do NOT need exemplars!!!!	2/27/2014 10:57 AM
38	ALSO, NEW MATH TEXTS, ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT WRITING TIME AND TRAINING, UNITS OF STUDY TRAINING.	2/27/2014 10:52 AM
39	Additional instructional materials and professional development for teachers are both necessary to ensure successful implementation of CCSS as well.	2/27/2014 10:45 AM
40	The survey only allowed for one selection above. It is actually all of the above for us. We are still waiting for any type of support from the State. It is just now beginning to be available. Better late than never I suppose but really not enough, soon enough.	2/27/2014 10:44 AM
41	All of the above	2/27/2014 10:29 AM
42	you need to be able to check more than one of these off for us we needed PD, new math program, instructional materials in ELA	2/27/2014 10:27 AM
43	Funding is always an issue - especially for smaller districts- when there are major revisions in multiple areas . Teachers need lots of support in the form of training, however instructional materials also need a major overhaul order to support implementation.	2/27/2014 10:20 AM
44	Actually exemplars, materials and more PD are all needed for a successful implementation.	2/27/2014 10:14 AM
45	Since only one can be checked above, I checked the most important. We also need addition professional development for teachers. We have a new math series being implemented and supplimented materials in ELA.	2/27/2014 10:10 AM

46	Question 3 should allow the respondant to check more than a single choice. We have provided a significant amount of PD for staff. Not simply on the standards and the shifts required, but also the mathematical practices, and changes in classroom design required to address College and Career standards. We have purchased new texts for mathematics, added new instructional materials including mobile technology devices, and are piloting the state Algebra I curriculum.	2/27/2014 10:08 AM
47	ALL OF THE ABOVE!!!!!!!!!!!! We are sorely lacking in support from the CTSDE, instructional materials, while labeled as Common Core are often not; professional development to support true understanding and thorough implementation will take time and money and we need from the CTSDE assessments truly linked to CCSS which will guide instruction....this work cannot be left to the District level	2/27/2014 10:06 AM
48	And PD and new math textbooks	2/27/2014 10:05 AM

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

AND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY WORKGROUP

MEETING AGENDA

Friday, FEBRUARY 27th, 2015

10:00 A.M. in Room 2B of the LOB

I. CONVENE MEETING

II. REMARKS BY CHAIRS

III. CONTINUATION OF ELL MODELS AND BEST PRACTICES

- Blended Learning
- Literacy Squared (unconfirmed)

IV. SBAC Assessment and ELL

V. RECOMMNEDATIONS DISCUSSION

- Programs
- Teachers
- Resources
- Coherence (Accountability)

VI. NEXT STEPS

VII. ANNOUNCEMENT OF TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

June 2014 Connecticut Superintendent Survey
Planning for Short-Term and Long-Term Supports to LEAs

Survey Response Period: June 4, 2014- June 18, 2014

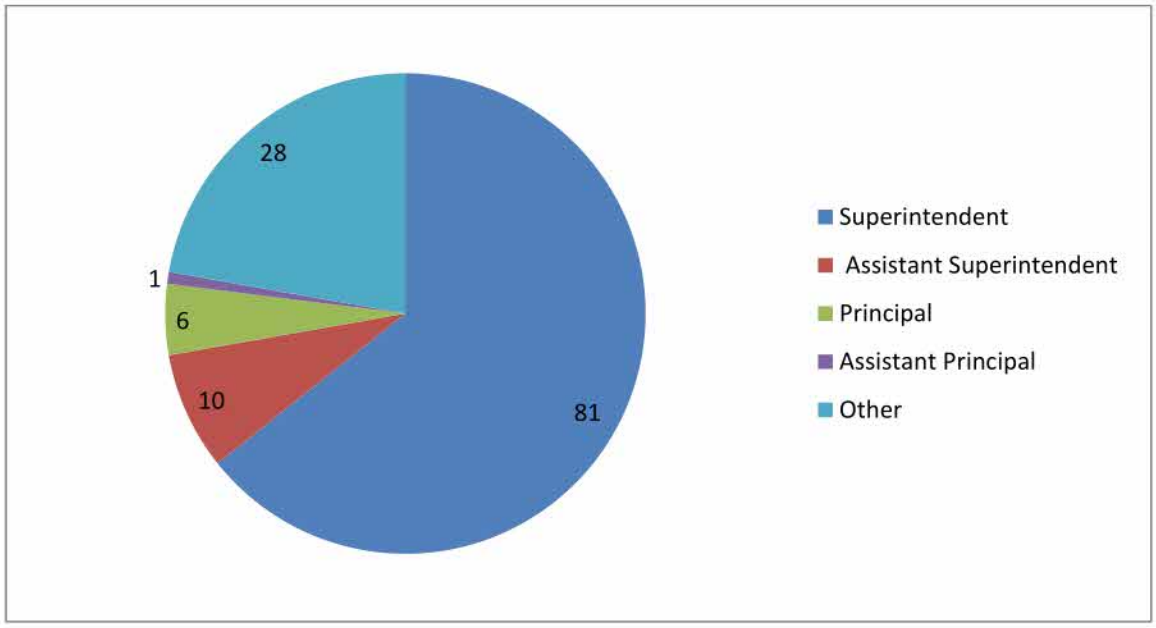
Purpose: The Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Academic and Talent Offices are considering ways to provide additional resources to districts to support the implementation of the CT Core Standards and the Educator Evaluation and Support System. To help inform our efforts, the CSDE is requesting your input and feedback.

General Information

Q1: Roll up: Total Number of Responses:

- 126 total responses
- 105 districts

Q2: Please select your role/position from the drop down list



Short-Term District Professional Development Needs I August 2014- December 2014

Q3: For your district's August 2014 Professional Development for district and school leaders and teachers, which of the following CSDE Professional Development modules/supports would be most helpful? (Number your top three (3) priorities; 1 being the highest priority)

	Count by Rank			Total #
Module/Support	1	2	3	
Instructional shifts to look for in the CT Core Standards classroom (by grade band)	29	15	13	**57**
CT Core Standards instructional shifts in ELA & Mathematics (by grade band)	24	17	12	**53**
Close reading, academic vocabulary & text-based questions (by grade band)	10	20	18	**48**
Focus on changes in math content standards (by grade band)	7	8	13	**28**
Writing high-quality student learning goals/objectives and Indicator of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs)	16	20	13	**49**
Technical assistance in implementing the districts educator evaluation and support plan	0	4	4	**8**
Optimizing the BloomBoard platform and/or marketplace	2	3	7	**12**
None	3	2	0	**5**
Other	3	1	3	**7**
Total	**94**	**90**	**83**	**-**

If "Other" is selected, please specify below.

- Using student data to plan instructional strategies to increase student achievement in ELA, Math and science 2. Interpret and analyze data 3. PD for special areas teachers, i.e. how to use assessment
- leadership capacity in all teachers
- Bloomboard with specific focus on administrator eval following the pilot work done to revise the admin eval.
- What an administrator should evaluate in a subject specific classroom.
- Using the digital library.
- We can provide the PD but support materials would be very helpful. I am also not sure that August 2014 would be the time determined to have any state provided PD.
- We are shifting to Writer's Workshop and Reader's Workshop from Columbia. We also are using the Fisher and Frey Instructional Framework for planning and implementation of instruction.
- Clearly outlining expectations for high school graduation requirements aligned with the Common Core State Standards, SBAC and the Connecticut Plan.
- What components of the Connecticut Plan are required for graduation? (End of course exams, capstone project, etc.) Provide modules and support to implement these requirements. 3 - Provide

professional learning on the SDE's vision for the 21st century learner and how the many initiatives that are being implemented (SEED, SBAC, and CCSS) will assist in achieving this vision. Assist district leaders in clearly articulating this vision as it is connected to the mandates and SDE initiatives as well as how technology will impact the teaching and learning process.

Q4: For your district's August 2014 back-to-school activities, which materials would be most helpful (if the CSDE were able to provide them or otherwise assist)? (Number your top three (3) priorities; 1 being the highest priority)

	Count by Rank			Total #
Module/Support	1	2	3	
CSDE Back-to-School Update (legislation, procedural changes, program information, event calendar) with PowerPoint and facilitator guide	18	5	6	**29**
Principal packets with peer guidance from the 2013-14 CAS Community of Practice	4	4	4	**12**
Principal packets with talking points, slides and parent-friendly activities on CT Core Standards	10	10	9	**29**
Teacher packets with talking points for parents on CT Core Standards	4	7	5	**16**
Teacher care package regarding latest and best available resources for CT Core Standards implementation	26	20	16	**62**
Grade band parent packets on CT Core Standards (translated into multiple languages)	4	9	4	**17**
Grade band parent packets on Smarter Balanced Assessment System (translated into multiple languages)	4	5	9	**18**
A revised SLO Handbook, inclusive of sample SLOs/IAGDs based on CT Core Standards	15	20	17	**52**
Resources for student and educator support specialists (SESS) (e.g., sample SLOs/IAGDs, adapted CT Common Core of Teaching SESS Rubric, etc.)	9	12	14	**35**
None	1	0	2	**3**
Other	0	1	1	**2**
Total	**95**	**93**	**87**	**-**

If "Other" is selected, please specify below.

- Materials to support staff that will be taking the Reading Survey in the fall.
- Assistance for building administrators and coaches regarding the use of data to change adult actions - teaching practices. Beyond the teacher evaluation system and numbers on a rubric, it would be helpful to assist districts in their continuous efforts of increasing the capacity of teachers. Maybe a session or resources regarding "non-standard" measures - across content areas and grades.

Q5: For district and school leaders and teachers, what would be the preferred format for Professional Development opportunities offered by the CSDE? (Number your top three (3) priorities; 1 being the highest priority)

	Count by Rank			Total #
Module/Support	1	2	3	
CSDE-offered webinars	20	15	11	**46**
Web-based self-guided PowerPoints	15	16	14	**45**
Online workshops/courses (e.g. BlackBoard, Schoology)	7	8	12	**27**
Electronic handbooks	2	12	8	**22**
Electronic forums to read about topics, engage in discuss, and share resources	4	6	12	**22**
In-person regional workshops	33	12	12	**57**
Communities of Practice (i.e., regional professional dialogue)	12	22	14	**48**
None	1	0	1	**2**
Other	2	0	0	**2**
Total	**96**	**91**	**84**	-

If "Other" is selected, please specify below.

- The CCSS Leadership series has been an effective professional learning format for my teacher leaders this year. I would like to see this type of intensified module based training continue with districts being able to send teacher leaders who can then return to district and offer support to their colleagues. I would also like to see this intensive model for building leaders.
- shoulder to shoulder coaches/content experts
- The answer is different for teachers than for district./school leaders. Teachers and instructional specialists were getting pulled out of school too many times this spring. If they kept up on the flow of information required of district coaches, time servicing students was severely compromised. Also administrators had to choose between professional learning and keeping up with the evaluation process
- Train the trainer model at the central office level

Medium-Term Professional Development Needs (September 2014 - June 2015)

Q6: During the 2014-15 school year, the CSDE could make available the following resources. Please indicate which of the following would be most helpful. (Number your top five (5) priorities; 1 being the highest priority)

	Rank by Count					Total #
Module/Support	1	2	3	4	5	
Monthly principal webinars regarding CT Core Standards	13	13	3	9	10	**48**
Technical assistance in implementing a CT Core Standards-aligned curriculum	11	9	18	6	7	**51**
Regional professional development sessions in CT Core Standards ELA/Literacy in the subject areas	18	17	15	7	4	**61**
Evaluator training/support in operationalizing the CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching	13	15	7	7	7	**49**
Support for developing a district plan for embedded PD including finding/creating time for professional learning	21	15	10	3	8	**57**
K-3 Reading Foundation Skills (CT Core Standards)	15	16	21	7	2	**61**
None	4	0	0	0	0	**4**
Other	0	0	1	1	0	**2**
Total	**95**	**85**	**75**	**40**	**38**	**-**

If "Other" is selected, please specify below.

- Regional workshops on the Calkins Units of Study
- Support for refining ongoing calibration of teacher evaluation with district administrators. This would ensure consistency and fidelity with the process.
- Clearly outlining the professional learning guidelines so that we can develop a plan for our district.
- Please archive all webinars etc. for future use

Long-Term Professional Development Needs (July 2015 - June 2016)

Q7: During the 2015-16 school year, the CSDE could make available the following resources. Please indicate which of the following would be helpful. (Number your top three (3) priorities; 1 being the highest priority)

	Rank by Count			Total #
Module/Support	1	2	3	
Support for aligning, revising or developing curriculum in accordance with the CT Core Standards and other state standards	23	14	10	**47**
Support for aligning district curriculum revision cycles with state standards in all disciplines	11	11	14	**36**
Professional Development in the instructional shifts accompanying the anticipated changes in the state standards in social studies, science and the arts	33	27	10	**70**
Support for aligning district assessment plan/program with new state standards and assessments	18	19	22	**59**
Connecting with other districts that can offer best practices in implementation of CT Core Standards and/or Educator Evaluation and Support	6	10	15	**31**
None	3	0	1	**4**
Other	0	2	1	**3**
Total	**94**	**83**	**73**	**-**

If "Other" is selected, please specify below.

- Regular, ongoing informational series in a variety of media platforms to help parents and community members understand how and why the industrial model of education doesn't serve the 21st century well--something to provide a thoughtful and measured balance to the "Stop the Core" groups
- I would prefer PD for science and social studies before 2015-2016 as content teachers are hearing information now and getting anxious anticipating the changes. Help is more beneficial before they get overly anxious about changes.
- We need access to benchmark assessments aligned to the CCSS and SBAC.
- Science curriculum - Next Gen Science standards.

District Best Practices

Q8. With respect to the CT Core Standards or the Educator Evaluation and Support System, what are some of the innovations and initiatives you are implementing and have found to be most effective? Please be as specific as possible.

- We have repurposed several positions to offer additional support for job embedded professional learning to teachers. Also, we have added language to our Plan that enables teacher leaders holding an 092 to serve as a critical friend/peer observer to colleagues and complete an informal observation with subsequent feedback being loaded into Bloomboard. Lastly, we are looking to adjust building schedules to enable faculty to have more time for collaboration.
- creation of Instructional Facilitator Positions - ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, CT/UA, and Special Education - at the elementary, middle, and high schools. These teachers receive a yearly stipend ($3,090.) to support curriculum development (aligned with CCSS) at the grade/department/ levels and to ensure vertical/horizontal alignment across the district. creation of district-wide curriculum council - a cross functional team that serves as a venue to develop and monitor structures and systems that support and vet curriculum work. currently considering moving the PD oversight to this committee rather than continue to have that oversight continue with the current PD/Teacher Evaluation Committee
- At this early time it is difficult to single out what might be working best, however it did work well to have teams of teachers working on the same SLO. For example we would have the Social Studies, Art, English, Spanish, and Physical Education teachers all working on improving a specific reading objective.
- Use of a complimentary evaluator
- Our teachers are using CCSS aligned formative assessments that they have located on line. We will be using the bank of assessments on the SBAC website for interim assessments next year.
- Time for discourse.
- Employing an experienced consultant to assist in developing the ELA curriculum.
- Amity is employing complementary evaluators. The program has helped to develop teacher leaders and provide valuable feedback on instructional practice.
- We are using common planning time at the middle school and it is very helpful.
- We have developed Regional Communities of Practice to address the CCSS shifts in LA and Math. These groups are led by a Principal for the region and focus on developing practical information for teacher leaders to use in presenting to their teachers. This exercise has also included a book discussion of Conley's Common Core text for all administrators and district leaders.
- Continuous training for faculty on writing appropriate SLOs. By frontloading this at the school level, we have encountered few difficulties implementing the system throughout the remainder of the year.
- Implementing Writer's Workshop
- We have been using the ELA modules from Engage New York. This is open source and designed by Expeditionary Learning.

- It has been overwhelming without sufficient support or guidance. The materials and textbooks that are supposedly aligned with Common Core often are not, and it is very difficult finding the right materials to assist us in making an effective transition.
- Regional meetings have been conducted with area superintendents discussing the implementation of the new evaluation systems, however additional meetings for district administrators and teachers would be helpful. The use of the RESC's might facilitate these meetings.
- Establishing a committee of teachers and administrators to choose an evaluation model (i.e. Marshall) compatible with our district's culture. Curriculum revision aligned w/ CCSS by teacher representatives, guided and facilitated by district leaders.
- School based instructional rounds and "video Visitations" as a vehicle for calibrating our teacher evaluation system.
- Teacher Unit Planning Guide for grade 3 to 8 ELA instruction Curriculum Based Math Assessments Aligned with CCT Annotated K-5 Math Pacing Guide aligned with CCT
- Torrington has worked to develop a direct thread/connection from standards to curriculum, to instructional modules, instructional and learning strategies, and pre, post and performance assessments. All of this has been connected to TEVAL with setting challenging SLOs and IAGDs. We are holding people accountable by conducting classroom rounds, using common protocols, (K-12) for monthly PLCs, grade level, team and department, meetings. All of these measures are aligned with the District Improvement Plan and Individual School Improvement Plans. Teachers and other staff members will be providing feedback on the new initiatives to curriculum revision teams and district administration through curriculum unit exit slips and meeting agenda and minutes.
- We have found the unannounced mini-observations to be one of the most beneficial changes we made with regards to the Educator Evaluation and Support System.
- The calibration of all administrators using the Danielson framework has promoted excellent discussion about instruction and a feeling of equity when all administrators are viewing instruction similarly.
- We have taken our time over the past four years to write our curriculum in alignment with the CCSS. We have included our teachers in a collaborative process. We have taken our time vetting new resources. We are taking our time. We began with ELA revision in grades K-5 because that is where our scores were lower and then moved to mathematics. We need to take our time as our teachers in the elementary grades are not able to switch gears for ELA and math simultaneously. We have provided training via consultants in Readers and Writers Workshop for the past three years to shift our instructional practice. We have followed a similar process with the Educator Evaluation and Support System. Our motto is we are all in this together and we are taking it at a pace that works for us while adhering to State guidelines.
- We are following along with the SEED Program and its flexibilities.
- Creating the Office of Human Capital Development has been instrumental in planning and implementing innovative and mandated programming. Three years ago, an administrative position was reallocated to create the Director of Human Capital Development. The ability to

provide focus toward our priority of transforming our workforce was the key to beginning our work. The Director of HCD proposed the addition of instructional coaches and increased professional learning time for teachers. The Board supported both proposals and through contract negotiations we have been able to add significant professional learning time for our teachers as well as increase instructional time for our students.

- We created a new position, Performance and Evaluation Specialist, to facilitate and guide the implementation of the new educator evaluation plans. This position organizes and provides PD on the new plans, the use of BloomBoard, and calibration on the CCT rubric. We have found the Systems of Professional Learning Modules very informative.
- Building coherence across student, adult, and organizational goals, measures and practices
- We have been successful with developing a district developed/school implemented turnkey rollout that includes materials, activities and resources for implementation. We will continue this process into next year for the revisions made to our plan.
- Being able to utilize our teachers to assist with curriculum writing and assessment creation has been critical. Further, providing time for a team to attend the Professional Learning modules and then share that back at the district has been instrumental in moving forward. Being able to now move beyond the shifts to what the instruction looks like is the next step; use of instructional coaches to move this along is the direction we are moving.
- We are focusing on developing Cornerstone Tasks and Assured Experiences that draw upon Performance Assessment principles. We are also using Fred Newmann's Authentic Intellectual Work to frame many of our discussions. See following link for more info. on the Iowa Dept. of Ed.'s AIW initiative. https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/educator-quality/authentic-intellectual-work
- Using the trainer of trainer model. Subject area coordinators are provided with professional development and then they are required to share the information with their departments.
- No time or energy for that yet.
- We have implemented a digital learning environment and as role models, we utilize these tools to communicate information to staff. We utilize courses in Schoology, Livebinder for the evaluation process, and provide Webinars through GotoMeeting. With regard to CT Core, we have had book studies with the standards being the book and organize weekly assistant superintendent visits to school around lesson study, so that we engage in deconstructing a lesson, reviewing the opportunities for students discourse and inquiry.
- Professional development presentations in Language Arts (Columbia Reading and Writing Project) with ongoing coaching support and time for teachers to collaboratively examine student work; Ongoing professional development presentations in Math (Eureka Math) with ongoing time for teacher collaboration and vertical teams. Vertical team collaboration (cross school) in language arts and math Presentations from the new social studies consultant on C3 with time for discussion of important changes that we need to make/ are making in social studies to align with the CT Core standards and college and career readiness We (Southeast CT) have developed an excellent regional PD collaborative approach -- essentially creating PLC's in the content areas and for AP teachers so that teachers don't feel so isolated in teaching their content.

- Looking for creative and innovative ways to use time to allow for more teacher collaboration and reflection-still working on that Trying to expand opportunities for job-embedded coaching and mentoring-pull-out attendance at learning opportunities can't be sustained
- Complete revisions to Math / Lang/ Arts/ associated disciplines piloting State Algebra Program
- View most effective and most difficult to orchestrate- my monthly attendance at grade level data team meetings to infuse small and timely doses of professional learning into their work- helping the teachers look at student work and make instructional decisions based on new standards and close examination of learning progressions... this cannot be done in large group settings, once or twice a year. Support must be borne of need and must be timely. additionally, helping the teachers see how designing rich performance tasks can drive instruction and assessment- and pairing that with educating the teachers (and parents) on how to let the learner make their own meaning from the problem they are trying to solve. It differs not from reading a book where the reader brings all they know to the book and walks away with a unique comprehension...
- A summer teacher academy focusing on the instruction shifts in CCSS Infusing the CCSS curriculum and instructional shifts into the work of plc teams
- We are training staff on a new Instructional Framework district wide to assist teachers in reducing the variability of how instruction is delivered classroom to classroom. We have also created daily common planning for teacher to develop common lessons to practice in front of each other. We have also created rubrics for the peer observations that they can take back to their planning team and refine/adjust the lessons.
- We developed in district cohorts that work together monthly. These monthly workshops focus on different aspects of evaluation and observation.
- Use of outside ongoing consultant--Patrick Flynn, Revision Learning
- Our district has done a good job with curriculum implementation and revisions to both our Math and ELA programs. We have established a group of teacher leaders who began the process two years ago and are continuing with necessary revisions and adjustments as needed to ensure close alignment with Smarter Balanced Testing and CT Core Standards.
- we are currently 100% common core and have been for 2 years. This has been a struggle/a shift but we have been moving forward.
- CT Core Standards -- CREC consultants have been very valuable to us. SLO development amongst groups of teachers has provided opportunity for professional conversations. The CCT itself has been a provided a good platform to develop professional conversations and common understanding
- Three years ago, we developed a CCSS implementation plan created by educators to outline clearly what aspects of the CCSS we would implement each year. We did this to encourage participation in learning the standards as well as take ownership in the revision of our curriculum aligned to these new standards. We developed the three-year roll out plan so that educators would value the systematic approach to the change process and view it as manageable and doable. In addition, we created ongoing professional learning opportunities each year aligned with the CCSS focus for that year.

- No innovation as yet
- Blackboard Connect training, local assessment development
- Like most districts, we are struggling to master the SEED system. We have a few in-house experts who have run hands-on tutorials for evaluators to assist in implementing the program. That has proven to be invaluable.
- We are developing on-line curricula and resources aligned to the Common Core; we have extensive cohort PD on the CCT planned that will take place in classrooms.
- CT Core Standards - utilized EQuIP rubric for vetting district made units of study - mathematics and ELA. Began use of online platform for curriculum so that teachers can reflect and refine units and share ideas w/their colleagues across the district.
- We have created standards based report cards in grades K-5, which have necessitated MANY grade level conversations and professional development. Our elementary math specialists have received Exemplars training; they also participate in CES math Council and Investigations Consortium meetings. Our 3 Elementary Program Leaders (Math, ELA, and Science) and Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments provide much training to staff on the CT Core Standards. Curriculum writing opportunities involve as many teachers as possible, resulting in a deeper understanding of the standards. We have brought "experts" into our schools to provide varying levels of PD and consultancy; Nancy Boyles and David Pook are two highly regarded experts we have recently utilized. Regularly scheduled District Articulation Committees (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies, World Language, and Media) allow representatives from all grade levels the opportunity to plan for a seamless K-12 curriculum and delivery of instruction model.
- Established more PD time with our Specialists
- Local professional learning opportunities embedded in our daily work. Some group professional learning has been the most effective
- With the Standards, much of the work is still being done at the curricular level. We are starting to examine the instructional needs related to delivering the standards. We are headed in a great direction with our District Data Team. We have plans to utilize our district Professional Learning and Evaluation Committee to plan targeted professional learning opportunities based on the Teacher Evaluation Plan results. We are looking to engage our teachers and administrators through the use of a new Talent Office web site. Teachers are becoming much more involved in the planning and implementation of professional learning.
- We are implementing online curriculum aligned to CCSS in grades 6-12. Next year roll out will include full online curriculum in our 9th grade academy with online support materials and individualized learning plans based on map assessment RIT scores for the other grades. In addition to the online curriculum we will be implementing a 1:1 laptop program that will include connectivity for every student 6-12 both in school and at home. We have fully implemented the use of Danielson Framework for teaching 2013 for our Educator Evaluation and Support. System.
- We have partnered with EASTCONN to develop a coherent approach to cupric implementation, assessment and the use of technology through an embedded PD model
- We are devoting funds to training faculty leaders who then will lead district workshops
- none yet will the summer to plan

- I came to the district in September 2013. There was no curriculum across the district in K-8, only pacing guides aligned to their texts with common assessments in the form of vendor unit texts. Work with EUs and EQs were in place 9-12. We completed math curriculum work during the school year in Grades 6-8. We have revised assessment calendars and will start K-5 curriculum work in math and complete 6-8 ELA curriculum the last week of June. I brought in Nancy Boyles for two days to put the 6-8 work on the right track.
- The Salem School District has spent a great deal of time this year studying research-based best practices and utilizing these when delivering instruction. We are working to align lessons with CC standards and are in the process of updating units of study to include performance tasks and more integrated technology. We have also worked to update our standards-based report cards.
- SRBI SEED-With some challenges Safe School Climate School Governance Council
- We completed internal calibration exercises with videos of classroom lessons to fully understand the CTT rubric.
- grade level curriculum binders revised curriculum
- District based Professional Development related to the TEVAL system and use of web based platform to support the process *RESC support for SLO writing for teachers *Creation of district forum related to TEVAL *Administrator trainings on Danielson rubrics
- Surveyed staff to determine understanding and implementation of CCSS. "Nesting" goals across the district to simplify and focus goal setting.
- In depth teacher training in differentiation of instruction - RTI training----tiers one, two and three in the regular education classroom

Q9: Do you have additional feedback or suggestions regarding how the Academic or Talent Offices can support your district and schools?

- Professional Development for the 2014-2015 school year is already complete. You offer for assistance is appreciated but not timely. This conversation needs to start in March. Thank you
- I would like to see a partnership between districts for leaders - this would enable us to utilize problem of practice work with a critical friend. Additionally, a Leadership Professional Learning Academy focused on how to coach faculty, how to work with faculty to develop standards based curriculum and standards based aligned assessments would be invaluable.
- Ongoing communication relative to CCSS and SBAC assessment to build understanding among stakeholders across the state. Partnering with the RESCs to support district work relative to CCSS aligned curriculum, and teacher/administrator evaluation
- I would prefer to be able to get as much electronically as possible with fewer face to face meetings.
- Keep the newsletters coming. The links embedded in them are very helpful. I appreciate the time and effort that has gone into preparing them. Your office has been very helpful.....during a very trying year.
- Identify a deadline and not change it. Finalize all specialists' rubrics. Once a directive with parameters and expectations are identified stay with the fixed plan and not make it a variable plan.

- Funding support and professional development.
- Help us with resources
- Do things in a more timely manner
- Continue offering hotlines with support staff, this has been very helpful at the Talent office
- Truly listen to district about their needs! Stop putting forth useless PD. This includes Alliance Convenings!
- Pull out of the Common Core.
- We received too much information from the SDE to determine what is important and not. The volume of information that comes from the SDE is overwhelming at times.
- Freedom and autonomy for districts to operate in the best interests of their students and greater educational community. The one size fits all is restricting districts - if a district is not in the commissioner's network and is progressing based on its DPI measures - freedom to operate it what the district administration and BOE feels is in the best interest of its students must be supported. An "urban" agenda is not appropriate for all districts.
- Building out resources for CCT based performance tasks, formative assessments and sample units. Finalize Science and Social Studies standards ASAP so we can create ELA units that are aligned with those content areas.
- Please allow a few years to implement all the mandated changes associated with education reform. Once distributed if possible limit the number of changes. Thank you.
- I think it is great you are soliciting our feedback with this survey. I think more surveys might be helpful in the future.
- Restore content experts in each subject who serve as a resource to schools.
- It is extremely difficult to send a few teachers out for professional learning with the expectation that they will then share it with all of their peers. There just is not the time within the constructs of a school day for this to happen. So while I appreciate having a few teachers in the district trained, it is not wide spread. Also finding and funding substitutes is a concern as well as time out of the classroom. Also scheduling so many trainings close together or in the month of June is problematic. I think access via webinars that our Principals can utilize during faculty meetings, etc. would be best.
- It would be helpful to have PD specifically for school library/media, ELL and Sp.Ed. staff in CCSS and NGSS.
- Thanks for your support--keep the process moving forward. Minimize changes or modifications to the plan that step away from the intention of improving and growing practice for kids!
- More materials/ resources for implementing the common core in non-core areas
- Provide a list of texts which are rich for close reading and appropriate for complexity that are aligned with the social studies and science units soon to be in each grade. Provide choices of performance tasks that incorporate inquiry and involve literacy appropriate for the standards and that align with the social studies and science units soon to be in each grade. Provide supports for high schools moving to standards-based teaching and learning.
- The greatest support would be providing consistency in the requirements of Educator Evaluation. Changing rubrics, SLO, IAGD, plans and other targets during the first year of

implementation was confusing. The Academic Office could support districts in the area of creating and aligning assessments with new learning expectations.

- I think you are doing a great job. The most difficult part is finding time-- we send coaches to your training but then struggle to find time for them to share the information and new learning with colleagues; we have attended excellent presentations for administrators, but then have difficulty finding time to discuss our new learning and refine, develop, and implement a consistent district approach. I do think that now you have changed to CT Core Standards you should be consistent in your language. This survey is the first document that I found consistent. Thank you for asking!
- Provide more guidance on all the areas that don't fit neatly into SEED and the CCT rubric.
- Keep op your efforts to maintain a solid elevator speech. Pick your big ideas and platform leverages and work backwards in helping districts buy into and achieve the goals. We find ourselves in our tiny district constantly affirming that there are over 160 districts in CT and likely over 160 implementation plans that are all unique and no one will 'get there' at the same pace... it is NOT a race. Our district seems resentful of our good work in part because other districts are 'not as far along'.... I am not sure how anyone can judge that, but we have high achieving students and high expectations and I do not expect to be at the back of any pack... helping districts with messaging for teachers and parents on issues like this will be huge next year. The media blitz will return after the summer break with a vengeance. Please help equip us with common vocabulary and messaging strategies so we can spend the majority of our time and energy with our students, not politics.
- Continue to coordinate support and resources through the RESCs
- I feel like the PD on CCSS modules is running in a very close timeline with when we are implementing. I would suggest PD be scheduled in more time prior to implementation than after districts were expected to begin using CC.
- My district had done no alignment to CCSS prior to my appointment last year. Therefore, in my first year here we have had to make up for lost time. It would have been helpful to have SDE consultants available to assist a district in crisis. Instead, I had to spend thousands of dollars hiring outside consultants to help us get the work done. This was a financial and resource strain.
- The monthly newsletters are helpful. Also, any information on SESS staff and central office staff for evaluation are important to our continued work around educator evaluation.
- like everyone has said all year, there have been far too many changes all at once. When people look back on their teaching career, they will remember 2013-2014 as the most difficult.
- Consistent and clear communication delivered in a timely manner through pre-defined channels
- I think it is important to have a clear focus and vision for the work we do. Educators in our district have indicated their frustration with our lack of focus aligned to a clear vision with so many initiatives being implemented in one year. At times this year, It has been difficult to frame these changes in a positive manner because I didn't have the answers (for example, SEED components in BloomBoard were not ready when we were ready for the end of the year conference meetings). I understand that change is difficult but I believe that this process has been counterproductive; causing educators to question the purpose and value of the change

and the work we are doing. In addition, these changes have made it very difficult to empower school-based teams to work together to develop initiatives important for the work at a particular school. We have focused on State initiatives for the past few years, instead of areas defined by district, school, grade level, and/or classroom needs. Our district performance standards initiative has taken a back seat to the mandates required by the SDE. We need help by allowing and empowering educators at the district and school levels in Cheshire to identify the work that needs to be done to improve student learning as well as the time to work together to develop and implement a plan to achieve it. Thanks, Scott Detrick

- on-line tutorials regarding various aspects of the SEED and CCSS would be helpful.
- Think about statewide curricula in all subject areas. We can plug in district specific resources and programs.
- We participated in the pilot of the State Algebra I curriculum, and found the training and subsequent delivery of the curriculum to be most positive. We are awaiting a similar experience with the Geometry curriculum. High school staff (English and Math) are really the ones who would benefit from more professional development at this time, as most PD offerings are aimed at K-8. Additionally, as we await the availability of interim Smarter Balanced assessments, we would appreciate PD in the development of valid and reliable assessments.
- video the sessions and archive for future use what does it look like in class
- Provide support for administrators to calibrate scoring on teacher observations. ACES has out-priced small districts in developing curriculum. It is challenging to develop curriculum with small budgets.
- We are wondering if other districts are in the process of updating their student report cards as well. Will districts be asked to use the model units presented in the digital library or are district expected to create their own? Will the state be sharing a comprehensive curriculum guide for each grade level?
- Consistent and regular feedback on state initiatives in a timely manner
- More support for technology skills for intermediate age students -- A better organizational chart of CSDE staff and their fully defined roles -- Better communication on deadlines with more advanced notification - Setting a plan for LEA's and sticking with it. Too often LEA's are all set with a CSDE initiative, but then it becomes a moving target

Principal Webinar 6: Meeting the Needs of All Learners
February 25, 2015 1:00 p.m.

As an instructional leader, you know that today's classrooms are more diverse than ever, even though our expectations are the same for all students: they must be college and career ready. When the requirement of rigorous standards and content are coupled with the challenges that come with the learning, cultural, and economic diversity present in today's classrooms, it is not surprising that teachers find themselves stretched to teach so that all students can meet rigorous academic goals. Universal Design for Learning, based on research from neuroscience and cognitive science, offers educators a useable framework and approach to plan and teach that can successfully support the widest array of today's diverse student population. In this sixth principal webinar series, principals will deepen their understanding of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and its framework and principles that address and support the instructional process. This includes a closer examination of specific UDL-aligned planning and classroom practices and strategies that scaffold diverse learners to higher academic outcomes. Join us for this webinar hosted by Ellen Cohn from the CSDE and Dr. Barbara Flanagan from Public Consulting Group.

Connecticut Systems of Professional Learning for CT Core Standards

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LAUNCH EVENTS

Launch of CT Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning

Each morning or afternoon workshop included: Welcome and project overview; Systems of Professional Learning: Regional Context and Offerings; CCSS Training Module Overview; District needs assessment; and Planning for Successful Implementation.

Event	Date	Location 1	Location 2	City	# Reg
ACES Launch Event AM	1/23/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	21
ACES Launch Event PM	1/23/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	11
Learn Launch Event AM	1/27/2014	Mystic Marriott	625 North Road	Groton	79
Learn Launch Event PM	1/27/2014	Mystic Marriott	625 North Road	Groton	69
CREC Launch Event AM	1/29/2014	Cromwell Crowne Plaza	100 Berlin Road	Cromwell	61
CREC Launch Event PM	1/29/2014	Cromwell Crowne Plaza	100 Berlin Road	Cromwell	74
CES Launch Event AM	1/30/2014	Norwalk Inn & Conference Center	99 East Avenue	Norwalk	37
CES Launch Event PM	1/30/2014	Norwalk Inn & Conference Center	99 East Avenue	Norwalk	27
EASTCONN Launch Event AM	2/4/2014	Rome Hall Ballroom	626 Gilbert Road	Storrs	69
EASTCONN Launch Event PM	2/4/2014	Rome Hall Ballroom	626 Gilbert Road	Storrs	23
Education Connection Launch Event AM	2/7/2014	Crowne Plaza Southbury	1284 Strongtown Rd	Southbury	70
Education Connection Launch Event PM	2/7/2014	Crowne Plaza Southbury	1284 Strongtown Rd	Middlebury	29
				Total Number of Sessions:	**12**
				Sum of Participants Registered:	**570**
				Sum of Participants Attended:	**521**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR DISTRICT COACHES

MODULE 1

English Language Arts and Content Literacy Module 1: Focus on Instructional Shifts

- Deepen understanding of the CCS-ELA and the implications of the standards for instruction; i.e., foundational reading in early grades, and literacy across the content areas.
- Explore key instructional practices and engage with the standards through video analysis and interactive activities.
- Develop aligned lessons using a lesson planning template that is consistent with CSDE's sample lessons and resources.
- Use the EQuIP rubric and evidence guides for planning instruction that aligns with the CCS-ELA & Literacy standards.
- Collaboratively plan for sharing key components of Module 2 within schools and districts.

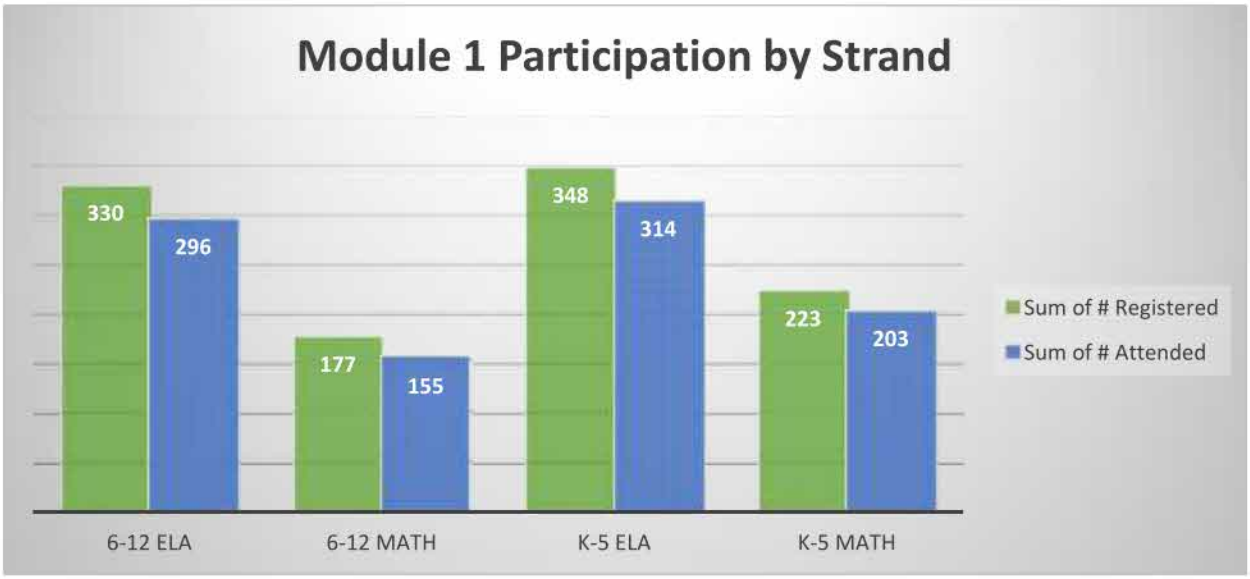
Mathematics Module 1: Focus on Practice Standards

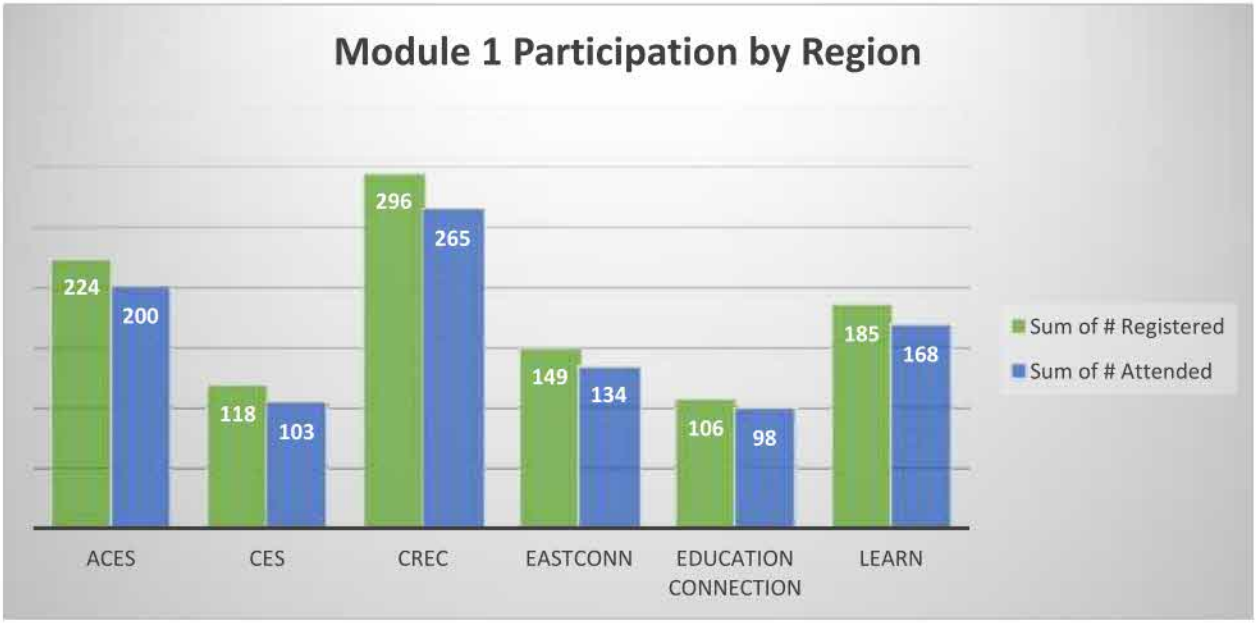
- Gain an initial understanding of the CCS-Math and the embedded changes and instructional shifts.
- Explore all eight of the Standards for Mathematical Practice and identified how they are related.
- Explore how practices can be clustered and examine the reasons why Practice 1: Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them and Practice 6: Attend to precision are considered the two "umbrella" standards that describe the habits of mind of successful mathematical thinkers.
- Identify evidence of the practices, with focus on Practices 1 and 6, in CCS-aligned mathematics tasks.
- Discuss descriptors for all eight practices, and create formal grade level descriptions for Practice 1 and Practice 6.
- Explore how specific instructional strategies (e.g., questioning, engaging students in mathematical discourse, and requiring multiple representations) can help students meet major learning goals.
- Identify relevant resources for implementing the CCS-Math and create a peer support network.
- Identify ways in which coaches will share information with teachers and provide support as teachers make changes to their instructional practice.

Course	Date	Location 1	Location 2	City	# Reg.
K-5 ELA	3/3/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	17
6-12 Math	3/5/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	20
K-5 ELA	3/5/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	46
6-12 ELA	3/6/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	42
K-5 ELA	3/6/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	437 Pequot Ave.	New London	28
6-12 ELA	3/7/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	437 Pequot Avenue	New London	40
K-5 ELA	3/7/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	26
6-12 Math	3/10/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	20
K-5 ELA	3/10/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	28
6-12 Math	3/11/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	437 Pequot Avenue	New London	28
K-5 ELA	3/12/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	25
K-5 Math	3/12/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	44
6-12 ELA	3/13/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	437 Pequot Avenue	New London	18
K-5 Math	3/13/2014	Nathan Hale Inn	855 Bolton Road	Storrs	44
6-12 ELA	3/14/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	45
K-5 ELA	3/14/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	437 Pequot Avenue	New London	14
6-12 ELA	3/17/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	25
K-5 ELA	3/17/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	42
6-12 Math	3/18/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	27
K-5 ELA	3/18/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	22
K-5 Math	3/18/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	31
6-12 Math	3/19/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	34

K-5 Math	3/19/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	41
6-12 ELA	3/20/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	25
K-5 ELA	3/20/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	33
6-12 ELA	3/21/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	27
K-5 Math	3/21/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	24
6-12 Math	3/24/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	48
6-12 ELA	3/25/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	48
K-5 Math	3/25/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	437 Pequot Ave.	New London	39
6-12 ELA	3/26/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	36
K-5 ELA	3/27/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	26
6-12 ELA	3/28/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	24
K-5 ELA	3/28/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	437 Pequot Avenue	New London	18
K-5 ELA	3/31/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	23

Total Number of Sessions:	**35**
Sum of Participants Registered:	**1078**
Sum of Participants Attended:	**968**





MODULE 2

English Language Arts and Content Literacy Module 2: Supporting all Students in Close Reading, Academic Language, and Text-based Discussion

- Become familiar with components of the backward design process for CCS-ELA & Literacy units and lessons.
- Know elements of a high quality CCS-ELA & Literacy unit or lesson.
- Become skillful in creating sequences of text-dependent questions, including those related to academic language.
- Deepen understanding of the relationship between reading and text-based discussion and know how to incorporate discussion into lesson design.
- Understand the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and learn some strategies for incorporating UDL into lesson design.
- Collaboratively plan for sharing key components of Module 2 within schools and districts.

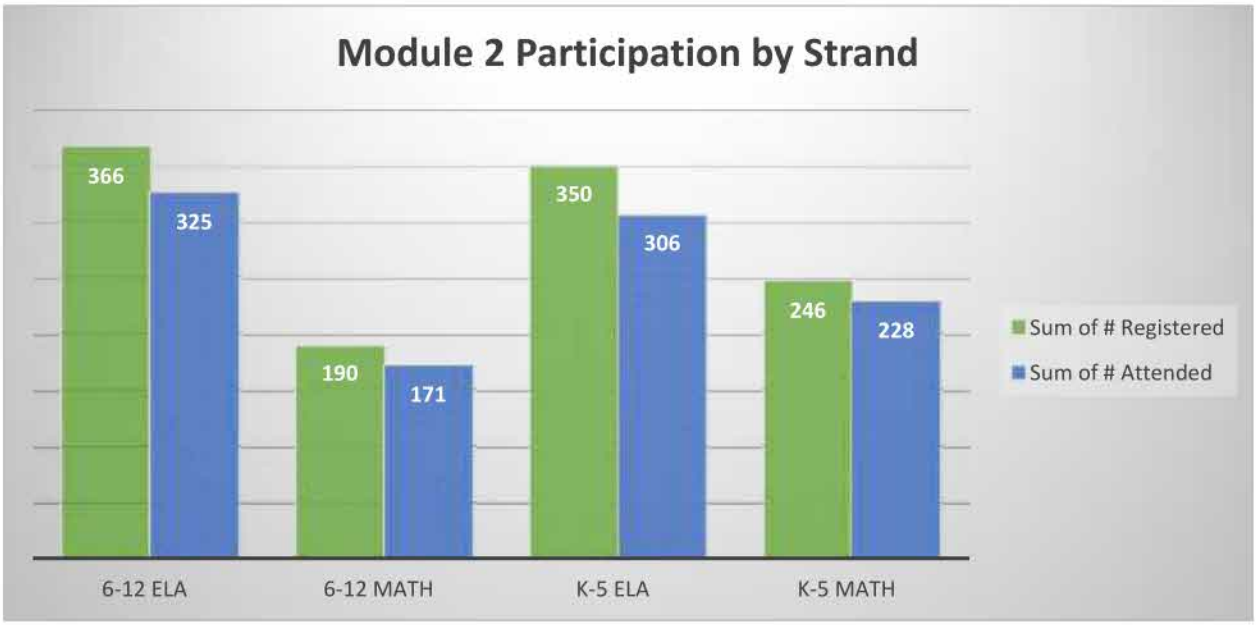
Mathematics Module 2: Focus on Content Standards

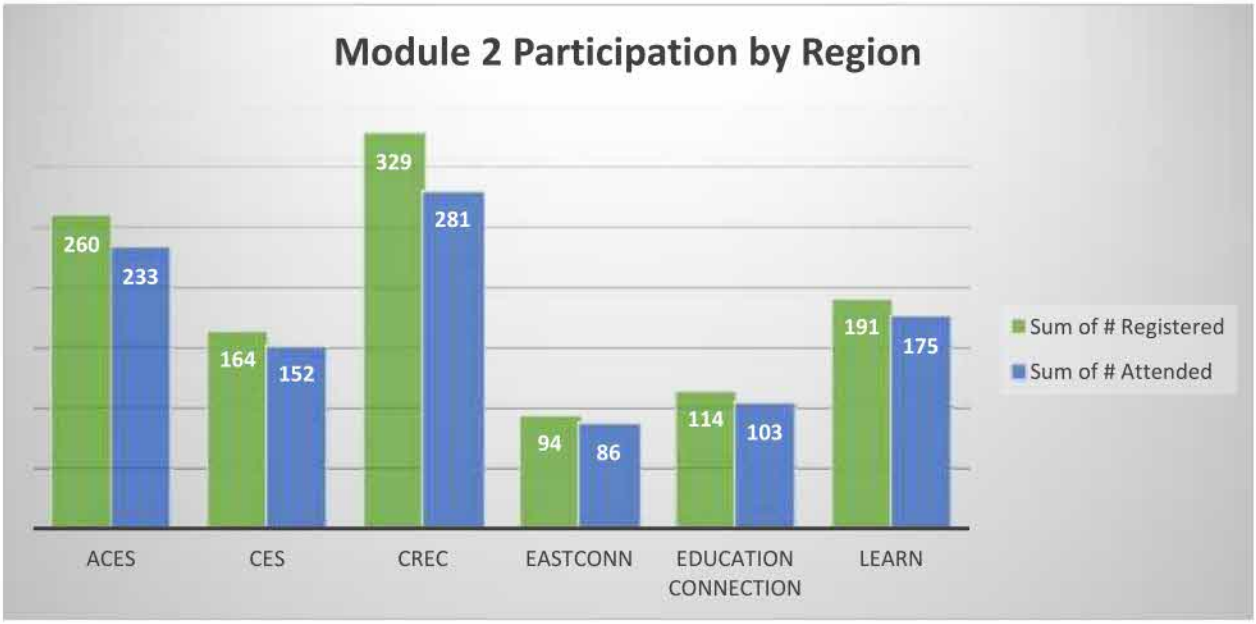
- Strengthen working relationships with peer Core Standards Coaches across their region.
- Deepen their understanding of the practice standards specified in the CCS-Math through sharing of implementation experiences.
- Examine the implications of the language of the content standards for teaching and learning.
- Identify CCS-aligned tasks that combine high-level content with mathematical practices.
- Identify and adapt high-level tasks that combine high-level content with the practice standards.

- Analyze the progression of topics in the content standards both within and across grade levels.
- Deepen their understanding of the potential of the CCS-Math to change mathematics teaching and learning.
- Gain understanding of some of the challenges involved in implementing the CCS-Math.
- Explore strategies for supporting teachers as they make changes in their classroom practice.
- Make plans for next steps.

Course	Date	Location 1	Location 2	City	# Reg.
6-12 ELA	4/21/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	33
K-5 ELA	4/21/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	32
K-5 Math	4/21/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	31
6-12 ELA	4/22/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	33
6-12 Math	4/22/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	33
6-12 Math	4/23/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	17
K-5 ELA	4/23/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	34
K-5 ELA	4/24/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	14
K-5 Math	4/24/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	28
K-5 ELA	4/25/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	28
K-5 Math	4/25/2014	The Gold Eagle	8 Tracy Road	Dayville	15
K-5 ELA	4/28/2014	Best Western Olympic Inn	360 Route 12	Groton	29
K-5 Math	4/28/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	32
6-12 Math	4/29/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	23
K-5 ELA	4/29/2014	Best Western Olympic Inn	360 Route 12	Groton	14
6-12 ELA	4/30/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	34
K-5 ELA	5/1/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	32
K-5 ELA	5/2/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	29
6-12 ELA	5/5/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	37
K-5 ELA	5/5/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	35
K-5 Math	5/5/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	34
6-12 ELA	5/6/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	27
K-5 Math	5/6/2014	The Gold Eagle	8 Tracy Road	Dayville	10
6-12 ELA	5/7/2014	The Gold Eagle	8 Tracy Road	Dayville	19
6-12 Math	5/7/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	30
K-5 ELA	5/7/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	28
6-12 ELA	5/8/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	37
K-5 ELA	5/8/2014	Hampton Inn Groton	300 Long Hill Road	Groton	22
K-5 Math	5/8/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	34
6-12 ELA	5/9/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	34
6-12 Math	5/9/2014	The Gold Eagle	8 Tracy Road	Dayville	19

K-5 ELA	5/9/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	32
6-12 ELA	5/12/2014	The Gold Eagle	8 Tracy Road	Dayville	10
6-12 Math	5/12/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	34
K-5 Math	5/12/2014	Hampton Inn Groton	300 Long Hill Road	Groton	26
6-12 ELA	5/13/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	36
6-12 Math	5/13/2014	Hampton Inn Groton	300 Long Hill Road	Groton	34
6-12 ELA	5/14/2014	Hampton Inn Groton	300 Long Hill Road	Groton	33
6-12 ELA	5/15/2014	Hampton Inn Groton	300 Long Hill Road	Groton	33
K-5 ELA	5/16/2014	The Gold Eagle	8 Tracy Road	Dayville	21
K-5 Math	5/16/2014	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	36
				Total Number of Sessions:	**41**
				Sum of Participants Registered:	**1152**
				Sum of Participants Attended:	**1030**





MODULE 3

English Language Arts and Content Literacy Module 3: Supporting all Students in Writing

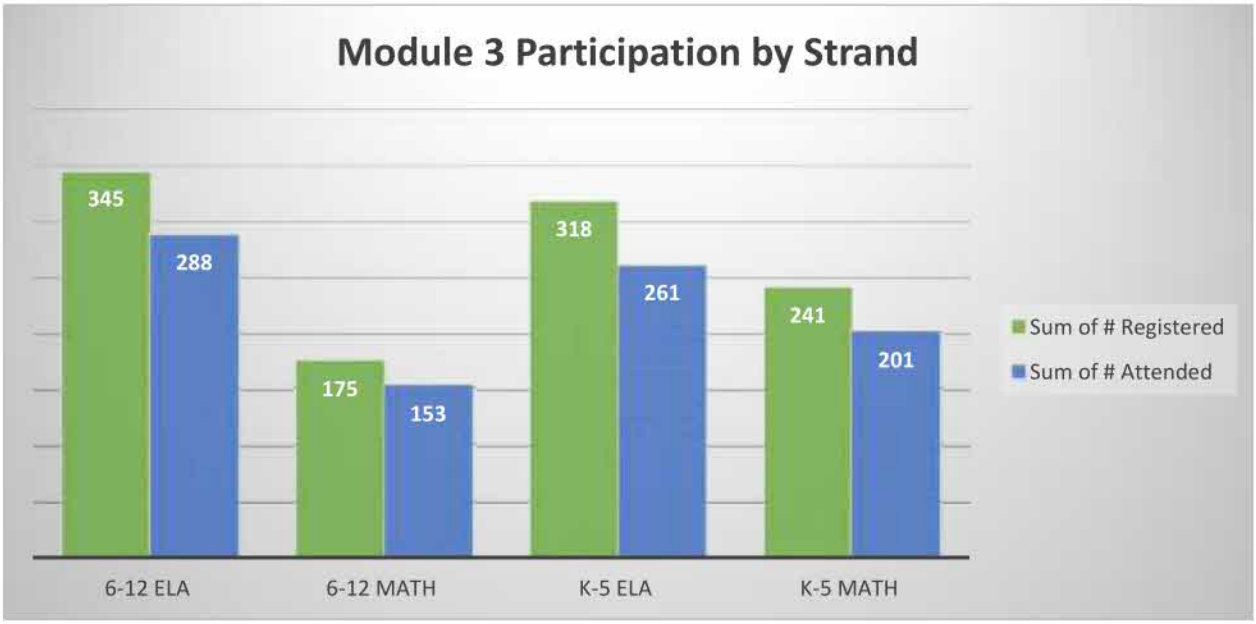
- Examine the purposes and genres of writing and the vertical progression of writing standards in the CCS.
- Understand how writing is incorporated and taught in CCS-aligned units and lessons.
- Learn research-based practices for writing to text.
- Understand the use of routine writing tasks as formative assessment.
- Be able to support students in CCS-aligned writing tasks.
- Learn how research skills and processes are integrated throughout the CCS and are developed in CSS aligned units and lessons.
- Collaboratively plan for sharing key components of Module 3 within schools and districts.

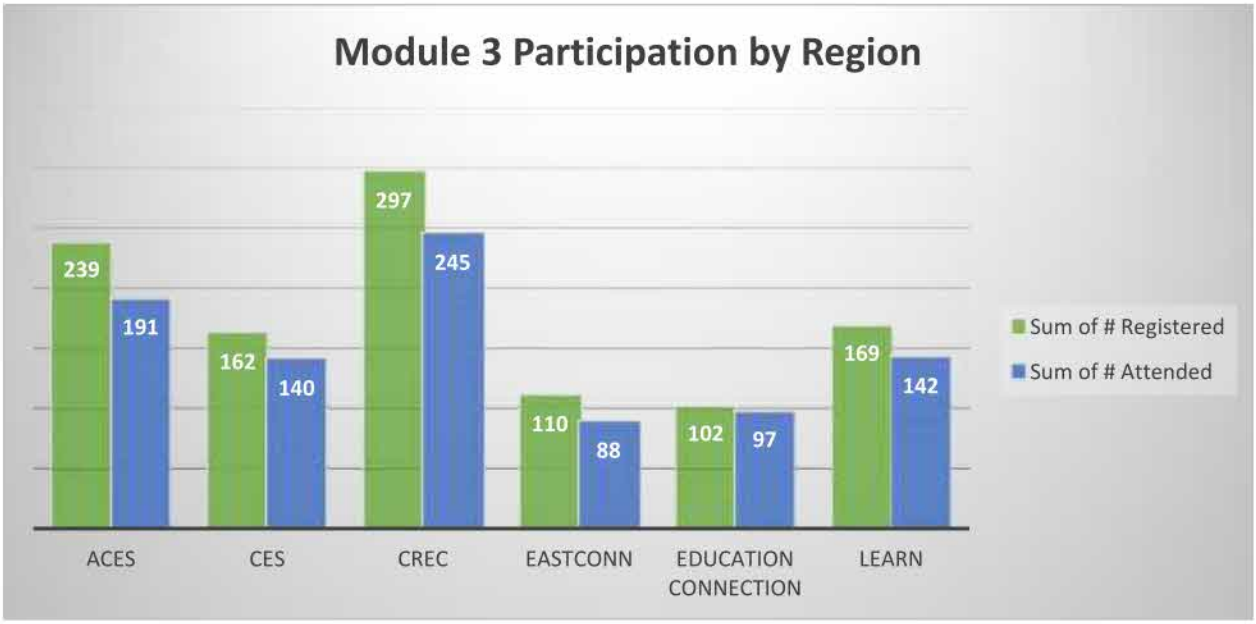
Mathematics Module 3: Focus on Teaching and Learning

- Strengthen working relationships with peer Core Standards Coaches across their region.
- Deepen their understanding of the Practice and Content Standards specified in the CCS-Math through sharing of implementation experiences.
- Articulate a common understanding of UDL.
- Identify the importance of incorporating UDL practices into lessons.
- Describe the alignment of instructional practices and learning expectations of the CCS-Math.
- Plan for implementing UDL strategies within classroom lessons.
- Assess progress towards learning outcomes using a variety of formative assessment strategies.
- Explore strategies for supporting teachers as they make changes in their classroom practice.

Course	Date	Location 1	Location 2	City	# Reg.
K-5 ELA	5/19/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	18
K-5 Math	5/21/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	20
6-12 ELA	5/22/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	16
K-5 ELA	5/22/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	29
6-12 ELA	5/23/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	36
6-12 Math	5/27/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	26
K-5 ELA	5/27/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	24
6-12 ELA	5/28/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	33
K-5 ELA	5/28/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	34
K-5 Math	5/28/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	25
6-12 ELA	5/29/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	32
K-5 ELA	5/29/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	16
K-5 ELA	5/30/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	29
K-5 Math	5/30/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	17
6-12 ELA	6/2/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	22
K-5 ELA	6/2/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	35
K-5 Math	6/2/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	33
6-12 ELA	6/3/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	33
6-12 Math	6/3/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	26
K-5 ELA	6/3/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	21
6-12 Math	6/4/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	23
K-5 ELA	6/4/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	34
K-5 Math	6/4/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	35
6-12 Math	6/5/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	21
K-5 ELA	6/5/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	17
K-5 Math	6/5/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	34
6-12 ELA	6/6/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	27
K-5 Math	6/6/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	25
6-12 ELA	6/9/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	10
6-12 Math	6/9/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	30
K-5 ELA	6/9/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	30
6-12 ELA	6/10/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	35
6-12 Math	6/10/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	28
K-5 ELA	6/10/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	31
6-12 ELA	6/11/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	30
6-12 Math	6/12/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	21
K-5 Math	6/12/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	19
6-12 ELA	6/13/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	36

K-5 Math	6/13/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	33
				Total Number of Sessions:	**39**
				Sum of Participants Registered:	**1079**
				Sum of Participants Attended:	**903**





MODULE 4

English Language Arts and Content Literacy Module 4: Designing and Aligning CCS ELA & Literacy-aligned Instruction and Assessment

- Understand the use of essential and guiding questions to inform instruction and performance tasks.
- Know how formative assessment is integrated in lesson design.
- Be able to design CCS-aligned performance assessments and rubrics.
- Learn how text sets and media are used in CCS-aligned units.
- Use knowledge of unit design, close reading, writing, discussion, and student support for high-level planning of a CCS-aligned unit.
- Use the EQuIP rubric to evaluate and plan revision of a unit.
- Collaboratively plan for sharing key components of Module 4 within schools and districts.

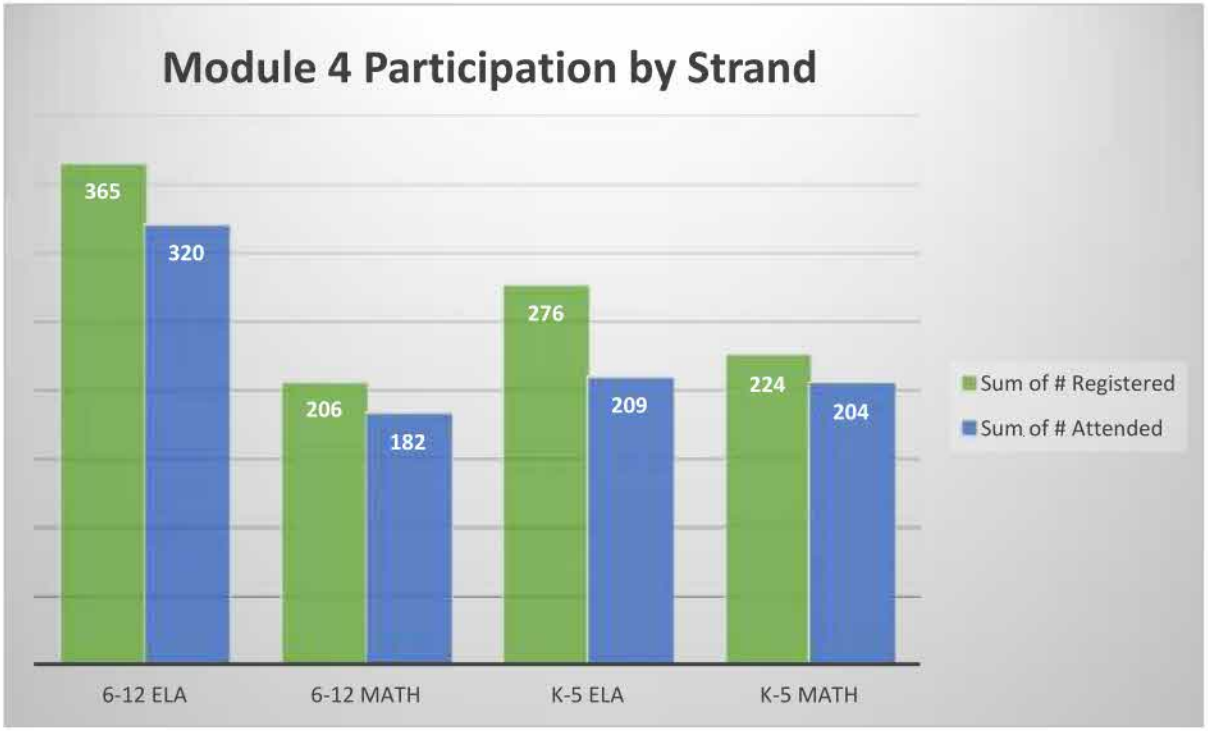
Mathematics Module 4: Focus on Learning Design

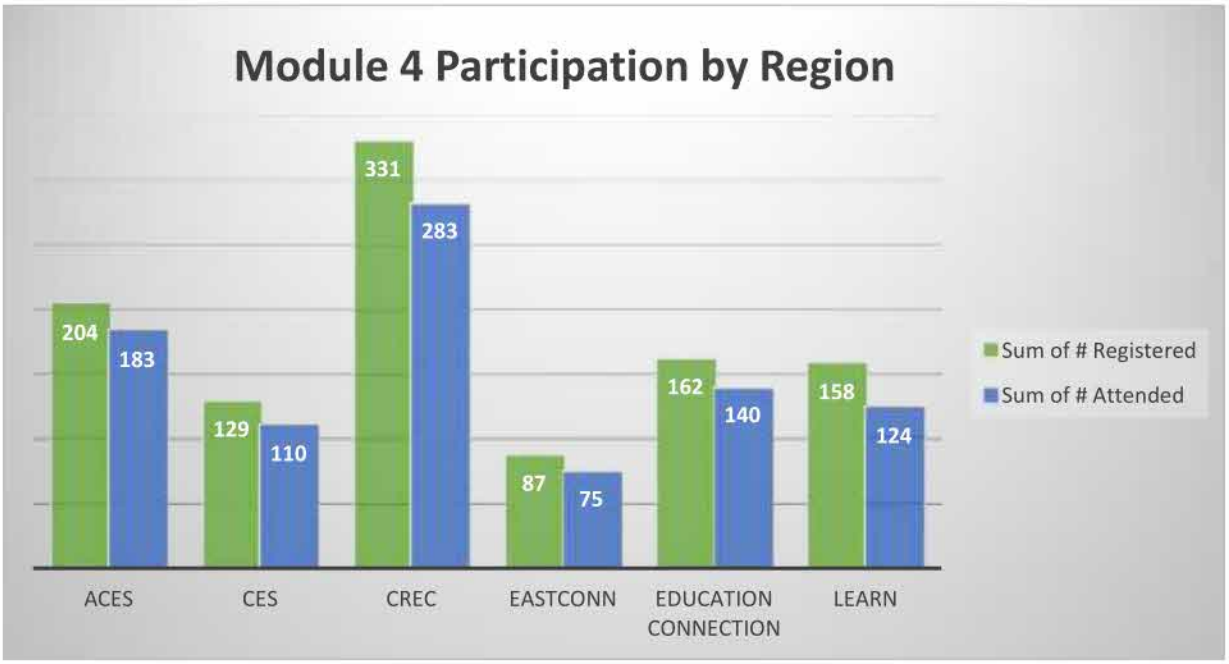
- Strengthen working relationships with peer Common Core Coaches across their region.
- Deepen their understanding of the CCS-Math, UDL, and formative assessment through sharing of implementation experiences.
- Conduct informal needs assessment to identify student needs.
- Discuss strategies for creating effective learning goals.
- Employ decision making strategies when designing and implementing CCS-Math lessons.
- Design and/or modify CCS-Math lessons in order to meet the needs of all students.
- Assist teachers in designing meaningful learning.
- Provide feedback to teachers on lesson design.
- Explore strategies for supporting teachers as they make changes in their classroom practice.

Course	Date	Location 1	Location 2	City	# Reg.
*Module 3 make-up	9/10/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	36
6-12 Math	9/15/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	24
K-5 ELA	9/15/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	26
6-12 ELA	9/16/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	22
6-12 Math	9/16/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	30
K-5 ELA	9/17/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	24
K-5 Math	9/17/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	14
6-12 ELA	9/18/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	30
K-5 ELA	9/18/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	24
K-5 Math	9/18/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	33
6-12 ELA	9/19/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	32

K-5 ELA	9/19/2014	Hilton Garden Inn	224 Gold Star Highway	Groton	19
6-12 Math	9/22/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	31
K-5 ELA	9/22/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	10
6-12 Math	9/23/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	33
K-5 Math	9/23/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	21
K-5 ELA	9/24/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	34
K-5 Math	9/24/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	25
K-5 ELA	9/25/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	15
6-12 ELA	9/26/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	28
6-12 ELA	9/29/2014	Hilton Garden Inn	224 Gold Star Highway	Groton	32
K-5 ELA	9/29/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	25
K-5 Math	9/29/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	30
6-12 ELA	9/30/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	26
K-5 ELA	9/30/2014	Hilton Garden Inn	224 Gold Star Highway	Groton	19
K-5 Math	9/30/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	35
6-12 Math	10/1/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	30
K-5 Math	10/1/2014	Hilton Garden Inn	224 Gold Star Highway	Groton	31
6-12 ELA	10/2/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	18
K-5 ELA	10/2/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	21
6-12 ELA	10/3/2014	Hilton Garden Inn	224 Gold Star Highway	Groton	19
K-5 ELA	10/3/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	16
6-12 ELA	10/6/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	29
K-5 ELA	10/6/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	12
6-12 ELA	10/7/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	32
K-5 ELA	10/7/2014	Hilton Garden Inn	224 Gold Star Highway	Groton	14
K-5 ELA	10/8/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	17
K-5 Math	10/8/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	35
6-12 ELA	10/9/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Road	Litchfield	34
6-12 Math	10/9/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	34
6-12 ELA	10/10/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	27
6-12 Math	10/10/2014	Hilton Garden Inn	224 Gold Star Highway	Groton	24

Total Number of Sessions:	**42**
Sum of Participants Registered:	**1035**
Sum of Participants Attended:	**915**


Module 4 Participation by Strand
365
320
206
182
276
209
224
204
6-12 ELA
6-12 MATH
K-5 ELA
K-5 MATH
Sum of # Registered
Sum of # Attended


Module 4 Participation by Region
204
183
129
110
331
283
87
75
162
140
158
124
ACES
CES
CREC
EASTCONN
EDUCATION CONNECTION
LEARN
Sum of # Registered
Sum of # Attended

MODULE 5

English Language Arts and Content Literacy Module 5: Looking at Student Work and Engaging Students in the Learning Process

- Learn and practice protocols for collaboratively looking at student work and using data to inform instruction
- Learn the importance of student goal setting and feedback and become familiar with related practices.
- Know protocols, practices, and strategies for student engagement in CCS ELA & Literacy-aligned instruction.
- Better understand how to support English Language Learners in CCS ELA & Literacy instruction.
- Understand the purpose of the Instructional Practice Guide and use it to observe CCS-aligned lessons
- Review and expand knowledge of principles, protocols, and strategies for working with adult learners around topics related to CCS ELA &Literacy.
- Collaboratively plan for sharing key components of all modules in CT Systems of Professional Learning within schools and districts.

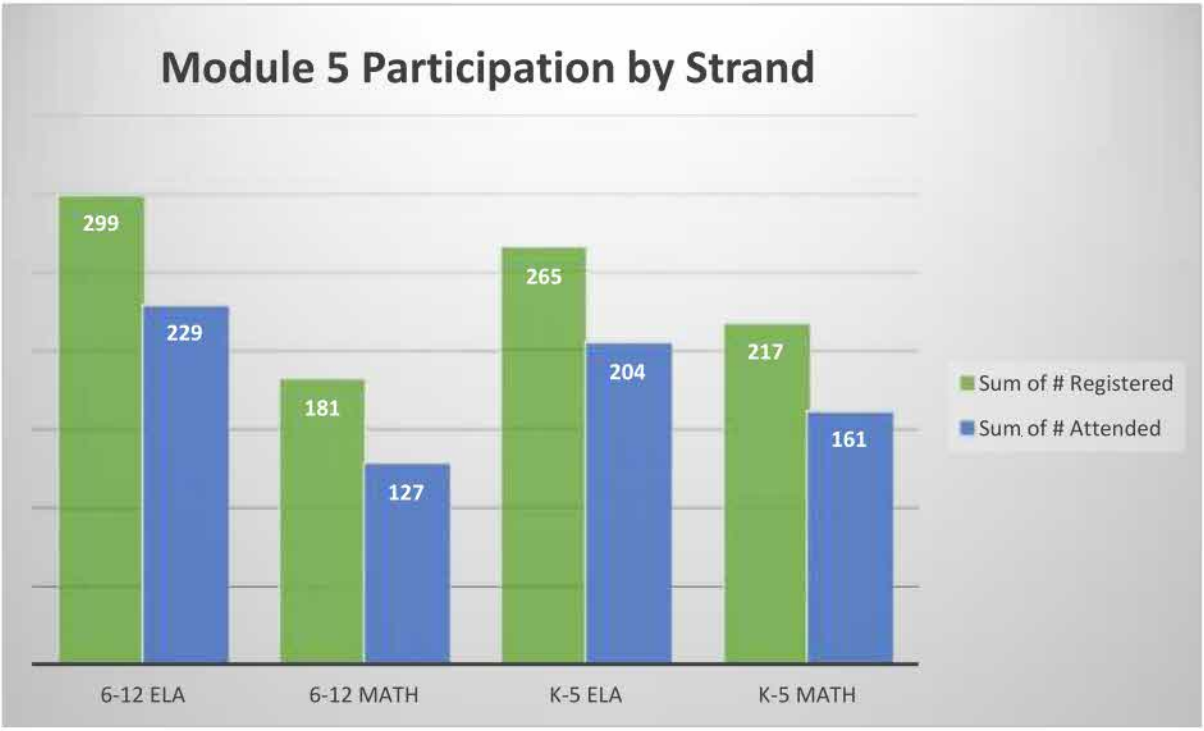
Mathematics Module 5: Focus on Sustaining Change

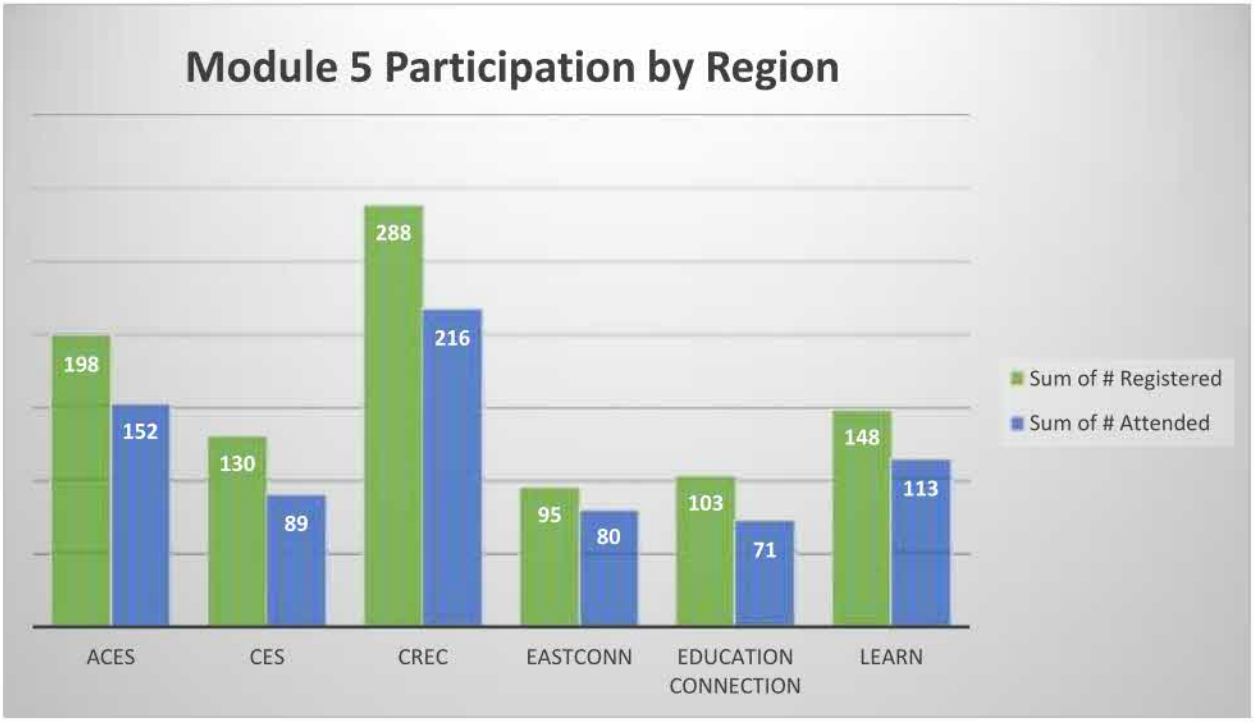
- Strengthen working relationships with peer Common Core Coaches across their region.
- Deepen their understanding of the CCS-Math, UDL, formative assessment, and learning design through sharing of implementation experiences.
- Describe characteristics of reflective teaching.
- Deepen their understanding of how reflective teaching can assist teachers' ability to self-assess lesson effectiveness.
- Articulate the difference and importance of reflection in practice and reflection on practice.
- Explore strategies for conducting coaching observations.
- Provide teachers will coaching feedback on lesson implementation.
- Explore strategies for supporting teachers as they make changes to their classroom practice.
- Identify resources for ongoing needs.

Course	Date	Location 1	Location 2	City	# Reg.
K-5 ELA	10/14/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	21
K-5 Math	10/14/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	23
6-12 ELA	10/15/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	22
K-5 ELA	10/15/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	20
K-5 Math	10/15/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	20
6-12 ELA	10/16/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	30

K-5 Math	10/16/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	23
6-12 Math	10/20/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	23
6-12 ELA	10/21/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	25
6-12 Math	10/21/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	30
K-5 Math	10/22/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Rd.	Litchfield	25
K-5 Math	10/23/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	31
K-5 ELA	10/24/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	29
K-5 Math	10/27/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	22
6-12 ELA	10/28/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	18
6-12 Math	10/28/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	26
6-12 Math	10/29/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	25
K-5 ELA	10/29/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	24
6-12 ELA	10/30/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	32
K-5 ELA	10/30/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	24
6-12 ELA	10/31/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 East River Drive	East Hartford	32
6-12 ELA	11/3/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	23
K-5 ELA	11/3/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	16
K-5 Math	11/3/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	28
6-12 Math	11/4/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Rd.	Litchfield	13
K-5 ELA	11/4/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	12
6-12 Math	11/5/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	27
6-12 ELA	11/6/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	29
K-5 ELA	11/6/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	24
6-12 ELA	11/7/2014	Mitchell College Weller Center	Montauk Ave. & DiBiasi Dr.	New London	29
K-5 ELA	11/7/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Rd.	Litchfield	30
K-5 ELA	11/10/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	25
K-5 Math	11/10/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	30
6-12 ELA	11/12/2014	Education Connection RESC	355 Goshen Rd.	Litchfield	35
K-5 ELA	11/12/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	28
6-12 ELA	11/13/2014	CES RESC	40 Lindeman Drive	Trumbull	24
K-5 Math	11/13/2014	EASTCONN RESC	376 Hartford Turnpike	Hampton	15
6-12 Math	11/14/2014	ACES RESC	205 Skiff St.	Hamden	37
K-5 ELA	11/14/2014	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	32

Total Number of Sessions:	**38**
Sum of Participants Registered:	**962**
Sum of Participants Attended:	**721**


Module 5 Participation by Strand
299
229
181
127
265
204
217
161
6-12 ELA
6-12 MATH
K-5 ELA
K-5 MATH
Sum of # Registered
Sum of # Attended


Module 5 Participation by Region
198
152
130
89
288
216
95
80
103
71
148
113
ACES
CES
CREC
EASTCONN
EDUCATION CONNECTION
LEARN
Sum of # Registered
Sum of # Attended

WEBINARS

Follow-up Webinars for Coaches

Follow-up webinars were conducted for Modules 1, 2, and 4, statewide by ELA and Mathematics strands. The purpose was to revisit the content delivered in person and answer questions from the field.

Webinar	Date	Location	# Registered	# Attended
ELA Module 1 Webinar	4/23/2014	Online	9	N/A
Math Module 1 Webinar	4/24/2014	Online	15	N/A
Math Module 2 Webinar	6/19/2014	Online	7	3
ELA Module 2 Webinar	6/20/2014	Online	6	2
Math Module 4 Webinar	11/3/2014	Online	6	4
ELA Module 4 Webinar	11/5/2014	Online	8	6
			Total Number of Webinars:	**6**
			Sum of Participants Registered:	**51**
			Sum of Participants Attended:	**> 15**

CSDE Principal Webinar Series

PCG is assisting the Department in conducting a monthly webinar series for principals and school leaders.

Webinar	Date	# Attended
Maximizing the Impact of your CT Core Standards- Trained Coaches • An overview of what coaches have learned through the first three modules • The topics that will focus the work in modules four and five • Tools and resources available to coaches for use with teachers • Needs for support identified by the coaches • How principals can best use coaches for capacity building in their school	8/27/2014	14
For CT Principals: Tools You Can Use • Tour the CT Core Standards Website and visit the School Leaders webpage • Review the library of CT Core Standards online PD packaged in brief video segments with activities and guides. Aligned to a new vision of job-embedded professional learning, on-demand PD can be used any time. Scan listings to find specific topics of interest to the busy instructional leader. Also perfect for teachers in a team meeting or a PD day!	9/24/2014	44

• Explore the recent publication "The CT Core Standards Principal Look Fors" which has been mailed to every school leader in CT and is also available online. Not intended for evaluation purposes, the flipbook will provide concrete examples of what to "look for" when visiting a standards-aligned classroom.		
What Should I See in a CT Core Standards-Aligned Classroom? • Review Instructional Shifts in English Language Arts and Literacy • Review Practice Standards in Mathematics • Learn what those shifts look like in lesson planning and instructional practice • Examine Classroom "Look Fors" Guide and its role in supporting teachers and leaders	10/29/2014	54
What Do All School and Family Partners Need to Know? • Provide CT principals and leaders with concrete supports and on-demand resources, wherever they are in their leadership journey, to better meet the demands of their role. • Deepen understanding of the importance of messaging to all stakeholders regarding CT Core Standards • Recognize the key components of a communication plan for all stakeholders	12/3/2014 (rescheduled)	11
Supporting Teachers in their Professional Learning • Deepen understanding of coaching role for principals in supporting CCS-aligned practices • Review current practices of classroom walkthroughs in elementary, middle and high school principals • Introduce elements of effective feedback to support teachers' professional learning	1/28/2015	TBD
Meeting the Needs of All Learners • Introduce the components of Universal Design for Learning • Provide examples of how instruction can be designed in various subject areas to meet various student needs	2/25/2015	TBD
Supporting ALL Learners • Discuss the rigor in the classroom and its relationship with DOK levels • Provide an overview of MTSS/RTI framework to meet the needs of struggling learners at all levels	3/25/2015	TBD
Using Assessment to Engage Students in their Own Learning • Review the various types of assessments that teachers should be using to engage students, including student self-reflection and portfolios • Examine performance tasks as a way to gauge students' growth but also their engagement in their own learning	4/29/2015	TBD
Checking In on Progress with Data • Review data-driven decision making • Explore the elements of a Balanced Score Card and its role in checking progress and supporting data driven decision-making	5/27/2015	TBD

MEETING THE CHALLENGE: CT CORE STANDARDS SUCCESS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Professional development series for educators working with students with disabilities and English learners. The goal of this professional development is to enable local educators to implement CCS-aligned curriculum, instructional practices, and assessments to meet the needs of a wide variety of learners.

MODULE 1

Academic Optimism and Universal Design for Learning

- Examine the current climate of the district and schools within the district.
- Explore strategies and practices for building a strong culture that fosters respect, decency, and success for every student and staff member.
- Learn about a new construct called "academic optimism" as a resiliency framework for improving academic performance through high expectations, collective efficacy of teachers, and trust between faculty, administrators, and parents.
- Recognize the power of a growth mindset for both students and teachers and its role in improving outcomes for all students.
- Rationale for and background of UDL
- Framework for and definition of UDL
- Principles of UDL, how they are based on neuroscience research
- UDL guidelines and practices that align with each UDL principle
- Use a planning tool for implementing a UDL approach to unit and lesson design or adaptation

Course	Date	Location 1	Location 2	City	# Reg.
Academic Optimism and UDL	1/13/2015	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	54
Academic Optimism and UDL	1/14/2015	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	48
Academic Optimism and UDL	1/20/2015	Four Points Sheraton	275 Research Parkway	Meriden	44
Academic Optimism and UDL	1/21/2015	Hilton Mystic	20 Coogan Blvd	Mystic	43
Academic Optimism and UDL	2/2/2015	Holiday Inn East Hartford	100 E. River Drive	East Hartford	105
Academic Optimism and UDL	2/3/2015	Crowne Plaza Southbury	1284 Strongtown Rd.	Middlebury	97
				Total Number of Sessions:	**6**
				Sum of Participants Registered:	**388**

MODULES 2 AND 3

In Modules 2 and 3, school teams will split into smaller discipline-specific teams and attend sessions pertaining to either English Learner or Students with Disabilities populations.

	Module 2	Module 3
EL Sessions	6	6
SWD Sessions	6	6

ONLINE LEARNING FOR ALL CONNECTICUT TEACHERS

FOUNDATIONS OF CONNECTICUT CORE STANDARDS

To capitalize on the Systems of Professional Learning for District Coaches Project, and extend support to all educators in the state of Connecticut, PCG is developing self-paced online learning courses using material from Modules 1 and 2. The courses will be adapted from the in-person professional development materials created for Connecticut Core Coaches, and will serve to provide a common basis of understanding among teachers regarding:

- The instructional shifts required by the Connecticut Core Standards
- Basic principles of Universal Design for Learning
- Formative Assessment practices aligned with the Connecticut Core Standards

This work will involve the development of eight courses differentiated by content area (English Language Arts & Literacy, and Mathematics) as well as by grade span (K-5 and 6-12).

- Module 1
  - K-5 ELA & Literacy: Focus on the Instructional Shifts
  - 6-12 ELA & Literacy: Focus on the Instructional Shifts
  - K-5 Math: Focus on Practice Standards
  - 6-12 Math: Focus on Practice Standards
- Module 2
  - K-5 ELA & Literacy: Supporting all Students in Close Reading, Academic Language, and Text-based Discussion
  - 6-12 ELA & Literacy: Supporting all Students in Close Reading, Academic Language, and Text-based Discussion
  - K-5 Math: Focus on Content Standards
  - 6-12 Math: Focus on Content Standards

Courses will be available to all Connecticut teachers as of April 1, 2015.

Curriculum Development Using Connecticut Core Standards

Using a blended model of online synchronous classes, and independent asynchronous work, participants will develop unit and lesson plans using a backward design model. The online course will be facilitated by a PCG subject matter expert, and will include many opportunities for participants to share their work and gain feedback from the facilitator and the other participants. The courses will be differentiated by content area (English Language Arts & Literacy, and Mathematics).

To pilot the course materials, activities, and instructional approaches, PCG will implement four in-person institute sessions: two pilots for ELA & Literacy, and two pilots for Mathematics. The pilot institutes will be offered during the summer of 2015. The online facilitated courses will begin implementation in fall of 2015, and each will run approximately 8 weeks. PCG will facilitate eight (four ELA and four mathematics) cohorts through the courses.

Supporting Educators of English Learners and Students with Disabilities

To sustain support for educators who work with students who are English Learners and students with disabilities, PCG proposes converting materials developed for *Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards Success for English Learners and Students with Disabilities* in-person sessions to asynchronous online learning courses. PCG will develop five online courses: one common foundational course, two courses specific to the needs of English Learners, and two courses specific to the needs of students with disabilities.

Connecticut State Department of Education

CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Part B State Systemic Improvement Plan

State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report Indicator 17
April 2015

Phase One:

Data Analysis
Infrastructure Analysis
State Identified Measureable Result (SIMR)
Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies
Theory of Action

Data Analysis

Systematic process to identify, select, and analyze existing data

Connecticut began its initial planning for the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) through attendance at the March 2014 Northeast Regional Resource Center's SSIP Meeting in Springfield, Massachusetts. Connecticut brought a 7-member internal SSIP team to this meeting: State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Coordinator, General Supervision Coordinator, Focused Monitoring Coordinator, Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) Data Manager, IDEA Data Analyst, State PTI Center Executive Director, and a Local Education Agency special education director. As a result of this meeting, the internal SSIP team met in the summer of 2014 to identify additional Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) staff to join the internal team and plan a process for convening a representative external stakeholder group to advise the CSDE moving forward. Additionally, Connecticut was able to outline the agenda for the first meeting of the external stakeholder group with an introduction to the process as well as the broad data that could potentially be selected as the State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR).

Connecticut convened its first external stakeholder meeting in October of 2014 with two main objectives: 1) to introduce stakeholders to the SSIP process, including their role in the data and infrastructure analysis and identification of the SIMR; and 2) presentation of the broad data analysis pertaining to all SPP/APR results indicators available for SIMR consideration. Discussion began with an explanation of the SIMR and the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) requirements regarding: alignment to an APR indicator; the mandate to be an individual child-level result; connection to other existing state-level initiatives; and availability of resources that the state must have to support the plan and effect change. All SPP/APR indicators were reviewed and evaluated for their potential use as a SIMR. Upon this review, five child-level results indicators were identified; of which three were appropriate for further analysis considering that n-sizes were large enough to meet the SIMR criteria regarding statewide improvement. While compliance indicators were eliminated from consideration as a SIMR, they were later included in the root cause analysis (focused data analysis).

Broad Data Analysis

A broad state-level analysis was conducted on the three remaining indicators: Graduation, Dropout, and Academic Achievement. For each of these indicators, analyses were completed and presented to the stakeholders. Analyses included multi-year trend data comparing students with disabilities to: all-students (including gap analysis); other traditionally underperforming subgroups; and national and regional data. The data used for the graduation and dropout broad data analysis included data aligned to the Connecticut's Approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility, including the 4-year on-time adjusted cohort graduation rate, as well as the 5- and 6-year rates currently under consideration in Connecticut's draft ESEA Flexibility renewal application. The data used for academic achievement also aligned with the state's Approved ESEA Flexibility performance index and were analyzed across all four tested subject areas (Math, Reading, Writing, and Science).

Summary of Stakeholder Conclusions Regarding the Broad Analysis:

Indicator 1 (ESEA Flexibility 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate)

- Overall Students with Disabilities (SWD) Graduation Rate
  - Slight increases during 3 of the 4 previous years
  - Ranged from 62.4 – 64.7% over past 4 years
- Gap Between All Students and SWDs Graduation Rate
  - Slowly, but consistently increasing
  - Ranged from 19.3 – 20.8% over past 4 years
- Comparison to U.S. and Other States
  - CT rates are higher than the national average for both All Students and SWDs
  - CT All Students and SWDs rate gap is larger than national gap and most states
- Potential to Use 5-Year or 6-Year Cohort Graduation Rate
  - 5-year rate shows a significantly higher rate than the 4-year rate for SWDs
  - 6-year rate is being considered for CT's draft ESEA Flexibility renewal request
- Comparison of SWDs to other historically underperforming subgroups
  - SWDs underperform all subgroups except English Language Learners (ELL)
- Contributing factor to low graduation rate is the high percentage of students staying on for transition services beyond completion of academic requirements to earn a standard high school diploma; post-secondary transition services are a high priority for the state

Indicator 2 (Dropout)

- Overall SWD Rate
  - Fairly stable from 2010-2012 with a decrease of almost one percent in 2013
  - Ranged from 14.8 – 15.4% over past 4 years
- Gap Between SWD and All Student Rates
  - Consistently widening
  - Ranged from 3.7 – 6.0% over past 4 years
- Comparison to Other States
  - Of neighboring states, CT has the lowest 4-year SWD dropout rate
- Comparison of SWDs to other historically underperforming subgroups
  - SWDs have lowest dropout rate of all other subgroups
- Fewer than 800 students with disabilities in the state of CT dropout annually, which may be insufficient to show statewide growth, when considering the total graduation cohort size

Indicator 3 (Academic Achievement)

- Science: SWDs are performing similarly to all other historically underperforming subgroups except ELL (*Stakeholders noted hands-on learning and applied concepts as an explanation for this higher performance trend*)
- Writing: SWDs are the lowest performing of all historically underperforming subgroups
  - Since writing is assessed within the English Language Arts (ELA) Smarter Balanced (SB) assessment, and not separately, writing is not an option for focus
- Reading: SWDs are performing at least 10 index points lower than all other historically underperforming subgroups except ELL
  - SWD perform poorest on reading versus all other subject areas

- Math: SWDs and ELLs are performing 10-15 index points lower than all other historically underperforming subgroups
    - SWD math performance has a consistent downward trend for four years
    - Math was ruled out as a focus option as no statewide initiatives exist to leverage

As a result of this broad data analysis and extensive stakeholder discussion, the stakeholders advised the CSDE to focus on academic achievement for further analysis, specifically in the area of reading. Stakeholders further recommended that the CSDE focus the work of the SSIP on reading achievement for the following reasons:

- Connecticut SWDs perform lowest in reading when compared to all other subject areas, therefore reading has the greatest opportunity for growth;
- There is potential for selecting a narrower focus within reading achievement given that all approximately 37,000 SWDs take the statewide assessment each year;
- Multiple state-level initiatives can be leveraged with an emphasis on Connecticut's K-3 Early Literacy Initiative (CK3LI) and differentiated supports and interventions through the Department's Turnaround Office, as well as CT's Framework for Response to Invention (RTI) - Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) - and the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG);
- As of September 2013, existing state law requiring all elementary educators (K-6) to achieve a satisfactory score on the reading instruction examination - Foundations of Reading Test (C.G.S. 10-145d (f)), was amended to include all CT Educators with an endorsement to teach comprehensive special education as well. Statewide, approximately 76 percent of all educators participating on this exam in 2013-14, passed on the first attempt, down from approximately 81 percent in previous years before this requirement went into effect. These data provide anecdotal support of the need for greater professional development in the area of reading instruction for teachers with a comprehensive special education endorsement; and
- Early literacy intervention should improve students' on-track reading in fourth grade which is a significant predictor of on-time graduation (Butler et al., 1985; Stainthorp & Hughes, 2004; Wagner et al., 1997).

In short, stakeholders felt that selection of a SIMR related to reading achievement would allow the state to focus on an area of extreme need for SWDs that is aligned to existing state-level initiatives and has the potential to effect longitudinal change on graduation/dropout rates and post-secondary outcomes.

<u>Disaggregation by multiple variables/narrow data analysis</u>

For the focused, root cause data analysis, stakeholders requested the CSDE to consider the following categories for disaggregation of reading achievement data: demographics (e.g., grade, Free/Reduced Lunch, ELL, race, etc.), discipline, enrollment and attendance, district type, and indicators specific to students' special education status (e.g., educational environments, TWNDP, primary disability, etc.). All data from our statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) were included in the focused data analysis, including all CSDE student information system (SIS) data and student-level 618 data. All data were student-level, aggregated to Local Education Agency (LEA) and State Education Agency (SEA) levels for analysis. ESEA Flexibility accountability data constituted the primary unit of analysis. The categories listed were analyzed

separately and in combination to explore interaction effects. Data for students with disabilities were compared to data of non-disabled peers for all analyses on variables available for all children.

Qualitative data were reviewed in the form of the CSDE 2014-2015 SRBI survey results. In the fall of 2014, this survey was administered to Prekindergarten through Grade 12 educators and leaders in Connecticut public schools and districts in order to gather information regarding the implementation of CT's Framework for SRBI statewide. Some of the results from this survey are summarized below and reinforce the stakeholders' recommendation to focus on the area of reading for a SIMR.

In the area of reading:

- Approximately sixty percent of respondents indicated universal screening measures are administered to students three times per year.
- Less than sixty percent of respondents reported district curriculum alignment with the CT Core ELA standards.
- Less than forty percent reported a continuum of differentiated instruction and research-based interventions available to all students in all grades.
- Approximately fifty percent conveyed the occurrence of collaborative meetings between teachers and interventionists to discuss student progress.
- Less than thirty percent described that decision rules and procedures were in place to appropriately match reading intervention to student need.

The following focused, root cause data analysis occurred during the months of October and November 2014. Results of this focused analysis were shared with stakeholders in early November.

Initial analysis of all data began at the district level which did not provide useful context for interpretation because too much variability existed among the 170 entities. Patterns among the district-level data were thoroughly examined to arrive at the district groupings used in the analysis described below.

District Type (ESEA Alliance Districts/State EdReform Districts/Charters)

- Alliance districts are the thirty lowest performing districts statewide;
- Education Reform (EDReform) districts are the lowest 10 of the Alliance districts;
- Both of these groups were used for analysis/comparison to our districts with high socio-economic status (SES); and
- There are very few charter schools in CT, accounting for less than one percent of all SWDs statewide. Analysis of this group by SWD was too small for SIMR consideration.

Summary of Stakeholder Conclusions Regarding the Focused Analysis:

Disability Status and Category

- Lowest performing disability subgroups of SWD included students with: Emotional Disturbance (ED), Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and all low incidence categories (hearing, visual and orthopedic impairments, traumatic brain injuries, developmental delays, deaf/blind and multiple disabilities).

  - n-size for each low incidence category is too small for consideration as a SIMR
- Significant differences exist between the reading performance of district SES groups across all disabilities, including non-cognitive impairments. However, differences by district SES were largest for students with Learning Disabilities (LD), ED, and other health impairments (OHI).

Race/Ethnicity

- Performance gaps for SWD by race are large in high SES districts and narrow or non-existent in low SES/Alliance districts.
- Significant differences by race and district type indicated that "where" students are educated (i.e., Low v. High SES districts) might require a differential approach to intervention.

Time with Non-Disabled Peers (TWNDP; compliance data)

- Alliance district students in regular class placements (80-100% TWNDP) performed equal to or below that of resource room students (40-79% TWNDP) in all other high SES districts.
- Placement appears to have a greater impact for students in the high SES districts (25 point gaps between regular class and resource room) than for those in low SES districts (10 point gaps between regular class and resource room).
- The rate of out-of-district placements was significantly higher in Alliance districts.
- TWNDP by SES district analysis indicates a need to consider the role of placement or educational setting when designing interventions at the individual district level.

Grade Level

- The only difference across grade was that 3rd grade SWDs performed significantly lower than SWDs at other grade levels.
- One potential intervention identified by stakeholders was expansion of full-day kindergarten programming by districts. A review of 2014-15 district offerings of full-day versus part-day kindergarten programs found too much consistency for useful discrimination in any data model. Currently,
  - 92% of all districts offer full-day kindergarten to their SWD;
  - Only 12 districts statewide offer half-day kindergarten programs; and
  - 95% of all kindergarten SWDs are served in full-day programs.

Discipline (Discipline by days sanctioned; compliance data)

Sanction categories used in the focused analysis included all students grouped by the cumulative number of days a student was sanctioned due to any disciplinary suspension and/or expulsion, regardless of severity of the offense (0 days sanctioned, less than 10 days sanctioned, 10 or more cumulative days sanctioned).

- Alliance district students with 0 days sanctioned performed more than 10 points lower than students with 10+ days sanctioned in upper SES districts. However, in Alliance districts, there is little difference between the performance of students across sanction categories (0, <10, 10+ days of sanction).
- Removal from class for disciplinary reasons (i.e., suspension or expulsion) impacts the performance of students in upper SES districts (15-20 point gaps between 0 days and 10+

days) more than for those in lower SES districts (5 point gaps between 0 days and 10+ days).
- The ten lowest performing districts accounted for 26% of state enrollment and 65% of students with 10+ days sanctioned.
- High SES districts – reading performance gaps by sanction category exist.
- Low SES districts – sanction category has no impact on reading performance.

Chronic Absenteeism

- SWDs are twice as likely to be chronically absent (absent 10 percent or more days) as those without disabilities.
- Chronically absent students performed comparable to students with good attendance on reading assessments in Alliance districts.
- Chronically absent students in upper SES districts had lower reading performance compared to district peers with good attendance.

Selection of SIMR and Additional Focused Analysis

SIMR: Increase the reading performance of all 3rd grade students with disabilities statewide, as measured by Connecticut's Approved ESEA Flexibility Performance Index.

CT's SIMR is aligned to Indicator 3: Participation and Performance of Children with IEPs on Statewide Assessments. While the SIMR is an academic achievement indicator, and therefore aligned with SPP/APR indicator 3, it is not completely congruent with the measurement and targets of Indicator 3. The SIMR is aligned with Connecticut's Approved ESEA Flexibility and only represents the subgroup of 3rd grade students with disabilities participating on the state's Reading Assessment (both standard and alternate).

Note: Connecticut has received permission to express its SIMR in a numeric form other than a percentage, to align with the state's approved ESEA Flexibility Performance Index. Connecticut has worked diligently to incorporate the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and SIMR into existing department initiatives, all of which center's around our ESEA Flexibility work. It is important to our state to use the same measures of student academic achievement across all monitoring and improvement initiatives, including our work with students with disabilities.

Reading Performance Index Baseline: FFY13 = 33.7

Targets: FFY14 = 33.7; FFY15 = 34.0; FFY16 = 34.3; FFY17 = 34.7; FFY18 = 35.0

The methodology for calculating the Reading Performance Index (RPI) starts with taking the scores on the statewide reading assessments for 3rd grade SWDs and converting that score into an appropriate index point value that ranged from 0 to 100. A reading performance index is calculated by averaging the index points earned by all SWD. The RPI baseline was calculated using the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) student scores from 2012-13, the most current statewide data available. Moving forward, the RPI will be calculated using data from the SB and Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA). Any changes to the calculation that are approved in Connecticut's ESEA Flexibility Renewal application will be incorporated into the SIMR data

used moving forward under the SSIP. Targets were established with the input of the SSIP stakeholders. These targets are reflective of the amount of growth that could be achieved in the RPI based on the 3-year cohort cycle of working with districts (i.e., one-third of the approximately 4500 SWD in 3rd grade statewide). These targets would need to be reset using the 2014-15 SB and CTAA data in the winter of 2015.

As a result of the initial root cause data analysis, stakeholders advised that the CSDE select 3rd grade reading as its SIMR. They cited the following in support of this recommendation:

- A SIMR focused on a specific disability category would be inappropriate as n-sizes are too small and it is not equitable to focus on one disability;
- 3rd grade SWD performed significantly lower than SWD in other grades;
- A single grade-level yields a large enough n-size to effect statewide change;
- SWD perform poorest on reading versus all other assessed subject areas; and
- Multiple state-level initiatives that emphasize early literacy could be leveraged.

Stakeholders further emphasized that previously reviewed compliance data (discipline, identification and race/ethnicity) along with education placement and chronic absenteeism data were meaningful to the theory of action at the LEA level, but constituted barriers to a statewide "one size fits all" intervention model. Therefore, they recommended that the CSDE avoid a singular focus on low SES districts, but instead to develop a plan that would differentiate interventions and supports by all district types (SES groups). They further requested that the CSDE investigate the best prediction model for the performance of SWD on 3rd grade reading assessments.

To determine the best prediction model, regression analyses began with a statewide (all student) model which found that poverty (student free/reduced lunch status) was the greatest predictor, followed by eligibility for special education and related services. A follow-up model was built for the SWD subgroup which found that educational setting (TWNDP) and enrollment in a low SES district were the greatest predictors of reading performance.

Considering the multiple examples where the impact of data varied by district type (e.g., discipline/days sanctioned; chronic absenteeism; race and disability category) as well as the assertion of stakeholders that interventions should be differentiated at the district level, the state-level analysis was insufficient. This led the CSDE to run three separate regression models for low, middle and high SES districts looking to see if data points rose in prominence when controlling for district SES group.

The outcome of the three new regression models based on low, middle and high SES were not as revealing as initially hypothesized. The only model explaining a significant amount of variance in 3rd grade reading achievement of SWDs was the high SES district model (R^2=.153). Race/ethnicity and TWNDP were the best predictors in this model, which reinforces the conclusions drawn earlier that in high SES districts - when a student is not educated in the general education classroom, achievement declines and race/ethnicity also play a role in these districts, which have predominately white student enrollment.

Selection of Districts Using a Tiered Intervention Framework

While stakeholder feedback and the additional regression models supported the need for a district-level tiered intervention model, questions remained on how to include districts in the work of the statewide SIMR. Existing CSDE infrastructure would not support a statewide intervention model covering all 170 IDEA districts. For this reason, the CSDE proposed an intervention framework following our newly redesigned special education monitoring cycle. In this new cycle, one-third of all districts would be eligible for inclusion in the intervention, each year. The three-year cycle was built to allow for a statewide representative sample of districts that also incorporates connected "feeder" elementary districts and receiving secondary districts into the same year's cycle. Each year's cycle does not include an equal number of districts as the goal of district inclusion was to meet the statewide representative sample requirement across race/ethnicity, age, grade, disability, and gender variables. Additionally, the tiered intervention framework was built to capitalize on existing state-level initiatives including the activities of the state's Turnaround Office and Bureau of Special Education's Focused Monitoring System (FM).

Connecticut's SSIP intervention framework will consist of three tiers:

- **Tier 1** of the intervention framework will include universal resources and supports relative to early literacy (i.e., best practice documents, professional learning modules, provision of the FM Protocol for use as an optional district self-study for the purpose of developing a Theory of Action) available to all 170 school districts throughout the three-year cycle.
- **Tier 2** of the intervention framework will include approximately 25 districts selected from Tier 1, using the districts most current SIMR data. Tier 2 (targeted) districts will receive additional supports provided by the CSDE in order to conduct a root cause analysis of third grade reading achievement, complete an infrastructure analysis, and develop a digital data wall outlining both of these analyses as well as the efficacy of existing related district-level initiatives. Further, Tier 2 districts will be provided the opportunity to participate in an FM Data Wall Showcase and associated professional learning activities. Tier 2 district selection criteria:
    - At least 10 district SWDs have valid scores on the 3rd grade reading assessment, and;
        - District 3rd grade reading performance index for SWDs is less than 60 points; or
        - The 3rd grade reading performance index gap between general education students and SWD is at least 30 points.
- **Tier 3** of the intervention framework will include approximately 15 districts selected from Tier 2, based upon review of the digital data wall, existing infrastructure and district-level initiatives. Tier 3 districts will benefit from intensive technical assistance and professional learning activities provided by the CSDE through one of two avenues:
    - Tier 3 districts that are one of Connecticut's Alliance districts (30 lowest performing districts in the state), will receive intensive interventions/supports as part of the existing initiatives of Connecticut's Turnaround Office in partnership with the Bureau of Special Education (BSE). At a minimum, these districts will be required to include a specific section in their Alliance District Improvement Plan regarding the SIMR and associated improvement activities targeting reading achievement of SWDs.

- All other districts selected for inclusion in Tier 3 will receive intensive interventions/supports through Connecticut's existing Special Education FM process. These districts will be required to develop a theory of action and corresponding improvement plan with supports by the CSDE and Connecticut's professional development center(s).

While Connecticut will tier interventions at the district-level, the SIMR will be measured statewide. Connecticut believes that the proposed intervention framework will allow districts to receive the level of support most beneficial to their individual need and encourage individualization of approaches to improving 3rd grade reading achievement. This district-level model allows the department to target the districts with the most need with intensive supports and all other districts with statewide intervention options, all while focusing on districts with large enough 3rd grade SWD counts to ensure improvement in the RPI statewide. Additionally, by using a 3-year cycle of monitoring, the CSDE will be able to include each district in some level of reading intervention, twice during the six years of the SSIP.

Additional data needed/methods and timelines to collect

- Connecticut is interested in including data regarding the readiness of students with disabilities entering Kindergarten into the district and state root cause analyses. While Connecticut currently does not have Kindergarten readiness data, the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and the CSDE are partnering with the University of Connecticut to develop a revised Kindergarten Entrance Inventory (KEI) and a tool for assessment related to the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) for children from birth to five years of age. In September 2013, Connecticut joined a seven-state consortium to develop the revised KEI. The consortium has aligned standards and work is underway on an inventory that addresses the domains of Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Physical Well-Being and Motor Development through a set of selected response items, performance tasks, and observational rubrics for teachers. It is expected that the new KEI will be available for full state-wide census administration in fall of 2017. The revised KEI will provide information to stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels about how well-prepared children are for kindergarten. Families and teachers will learn about each student's skills and relative strengths and weaknesses in these domains. School, local district, and state leaders will learn about students' levels of preparedness for kindergarten, which will facilitate programmatic decision-making at the school, district, community and state levels.
- The CSDE was interested in whether a district's choice of an early literacy intervention and associated assessments might bring clarity to the regression models. To that end, the department administered a survey of all district directors of special education requesting they report which reading interventions and which district-level formative reading assessments were being used in their districts. Survey data show that each district is using multiple interventions and multiple formative assessments. While useful for qualitative purposes in understanding district context, these data were not useful in conducting the regression.

Data Quality

Connecticut takes pride in the quality and comprehensiveness of its data collection systems and is confident in the accuracy, breadth and depth of available data. The Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation (BDCRE) conducts the data collections required under the IDEA and ESEA. All data regarding children are collected via multiple unique but "linked" data collection systems. These are complex systems that inter-relate based upon a unique state assigned student identifier (SASID) and the statewide PSIS-Registration System. PSIS-Registration uses the SASID to track all students in public education, their movements across and within school systems, and ensures that all other state data collections are working from the same base set of student information.

Valid and Reliable Data

Valid data are data that are an accurate representation of the population and free of error. Reliable data are data that are consistent over time. The CSDE uses a number of internal procedures to ensure the validity and reliability of data. These internal procedures include:

- SASID matching across all data collection systems;
- Thorough documentation of all data variables across all data collection systems, variable definitions, FAQs, and all associated data edits (technical and functional specifications documents, record layouts and data collection system handbooks);
- Extensive automated system edit checks and data cleaning processes;
- Numerous "live" data verification reports, year-to-year change reports, and data cleaning reports for LEAs within each of the CSDE's data collection systems, immediately accessible by LEAs upon submission of data (available on-line 24 hours a day, seven days a week);
- CSDE technical assistance staff assigned for each data collection system;
- Administrative override system in the Special Education Data Application and Collection (SEDAC) system that identifies potential data with noncompliance immediately upon reporting by the LEA; system additionally coordinates the official notification of a finding of noncompliance and tracks the verification of correction of noncompliance;
- Annual random sampling of individualized education programs (IEP) for inclusion in the SEDAC Desk Audit System;
- Published timelines for reporting;
- Annual coordinated training for LEA personnel on all major data collections systems: SEDAC, SIS, SIS-Registration, Discipline System, Evaluation Timelines, and Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO). By integrating all trainings, LEA personnel receive training simultaneously, become knowledgeable of how all separate CSDE data collection systems are linked and interdependent, and leave the training with knowledge of the CSDE's singular, coordinated message on student data; and
- Focused monitoring, conducted by the BSE, which validates data through triangulation with other data sources including: record reviews, desk audits, surveys, on-site observations, and student/teacher/parent interviews.

Each database has an extensive system of internal data edits, which help to ensure the reliability of the data. The internal data edits have three levels:

- Hard Edit: Data format is not suitable for the intended use; does not conform to data warehouse documentation requirements. Data are rejected; district required to resubmit.

- Soft Edit: Data is accepted into state system but violates internal data edits and must be reviewed by LEA for accuracy. In some cases the internal edit identifies noncompliance or data entry errors and in other cases the internal edit identifies LEA misunderstanding of the data field and its use. In addition to field level edits, year-to-year change reports and other aggregate date verification reports allow for the identification of systemic data anomalies. These reports are available within the data collection systems and do not require CSDE intervention for the LEA to access and assess immediately upon reporting data.
- Administrative Override: Data are accurate but outside the parameters of compliance with the IDEA. Noncompliance is identified and documented, findings and corrective actions are issued and timely correction and verification of noncompliance is all recorded within the database.

Reflection of Actual Practice

The CSDE examines its data collection processes on a regular basis to ensure the valid and reliable data collected reflect actual practice. Each year, BDCRE staff work collaboratively to revise the CSDE data collection systems' internal data edits and create new data checks that assist in ensuring accurate reporting and/or identification of inaccuracies in reporting. Through this collaboration, staff clarifies data element definitions, updates FAQs documents, and expands technical assistance opportunities. The staff, in turn, communicates revised information to LEA personnel.

In addition, data collection system handbooks are updated and provided to LEA personnel in two forms: the *Annual Handbook* and a *"Highlighted" Annual Handbook*, which draws attention to all changes from the previous published version. Also, the BDCRE holds an annual coordinated training on all major data collections systems for LEA personnel. Throughout the year, LEAs receive notification of any changes, updates and clarifications to the CSDE data collection systems and procedures via associated help pages online and e-mail correspondence from BDCRE staff.

Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity

The CSDE developed an internal SSIP leadership team that completed a "high-level" review of the State's systems and invited representatives from various agency offices, as well as external partners, to the November OSEP SSIP Technical Assistance meeting. In addition to OSEP and U.S. Department of Education staff, the CSDE's Chief Operating Officer; as well as representatives from the Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness, Performance Office, Turnaround Office, Academic Office, Choice Office, Talent Office, Regional School Choice Office (RSCO), State Education Resource Center (SERC), Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center – Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), and a representative from the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (ConnCASE); participated in the two-day meeting. Connecticut engaged Attorney Susan Marks, of the former Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC), to facilitate the group's use of NERRC's *In-Depth Infrastructure Analysis Tool*, which was designed to assist states in (1) analyzing strengths and challenges in infrastructure alignment, resources, organizational capacity and readiness; and (2) connecting the State's infrastructure to the SSIP. Having a diverse group of participants, with knowledge of existing systems across the agency and the state, allowed the CSDE to complete a comprehensive assessment of its current infrastructure in relation to the identification of an appropriate SIMR.

Since November 2014, further focused analysis of the State's infrastructure has continued. The CSDE's leadership team, which represents the entire agency, has met weekly to inform the development of Connecticut's new ESEA Flexibility Renewal request and the SSIP. The State recognizes that working collaboratively to align these two initiatives is critical for building capacity in districts to implement, scale up, and sustain the use of evidence-based practices to improve results for children with disabilities. The leadership team considered the SIMR, existing infrastructure systems and possible linkages with developing systems. The two initiatives were developed in tandem to complement one another and support shared goals.

The State also engaged its SSIP stakeholders to assist with the analysis of the State's infrastructure. In December 2014, the State provided information to the stakeholders on various existing State initiatives that had the potential to support the SSIP work. Stakeholders were then able to use that information, along with the data analysis, to comment on and inform the development of the State's SIMR.

Governance

In January 2012, the Connecticut State Board of Education approved the Commissioner of Education's reorganization plan for the CSDE. This reorganization resulted in a department structure based on strategic priorities rather than compliance and created the structure and capacity to implement legislative priorities and other agency initiatives. Since this structure was implemented in 2012, the CSDE has been successfully reorganized to include the Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness, led by the Chief Operating Officer, and the newly formed Academic, Performance, Talent, and Turnaround Offices. The leaders of these offices work in close collaboration to lead and oversee the implementation of the major aspects of Connecticut's educational reform efforts (e.g., ESEA Flexibility and the SSIP).

The CSDE seeks to maximize the use and impact of its resources in its efforts to improve results for all students, including students with disabilities. In doing so, CSDE is able to leverage financial, human and other resources to create initiatives that are supported, coordinated and represent priorities of the agency such as the SIMR-related work.

Within the CSDE, the BSE works closely with other Bureaus and Offices throughout the Department. This is done in a variety of ways, both formally and informally, to help ensure that efforts focused on improved results for students with disabilities are informed and coordinated throughout the agency.

Formally, communication and collaboration between sections of the Department occurs around various initiatives involving district-level work. For example, the BSE supports and works closely with staff in the Performance Office who are primarily responsible for a broad range of data collection activities related to students with disabilities. The Bureau of Special Education works closely with Performance Office colleagues to review and analyze student and district data, in an effort to identify districts that may be in need of specific intervention and support for the SIMR. Staff in the Performance Office, including the Part B Data Manager, take a lead role in providing information for a variety of federal reports, including the SPP/APR, as well as collect, compile and analyze data for focused monitoring.

The BSE also is directly connected to the Academic Office and staff who oversee Department work related to students with disabilities, including SRBI, which is Connecticut's RTI framework, as well as alternate assessments and test accommodations. Ongoing communication between relevant staff occurs to help ensure that students with disabilities throughout the state are provided with appropriate instruction/interventions and assessments. These are key components to the State's SSIP Theory of Action.

Related services are a significant part of services and supports for students with disabilities and the BSE supports a number of staff with related service expertise. These staff members, representing school psychology, social work, school counseling and health services, are physically located in the Department's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services & Adult Education and work closely with the BSE and contribute significantly to the CSDE's efforts to improve student results, and provide support and guidance within the CSDE as well as to the field. Supports are provided in relation to: students with emotional disturbance, suspension and expulsion, positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) and disproportionate identification of students with disabilities.

Connecticut has a new state agency, the OEC, established in 2013. The OEC helps to support young children with disabilities within the state's overall early childhood efforts. The CSDE and the BSE have a close working relationship with the OEC and respective staff share information between the two agencies as appropriate.

Finally, the BSE supports work within the CSDE's Information Technology (IT) Office. Working with staff in IT helps to ensure that the Department has effective and efficient systems in place to support a wide variety of special education related matters, including individual student data collection in the areas of: early childhood outcomes, discipline, and evaluation

timelines among others. These data are important for supporting the districts' work with the SIMR. Additionally, any system identified compliance concerns may negatively impact a district's implementation of its improvement plan.

In all of the above, the CSDE actively promotes communication and collaboration between the Bureaus and Offices and strives to ensure that the work is well coordinated. The goal is always to promote positive outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities. As appropriate, the CSDE utilizes IDEA set aside funds to financially support key staff or parts of staff in the Performance Office, the Academic Office, the Information Technology Office, and the Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services & Adult Education. These staff members are strategically positioned to be engaged in decision making for various agency initiatives and help to extend the focus on students with disabilities beyond the BSE. As with all complex organizations, there is always potential to improve communication between the various arms of the agency. This is one area for focus in the department as we integrate the SSIP work into the work of the Turnaround and Academic Offices.

The State prides itself in involving diverse stakeholders, understands that multiple perspectives are essential in helping to ensure positive outcomes, and values the input it receives. For example, the State Advisory Council on Special Education (SAC) and ConnCASE (state special education administrators professional organization) were provided with regular updates on the SSIP work and provided feedback on the plan's development. ConnCASE and the SAC also had several representatives serve on the SSIP Stakeholder Group.

The Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs) and the State Education Resource Center (SERC) are able to assist the state in developing implementation capacity at the State, regional, district and school levels. The state also coordinates with these organizations to disseminate information to the field and collect feedback on various initiatives. See more detailed explanations regarding the roles of the RESCs and SERC in the "Existing Initiatives" section below.

Fiscal

Through the Bureau of Grants Management, the State Department of Education is responsible for the distribution of $3 billion in state and federal funds for educational purposes. The Bureau's primary mission is to ensure that all towns, regional school districts, regional educational service centers and other eligible educational agencies receive their proper share of state and federal grants in aid for education. The office monitors public elementary and secondary education expenditures to ensure compliance with state requirements and for maintaining such fiscal records as are necessary to report on the financial condition of education in Connecticut.

The Bureau is divided into two areas, the Calculations and Pupil Data unit and the Process and Quality Control unity. Calculations and Pupil Data is responsible for the collection, maintenance, analyzing, and verification of various data elements (i.e., general enrollment, special student populations, income and poverty data, and expenditures in total and by detailed category) for use in calculating state and federal formula grant entitlements. They design all formula grant calculations based on federal and state statute and provide technical assistance to internal program managers and school business officials statewide. The Process and Quality

Control unit provides an independent quality control review of each grant calculation, each data analysis and each major report prepared within the division. This includes a process review to assess compliance with established procedures, to note any exceptions and to recommend process changes as appropriate. They maintain the agency's grant payment system. Some grants have statutory payment dates, but most are subject to a cash management requirement that necessitates monthly disbursements as grantees draw down available funds as needed. Finally they collect end-of-year expenditure reports for most state and federal grants and reconcile expenditures to the budgeted spending plan of the grantee. Expenditures which vary from the approved budget by more than the amount permitted under agency policy must be reviewed to determine whether a refund is necessary

The State funds improvement strategies with a combination of federal and state funds. The State uses both quantitative and qualitative data to guide the development and implementation of improvement strategies. As one of the State's primary professional development providers, SERC reviews multiple data points and creates Results-Based Accountability (RBA) report cards for various initiatives subsidized by the CSDE. The RBA report cards are used to assess the effectiveness of specific interventions/trainings, inform revisions and the development of new improvement strategies. For 2015-16 forward, the CSDE has targeted a portion of IDEA set aside funds to support activities related to the implementation of SSIP improvement strategies, specifically for Tier 2 and Tier 3 districts. The Chief Operating Officer, in partnership with the BSE Chief and the Bureau of Grants Management, will be responsible for approving the allocation of fiscal resources and monitoring use of funds related to the implementation of SSIP improvement strategies.

Quality Standards

As part of its commitment to high quality standards and assessments, the CSDE has undertaken the following ongoing activities:

- Actively engaged stakeholders using multiple pathways, including meetings, committees, councils, conferences, surveys, newsletters, communication toolkits, the launch of the Web site ctcorestandards.org by the Academic Office, as well as the creation and dissemination of parent materials translated into the top seven languages spoken by Connecticut students.
- Worked with the Governor's Common Core State Standards Task Force, which studied successful implementation practices and made recommendations to highlight needed strategic actions.
- Implemented Task Force recommendations, many of which were in process, including:
    - Provided supports for standards implementation in the form of hundreds of teacher mini-grants; 1200 days of customized, in-district coaching and technical assistance, teacher access to the SB Digital Library of resources; $34 million in technology updates for local education agencies; and 20,000 copies of an instructional guide for school and district leaders.
    - Deployed a statewide professional development plan focused on the significant instructional shifts needed to achieve mastery of new standards at each grade level; delivery of aligned supportive instruction for ELL and SWD; and the strategies, tools, and knowledge school and district administrators will require to lead transition to the

new standards. To date, over 1,000 coaches have been trained, and thousands of educators have participated in regional and/or online professional development.
    - Delivered dozens of workshops on the SB Assessment System, including assessment literacy, digital library resources, and critical training titled, "Connecting the Assessment Claims to Classroom Instruction." This training emphasizes that the best preparation for annual testing is high-quality curriculum and teaching to the standards.
- The first operational administration of the SB Assessment for students in grades 3-8 and 11 and an alternative assessment aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will occur in spring 2015.
- Creation of online resources and online courses for college and career ready standards with target audiences of teachers and leaders (to be launched in May 2015).

The area for improvement most critical for the BSE to fully realize the goal of the SIMR, is to increase capacity and efficacy of BSE staff in the area of research-based literacy instruction and interventions for students with disabilities. The Academic Office will be an essential partner in this internal professional learning.

Professional Development (PD)

The CSDE recognizes the importance of high quality professional development offerings for district personnel. The CSDE also recognizes the importance of parent/family training to empower parents and families in their role in the special education process. Therefore, the CSDE:

- partners with SERC, the RESC Alliance, CPAC and other organizations to ensure that regularly scheduled, relevant professional development offerings and parent/family trainings are available to the public to address various topics (both compliance-focused and results-focused) related to special education;
- looks regularly at the patterns and trends across monitoring activities and uses the information to plan appropriate future offerings with the SERC, the RESC Alliance, and other service delivery providers;
- utilizes the Turnaround Office organizes quarterly Convenings to provide Alliance Districts with professional development in the four framework areas (Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate, and Operations);
- instructed the Turnaround Office to review the Alliance District Plans and data from quarterly monitoring visits to develop the agenda for the Convenings; and
- contracted with Mass Insight, another PD partner for the CSDE, developed the Alliance District quarterly monitoring data dashboard and project manages the Alliance District applications.

The Academic Office is committed to providing CT educators with access to resource and tools and professional learning opportunities throughout the K-12 learning continuum.

The CTCORESTANDARDS.ORG is a Web site devoted to providing Connecticut educators, families and community members with valuable and accurate information as well as concrete supports such as:

- Model units and lessons and standards-aligned classroom materials;

- Program models to assist leaders and educators in their transition to the new standards;
- Resources for professional development and learning; and
- Parent-, student- and community-friendly materials to learn more about the CCS.

A recently added page to the site is dedicated to Universal Design for Learning (UDL). A general overview for understanding UDL is provided through linked resources and articles, videos and webinars. The implementation for UDL is supported through resources for planning for implementation, curriculum development, and classroom videos that link UDL to the CCS. There are also professional development modules and additional online resources for understanding and using UDL.

Additional professional development opportunities include:

- SB Digital Library, an online collection of instructional and professional learning resources contributed by educators for educators. These resources are aligned with the CCS.
- A professional learning series titled, "Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards Success for English Learners and Students with Disabilities," a 3-module series of professional learning opportunities are for educators who implement CCS aligned curriculum, instructional practices and assessments while meeting the needs of a wide variety of learners. Public Consulting Group's (PCG's) national experts in special education and English as a Second Language (ESL) have designed these professional learning modules for school teams consisting of a school principal (or other school leader), a special educator serving SWD, an ELL educator serving English learners and two general educators.
- CSDE Principal Webinar Series: The CSDE is collaborating with Connecticut Association of Schools to offer professional development opportunities to CT school principals, central office administrators and other invited guests for a series of workshops to support the implementation of the CCS.
- Smarter Balanced: Connecting the Claims to Instruction is professional development designed for Math and ELA teachers. Throughout these presentations, strategies and engaging activities are modeled to complement CCS aligned instruction, while also demonstrating connections to the SB assessments.
- Since 2012, the Academic Office, in partnership with the Commission on Children, the University of Connecticut and literacy experts from Literacy How and Hill for Literacy have launched a two year K-3 Reading Assessment Study as well as an Intensive K-3 Reading Model Pilot. The pilot, serving six low performing schools in Connecticut's Alliance and/or Priority districts, provides internal and external coaches with literacy expertise, extensive literacy leadership training and teacher literacy training to build capacity and sustainability. The pilot, funded by statute, functions to develop an exemplar K-3 Literacy model that incorporates research based literacy instruction and multiple tiered interventions and supports. The pilot will serve as an exemplar for all Connecticut's schools, but especially Connecticut's lowest performing schools.
- To expand the reach of the pilot's promising outcomes, a modified form of project focusing on literacy assessment and literacy leadership team training has been expanded to an additional 17 Alliance and/or Priority District schools in 2014-15.

- Connecticut is conducting a K-3 Reading Instruction Skills Survey to all Connecticut Teachers beginning in winter 2015. The survey's results will be used to plan extensive K-3 reading professional learning in the five fundamentals of early reading – phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary.

Potentially, an area for improvement in the area of professional development supports for schools and districts would begin with a needs assessment and review of existing PD, research new PD opportunities related to literacy and identify any issues of access to existing PD for teachers of students with disabilities.

Technical Assistance (TA)

Technical assistance activities are critical for ensuring the implementation of IDEA requirements and distributing best practices to LEA personnel and families. The BSE conducts a number of TA activities to help promote compliance and best practices in the provision of special education services across Connecticut.

For example, the BSE regularly publishes its Bureau Bulletin, which provides updates to LEA personnel and families regarding special education policy and practice, upcoming BSE activities and professional development and/or TA opportunities. In another example, the BSE Chief issues memoranda to special education directors regarding guidance about the provision of special education services or new/revised BSE practices. In a final example, the Commissioner of Education issues "C-Letters" to superintendents regarding guidance about education policy or new/revised CSDE practices.

The BSE also provides a great deal of TA to LEA personnel and families regarding the provision of special education services through telephone and e-mail contacts. The BSE has developed an organization system to manage the voluminous number of contacts received each week. Each BSE consultant accepts contacts from a group of LEAs in order to ensure the timely response to inquiries and establish a regular contact between the BSE and LEA personnel and families from a particular district. These communications serve as an opportunity to provide TA, establish a collaborative relationship between the CSDE and its constituents and promote both compliance and best practices regarding special education services.

In 2014-15, through a competitive application process, the CSDE's Academic Office funded 1200 days of TA and instructional coaching in implementation of the CCS including, but not limited to, K-3 Reading supports. These services were provided through our regional partners, RESCs, to 67 districts statewide.

The Performance Office spends a great deal of manpower on the provision of TA to LEAs across the state. In addition to annual statewide Data Summit trainings for all district data managers associated with each data collection system in the state, the staff of the Performance Office also train district Special Education Directors annually on their data collection and reporting responsibilities. Technical assistance is offered throughout the year in the form of webinars for all data collections where data accuracy is emphasized. Targeted TA is provided as a part of the FM digital data wall requirement of LEAs. Analysts in the Performance Office work one-on-one with LEA directors to support their data analysis needs for this portion of the improvement

planning process. Ongoing TA is provided by the state data managers for each collection in the form of help desk services and online TA documents including user guides, functional specifications and data dictionaries.

Data

A description of the CSDE data infrastructure is outlined in detail in both the "Data Analysis" and the "Existing Initiatives – Performance Office" sections.

Accountability/Monitoring

The CSDE's General Supervision System (GSS), coordinated by the BSE, is an integrated management system of CSDE compliance monitoring and program improvement activities. The purpose of the GSS is to ensure that LEAs are compliant in their implementation of the IDEA and Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Sections 10-76a to 10-76h, inclusive, and to improve the educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities.

The CSDE's GSS has been designed to support federal and state special education requirements with the intent of enabling LEA compliance, correcting any deficiencies identified through LEA monitoring, and improving organizational practices of LEAs. Further the GSS provides an infrastructure for examining the extent to which compliance monitoring and program improvement activities elicit critical patterns and trends for use in understanding the needs of individual LEAs and the state as a whole. Some activities under the GSS fall into one of two prongs – compliance monitoring activities and program improvement activities, while others appear in both. Under each prong, there are several CSDE activities that work together to ensure the overall purpose of the GSS and the CSDE's responsibility under 34 C.F.R Section 300.149 are met.

The BSE has tailored its policies, procedures and practices to address the identification and timely correction of noncompliance to align with the federal guidance and reflect state priorities. These policies and procedures apply across all compliance monitoring activities. While the compliance monitoring activities may appear seemingly unrelated, as a result of applying the same policies, procedures and practices to each monitoring area, there is a consistency across the activities.

The primary areas of focus of the CSDE's compliance monitoring activities are: improving educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities; and ensuring that LEAs meet the program requirements under the IDEA, Part B. The GSS emphasizes performance-based results across indicators in areas of compliance, data management, policies and practices, technical assistance, fiscal management, and improvement activities. While there is a BSE consultant dedicated to the coordination of the GSS and related activities, the compliance monitoring activities are managed individually by other BSE staff. These staff are the primary point of contact for their areas and are responsible for overseeing the day to day operations of his/her compliance monitoring activity. Consultants participate in on-site visits, conduct desk audits, review data submissions, and verify completion of corrective actions across multiple monitoring activities to support their colleagues and to keep informed regarding the procedures and practices being used within the system.

Procedures for each of the compliance monitoring activities are designed and implemented to ensure that LEAs meet the requirements under the IDEA, Part B. These procedures include the use of a variety of activities, such as on-site visits, district self-assessments, annual performance reporting, desk audits, complaint investigations and program review evaluations, which lead to a determination around LEA compliance.

With regard to ESEA Flexibility Accountability and Monitoring, Connecticut uses a five category school classification system (C.G.S. Section 10-223e). The CSDE uses the most recent available data for all ESEA accountability indicators (including results from the SB assessment in 2014-15) to update its list of school classifications and to publish annual Profile & Performance Reports (PPR), which outline a school or district's progress on a wide variety of college and career ready metrics. Per state law, the school classifications will be labeled as Category 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. Category 4 will be newly identified Turnaround and Focus Schools. Category 5 will be previously identified Turnaround and Focus schools that have not exited.

The CSDE will continue to target interventions and supports in the previously identified 30 lowest performing districts (i.e., the Alliance Districts). The CSDE's Turnaround and Performance Teams partner with districts to ensure that schools in each of these accountability categories receive appropriate levels of support. The lower-performing schools receive more support from the state, their home districts, and RESCs and are required to engage in a process of diagnosis, planning, intervention, and monitoring. The higher-performing schools, however, are given the information they need to drive their own improvement.

The CSDE helps build district and school capacity through financial resources and TA through Alliance District programs by partnering with the districts as they plan for school and district level intervention, as well as the removal of barriers and duplication. The state's 30 lowest-performing districts receive substantial funding, conditional on district reform plans in key areas defined by the state. Each Alliance District plan must identify critical improvements in academic achievement, talent recruitment and retention, positive climate and culture, and improved operations. The State's Turnaround Team acts as a resource to districts as they implement and monitor interventions in low performing schools.

As with all major CSDE initiatives, stakeholder input is essential to the State's accountability and monitoring processes. Stakeholder involvement at the ESEA Flexibility level included a wide variety of parent, school and community group representatives at all levels of design and implementation planning. BSE stakeholders groups meet throughout the annual monitoring cycle to provide input on the review and revision of ongoing monitoring activities.

Finally, the CSDE Performance Office and BSE worked diligently to ensure alignment of the SIMR with the ESEA Flexibility calculations. Work moving forward will focus efforts toward coordinated reporting of the SIMR on the State's PPRs in an effort to highlight the SSIP and reading achievement of SWDs.

Existing Initiatives

Focused Monitoring (FM) System

The intent of the BSE's FM System is to monitor procedural compliance with the IDEA while providing support and TA to LEAs toward their effectiveness of efforts to educate SWDs. Connecticut's FM System has been in place for 11 years and has undergone targeted updates several times to meet the changing priorities of the state and the needs of districts to effectively educate SWD. The focused monitoring steering committee (FMSC) is comprised of diverse stakeholders representing various education interests such as IDEA Part C, General and Special Education Administrators, SAC, CPAC, ConnCASE, SERC, and multiple CSDE offices. The FMSC has been integral in advising the State on development of the below described practices and procedures. With the support of the FMSC, the FM System has been leveraged as the process driver used to implement and monitor the SSIP at the district level.

The BSE's FM System has three tiers:

Tier 1: Tier 1 consists of an annual IDEA compliance review and the FMSC analysis of data related to SWDs for approximately 60 Connecticut LEAs. Based on the review of these data, the FMSC identifies data of concern and recommends approximately 25 LEAs of the original 60 to participate in Tier 2 of the FM system. The remaining LEAs not identified for participation in Tier 2, are provided universal Tier 1 supports for use in district.

Tier 2: In Tier 2, approximately 25 of the original 60 LEAs participate in the development and submission of a digital data wall presentation based on their data of concern. Submissions are reviewed by CSDE and SERC consultants. Approximately 15 LEAs are identified to receive additional support and TA under Tier 3 of the FM system to address their data of concern. The remaining LEAs not identified for participation in Tier 3, are provided universal Tier 1 supports for use in district.

Tier 3: In Tier 3, identified LEAs participate in up to four in-district sessions designed to improve outcomes for SWDs. Activities include a further analysis of the district's data of concern and root causes, the development of a district focus for improvement, a comprehensive review of the district's infrastructure as related to the identified focus for improvement, the development of a Theory of Action Implementation Plan and planning progress-reporting conferences.

The BSE's established FM system is being leveraged to become a key component in the State's SSIP theory of action. During the data analysis activity in Tier 1of the FM process, data related to the State's SIMR will be the primary factor in determining which districts are selected for SSIP Tier 2 level supports. Tier 2 and Tier 3 of the FM system have also been reworked to align with the targeted and intensive supports offered in the SSIP work with districts.

State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)

The SPDG is aimed at sustaining and expanding a coordinated, statewide system of professional development, coaching, and support to schools, PreK-12, to improve educational outcomes through a continuum of academic and behavior supports for all students. Its goal is to increase the number of schools in the state implementing scientifically research-based core literacy

instruction and school-wide positive behavioral supports driven by CCS and personal/social learning expectations through the provision of multi-tiered interventions and use of data driven decision-making. The grant strives to improve the academic achievement of all students with a specific focus on SWD, students of color, and ELL.

In addition to programming on Connecticut's SRBI Framework, comprehensive reading instruction, PBIS, and data driven decision-making, participants will receive support on determining educational benefit for students with disabilities, developing standards-based IEPs, and increasing family/community engagement. Participation in SPDG includes: seven days of differentiated, statewide professional development; six days of on-site, job-embedded technical assistance and coaching support tailored to meet the needs of each school; a stipend to defray cost for substitute coverage, data collection systems, and instructional materials; annual use of School-Wide Information Systems (SWIS); and regular facilitated self-assessment of implementation. To date, seventy-eight schools representing thirty-eight of Connecticut's 201 school districts have participated in the SPDG process.

Connecticut's SPDG also has an extensive stakeholder group that advises this work. This group is comprised of the following: the RESC Alliance, Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC), CPAC, CT Birth to Three System, the School Improvement Grant (SIG) Network, SERC, and the Center for Behavioral Education & Research (CBER).

A clear connection exists between Connecticut's SPDG and SSIP/SIMR, and the work already completed for the SPDG can be leveraged to support the new SSIP work. Some of the SPDG resources and materials, either developed specifically for the SPDG initiative or created separately but used in the process, can be used for district SIMR work. For example, SERC has developed an IEP Rubric that measures the quality of IEP development for SWD. The rubric is constructed on the premise that all students are entitled to the general education curriculum within the least restrictive environment (LRE), and therefore the design of an IEP is focused on student outcomes based in the general education curriculum. The rubric provides educators and families a means to assess the quality of an IEP by shifting the IEP from a mere list of legal or compliance tasks to an instructional tool, supporting a student in achieving the same general education standards as non-disabled peers. Also used in the SPDG process is an SRBI Self-Assessment Tool that focuses on Instruction, Assessment and Decision-Making Systems as well as Leadership; as well as a Literacy Evaluation Tool (LET), that is designed to provide feedback on the efficacy of literacy curriculum and instruction.

Turnaround Office

The Alliance District Program is a unique and targeted investment in Connecticut's thirty lowest-performing districts. Connecticut General Statute (C.G.S.) Section 10-262u established a process for identifying Alliance Districts and allocating increased Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding to support district strategies to dramatically increase student outcomes and close achievement gaps by pursuing bold and innovative reforms. Pursuant to C.G.S. § 262u, each Alliance District's receipt of its designated ECS funding is conditioned upon district submission and the Commissioner of Education's approval of a plan, district progress and performance relative to the plan, and subsequent annual amendments, in the context of the district's overall strategy to improve academic achievement. The CSDE reviews district plans on an annual basis

and approves plans aligned to the goals of the program. Annual plan approval is predicated upon district implementation and performance during the prior year. Each Alliance District is assigned a Turnaround Office Consultant who conducts quarterly monitoring meetings and provide technical assistance on the development, implementation, and monitoring of the district plan. In preparation for quarterly monitoring meetings, districts complete a dashboard and submit data relative to reading and math achievement, student and faulty attendance, and discipline. They also provide updates on the implementation of their Alliance District Plan.

The CSDE Turnaround Office has developed a framework for school and district transformation efforts. This framework identifies four overarching and research-based leverage points for school and district improvement: Academics, Talent, Culture and Climate, and Operations. Districts receive professional development in these areas through quarterly meetings. Alliance Districts are required to address each of these areas in their plan by developing a core set of strategies. Preschool through third grade literacy is one of the academic related reform priorities that Alliance Districts may identify in their plan.

Priority School Districts are school districts identified as having the greatest academic need in the state. Currently 15 of the 30 Alliance Districts are also Priority Districts. This program was initiated by the State Board of Education in 1983, to improve the quality of education available and to focus on funding a specific set of initiatives. One of these initiatives is early reading intervention. Priority School Districts are required by statute to spend at least 20 percent of their funds on promoting early literacy. Priority School Districts are also required by statute to submit K-3 reading universal screening assessment data for all students to identify those that are "substantially deficient" in reading. This screening occurs multiple times per year. While these data might be useful in future analyses, currently the reporting limitations make the data unusable at a district-level for inclusion in the Tier 2 targeted supports root cause analysis work.

Under the proposed SSIP implementation framework, Alliance Districts selected for inclusion in SSIP Tier 2 Targeted Supports will be required to conduct a root cause analysis and create a digital data wall outlining the district's conclusions and strategies for improved literacy outcomes for students with disabilities in grade 3. The CSDE team evaluating the submitted data wall will include consultants from the BSE, the Academic Office, as well as Turnaround Office. Regardless of whether any Alliance District is selected for SSIP Tier 3 intensive supports, all Alliance districts will be required to revise their approved Alliance District Plan to specifically include data and improvement activities around a reform priority focused on Kindergarten through grade 3 literacy for students with disabilities. Any further intensive supports provided to Tier 3 Alliance Districts will be managed through the Turnaround Office with support from the BSE.

In 2016, districts will be required to include a specific, targeted goal to address K-3 Reading in their Alliance District Program application. While many are actively engaged in early literacy improvements, a focus on students with disabilities is not always explicit. This addition to the application process will further the improvement efforts in every Alliance District.

Academic Office

Connecticut Core Standards (CCS)

The CCS, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2010, provide teachers, students and families with clear expectations of what a student should know and be able to do at each grade level. The standards focus on ELA & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects and Mathematics. School districts develop local curricula based on these college and career standards. Taken together, standards, high quality curriculum, and instruction prepare students, including SWDs, to meet the demands of 21st Century study, work and life.

In ELA/literacy, students are exposed to a balance of literary and informational texts across all subject areas, including social studies, science and the technical subjects. With attention to reading closely and carefully, students are encouraged to use text evidence to support critical thinking, conclusions drawn, and analyses made within and across texts. Students are also expected to develop facility with academic language, and produce clear and coherent writing across multiple modes for a variety of purposes and audiences. Additionally, focused instruction will help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of speaking and listening skills, so that as students progress through elementary, middle and high school, they will be ready for the demands of college and career.

The CCS are the foundation for curricula development in local school districts, including literacy instruction in the early grades, which are included explicitly in the CCS for ELA. Known as "foundational reading skills" within the standards, there can be no doubt that teachers must address all components of early reading including phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary. These standards and the district-level curriculum are important keys to the individualized root cause analysis required of SSIP Tier 2 and 3 districts and will act as drivers for the development of their early literacy improvement plans for SWD.

Connecticut's K-3 Literacy Initiative (CK3LI)

The priority goals of CK3LI are:

1. Implement leadership routines and systems necessary to institute evidence-based literacy practices within a tiered instructional model and build capacity to ensure sustainability of the school-wide literacy model.
2. Collaborate with schools to implement research-based programs within a multi-tiered system of support framework.
3. Create a consistent knowledge base and common language among teachers that is based on the overview of reading, current reading research and evidence-based practices in reading and writing instruction.
4. Collaborate with the school leaders to establish a framework and process for using scientifically-based dynamic assessments to make instructional decisions at the district, school, grade, classroom and individual student levels.
5. Develop and implement a school-home/family model for student support.

On July 9, 2014, the Connecticut State Board of Education approved a menu of research-based K-3 reading assessments. The menu of research-based reading assessments must be used by districts for the purpose of Universal Screening for Reading of the entire K-3 student population. Many of the assessments found on the menu (curriculum based measures and computer adaptive

measures) are already used widely in Grades K-3 across Connecticut. These measures have been evaluated for technical adequacy through the National Center on Response to Intervention.

From a PD perspective, the CK3LI has developed the following training modules:

- Phonological Awareness: The Key to How Language Works
- Enhancing Oral Language: A Pathway to Deep Literacy
- Explicit Small Group Reading Instruction
- Comprehension: The Journey to Strategic Thinking
- Enhancing Vocabulary to Unlock the Treasures of Text
- Explicit and Differentiated Code Instruction
- Fluency: The Essential Link to Building Comprehension
- Independent Literacy Practice: The Key to Mastery
- The Principal's Role in the Instructional Process of Literacy

While currently the CK3LI is only fully implemented in under 20 schools across the state, the potential exists to scale up this initiative progressively each year through the inclusion of SSIP Tier 2 and 3 districts. The existing training modules could also be leveraged easily as they directly relate to the district, school and classroom level SIMR work.

Scientific research-based interventions (SRBI)

Connecticut's SRBI, the state's RTI framework, is a systemic approach with successive tiers that involve three increasingly intensive levels of intervention. All three tiers are part of a comprehensive educational system involving scientific, research-based core general education practices and interventions, with supports from a wide range of support services personnel. In particular, the tiers should not be viewed as categorical placements or as "gates" to special education. Multiple resources are readily available on the state's website to assist districts, including three topic briefs, training materials, data team guidance documents and parent informational materials. These resources will be used as needed to support district development of strong SRBI frameworks to further support appropriate tiered literacy instruction.

On May 21, 2015, the CSDE is partnering with SERC to present the spring 2015 Symposium II which has the theme of Using Data for Development, Decision Making, and Effective Instruction. The intended outcomes for participants are:

- Generate and learn critical factors to consider when planning and making ongoing adjustments to school articulated approach to teaching to ensure achievement;
- Generate and learn promising instructional practices targeting particular instructional focus areas and student populations and supporting research basis; and
- Generate and learn collaborative approaches and practices for effectively including families in school-based decision making to improve student achievement.

Performance Office

The Performance Office is responsible for the timely and accurate collection of all federal and state mandated data necessary to support informed decision-making and action by schools, districts, the CSDE and other stakeholders. The Office develops performance metrics, establishes targets and published analyses and reports to enable provision of supports and interventions tied to state initiatives supported by the work of other CSDE offices.

Connecticut's data systems are coordinated under our state's Agency Data Governance Body which has both formal and informal committees that control decision making regarding data security, access, use and collection. Additionally, the CSDE Data Governance body sits under an inter-agency data governance umbrella that supports interoperability of our state systems.

Connecticut has an SLDS that is unique-identifier driven from preschool through higher education. The SLDS helps turn data into information regarding college and career readiness and early warning indicators. The CSDE is moving toward a unified vision of comprehensive, actionable, longitudinal data accessible by both internal and external constituents, including parents and community members. It is this vision that allowed for the extensive analysis provided under the "Data Analysis" section of the SSIP; specifically the high level of sophistication of our data systems and the longitudinal linkages embedded into the system's design.

More detail about the work of Connecticut's Performance office to ensure valid and reliable data collection can be seen within the "Data Analysis" section.

Talent Office

Connecticut recognizes that teacher and principal administrator evaluation and support systems are a critical part of its comprehensive plan to build an environment that ensures equal equity opportunity and excellence in education for all Connecticut students, including SWDs. Since early 2012, the CSDE has engaged the leadership and expertise of a legislatively- enacted council of educators, policymakers, and advocates, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), in the undertaking of a major reform effort to consult with the CSDE in the development of new guidelines for the evaluation of teachers and administrators across the state.

In February 2012, PEAC agreed on the following design for the state model for administrator evaluation and support system:

- Multiple student learning measures/indicators: 45 percent, half of which are based on the state test and the other half to be locally determined, with parameters set by the state;
- Observations of principal performance and practice: 40 percent, based on the six performance expectations in the Connecticut Leadership Standards; it includes a focus on all practices involving teacher quality and teacher evaluation;
- Staff, community, and/or student feedback including surveys: 10 percent, based on all or some of the six performance expectations in the Connecticut Leadership Standards; and
- Teacher performance growth and effectiveness outcomes: five percent based on teacher effectiveness measures such as a) increasing the percentage of teachers making adequate growth in student achievement; or b) differing strategies for teachers at differing levels of effectiveness.

The state's teacher and principal administrator evaluation and support systems will play a critical role in developing the capacity of district staff to provide comprehensive literacy supports to SWD. The CSDE's overarching goal is to ensure Connecticut's new evaluation and support system serves as an effective tool for educators and administrators to measure their performance, identify where members need support, and provide appropriate professional development strategies. Furthermore, on-going analysis of the performance of special educators on the

Foundations of Reading Test will assist the state in making recommendations to the state's teacher training programs, and in developing appropriate PD for in-service teachers to ensure our SWDs are receiving literacy instruction from qualified personnel.

The Office of Early Childhood

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) was established in 2013 to coordinate and improve the various early childhood programs and components in the state to create a cohesive high-quality early childhood system. The OEC oversees a coordinated system of early childhood care, education and support. The OEC:

- Provides funding, standards, regulations, training and oversight to ensure that early care and education programs for young children
  - are safe, healthy and nurturing;
  - effectively support children's physical, social, emotional and cognitive development; and,
  - are accessible to all children, particularly those facing barriers, risks or challenges to their healthy development and success.
- Provides home visiting services, funding and training to support families raising young children to ensure the children's health, well-being and positive growth and development and to prevent child abuse or neglect.

Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) were created through the work of the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet and its Early Learning Standards Workgroup. In addition, over 100 state and national experts participated in some way during the development process, helping to ensure a strong and comprehensive set of Early Learning Standards for Connecticut.

The CT ELDS were published in the spring of 2014 and include the areas of: cognition, social and emotional development, physical development and health, language and literacy, creative arts, mathematics, science and social studies. The learning progressions within the CT ELDS promote:

- Equity for all children, through the setting of high, but appropriate, expectations;
- High-quality early learning experiences, by providing clear goals and trajectories of learning;
- Provision of individual support, based on each child's growth and development;
- Families' understanding of what their children are learning and how they can support them;
- Teachers' understanding of age-appropriate content and approaches to children's learning; and,
- Communication across sectors, based upon these common goals for children.

Success on the state's literacy SIMR will depend highly on SWDs having a strong literacy foundation built during the early development years of birth through age five. Therefore, the BSE will be partnering with the OEC and using the CT ELDS to ensure preschool educators are well trained in implementing appropriate literacy instruction, assessing students' literacy skills, and providing individualized supports for young children and families. The OEC will be a valuable partner as the CSDE moves into Phase 2 of the SSIP.

Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center

The Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), serving as Connecticut's federally designated Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center is an important partner of the CSDE and the BSE in their activities to support SWD and their families. For more than 15 years the CSDE has had a Personal Services Agreement (PSA) with CPAC that illustrates this shared work and provides CPAC with funding to help support its efforts.

The purpose of the current PSA is to provide financial support to the CPAC to further the CSDE's continued development and expansion of a comprehensive system of supports and training for parents and educators. It is expected that strong and effective collaboration between families and schools will serve to improve services and outcomes for SWD ages 3 through 21.

Under the provisions of the current agreement, CPAC will provide parent participants with ongoing training opportunities to update their knowledge of topics including: policies, practices and procedures related to the implementation of the IDEA, the SPP/APR/SSIP, the ESEA and the CCS. Specific to the SSIP and the SIMR, CPAC will: 1) support the CSDE in district level monitoring activities; 2) participate in the stakeholder group working with the CSDE around implementation of the SSIP and efforts to support the SIMR; 3.) actively participate in site visits to school districts in support of the development of improvement plans; 4.) share relevant information with parents and families; and conduct follow-up parent activities (such as parent training and parent group technical assistance), as needed.

State Education Resource Center (SERC)

The SERC, formerly known as the Special Education Resource Center, was established by the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) in 1969 as a centralized resource for families and educators regarding special education. In 2005, the CGA amended the statute to rename it the State Education Resource Center, signifying a meaningful integration of special education and general education into a single system.

The SERC is a quasi-public agency primarily funded by the CSDE. The SERC services a broad range of constituents, including state level policy makers, educators, families, and community members through a variety of venues and mediums, including the library, web and in-person supports. The SERC is responsible for three major functions: provision of resources, a centralized library, and professional learning; and provides PD and information dissemination on the latest research and best practices to educators, service providers, and families throughout the state, as well as job-embedded technical assistance and training within schools, programs, and districts in collaboration with the CSDE.

The SERC Library offers a comprehensive collection of resources for educators and parents, including tests, online journals, a DVD and video collection, CD-ROM programs, young people's disability awareness literature, and reference and research materials. The SERC has produced several resources on assistive technology (AT) for educators and families serving children with a range of needs. The SERC had supported the CSDE and the CT Birth to Three Program in completing the Connecticut Assistive Technology Guidelines. The SERC coordinates many conferences on behalf of the CSDE and Birth to Three, such as the "Together

We Will" conference which provides valuable training, resources, and networking for Birth to Three and Early Childhood service providers and educators.

The SERC has been assisting schools in their efforts to implement a continuum of academic and behavioral supports for all students using SRBI and PBIS. SERC's Analyzing Literacy Data (ALD) project, which SERC first developed as part of a previous SPDG in 2007, is built around establishing achievable, but ambitious literacy goals for students at all levels. It is intended to improve outcomes for the entire group of students as well as students with IEPs, FRL students, ELLs and students of color.

As SERC has already established a wide array of resources and supports for districts in areas related to the state's SSIP/SIMR (e.g., SRBI, AT, ALD project), the CSDE will be well positioned to capitalize on aligning existing TA and PD with the refocused vision of FM and the SSIP tiered supports. The SERC will be a primary partner as the state looks to develop and expand the provision of TA related to literacy for SWDs.

Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC)

The RESCs were created more than 40 years ago by legislative mandate to help districts communicate and collaborate. Some years later, a formal Alliance of Connecticut's six RESCs was established. RESCs are public education agencies whose main purpose is to "furnish programs and services" to Connecticut's public school districts. RESCs' cost efficient, cooperative efforts have saved money for Connecticut school districts and have enabled schools to expand services beyond what they could have accomplished alone. The RESC Alliance works with the Departments of Children & Families, Education, Mental Health & Addiction Services, Developmental Services, Public Health, Social Services and the Board of Education & Services for the Blind (BESB) on statewide issues and projects. Each of the six state RESCs impacts public education in numerous ways including: operating public magnet schools, operating public special education segregated programs, and providing PD and instructional support services for member districts in its region.

Nearly five percent of Connecticut's SWD are educated within RESC schools and programs. Additionally, the PD consultants at each of the RESCs have expertise in curriculum development, literacy instruction, SRBI, differentiated instruction, universal design for learning (UDL), and other related areas. Because of these two reasons, the RESCs will be another key partner as the CSDE moves into Phase 2 of the SSIP.

State Advisory Council (SAC)

The SAC is Connecticut's "State Advisory Panel" per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the C.G.S. In accordance with the federal special education regulations (see 34 C.F.R. § 300.167), the purpose of the SAC is to provide "policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in the State." The SAC membership requirements are described in 34 C.F.R. § 300.168 and in the C.G.S. Section 10-76i. A majority of the members of the SAC must be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities (ages birth through 26). Members are appointed by the Governor of the State of Connecticut, or any other official authorized under State law to make such appointments. The SAC members must be individuals involved in, or concerned with the education of children with

disabilities; and representative of the ethnic and racial diversity of, and the types of disabilities found in, the state population. The duties of the SAC are described in 34 C.F.R. § 300.169 and in the C.G.S. Section 10-76i. The federal duties are the following actions:

- advise the SEA of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities;
- comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities;
- advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the Act;
- advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B; and
- advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

The SAC meets regularly throughout the year and council representatives have been assigned to the following State agency stakeholder groups: SSIP, Academic Achievement Indicator, Disproportionality Indicators, Evaluation Timeline Indicator, Graduation/Dropout Indicators, Parent Involvement Indicator, Preschool Indicators, Education Placement Indicator, Suspension and Expulsion Indicator, Transition/Post-School Outcomes Indicators, Transition Task Force, BESB, Connecticut Equity Plan Stakeholder Group, State Board of Education Special Education Ad Hoc Committee and Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). The SAC Ad Hoc Committees include: SRBI, School Climate, Approved Private Special Education Programs (APSEP), and Education Evaluation and Support.

As outlined in federal regulation, the SAC's duties include advising the state on the unmet needs of SWDs statewide. The SAC's representation already exists throughout the BSE's SPP/APR, which includes the SSIP/SIMR. Their feedback on our progress related to the SIMR will be critical to continuous improvement in the area of literacy for SWD.

Higher Education

There are SSIP/SIMR related initiatives being incorporated into Connecticut institutes of higher education teacher preparation programs. Beginning in July 2015, any program of teacher preparation leading to professional certification is required to include, as part of the curriculum, instruction in literacy skills and processes that reflects current research and best practices in the field of literacy training, and include the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based interventions for, students with dyslexia (Public Act 14-39).

While the benefits of the new legislation may not be realized immediately, including coursework on the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based interventions for, students with dyslexia in the state's teacher preparation programs will help ensure that Connecticut students are given appropriate reading interventions and, if appropriate, referred for special education evaluation in a timely manner.

In July 2013, the Talent Office applied for and was awarded a grant from the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability and Reform (CEEDAR) Center, funded by the OSEP. The purpose of the grant was to support intensive technical assistance in:

- reforming teacher and leadership preparation programs to embed evidence-based practices;
- revising licensure standards to align with reforms in teacher and leadership preparation;
- refining personnel evaluation systems in teacher and leadership preparation programs; and
- realigning policy structures and professional learning systems.

The CEEDAR initiative aligns and integrates seamlessly with all major Talent Office and Academic Office goals and strategies including:

- PEAC
- Professional Learning System Reform
- Transforming Connecticut's educator preparation systems: Educator Preparation Advisory Council (EPAC)
- Network for Transforming Educator Preparation (NTEP) Grant from the Council of Chief School Officers (CCSSO)
- CCS and SB Assessment Implementation
- Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program (Connecticut's induction program for beginning teachers); and
- Connecticut's SRBI Framework

A CEEDAR state leadership team, a subcommittee of EPAC to work on preparation curriculum reform, was convened in February 2014. It includes faculty teams from Central Connecticut State University, University of Saint Joseph and Southern Connecticut State University, as well as school district representatives, advocacy groups and professional organizations.

With the support of the national CEEDAR Center, the CSDE and faculty teams are receiving intensive technical assistance to reform existing curricula to ensure the integration of evidence-based practices into content instruction and field placements for candidates in teacher preparation programs. The focus is to improve the delivery of supports for SWD, ELLs and struggling learners in K-12 schools throughout the state. The CEEDAR Center and CSDE have sponsored statewide institutes with national experts in the field of evidence-based practices in literacy and writing. Currently the faculty teams are analyzing their initial teacher preparation program curricula and syllabi against research-based innovation configurations to determine gaps, redundancies or priorities to consider in the redesign of program curricula. The revised curricula will be submitted for a peer review by national experts and faculty teams will be provided feedback. The institutions will then implement the revised curricula focused on evidence-based practices in literacy and writing, as well as measure impact of the training on teacher candidates' skills in evidence-based practices ability to lead K-12 students to demonstrate competency to improve core and specialized instruction in the college- and career-ready standards in reading, writing and comprehension skills in argumentation. Based on the work of the CEEDAR partner institutions, the CSDE and members of the faculty teams will coordinate a plan to scale up to all other educator preparation institutions in 2017.

Stakeholder Input

In September 2013, at its annual "Back to School Meeting" with LEAs from throughout the state, the BSE made available a fact sheet outlining the process for the development of the

SSIP. That document was also posted on the SERC Web site with other meeting materials. In April 2014, a letter was sent to the ConnCASE requesting members representing each of the state's regions to participate in a statewide stakeholder group designed to assist the CSDE with disseminating information and acquiring input on the SSIP from their region's constituents. It was further requested that those participants be chosen from LEAs that represent the state's economic and racial diversity. A similar request was forwarded to the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS). Additional participants were sought from the following groups/organizations: SERC, CPAC, SAC, the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, and the African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities. The stakeholder group was further comprised of a subset of representatives from offices within the BSE, the Performance Office, as well as the Academic and Turnaround Offices. Multiple informational meetings were conducted during the summer of 2014 to familiarize stakeholders with the SSIP process.

At its September 2014 "Back to School Meeting", the BSE provided an update on the state's progress with the SSIP development process. Associated materials were posted on the SERC Web site. That same month, a similar presentation was made to the SAC. Since the fall of 2014, monthly stakeholder meetings have taken place, with conference call access made available to participants unable to travel to the meeting site. Updates on the process of SSIP development have been provided at monthly meetings of the BSE, providing BSE staff the opportunity to provide input. In an effort to align the SSIP with Connecticut's ESEA Flexibility renewal request and gain input on the SSIP from CSDE personnel throughout the agency, the BSE's SSIP Program Manager has participated in weekly meetings with the CSDE's Leadership Team.

Multiple stakeholder meetings, as well as meetings among internal participants were devoted to infrastructure analysis aimed at determining system capacity to support improvement and aimed at identifying means to build capacity to implement, scale up and sustain evidence-based practices to improve results. Specifically, SERC facilitated an SSIP meeting during which external stakeholders participated in a gallery walk designed to elicit member input regarding: best practices in literacy instruction; effective interventions targeted at each of the three tier levels of the implementation framework; and potential partners for Phase 2 of the SSIP.

A subset of external stakeholders worked with representatives from across all CSDE Offices and OSEP/ESEA staff in a process utilizing NERRC's *In-Depth Infrastructure Analysis Tool*, designed to assist the State in (1) analyzing strengths and challenges in infrastructure alignment, resources, organizational capacity and readiness; and (2) connecting the State's infrastructure to the SSIP. This process allowed the CSDE to complete a comprehensive assessment of its current infrastructure in relation to the identification of an appropriate SIMR.

State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)

Increase the reading performance of all 3rd grade students with disabilities statewide, as measured by Connecticut's Approved ESEA Flexibility Performance Index.

Connecticut's SIMR is aligned to SPP/APR Indicator 3: Participation and Performance of Children with IEPs on Statewide Assessments. While the SIMR is an academic achievement indicator, and therefore aligned with Indicator 3, it is not completely congruent with the measurement and targets of Indicator 3. The SIMR is aligned with Connecticut's Approved ESEA Flexibility and only represents the subgroup of 3rd grade students with disabilities participating on the state's Reading Assessment (both standard and alternate).

Note: Connecticut has received permission to express its SIMR in a numeric form other than a percentage, to align with the state's approved ESEA Flexibility Performance Index. Connecticut has worked diligently to incorporate the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and SIMR into existing department initiatives, all of which center's around our ESEA Flexibility work. It is important to our state to use the same measures of student academic achievement across all monitoring and improvement initiatives, including our work with students with disabilities.

Reading Performance Index Baseline: FFY13 = 33.7

Targets: FFY14 = 33.7; FFY15 = 34.0; FFY16 = 34.3; FFY17 = 34.7; FFY18 = 35.0

The methodology for calculating the Reading Performance Index (RPI) starts with taking the scores on the statewide reading assessments for 3rd grade SWDs and converting that score into an appropriate index point value that ranged from 0 to 100. A reading performance index is calculated by averaging the index points earned by all SWD. The RPI baseline was calculated using the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) student scores from 2012-13, the most current statewide data available. Moving forward, the RPI will be calculated using data from the SB and Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA). Any changes to the calculation that are approved in Connecticut's ESEA Flexibility Renewal application will be incorporated into the SIMR data used moving forward under the SSIP. Targets were established with the input of the SSIP stakeholders. These targets are reflective of the amount of growth that could be achieved in the RPI based on the 3-year cohort cycle of working with districts (i.e., one-third of the approximately 4500 SWD in 3rd grade statewide). These targets would need to be reset using the 2014-15 SB and CTAA data in the winter of 2015.

Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies

Connecticut utilized the input and expertise of a variety of individuals, offices, and agencies, both within and outside of CSDE, in proposing improvement strategies aimed at measurable improvement in its SIMR (see Infrastructure Section detailing the participation of external and internal stakeholder members).

Since the process for the development of Connecticut's SSIP and the process for submission of the state's ESEA flexibility renewal request occurred simultaneously, components of each process were utilized to inform the other and, to the degree possible, align priorities, initiatives and activities. That collaborative work involving CSDE leadership (including: the Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness -which includes the BSE; Academic Office, Performance Office, Talent Office, and Turnaround Office) was accomplished through weekly meetings. The BSE's SSIP Project Manager participated in the ESEA Flexibility Renewal application planning sessions for the purpose of aligning the two initiatives. Additionally, through the process of monthly updates and discussions, consultants from both the BSE and the Performance Office have participated in the development of the SSIP.

Connecticut's data analysis revealed variability across the state's 170 school districts with regard to the reading achievement of third grade students with disabilities, including differences related to district SES, placement in LRE, attendance rates, and removal from class for disciplinary sanctions. As detailed in the "Data Analysis" section, it was the consensus of stakeholders that the state's framework for intervention allows for the ability to differentiate improvement strategies at the district level according to uniquely identified district needs. From such discussion two themes emerged:

- The need for a tiered system of supports/interventions; and
- The need for the development of individualized district improvement plans.

The notion of proposing a tiered framework of interventions and supports was generated through discussion regarding Connecticut's focus on increasing the intellectually disabled population's participation and progress in general education settings during the implementation of the *P.J. et al. v. State of Connecticut, Board of Education, et al. Settlement Agreement.* That statewide process, including its differentiated supports, resulted in significant positive outcomes supporting the goals of the *Settlement Agreement*. Having had the experience of implementing a tiered approach to supporting educators in methods and practices to determine the LRE for SWD, it was determined that the "lessons learned" though the *Settlement Agreement* process could be applied to Connecticut's SSIP.

Through its provision of TA as part of the *Settlement Agreement*, SERC "scaled up" efforts to affect systemic change through this district-level approach customized to the needs and infrastructure of individual school systems. TA was provided to district level teams, teams that were required to include general and special education leaders, as well as other key decision makers and stakeholders. This team was to be empowered to identify and implement strategies, particularly professional development, that would impact more inclusive practice for students with ID. It was also critical for TA providers to support district level teams in connecting these

strategies to the district's larger improvement/reform efforts. The *Settlement Agreement* concepts of "scaling up" interventions and tailoring improvement plans to district needs will be replicated in Connecticut's SSIP framework.

All the CSDE's SIMR work with stakeholders resulted in a district-level tiered intervention framework built to capitalize on existing state-level initiatives including the activities of the state's Turnaround Office and BSE FM System.

Tier 1 of the intervention model will include universal resources and supports relative to early literacy that will be made available to all of the state's districts throughout the three-year cycle, with a plan to add/expand resources each year. Among those resources:

- best practice documents;
- professional learning modules;
- links to state/national resources, and
- the BSE's FM Protocol for use as an optional district self-study for the purpose of conducting data, infrastructure and root cause analyses in order to develop a district-specific theory of action and improvement plan.

Tier 2 of the intervention framework will include approximately 25 districts selected from Tier 1, using the districts most current SIMR data. Tier 2 (targeted) districts will receive additional supports provided by the CSDE, be required to conduct a root cause analysis of third grade reading achievement, complete an analysis of the efficacy of existing district-level initiatives, and develop a digital data wall of their findings. Submissions are reviewed by BSE, Performance Office, Turnaround Office, Academic Office and SERC consultants, according to an established set of criteria. Following such review, Tier 2 districts will be provided the opportunity to participate in a Data Wall Showcase and associated professional learning activities. Further, Tier 2 districts not identified for Tier 3 intervention may be required to complete a Theory of Action subject to monitoring by the BSE.

Tier 3 of the intervention framework will include approximately 15 districts selected from Tier 2, based upon review of the digital data wall. Districts participating in this level of intervention are required to assemble a diverse team of professionals (i.e., administration, special education, general education, data and subject area expertise) for the purpose conducting the analyses below and developing an implementation plan. Tier 3 districts will benefit from intensive TA and professional learning activities provided by the CSDE and Connecticut's PD centers through one of two avenues:

- Tier 3 districts that are one of Connecticut's Alliance districts (30 lowest performing districts in the state), will receive intensive interventions/supports as part of the existing initiatives of the Turnaround Office in partnership with the BSE. At a minimum, these districts will be required to include a specific section in their Alliance District Improvement Plan regarding the SIMR and associated improvement activities targeting early reading achievement of SWDs.
- All other districts selected for inclusion in Tier 3 will receive intensive interventions/supports through the BSE's existing FM process. These districts will be required to expand upon the Tier 2 data analysis; complete infrastructure and root cause analyses; and develop a theory of action and corresponding improvement plan.

Each district will be developing a plan that is based on its own data, infrastructure and root cause analysis. The intervention plan for each district will be focused on the identified needs of that district. The components related to literacy that must be addressed, through both the analysis and the development of an improvement plan, are:

- the effective use of a universal screening measure, selected from the CSDE's menu or research-based universal screening reading assessments;
- an established/functional process for the analysis of data for the purpose of instructional planning;
- a review of the district's multi-tiered system of support process (SRBI) to include: the identification of current instruction and intervention techniques being used in the district; ensuring that core instruction is implemented with fidelity (collaboratively between general and special education); and a determination of the need to make changes in the process through use of the CSDE's SRBI self-assessment;
- the writing of IEP goals and objectives in alignment with CCS,
- the development of student-specific intervention plans that match each student's profile (i.e, learning/language/literacy strengths and weaknesses) and include the monitoring of each student's progress frequently in order to individualize and adjust instruction; and
- a plan for parent engagement in supporting student reading.

Connecticut's statewide root cause analysis led the stakeholder advisory team to recommend using a tiered intervention framework. This district-specific design requires that improvement strategies be tailored to the contributing factors identified through each district's infrastructure and root cause analyses. The resulting improvement plan will address the district-level contributing factors (including both process and compliance areas) determined as barriers to reading proficiency. Due to the variety of potential improvement strategies that may be suitable for each district, it would be inappropriate to limit districts to a finite set of strategies outlined within this plan. However, to illustrate what the State would expect in a district plan, the following examples are provided.

<u>Identified Contributing Factor Example #1: Suspension/Expulsion</u>

If a district found a correlation between low reading achievement and the use of suspension/expulsion as the district's primary classroom management technique, the following activities may be appropriate interventions for inclusion in its improvement plan:

- Completion of the Indicator 4 (Discipline) Self-Assessment, designed to determine if the district is in compliance with the regulatory provisions of IDEA and is demonstrating best practices (i.e., acknowledging and incorporating students' cultural, social and developmental diversity to enrich learning opportunities, creating a school climate that is responsive to and respectful of the learning needs of students with diverse backgrounds, interests and performance levels, and providing explicit instruction about social skills to develop students' social competence) and responsible and ethical behavior by using a continuum of proactive strategies that may be individualized to student needs;
- Provision of professional learning in diffusion techniques, de-escalation, behavior management, reducing challenging behavior, improving communication and repairing relationships;
- Teaching students pro-social skills and self-regulation strategies;

- Utilization of the School-wide PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory to provide a valid, reliable and efficient measure of the extent to which school personnel are applying the core features of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Identified Contributing Factor Example #2: Time With Non-disabled Peers

If a district found a correlation between low reading achievement and the disproportionate use of resource room, self-contained classrooms and/or out-of-district placements, the following activities may be appropriate interventions for inclusion in its improvement plan:

- Investigation of district adherence to the accurate completion of the LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) Checklist;
- Utilization of the LRE Self-Assessment;
- Utilization of the IEP rubric for low performing segregated students;
- Determination of district need and associated professional learning regarding:
    - Differentiated Instruction;
    - Co-teaching; and
    - the Educational Benefit Process.

Although Connecticut's SIMR will be measured by Connecticut's Approved ESEA Flexibility RPI, each district will be required to include multiple measures for the purpose of monitoring progress on each component (reading achievement and contributing factors) of its comprehensive improvement plan.

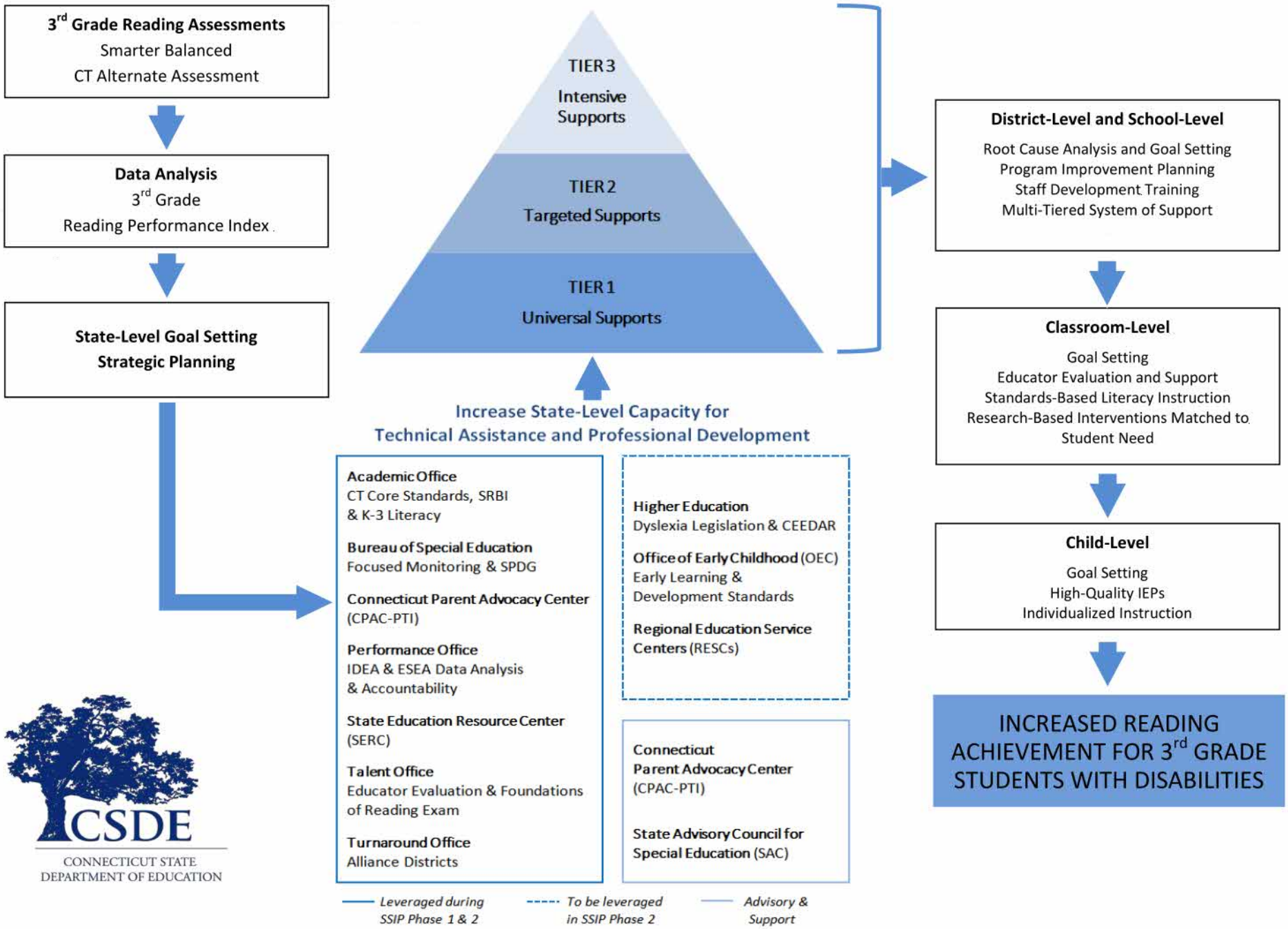
While specific improvement strategies are required at the district-level under the proposed tiered intervention framework, the following state-level activities are necessary to improve the State's infrastructure and strengthen the CSDE's ability to support LEA implementation of evidenced-based practices to improve results for SWDs.

- The work that has taken place toward the submission of the SSIP and the completion of the ESEA flexibility renewal request has required the collaboration of all CSDE Offices; however, regular/targeted time must be established for the continued planning and monitoring of the SSIP implementation. The Chief for the Bureau of Special Education will play a vital role in this process.
- The Alliance District application will be revised so that all participating districts are required to include a K-3 reading goal explicitly targeting SWDs.
- An intra-office team structure to provide SSIP Tier 3 supports in a collaborative and cohesive manner will need to be developed by the BSE and Turnaround Office.
- The Performance Office will include district level SIMR data in the annual PPR (district/school report cards) to highlight the importance of this work. (Any published data will follow state public reporting rules regarding subgroup "n" size.)
- Within the CSDE's Web site, the BSE will create a page devoted to the SSIP where both information and resources will be posted.
- The RESCs and the OEC will be engaged in conversation/planning with the CSDE regarding their potential involvement in support of the SSIP.
- Connecticut's Institutes of Higher Education must be more fully engaged as partners in the state's SSIP efforts with regard to teacher preparation and the implementation of research-based interventions for the improvement of reading achievement.

- A variety of PD opportunities currently exist through the work of the CSDE and various PD providers. A plan will need to be developed to conduct a needs assessment, research currently available offerings and catalog them in an easily accessible platform. A review of the needs assessment will result in the development of additional PD offerings.
- In order for the BSE to effectively participate in efforts related to improving literacy outcomes, BSE staff members will need to engage in professional learning in the area of research-based literacy instruction and interventions for students with disabilities. The Academic Office and CSDEs external partners will be integral to the provision of such professional learning.
- Information and resources regarding a parent's role in supporting reading, and a plan for their distribution, will be developed in collaboration with CPAC.

SSIP – THEORY OF ACTION

SIMR - Increase the reading performance of all 3rd grade students with disabilities statewide, as measured by Connecticut's Approved ESEA Flexibility Performance Index



CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

2014-15 Alliance District Calendar

August 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30/31

September 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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October 2014						
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Fall Cycle:

- October 15: Fall Alliance District Convening
- November 7: Data Submission
- November 10-21: Monitoring Meetings

Midyear Cycle:

- January 14: Alliance Convening/ Release of Year 4 Application
- January 23: Data Submission
- January 26-February 6: Midyear Monitoring/Year 4 Planning Meetings

Spring Cycle:

- April 10: 2015-16 Draft Plan Application Deadline
- April 24: Data Submission
- May 7: Spring Alliance District Convening
- May 4-15: Monitoring Meetings

Year-End Cycle:

- July 10: Data Submission
- August 4-15: Monitoring Meetings

Calendar Key:

- Alliance District Bulletin
- Data Submission Deadline
- Monitoring Meetings
- Alliance District Convening
- 2015-16 Plan Deadline

Revised 9/6/14.

2014-15 Commissioner's Network Calendar

August 2014						
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Fall Cycle:

- November 7: Data Submission
- November 10-21: Monitoring Meetings
- December 10: NetStat Session

Midyear Cycle:

- December 15 - January 23: Midyear Audits
- January 23: Data Submission
- February 9-20: Midyear Review Monitoring Meetings
- March 11: NetStat Session

Spring Cycle:

- April 24: Data Submission; 2015-16 Plan Amendment and Budget Proposal Deadline
- May 11-22: Monitoring Meeting
- May 27: NetSat Session

Year-End Cycle:

- July 10: Data Submission
- July 20-31: Monitoring Meetings

Calendar Key:

- Network Newsletter
- Data Submission Deadline
- Monitoring Meetings
- NetStat Session
- Midyear Audits

Revised 8/8/14.

THE COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK
SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS | 2014-15

Commissioner Stefan Pryor
Connecticut State Department of Education
Morgan Barth, Division Director
The Turnaround Office

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NETWORK OVERVIEW 1

1.1. Introduction

The Commissioner's Network is a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to dramatically improve student achievement in chronically low-performing schools. The Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner of Education to participate in the Network for a period of three to five years. The Network includes Commissioner's Network and School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools. These schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability.

The Network currently serves over 11,000 students in 20 schools across 10 districts. The CSDE forges powerful performance-based partnerships with schools and districts working in a highly collaboration manner. The purpose of this document is to summarize the system of support and accountability that defines Network participation.

1.2. Network Schools

The Network currently includes 20 schools. Cohort I Network schools (4 schools) will enter their third year of the turnaround process during the 2014-15 school year, and Cohort II schools (7 schools) will enter their second year of turnaround during the 2014-15 school year. The Commissioner and State Board of Education recently approved 5 additional Network schools, and the CSDE recently awarded SIG grants to 4 schools.

Each Network school is assigned a Turnaround Office designee. Designees serve as the schools' primary liaisons with the CSDE. Designees visit schools on a regular basis to provide support and monitor progress using the CSDE's uniform walkthrough protocol. The following chart provides a snapshot of Network schools and designee assignments:

District:	School:	Cohort:	Grades:	Enrollment:	CSDE Designee:
Bridgeport	Curiale School	I	K-8	737	Patty Foley
	Dunbar School	II	K-8	300	Megan Alubicki Flick
	Marin School	III	PK-8	908	Megan Alubicki Flick
New Haven	High School in the Community	I	9-12	262	Michelle Rosado
	Wilbur Cross High School	II	9-12	950	Megan Alubicki Flick
	Lincoln-Bassett School	III	PK-6	375	Kaylan Ricciardi
	West Rock Author's Academy	SIG	PK-5	224	Michelle Rosado
New Britain	DiLoreto School	II	K-8	780	Patty Foley
	Slade Middle School	SIG	6-8	618	Patty Foley

District:	School:	Cohort:	Grades:	Enrollment:	CSDE Designee:
	Pulaski Middle School	SIG	6-8	634	Patty Foley
Hartford	Milner School	I	PK-8	375	Megan Alubicki Flick
	Clark School	III	PK-8	370	Megan Alubicki Flick
Norwich	Stanton School	I	PK-5	398	Michelle Rosado
	Uncas School	III	K-5	282	Michelle Rosado
Waterbury	Walsh School	II	PK-5	459	Michelle Rosado
	Crosby High School	II	9-12	1,389	Morgan Barth
Windham	Windham Middle School	II	6-8	665	Kaylan Ricciardi
Norwalk	Briggs High School	II	9-12	66	Patty Foley
East Hartford	O'Brien STEM Academy	III	K-6	501	Kaylan Ricciardi
Meriden	John Barry Elementary School	SIG	K-5	504	Kaylan Ricciardi

As schools' primary points of contact and day-to-day liaisons with the CSDE, Megan Alubicki Flick, Patty Foley, Kaylan Ricciardi, and Michelle Rosado bring a wealth of knowledge and experience leading and supporting turnaround efforts. They will maintain a frequent presence in Network schools, namely through school and classroom walkthroughs and support around the creation and refinement of Essential School Systems.

In support of these school-level efforts, Morgan Barth and Andrew Ferguson will lead the Turnaround Office's work in collaborating with school and district leadership at the strategy level, including: initial school planning, stakeholder engagement, Alliance District strategic alignment, labor relations, external partnerships, budgeting, facilitation of quarterly monitoring and annual audits, and annual plan amendments.

CSDE Network Support Team:	Phone Number:	Email Address:
Morgan Barth	(860) 713-6705	Morgan.Barth@ct.gov
Andrew Ferguson	(860) 713-6793	Andrew.Ferguson@ct.gov
Megan Alubicki Flick	(860) 713-6786	Megan.Alubicki@ct.gov
Patty Foley	(860) 713-6793	Patricia.Foley@ct.gov
Kaylan Ricciardi	(860) 713-6864	Kaylan.Ricciardi@ct.gov
Michelle Rosado	(860) 713-6748	Michelle.Rosado@ct.gov

NETWORK FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH 2

2.1. Network Overview

During the 2013-14 school year, the CSDE introduced a framework for school and district transformation efforts. The framework guides school turnaround planning processes, implementation efforts, and progress monitoring in Turnaround, Focus, and Review schools, including SIG and Commissioner's Network schools. The framework also serves as a foundation for Alliance District annual planning, plan implementation, and quarterly progress monitoring. The framework identifies four overarching and research-based leverage points for school and district improvement, creating greater coherence and alignment between school and district reform efforts. The four domains include:

- **Talent:** Systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- **Academics:** Rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels, including aligned curricula, instruction, and assessments.
- **Culture and Climate:** Positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.
- **Operations:** Systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.

The framework creates a common language and shared definitions for school turnaround. The four domain areas serve central components of the Network theory of change and system of supports, as outlined below.

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
If we work in collaboration with local stakeholders to create **conditions** necessary to empower educators and school leaders… If we develop and commit to **Turnaround Plans** with research-based strategies to advance talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations… If we build, refine, and implement rigorous and robust **Essential School Systems**…	…Then we will see gains relative to leading indicators of school improvement as measured through **school walkthroughs**, **quarterly monitoring,** and **NetStat sessions**… …Then school systems and performance will improve as measured by **annual audits**…	…Ultimately leading to significant gains in student achievement in historically low-performing schools in traditionally underserved communities. …Ultimately embedding essential school systems into the culture of schools and districts and thereby sustaining the school's transformation into a high-performing school.

2.2. Network Shared Expectations

Network schools receive additional flexibility and resources to significantly improve student outcomes. All districts participating in the Network commit to a shared set of expectations, acknowledging the tremendous opportunity and responsibility afforded by the Network. The purpose is to establish clear expectations regarding how the districts, CSDE, and Network schools will work collaboratively to drive results. The shared expectations outline commitments to create and maintain optimal conditions and systems in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. In so doing, the shared expectations create a solid foundation for the partnership between the CSDE and Network districts and schools; continued Network funding is conditional on meeting the expectations agreed to by all parties.

2.3. Turnaround Plans and Essential School Systems

Turnaround Plans developed at the start of the turnaround process provide a high-level roadmap for reform. Understanding that schools are dynamic environments and staffing and leadership may change between when plans are developed and executed, the CSDE intentionally designs Network Turnaround Plans and SIG applications to allow for adaptability. Once Turnaround Plans and SIG applications are approved, schools are expected to create, refine, and implement Essential School Systems to drive the critical day-to-day work.

High-performing schools create and maintain systems to develop and attract top talent, provide excellent academics, foster a positive school culture and climate, and ensure seamless operations. Success in each of these areas necessitates thoughtful planning and sophisticated procedures and routines. The Turnaround Office has created a website with system templates, exemplars, and tools designed to support school teams as they work to create highly-effective systems and implement those systems with fidelity school-wide.

Talent

Professional Development Plan: A comprehensive plan to support staff development, including a calendar of school and district professional learning opportunities. A schedule and protocols to facilitate vertical

Evaluation and Coaching System: Tools to evaluate staff performance over time, allowing for actionable feedback, targeted development, and strategic staffing. A coaching cycle aligned to school's goals and staff development needs.

Recruitment and Retention Strategy: Human capital systems to recruit, identify, and hire highly-effective educators and staff. Mechanisms and strategies to proactively recognize and retain exemplary staff members.

Staffing Structure: A clear and coherent school staffing and organizational structure, including defined roles and responsibilities, and committees facilitating distributed leadership and shared accountability and decision-making.

Culture and Climate

Student Attendance Plan: A proactive plan detailing strategies to ensure that all students arrive at school on time every day and ready to learn, and a clear set of interventions to address chronic absenteeism.

Behavior Management Strategy: A detailed approach to behavior management, including staff training and strategies to promote and reinforce positive behaviors. A clear discipline policy outlining consistent consequences for

Family Engagement Plan: A plan to engage families in their children's academic development. Strategies to engage families in a deep, meaningful, and sustained manner (e.g., family events, committees, volunteer

Wraparound Strategy: A holistic approach for providing wraparound services to address students' and families' health and wellness needs. A community asset map identifying and linking families to local resources.

Academics

Comprehensive Assessment Strategy: A comprehensive plan for administering formative, benchmark, and summative assessments in all grade levels and content areas (e.g., test type, frequency, and data

Core Academic Program: An articulation of the school's core academic programming and course offerings, including curricula and programs for all grade levels, content areas, and student performance levels.

Instructional Framework: Instructional priorities and expectations promoting rigor, coherence, and alignment (e.g., unit/lesson plan templates, pacing guides, curriculum scope and sequence, homework policy, grading

SRBI Strategy: Systems, processes, and tools to gather data and provide timely and targeted interventions. Structures to meet the needs of special populations, including special education students and English language

Operations

School Calendar and Daily Schedule: Tools that maximize student and staff time, such as a daily bell schedule and master calendar. A detailed plan for extended learning time, providing enrichment and intervention opportunities.

Communications Plan: A communications plan using multiple modes of communication (e.g., website, newsletters, social media, e-blasts) to regularly communicate with internal and external audiences and community stakeholders.

Budget: A detailed budget outlining all sources of funds (e.g., local, state, federal, grants) and strategic investments aligned to school operations and program areas. Tools and processes for ongoing accounting.

Technology and Facilitates Plan: A plan to maintain school facilities and grounds, creating a welcoming environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. A plan to acquire and use technology to enhance instruction.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

1. **Turnaround Plan Application**
   The 2014-15 Network application requires schools to identify needs and priorities, and evidence-based strategies addressing those needs.

   CIII Network Application.pdf

2. **Network Conditions and Expectations**
   CSDE and Network school and district leaders commit to shared expectations regarding school-level autonomy, resourcing, and increased accountability.

   Sample Network Expectations.pdf

3. **Essential School Systems**
   All Network schools work to develop and continuously improve systems to ensure seamless school operations and advance student achievement.

   Essential School Systems Website

NETWORK SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS 3

3.1. Support Overview

The CSDE works to strike the right balance between providing support, maintaining accountability, and getting out of the way, when necessary. The summary below outlines the various support and accountability structures in place over the course of the school year. The sections that follow provide additional context and tools.

Support:	*Description:*	*Frequency:*
School and Classroom Walkthroughs	Informal school site visits and classroom observations used to gauge improvements in school climate and teaching and learning.	Ongoing
Quarterly Monitoring Meetings	Quarterly progress check-ins to discuss successes and challenges rooted in (1) school data, (2) plan implementation, and (3) year-to-date grant spending.	Quarterly
NetStat Sessions	Quarterly sessions designed to engage Network teams in meaningful professional development and quantitative analyses of leading and lagging indicators of school turnaround.	Quarterly
Midyear Audits	Midyear audits using a consistent rubric and indicators in the areas of (1) talent, (2) academics, (3) culture and climate, and (4) operations; used to inform plan modifications.	Annual
LEAD CT Leadership Coaching	Intensive 2-month spring fellowship for new turnaround leaders; ongoing community of practice and job-embedded leadership coaching throughout the school year.	Ongoing

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

1. **Walkthrough Rubric**
   CSDE staff use this walkthrough tool to collect formative data from Network schools and identify areas for future support.
   Walkthrough Rubric.docx
   Sample Tracker.xlsx

2. **Annual Audit Tool and Sample Report**
   The audit tool and sample report reflect the annual evaluation process that occurs in each school.
   School Turnaround Rubric.docx
   Audit Report Sample.docx

3. **Quarter Online Data Submission Template**
   On a quarterly basis, Network schools provide data that serve as the foundation for quarterly monitoring conversations and NetStat sessions.
   Coming Soon!

3.2. Network Calendar

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Fall Cycle:

- November 7: Data Submission
- November 10-21: Monitoring Meetings
- December 10: NetStat Session

Midyear Cycle:

- December 15 - January 23: Midyear Audits
- January 23: Data Submission
- February 9-20: Midyear Review Monitoring Meetings
- March 11: NetStat Session

Spring Cycle:

- April 24: Data Submission; 2015-16 Plan Amendment and Budget Proposal Deadline
- May 11-22: Monitoring Meeting
- May 27: NetSat Session

Year-End Cycle:

- July 10: Data Submission
- July 20-31: Monitoring Meetings

Calendar Key:
Network Newsletter
Data Submission Deadline
Monitoring Meetings
NetStat Sessions
Midyear Audits

3.3. Walkthroughs

CSDE Network designees visit Network schools several times per quarter. During these visits, designees use a streamlined and non-evaluative walkthrough tool to identify school-wide trends and structure classroom observations. The walkthrough protocol provides as a real-time indication of school and classroom progress. The tool includes a subset of the audit indicators (see Section 3.4) that might be observable in a fairly short school and classroom visit. The tool includes a checkbox format with "look fors" aligned to each of indicator area. Though the observer may not observe all indicators on a given walkthrough, the tool provide a clear set of school and classroom priorities aligned to the annual audit, which serves as the primary evaluative process for Network schools.

The Turnaround Office internally aggregates and disaggregates walkthrough data to identify issue areas within individual schools, as well as Network-wide trends. This analysis then informs Network-wide supports and professional development topics addressed during NetStat sessions. Designees ideally conduct school and classroom walkthroughs with school leadership, allowing for calibration and planning conversations, though this is not required. Importantly, the walkthrough tool is purposefully aligned to the SEED and Danielson evaluation frameworks.

School-wide Walkthrough Rubric

Indicator	1 – Below Standard	2 – Developing	3 – Proficient	4 – Exemplary
1. School Environment (Culture and Climate)	❑ Unkempt, rundown, or unsafe school facilities ❑ Uninspiring, unwelcoming, or sterile learning environment ❑ Little to no school branding or sense of school pride and identity ❑ Little to no evidence of data or student work	❑ Unkempt, rundown, or unsafe facilities in certain sections of the school ❑ Somewhat inspiring and welcoming learning environment ❑ Minimal school branding ❑ Some evidence of data or student work in certain locations	❑ Bright, clean, and well-kept facilities in most sections of the school ❑ Welcoming and inspiring learning environment in parts of the school ❑ Some school branding and sense of pride and identity ❑ Some data and student work displayed throughout the school	❑ Bright, clean, and well-kept facilities throughout the school ❑ Inspiring learning environment conducive to high-quality instruction ❑ Clear school branding and consistent messaging ❑ Data and student work displayed effectively throughout the school
2. Routines and Transitions (Operations)	❑ Chaotic and disorderly environment leading to concerns about student and adult safety ❑ High noise level during transitions ❑ Little to no evidence of systems and routines ❑ Little to no adult presence and redirection of disruptive behaviors	❑ Somewhat chaotic and disorderly environment in certain locations and during certain times of day leading to some concerns about safety ❑ Moderate noise level ❑ Minimal evidence of systems and routines ❑ Some adult presence	❑ Calm and orderly environment in most locations and during most of the school day ❑ Some noise during transition times ❑ Somewhat clear rules and evidence of systems and routines ❑ Moderate adult presence to reinforce norms and behavioral expectations	❑ Calm and orderly environment throughout the school ❑ Minimal noise level during transitions ❑ Clear, consistent, and evident rules and routines, with largely unspoken and institutionalized systems and procedures ❑ Strong adult presence
3. Interpersonal Interactions (Culture and Climate)	❑ Weak sense of community ❑ Disrespectful interactions between students and students/adults ❑ Signs of divisiveness or hostility ❑ Minimal connections between students and staff, with interactions that are largely transactional or triggered when students are off task ❑ Concerns about staff professionalism	❑ Moderate sense of community ❑ Students are somewhat respectful toward one another and adults ❑ Some divisiveness, however, it does not define school culture ❑ Somewhat positive interactions between students and staff ❑ Some concerns about staff professionalism	❑ Good overall sense of community ❑ Students are generally respectful toward one another and adults ❑ Mostly positive rapport with minimal teasing and divisiveness ❑ Some connections between students and staff, with most staff seeking invested in their students ❑ Solid staff professionalism	❑ Strong sense of community ❑ Students are respectful and supportive of one another and adults ❑ Positive and supportive rapport with an inclusive climate ❑ Strong connections between staff and students, with an investment in student wellbeing and development ❑ High degree of staff professionalism

Classroom Observation Rubric

Indicator	1 – Below Standard	2 – Developing	3 – Proficient	4 – Exemplary
1. Student Engagement (Academics)	❑ Few students are engaged and excited about their work ❑ Most students are engaged in off-task behaviors ❑ Lesson primarily appeals to one learning style ❑ Few students are actively involved in the lesson	❑ Some students exhibit moderate engagement ❑ Many students are engaged in off-task behaviors ❑ Some strategies to address multiple learning styles ❑ Students are involved in the lesson, but participation is mostly passive	❑ Most students are engaged and exhibit good behavior ❑ Most students are on task ❑ Strategies for multiple learning styles ❑ Students are involved in the lesson, but participation is, at times, more passive than active	❑ All students are visibly engaged and ready to learn ❑ All students are on task ❑ Lesson appeals to and supports diverse learning styles ❑ Students are actively engaged in the lesson, participating in classroom dialogue and instruction
2. Use of Time (Operations)	❑ Ineffective use of time by students and staff due to misbehavior and/or poor scheduling and transitions ❑ Many students need reminders and redirection to stay on task or transition to new tasks ❑ Teacher struggles with lesson pacing ❑ Use of class time is not constructive	❑ Somewhat effective use of time by students and staff ❑ Missed opportunities to maximize instructional time ❑ Some students need redirection ❑ Somewhat well-paced lesson ❑ Teacher could be more thoughtful in the use of class time	❑ Effective use of time with minimal downtime for students and staff ❑ Few students require redirection; most students transition quickly to work when prompted by the teacher ❑ Well-paced and planned lesson ❑ Teacher is adept at managing and using class time	❑ Optimal use of class time by students and staff with little to no downtime ❑ Students stay on task and transition promptly to new tasks with minimal cues and reminders from the teacher ❑ Excellent lesson pacing and design ❑ Teacher meticulously uses every moment of class time

3.4. Annual Audits

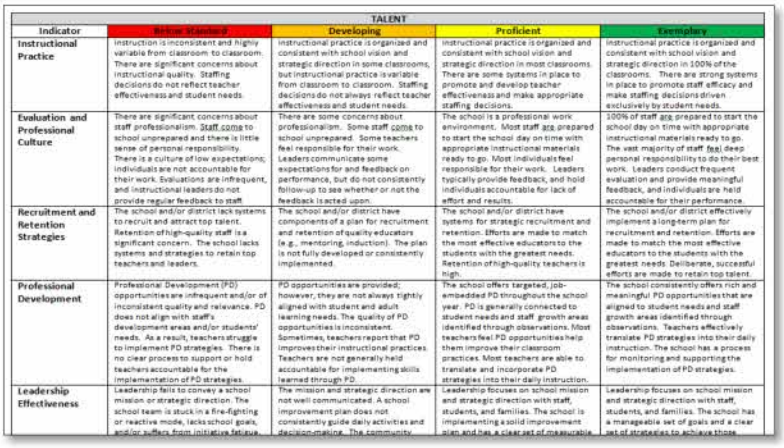
After being initially selected for possible participation in the Commissioner's Network, prospective Network schools participate in an operations and instructional audit to benchmark school systems and performance in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. This serves as a baseline evaluation from which Turnaround Committees develop Turnaround Plans.

On an annual basis, the Turnaround Office follows a similar process to conduct midyear audits in all Network schools. Midyear audits allow schools and the CSDE to evaluate progress in each of the indicator areas, as well as identify areas for potential interventions or midcourse corrections. The chart below outlines the indicators used in the audit process; these align to the Office's four domain areas.

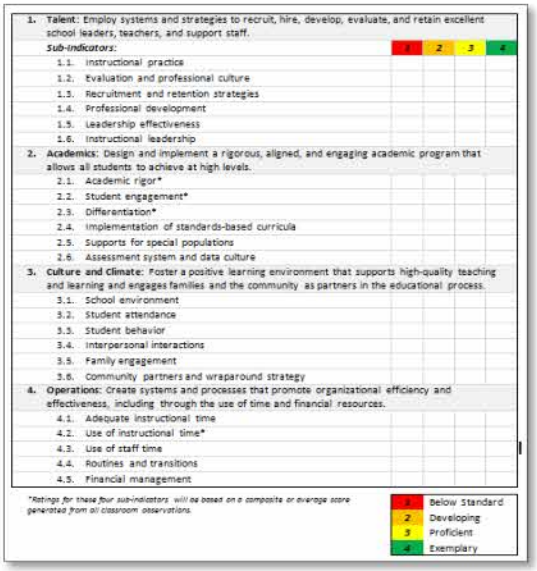
Talent	Culture and Climate
• Instructional practice • Evaluation and professional culture • Recruitment and retention strategies • Professional development • Leadership effectiveness • Instructional leadership	• School environment • Student attendance • Student behavior • Interpersonal interactions • Family engagement • Community partners/Wraparound strategy

Academics	Operations
• Academic rigor • Student engagement • Differentiation • Curriculum and instruction aligned to CCSS • Supports for special populations • Assessment system and data culture	• Adequate instructional time • Use of instructional time • Use of staff time • Routines and transitions • Financial management

The audit generally consists of a 1-2-day site visit, whereby auditors collect qualitative and quantitative data through stakeholder surveys, interviews, focus groups, classroom observations, and school-wide observations. The Turnaround Office uses a consistent rubric and report template to provide a summation of school strengths and growth areas. The audits, which occur in the middle of the school year, allow for comparisons across schools and a longitudinal analysis of each school's progress over time. The Turnaround Office's school turnaround rubric (shown below) defines "Below Standard," "Developing," "Proficient," and "Exemplary" status for each of the indicators listed above. The rubric also allows schools to self-assess and monitor their own progress over time.



TALENT				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Instructional Practice	Instruction is inconsistent and highly variable from classroom to classroom. There are significant concerns about instructional quality. Staffing decisions do not reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Instructional practice is organized and consistent with school vision and strategic direction in some classrooms, but instructional practice is variable from classroom to classroom. Staffing decisions do not always reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Instructional practice is organized and consistent with school vision and strategic direction in most classrooms. There are some systems in place to promote and develop teacher effectiveness and make appropriate staffing decisions.	Instructional practice is organized and consistent with school vision and strategic direction in 100% of the classrooms. There are strong systems in place to promote staff efficacy and make staffing decisions driven exclusively by student needs.
Evaluation and Professional Culture	There are significant concerns about staff professionalism. Staff come to school unprepared and there is little sense of personal responsibility. There is a culture of low expectations; individuals are not accountable for their work. Evaluations are infrequent, and instructional leaders do not provide regular feedback to staff.	There are some concerns about professionalism. Some staff come to school unprepared. Some teachers feel responsible for their work. Leaders communicate some expectations for and feedback on performance, but do not consistently follow-up to see whether or not the feedback is acted upon.	The school is a professional work environment. Most staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. Most individuals feel responsible for their work. Leaders typically provide feedback, and hold individuals accountable for lack of effort and results.	100% of staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. The vast majority of staff feel deep personal responsibility to do their best work. Leaders conduct frequent evaluation and provide meaningful feedback, and individuals are held accountable for their performance.
Recruitment and Retention Strategies	The school and/or district lack systems to recruit and attract top talent. Retention of high-quality staff is a significant concern. The school lacks systems and strategies to retain top teachers and leaders.	The school and/or district have components of a plan for recruitment and retention of quality educators (e.g., mentoring, induction). The plan is not fully developed or consistently implemented.	The school and/or district have systems for strategic recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Retention of high-quality teachers is high.	The school and/or district effectively implement a long-term plan for recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Deliberate, successful efforts are made to retain top talent.
Professional Development	Professional Development (PD) opportunities are infrequent and/or of inconsistent quality and relevance. PD does not align with staff's development areas and/or students' needs. As a result, teachers struggle to implement PD strategies. There is no clear process to support or hold teachers accountable for the implementation of PD strategies.	PD opportunities are provided; however, they are not always tightly aligned with student and adult learning needs. The quality of PD opportunities is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers report that PD improves their instructional practices. Teachers are not generally held accountable for implementing skills learned through PD.	The school offers targeted, job-embedded PD throughout the school year. PD is generally connected to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Most teachers feel PD opportunities help them improve their classroom practices. Most teachers are able to translate and incorporate PD strategies into their daily instruction.	The school consistently offers rich and meaningful PD opportunities that are aligned to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Teachers effectively translate PD strategies into their daily instruction. The school has a process for monitoring and supporting the implementation of PD strategies.
Leadership Effectiveness	Leadership fails to convey a school mission or strategic direction. The school team is stuck in a fire-fighting or reactive mode, lacks school goals, and/or suffers from initiative fatigue.	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated. A school improvement plan does not consistently guide daily activities and decision-making. The community	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school is implementing a solid improvement plan and has a clear set of measurable	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has a manageable set of goals and a clear set of strategies to achieve those



1. **Talent:** Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.
   - *Sub-indicators:* 1 2 3 4
   - 1.1. Instructional practice
   - 1.2. Evaluation and professional culture
   - 1.3. Recruitment and retention strategies
   - 1.4. Professional development
   - 1.5. Leadership effectiveness
   - 1.6. Instructional leadership
2. **Academics:** Design and implement a rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels.
   - 2.1. Academic rigor*
   - 2.2. Student engagement*
   - 2.3. Differentiation*
   - 2.4. Implementation of standards-based curricula
   - 2.5. Supports for special populations
   - 2.6. Assessment system and data culture
3. **Culture and Climate:** Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.
   - 3.1. School environment
   - 3.2. Student attendance
   - 3.3. Student behavior
   - 3.4. Interpersonal interactions
   - 3.5. Family engagement
   - 3.6. Community partners and wraparound strategy
4. **Operations:** Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.
   - 4.1. Adequate instructional time
   - 4.2. Use of instructional time*
   - 4.3. Use of staff time
   - 4.4. Routines and transitions
   - 4.5. Financial management

*Ratings for these four sub-indicators will be based on a composite or average score generated from all classroom observations.

1 Below Standard
2 Developing
3 Proficient
4 Exemplary

3.5. Quarterly Monitoring and NetStat Sessions

On a quarterly basis, Network schools submit quantitative data to the Turnaround Office. The data inform Network-wide conversations at quarterly NetStat sessions and one-on-one quarterly monitoring conversations at each school site. The CSDE works to collect enough data to gather an accurate understanding of the school's performance relative to core leading and lagging indicators, while not overburdening the school with unnecessary reporting. The chart on the following page provides a complete summary of data the Turnaround Office may request. At minimum, schools report quarterly on attendance, behavior, academic achievement, and grant spending. The Turnaround Office may request additional data if there are concerns about a lack of progress and/or the need for a more nuanced understanding of school performance and trends.

Talent	Culture and Climate
• Number of formal/informal evaluations • Staff evaluation data • Staff retention data • Staff recruitment data/hiring timelines • Class size (student/staff ratio) • Professional development participation rate and implementation	• Student average daily attendance • Student chronic absenteeism • Student on-time arrival • Staff average daily attendance • Staff on-time arrival • Student, staff, and parent climate surveys • Student behavior • Dropout rate • Family engagement (events, participation)
Academics	**Operations**
• Interim assessment data • Course passage rates/Credit accumulation • PSAT, SAT, ACT, AP participation rates/scores • Summative assessment data • Graduation rates • Student retention rate • Post-secondary application/enrollment/ persistence	• Year-to-date grant spending • Accuracy of budget projections • Percent of budget devoted to classroom purposes • Instructional minutes • Staff common planning time • Ratios of students/staff to technology • School facilities and cleanliness • Average time for order/delivery of supplies

Quarterly monitoring meetings at each Network school are designed as data-driven conversations. A rough agenda for quarterly monitoring meetings can be found below.

I. Data Analysis and Review

a. When reviewing school data, what emerge as school strengths and recent accomplishments in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations?
b. When reviewing school data, what emerge as continued growth areas aligned to talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations?

II. Essential School Systems

a. How might the data inform modifications to school systems, processes, and routines?
b. Which systems are operating efficiently and effectively? Which systems require refinement in design and/or implementation?

III. Grant Spending

a. Is the school on track with grant spending? Why or why not?

IV. Action Plan

a. What are the school's priorities and necessary action items over the next quarter?
b. What are immediate next steps and quick wins vs. longer-term priorities?
c. Who will advance this work and by what deadline?

On a quarterly basis, representatives from the Network schools come together for NetStat sessions. Modeled after the successful CompStat process, NetStat sessions provide a structured opportunity for reflection and collaboration across schools. School teams analyze leading and lagging performance data in the four domain areas. School teams share best practices, discuss challenges, brainstorm solutions, and develop action plans around next steps to improve school data. NetStat also provides an opportunity for structured planning and professional development. The Turnaround Office organizes professional development, including by identifying presenters from among the Network schools, to share strategies and best practices aligned to the four domain areas and Essential School Systems.

3.6. LEAD Connecticut

All Network principals are encouraged to participate in turnaround principal development programs offered by LEAD Connecticut. Each spring, LEAD Connecticut will offer an 8-week intensive Spring Leadership Fellowship to prepare principals for the turnaround process. Through the intensive Spring Fellowship, turnaround leaders visit high-performing turnaround schools nationally and begin developing entry plans to launch the following school year in their buildings.

LEAD Connecticut also offering its Community of Practice for sitting turnaround principals statewide. Through this program, principals join a powerful network of practitioners, receiving targeted trainings and embedded coaching throughout the school year. The program begins with a 2-week summer intensive focused on high-leverage leadership strategies and continues with site-based leadership coaching and monthly community of practice meetings throughout the year. LEAD Connecticut's website provides mode information on these leadership development opportunities.

District and Network Quarterly Monitoring

Quarterly Monitoring 1

1.1. Overview

The Alliance District program represents a targeted investment in Connecticut's 30 lowest-performing districts. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and Alliance Districts share a commitment to dramatically improving student achievement through a process of continuous improvement, and ongoing and shared accountability. On a quarterly basis, Alliance District leadership, Network school leadership, and CSDE staff come together for monitoring conversations to discuss progress and identify continued growth areas.

During the 2014-15 school year, the Turnaround Office will significantly streamline the quarterly data reporting process for Alliance Districts and Network schools to minimize the burden on district and school staff and focus on several core leading and lagging performance indicators. Districts must report data for the entire district, as well as Turnaround, Review, and Focus schools, including Commissioner's Network and School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools. The new online reporting platform auto-generates graphs that allow for longitudinal analysis and comparisons across schools within a district.

1.2. Timeline and Critical Dates

The Alliance District and Network 2014-15 calendars identify dates and deadlines for quarterly monitoring. At the start of each monitoring cycle, the district and/or school(s) must update and submit data via the online reporting platform, and then participate in Alliance and Network (if applicable) monitoring meetings.

	Fall	Midyear	Spring	Year-End
Data Submission Deadline	November 7, 2014	January 23, 2015	April 24, 2015	July 10, 2015
Alliance District Monitoring Meetings	November 10-21, 2014	January 26-February 6, 2015	May 4-15, 2015	August 4-15, 2015
Network School Monitoring Meetings	November 10-21, 2014	February 9-20, 2015	May 11-22, 2015	July 20-31, 2015

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1.2. Timeline and Critical Dates

Section 2: Data Reporting Platform

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2.2. Quantitative Data
2.3. District Implementation Updates
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Section 3: Monitoring Meetings

3.1. Alliance District Quarterly Meeting Agenda
3.2. Network School Quarterly Meeting Agenda

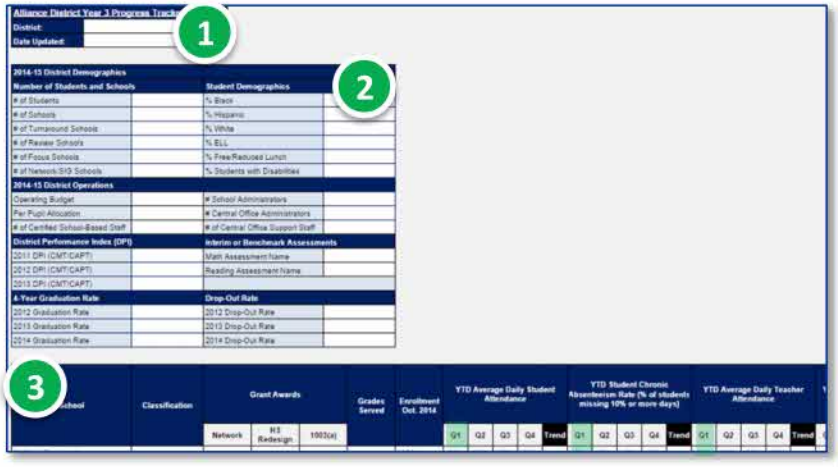
DATA REPORTING PLATFORM 2

2.1. About the Platform

During the 2014-15 school year, the CSDE is rolling out an online reporting platform for Alliance Districts and their Turnaround, Review, and Focus schools (including Commissioner's Network and SIG schools). The new online platform will allow for collaborative access to school and district data. Unlike last year, districts and schools do not need to wait to receive quarterly reporting templates from the CSDE. District and school leaders can access and update their district's customized reporting platform via the online spreadsheet. District and school leaders will receive a link to their spreadsheet from their point of contact. The online tracker will be projected during quarterly monitoring meetings to help facilitate conversations.

2.2. Quantitative Data

On a quarterly basis, Alliance Districts must provide year-to-date district aggregate data and data for Turnaround, Review, and Focus schools for core leading and lagging performance indicators. Such metrics are defined in the "Indicator Glossary" section on the following page. The screenshots below explain the first two tabs of the online dashboard, including instructions for submitting data in the "Data Worksheet" tab.

Directions:	Screenshots:
District Dashboard: Do not enter data on the "District Dashboard" tab. This tab draws directly from the "Data Worksheet" tab and will auto-generate graphs.	
Data Worksheet: 1. Update the "Date Updated" to reflect the date of data entry. 2. Only during Q1, provide district demographic data (e.g., demographics, schools). 3. In the appropriate columns (e.g., "Q1"), provide year-to-date aggregate district data and school-level data for each indicator listed (see "Indicator Glossary").	

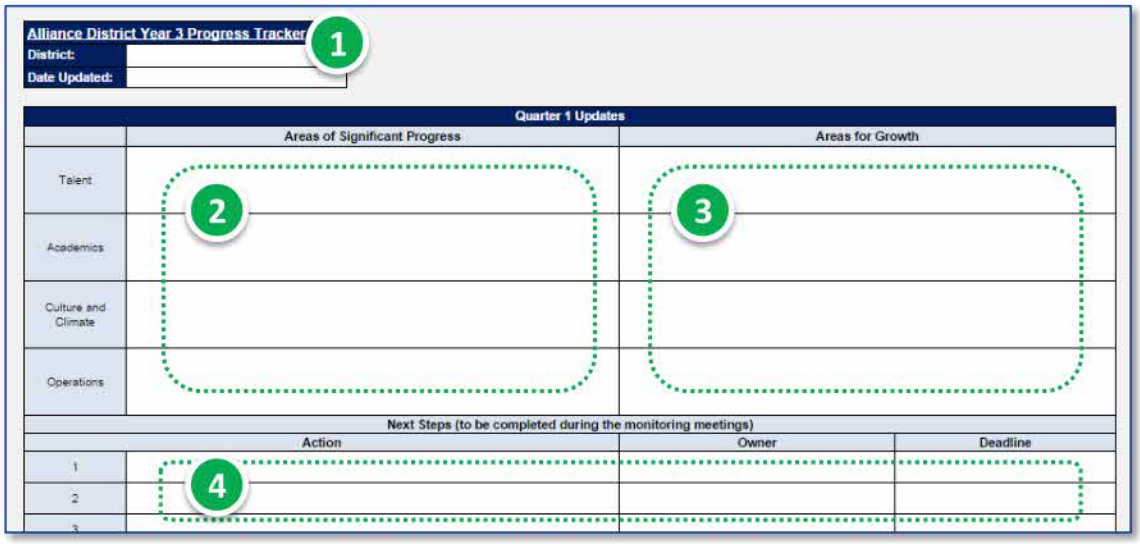
Indicator Glossary:

- **Average Daily Attendance Rate:** Average of daily attendance rates (reported year-to-date at the end of each quarter).
- **Chronic Absenteeism Rate:** Percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of school days (reported year-to-date at the end of each quarter).
- **Suspension/Expulsion Rate:** Percentage of students with one or more suspension and/or expulsion (reported year-to-date at the end of each quarter).
- **Reading/Math Proficiency:** Percentage of students scoring at or above the national mean score on nationally-normed interim assessments (reported for each testing window).
- **Reading/Math Growth:** Percentage of students meeting or exceeding the mean national growth rate on nationally-normed interim assessments (reported at the end of the school year).

2.3. District Implementation Updates

Alliance Districts must also provide quarterly implementation updates relative to their Year 3 plans. District leaders must reflect upon and identify four accomplishments and four growth areas per quarter aligned to talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Districts must provide evidence of progress and specific needs or challenges.

Directions:



District Updates:

1. Update the "Date Updated" to reflect the date of data entry.
2. Summarize district progress in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. District strengths should reflect accomplishments made during the preceding quarter. Provide quantitative data or evidence to substantiate the district strengths and recent accomplishments.
3. Identify a current growth area, barrier, or challenge in each of the framework areas. Provide data or evidence to better define the growth area or need.
4. During the district quarterly monitoring meeting, the district and CSDE will collectively identify next steps. Districts should not complete this section prior to the meeting with the CSDE.

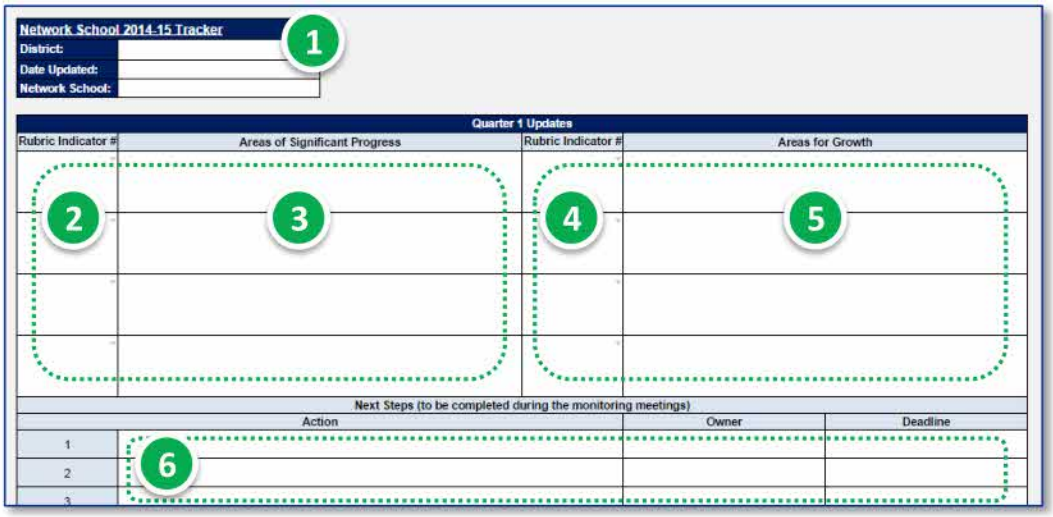
Please find sample district implementation updates below.

	Area of Significant Progress	Area for Growth
Talent	*Nutmeg School District has long struggled with staff recruitment and timely teacher hiring. For example, Nutmeg began the 2013-14 school year with 15 unfilled teacher vacancies. Nutmeg's Year 3 Alliance plan included a new Talent Recruitment Manager and improved online application software. Going into the 2014-15 school year, Nutmeg had 95 teacher vacancies – the largest number of vacancies in the past 10 years. Nutmeg successfully filled all teacher vacancies by August 1, 2014, and 35% of new teachers represented diverse hires.*	*Nutmeg identified elementary math as a focus area for 2014-15. In 2013-14, 42% of students at the elementary level scored at or above grade level in math. Informed by the data, Nutmeg planned to hire math coaches for each of the district's 10 Turnaround and Review schools. Nutmeg was only able to fill five of the 10 positions. Based on classroom observations and teacher surveys, elementary teachers are struggling with the new math curriculum and report the need for additional coaching and instructional support.*
Academics	*Nutmeg's elementary schools adopted the Workshop Model during the 2013-14 school year. Each school has a Workshop Model Teacher Leader funded by the Alliance District grant. These teacher leaders attended a weeklong training at Teachers College in summer 2014. The Teacher Leaders provide monthly professional development and embedded teacher coaching; in fall 2014, 95% of elementary school teachers reported that Teacher Leaders support and improve their practice and implementation of the Workshop Model. Across Nutmeg's elementary schools, 75% of students saw growth on the reading benchmark assessment between the beginning of the 2014-15 school year and end of Quarter 1 assessment (compared to 45% showing growth during the same interval in 2013-14).*	*Nutmeg lacks uniform benchmark assessment in Grades K-12 in mathematics. Several schools use teacher-generated tests; however, the district lacks a universal assessment system. Nutmeg planned to use 2014-15 Alliance funds to purchase a district-wide math assessment tool. A team of school and district leaders explored various assessment systems during summer 2014; however, the team was unable to reach consensus on a new tool and has yet to purchase a new system and plan for its rollout to schools.*

2.4. Network Implementation Updates

Please Note: This section is only applicable for Alliance Districts with Commissioner's Network's and/or SIG schools. Commissioner's Network and SIG schools must submit quarterly implementation updates, in addition to the quantitative data outlined in Section 2.2. For each Network school, reflect upon the school's performance relative to the CSDE's school turnaround rubric (with performance indicators in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations). Select four areas where the school has experienced recent progress and four areas for further growth. Schools must provide evidence of progress and specific needs or challenges.

Directions:



Network Tracker:

1. Update the "Date Updated" to reflect the date of data entry.
2. Identify indicator areas where the school is experiencing positive outcomes. Select the areas from the drop-down menu.
3. Provide data or evidence to substantiate the strengths or accomplishments.
4. Identify growth areas where the school is experiencing challenges. Select the areas from the drop-down menu.
5. Provide data or evidence to better define the barrier, challenge, or need.
6. During the Network quarterly monitoring meeting, school leadership and the CSDE will collectively identify next steps. Schools should not complete this section prior to the meeting with the CSDE.

Please find sample school implementation updates below.

Significant Progress		Growth Area	
Rubric	**Evidence of Progress**	**Rubric**	**Evidence of Need**
3.2. Student Attendance	*Nutmeg School hired a Parent Liaison to focus on family outreach, particularly around the importance of attendance and on-time arrival. The Parent Liaison makes daily phone calls home and home visits based on student attendance. Last year, the average daily attendance rate for students was 89%, and the chronic absenteeism rate was 32%. This year after Quarter 1, the attendance rate is 92%, and the chronic absenteeism rate is 25%.*	*3.3. Student Behavior*	*Nutmeg recently adopted the PBIS approach for positive behavior management. Nutmeg hosted three PBIS trainings for teachers during Quarter 1; approximately half of the teachers attended at least one training. The number of suspensions and expulsions (55 incidents year-to-date) exceeds the number of incidents reported at this point last year (40). Students report they are unclear about behavioral expectations and consequences seem inconsistent.*

MONITORING MEETINGS 3

3.1. Alliance District Quarterly Meeting Agenda

1. **Welcome, Objectives, and Introductions** **(10 minutes)**

2. **School and District Data** **(30 minutes)**

   a. **Successes:** What successes are evident in the district and school data? Which schools are making gains and in which areas? What is contributing to these successes?

   b. **Challenges:** What are some areas for growth at the school or district levels? Which schools are struggling? What is the district's plan to support and/or intervene in these schools?

Indicators
• Student attendance
• Student chronic absenteeism
• Teacher attendance
• Student behavior
• Math/Reading proficiency
• Math/Reading growth

3. **Implementation Updates** **(30 minutes)**

   a. **District Implementation:** Which strategies are on-track and yielding positive results? Which strategies are off-track? Why, and what is the district's plan of action?

   b. **School Implementation:** In which areas are schools making progress? Which areas are prioritized for future growth and development? Why, and what is the district's plan of action?

   c. **Grant Spending:** Is the district on track with its grant spending? If not, why not?

Grant	Allocation	YTD Draw-Downs	YTD Balance (%)
Alliance District	$	$	%
Priority School District	$	$	%
Commissioner's Network	$	$	%
School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003(g)	$	$	%
1003(a)	$	$	%
Low-Performing Schools Bond Funding	$	$	%

4. **Action Items** **(20 minutes)**

   a. What are the district and CSDE's next steps resulting from the monitoring meeting?

Activity	Owner	Deadline

3.2. Network School Quarterly Meeting Agenda

1. **Welcome, Objectives, and Introductions** **(10 minutes)**

2. **School Data** **(30 minutes)**

   a. **Successes:** What are the school's accomplishments in the areas of talent, academics, climate, and operations?

   b. **Challenges:** What are the school's urgent needs? What barriers and challenges is the school experiencing?

   c. **Targets:** Is the school on track to achieve its goals?

Indicators
• Student attendance • Student chronic absenteeism • Teacher attendance • Student behavior • Math/Reading proficiency • Math/Reading growth

3. **Implementation Updates** **(30 minutes)**

   a. **School Implementation:** In which areas is the school making progress? Which areas are prioritized for future growth and development? Why, and what is the school's plan of action?

   b. **Grant Spending:** Is the school on track with its grant spending? If not, why not?

Grant	Allocation	YTD Draw-Downs	YTD Balance (%)
Commissioner's Network	$	$	%
SIG 1003(g)	$	$	%
1003(a)	$	$	%
Wraparound Grant	$	$	%
Low-Performing Schools Bond Funding	$	$	%

4. **Action Items** **(20 minutes)**

   a. **Short-Term Priorities:** What are the school's immediate next steps? What is the school prioritizing between now and the next quarterly monitoring meeting?

Short-Term Activities	Owner	Deadline

   b. **Strategic Shifts:** Longer term, what shifts in strategy may be necessary in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations?

Talent	Academics	Culture and Climate	Operations

NETWORK MIDYEAR AUDIT REPORT

School:	Grades Served:	Cohort:	Date of Site Visit:
District:	**Principal:**		

Part I: Talent				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
1.1. Instructional practice	✓			
1.2. Evaluation and professional culture	✓			
1.3. Recruitment and retention strategies	✓			
1.4. Professional development (PD)	✓			
1.5. Leadership effectiveness	✓			
1.6. Instructional leadership	✓			

Summary of Strengths:	Summary of Growth Areas:
• **Strength 1:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Strength 2:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Strength 3:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit.	• **Growth Area 1:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Growth Area 2:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Growth Area 3:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit.

Part II: Academics				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
2.1. Academic rigor	✓			
2.2. Student engagement	✓			
2.3. Differentiation and checking for understanding	✓			
2.4. Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards	✓			
2.5. Supports for special populations	✓			
2.6. Assessment system and data culture	✓			

Summary of Strengths:	Summary of Growth Areas:
• **Strength 1:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Strength 2:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Strength 3:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit.	• **Growth Area 1:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Growth Area 2:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Growth Area 3:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit.

Part III: Culture and Climate				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
3.1. School environment	✓			
3.2. Student attendance	✓			
3.3. Student behavior	✓			
3.4. Interpersonal interactions	✓			
3.5. Family and community engagement	✓			
3.6. Community partners and wraparound strategy	✓			

Summary of Strengths:	Summary of Growth Areas:
• **Strength 1:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Strength 2:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Strength 3:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit.	• **Growth Area 1:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Growth Area 2:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Growth Area 3:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit.

Part IV: Operations				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4

4.1. Adequate instructional time	✓			
4.2. Use of instructional time	✓			
4.3. Use of staff time	✓			
4.4. Routines and transitions	✓			
4.5. Financial management	✓			

Summary of Strengths:	**Summary of Growth Areas:**
• **Strength 1:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Strength 2:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Strength 3:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section should contain objective information learned from the audit.	• **Growth Area 1:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Growth Area 2:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit. • **Growth Area 3:** Several sentences providing specific details and evidence. Avoid recommendations here; this section could contain objective information learned from the audit.

Part V: Recommendations	**Priority Level:**	**Resource Requirement:**	**Timeline:**
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Cohort I Network School Status Recommendation:

☐ Develop a transition plan, in consultation with the CSDE, to exit the Network and return to full control by the local board of education. The State Board of Education shall consider such plan for approval no later than June 2015.

☒ Develop a plan, in consultation with the CSDE, to continue in the Network for a fourth year. The State Board of Education shall consider such plan for approval no later than June 2015.

Rationale and Local Capacity Assessment:

The audits concludes that SCHOOL's participation in the Network should be extended for a fourth year for the following reasons:

- Reason 1 (complete sentences)
- Reason 2 (complete sentences)
- Reason 3 (complete sentences)

School Turnaround Rubric

TALENT				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
1.1. Instructional Practice	Teacher effectiveness is inconsistent and highly variable from classroom to classroom. There are significant concerns about instruction. Staffing decisions do not reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Instructional quality is moderate; however, teacher effectiveness is variable from classroom to classroom. Staffing decisions do not always reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Most classes are led by effective educators, and instructional quality is strong. There are some systems in place to promote and develop teacher effectiveness and make appropriate staffing decisions.	100% of classes are led by deeply passionate and highly effective educators. There are strong systems in place to promote staff efficacy and make staffing decisions driven exclusively by student needs.
1.2. Evaluation and Professional Culture	There are significant concerns about staff professionalism. Staff come to school unprepared, and there is little sense of personal responsibility. There is a culture of low expectations; individuals are not accountable for their work. Evaluations are infrequent, and few if any staff were formally evaluated 3 or more times in 2012-13. Instructional leaders do not provide regular feedback to staff.	There are some concerns about professionalism. Some staff come to school unprepared. Some teachers feel responsible for their work. Some teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2012-13, but most were not. Leaders communicate some expectations for and feedback on performance, but do not consistently follow-up to see whether or not the feedback is acted upon.	The school is a professional work environment. Most staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. Most individuals feel responsible for their work. Most teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2012-13 in alignment with SEED expectations. Leaders provide feedback and hold individuals accountable for effort and results.	100% of staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. The vast majority of staff feel deep personal responsibility to do their best work. All teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2012-13. Leaders conduct frequent informal evaluations and provide meaningful feedback. Individuals are held accountable for their performance.
1.3. Recruitment and Retention Strategies	The school and/or district lack systems to recruit and attract top talent. Retention of high-quality staff is a significant concern. The school lacks systems and strategies to retain top teachers and leaders.	The school and/or district have components of a plan for recruitment and retention of quality educators (e.g., mentoring, induction). The plan is not fully developed or consistently implemented.	The school and/or district have systems for strategic recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Retention of high-quality teachers is high.	The school and/or district effectively implement a long-term plan for recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Deliberate, successful efforts are made to retain top talent.
1.4. Professional Development	Professional Development (PD) opportunities are infrequent and/or of inconsistent quality and relevance. PD does not align to staff's development areas and/or students' needs. As a result, teachers struggle to implement PD strategies. There is no clear process to support or hold teachers accountable for the implementation of PD strategies.	PD opportunities are provided; however, they are not always tightly aligned with student and adult learning needs. The quality of PD opportunities is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers report that PD improves their instructional practices. Teachers are not generally held accountable for implementing skills learned through PD.	The school offers targeted, job-embedded PD throughout the school year. PD is generally connected to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Most teachers feel PD opportunities help them improve their classroom practices. Most teachers are able to translate and incorporate PD strategies into their daily instruction.	The school consistently offers rich and meaningful PD opportunities that are aligned to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Teachers effectively translate PD strategies into their daily instruction. The school has a process for monitoring and supporting the implementation of PD strategies.
1.5. Leadership Effectiveness	Leadership fails to convey a school mission or strategic direction. The school team is stuck in a fire-fighting or reactive mode, lacks school goals, and/or suffers from initiative fatigue.	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated. A school improvement plan does not consistently guide daily activities and decision-making. The community	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school is implementing a solid improvement plan and has a clear set of measurable	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has a manageable set of goals and a clear set of strategies to achieve those

TALENT				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
	The school community questions whether the school can/will improve.	generally understands the need for change, however actions are more often governed by the status quo.	goals. The plan may lack coherence and a strategy for sustainability. Leadership conveys urgency.	goals. The plan is being implemented and monitored with fidelity. Leadership conveys deep urgency.
1.6. Instructional Leadership	Few staff can articulate a common understanding of what excellent instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are not clear. Instructional leaders do not demonstrate a commitment to developing consistent and high-quality instructional practice school-wide.	Some staff can articulate a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are enforced with limited consistency. Instructional leaders demonstrate some commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	Most staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are consistently enforced. Instructional leaders consistently demonstrate a commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	All staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. Educators relentlessly pursue excellent pedagogy. Instructional leaders have communicated and enforced high expectations school-wide.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
2.1. Academic Rigor	Most observed lessons are teacher-led and whole group. Teachers rarely engage students in higher-order thinking. Most students demonstrate a surface-level understanding of concepts. Observed lessons are indicative of low expectations and little sense of urgency.	Some observed lessons are somewhat student-centered, challenging and engaging. Teachers engage students in some higher-order thinking. Many students demonstrate only a surface-level understanding of concepts. Teachers demonstrate moderate expectations and some urgency.	Observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging for most students. Teachers engage students in higher-order thinking, and students are pushed toward content mastery. Lessons begin to engage students as self-directed learners. Teachers communicate solid expectations.	All observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging. Teachers push students, promoting academic risk-taking. Students are developing the capacity to engage in complex content and pose higher-level questions to the teacher and peers. Teachers promote high expectations.
2.2. Student Engagement	Few students are actively engaged and excited about their work. The majority of students are engaged in off-task behaviors and some are disruptive to their classmates. Observed lessons primarily appeal to one learning style. Few students are truly involved in the lessons.	Some students exhibit moderate engagement, but many are engaged in off-task behaviors. Some observed lessons appeal to multiple learning styles. Students are involved in the lessons, but participation is more passive than active. Students are easily distracted from assigned tasks.	Most students are engaged and exhibit on-task behaviors. The observed lessons appeal to multiple learning styles. Students are involved in the lesson, but participation is, at times, more passive than active. A handful of students are easily distracted from the task at hand.	All students are visibly engaged, ready to learn, and on task. Students are clearly focused on learning in all classrooms. The lessons appeal to and seem to support all learning styles. Students are actively engaged in the lessons and excited to participate in classroom dialogue and instruction.
2.3. Differentiation and Checking for Understanding	Most teachers take a one-size-fits-all approach and struggle to differentiate their instruction to meet individual learning needs. There is no evidence around the use of data to inform instruction and minimal efforts to check for student understanding.	Some teachers are differentiating at least part of the observed lessons; however, the practice is not consistent or widespread. There is some evidence of the use of student data to adapt the learning process. Some teachers use strategies to monitor understanding.	Most teachers employ strategies to tier or differentiate instruction at various points in the lesson. Most teachers use data or checks for understanding to differentiate the learning process on the fly. Teachers take time to support students struggling to engage with the content.	Teachers consistently and seamlessly differentiate instruction. Teachers use data and formal/informal strategies to gauge understanding, and differentiate the learning process accordingly. Tight feedback loop between monitoring efforts and instruction.
2.4. Curriculum and Instruction	The school lacks a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	The school has curricula for some grades and content areas, some of which are rigorous, standards-based.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for almost all grade levels and content areas, and are being	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for all grade levels and content areas. Curricula are aligned with the

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
Aligned to Common Core State Standards	and/or the curriculum is not being implemented with fidelity. As a result, pacing is inconsistent. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is > 10 points below the state average.	Curricula are implemented with some fidelity. Teachers struggle with consistent pacing. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is 6-10 points below the state average.	implemented consistently across classrooms. Teachers demonstrate consistent pacing. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is within 5 percentage points of the state average.	CCSS and are being implemented with a high degree of fidelity throughout the school. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments meets or exceeds the state average.
2.5. Support for Special Populations	The school is inadequately meeting the needs of its high-needs students. IEP goals are not regularly met. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is not fully considered when making placements. The school lacks appropriate interventions and supports for ELLs. There are significant achievement gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and no evidence of progress.	The school typically meets the needs of its high-needs students. Most special education students meet their IEP goals, but LRE is not always considered when making placement determinations. The school typically meets the needs of its ELLs, and attempts to track progress and set content and language mastery goals. There are significant gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments and marginal progress over time.	The school consistently meets the needs of its high-needs students. Special education students regularly meet their IEP goals and LRE is a critical factor in placement determinations. The school meets the needs, tracks progress, and sets content and language mastery goals for all ELLs. There are small gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and some signs of progress toward closing the gaps.	The school is successfully closing the achievement gap for its high-needs students. General and special education teachers work collaboratively to support students. The school tracks the effectiveness of language acquisition instructional strategies and adjusts programming accordingly. There is no achievement gap between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments.
2.6. Assessment Systems and Data Culture	The school lacks a comprehensive assessment system (including summative and benchmark assessments). Teachers rarely collect, analyze, and/or discuss data. The school lacks or fails to implement SRBI protocols linking data to interventions.	The school has some consistent assessments; however, there are major gaps in certain grades and content areas. There are some efforts to collect and use data. SRBI systems and processes are somewhat present.	The school implements a clear system of benchmark assessments. Some teachers are developing familiarity with regularly using formative assessments to differentiate instruction. The school has emerging processes in place to use the data to inform interventions.	Teachers consistently administer assessments throughout the year. Assessments are standards-based and provide real-time data. Teachers embed formative assessments in their daily lessons. The school has strong processes to collect, analyze, and use data to inform interventions.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
3.1. School Environment	The school fails to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Communal spaces and classrooms may be unkempt, rundown, unsafe, or sterile. Many classrooms are neither warm nor inviting and lack intellectual stimulation. Little to no student work or data is displayed to help convey a sense of pride and high expectations.	The school struggles to provide a welcoming environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Large sections of the school are not clean, bright, welcoming, or reflective of student work. Though the school has some data and student work displayed, efforts to brand the school and convey high expectations are very minimal. Sections of the school need significant attention.	The school generally provides a welcoming learning environment. Most of the facility is in good repair and conducive to teaching and learning. Most classrooms and common spaces are bright and clean, displaying data and student work; however, some sections lack visual stimulation. The school has made an effort to foster school identity through branding and consistent messaging in	The school provides a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Common spaces and classrooms are bright, clean, welcoming, and conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Data and student work are visible and present throughout the school, inspiring students and teachers to do their best work. There is clear branding and consistent messaging throughout the school,

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
			classrooms and communal spaces.	promoting school identity and pride.
3.2. Student Attendance	The school has few, if any, strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is ≤ 88% and/or chronic absenteeism is > 20%.	The school has some strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is between 89% and 93% and/or chronic absenteeism is between 16% and 20%.	The school has multiple, effective strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is between 94% and 97% and/or chronic absenteeism is between 11% and 15%.	The school implements effective strategies to increase attendance and on-time arrival. Average daily attendance is > 97% and chronic absenteeism is ≤ 10%.
3.3. Student Behavior	A school-wide behavior management plan may exist, but there is little evidence of implementation. Student misbehavior is a significant challenge and creates regular distractions. Disciplinary approaches appear to be inconsistent; students and staff do not have a common understanding of behavioral expectations. Discipline is mostly punitive. The rate of suspensions/expulsions as a proportion of student enrollment is greater than 20% (total # 2012-13 incidents/total enrollment).	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place, and there are some signs of implementation. Student misbehavior is a challenge and creates frequent disruptions. There may be confusion among students and staff regarding behavioral expectations. Discipline is primarily punitive, and there is inconsistent reinforcement of desired behaviors. The rate of suspensions/expulsions as a proportion of student enrollment is between 15% and 20%.	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place and effectively implemented most of the time. Student behavior is under control. Misbehavior is infrequent, with periodic distractions to instruction. Most students behave in a calm and respectful manner. Students and staff have a common understanding of the behavior policy. There is positive reinforcement of desired behaviors. The suspension/expulsion rate is between 10% and 14%.	A school-wide behavior management plan is consistently and effectively implemented. All students behave in a calm, orderly, and respectful manner throughout the school day. Classroom distractions are minimal, and immediately and appropriately addressed. Rewards and consequences are clear and appropriate, and are consistently applied across the school. The suspension/expulsion rate is < 10%.
3.4. Interpersonal Interactions	There is a weak sense of community. The quality and types of student, adult, and student/adult interactions raise concerns. There are signs of divisiveness or hostility among students and with staff. There are minimal signs of connections between students and staff; interactions are largely transactional or triggered when students are off task.	There is a moderate sense of community. Students are somewhat respectful toward one another and adults. There is some teasing and divisiveness; however, it does not define school culture. Communication between students and staff is somewhat positive. There are some connections between students and staff.	There is a good overall sense of community. Students are generally respectful toward one another and adults. Interactions are mostly positive. There is minimal teasing and divisiveness. Communication between students and staff is generally positive and respectful. There are signs of connections between students and staff. Most staff seem invested in their students.	There is a strong sense of community. Students are respectful and courteous of one another and adults. Student interactions are overwhelmingly positive and polite. The school has an inclusive and welcoming environment. Student/adult interactions are positive and respectful, demonstrating strong relationships. Staff seems invested in the well-being and development of students.
3.5. Family and Community Engagement	The school offers infrequent opportunities to involve parents in the school community. Family involvement is minimal. Teachers rarely reach out to families regarding their child's academic progress.	The school offers several family events throughout the year. Roughly half of families participate in school activities. More than half of all teachers reach out to families regarding their child's academic progress.	The school offers periodic, meaningful opportunities for parents/families to engage in student's education. Most families participate in school activities. Most educators communicate regularly with families.	The school frequently engages parents/family as partners in student's education. Almost all families participate in school activities. Nearly all educators communicate with families on a regular basis.
3.6. Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy	The school offers inadequate supports to address students' nonacademic needs. There are limited wraparound services. The school makes little or no effort to engage community partners	The school offers some support to address students' nonacademic needs through wraparound services. Community and partner engagement is spotty and event-specific.	The school offers a range of wraparound services to address students' nonacademic needs. The school has several sustained community partnerships.	The school has a clear process for evaluating students' needs and connecting students to appropriate wraparound services. The school has sustained community partnerships to

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
	to expand services offered through the school.			help address student needs.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
4.1. Adequate Instructional Time	There is not enough time in the school schedule to appropriately meet students' academic needs. There is a significant amount of wasted time in the school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes ≤ 5 hours of instruction per day, and ≤ 60 minutes of ELA time.[1]	Students would benefit from increased instructional and/or intervention time. The school calendar and daily schedule could be improved to increase time on task. The schedule includes > 5 and ≤ 5.5 hours of instruction per day, and > 60 and ≤ 90 minutes of ELA time.	The school has taken steps to increase instructional time on task through extended learning opportunities. The school calendar and daily schedule are well constructed. The schedule includes > 5.5 and ≤ 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 90 and ≤ 120 minutes of ELA time.	The school has multiple extended learning opportunities available to students. The school implements a thoughtful and strategic school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes > 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 120 minutes of ELA time.
4.2. Use of Instructional Time	Staff and students use time ineffectively. Misused instructional time results from misbehavior, poor scheduling, and inefficient transitions. There are missed opportunities to maximize time on task. Observed teachers struggle with pacing and fail to use class time in a constructive manner.	Staff and student use of time is somewhat effective. Some students are off task and there are missed opportunities to maximize instructional time. Lesson schedules are moderately well planned, paced, and executed. Teachers could be more skilled and/or methodical in the use of class time.	Most staff and students use time well. A handful of students require redirection; however, the majority of students transition quickly to academic work when prompted by the teacher. There is minimal downtime. Lessons are well planned, paced, and executed. Teachers are adept at managing and using class time.	Staff and students maximize their use of time. There is no downtime. Transitions are smooth and efficient. Students transition promptly to academic work with minimal cues and reminders from teachers. Teachers meticulously use every moment of class time to prioritize instructional time on task.
4.3. Use of Staff Time	Educators lack adequate and/or recurring professional development and/or common planning time. Common planning time is currently disorganized and the time is not used effectively. As a result, staff members are unable to develop and/or share practices on a regular basis.	Most academic teams have common planning periods (less than 1 hour/week); however, the school has failed to secure vertical and horizontal planning. Collaborative planning time is used at a basic level (e.g., organization of resources or topics not directly related to classroom instruction).	All academic teams have common planning periods (1-2 hours/week) and they are seldom interrupted by non-instructional tasks. Staff members use this time to discuss instructional strategies, discuss student work, develop curricular resources, and use data to adjust instruction.	All educators have weekly common planning time for vertical and horizontal planning (more than 2 hours/week). Common planning periods are tightly protected and only interrupted by emergencies. The school has established tight protocols to ensure that common planning time is used effectively.
4.4. Routines and Transitions	The school is chaotic and disorderly. The safety of students and staff is a concern. The school lacks critical systems and routines. Movement of students is chaotic and noisy with little adult intervention. Adults are not present during transitions; therefore,	The school is somewhat chaotic and/or disorderly, particularly in certain locations and during certain times of day. Some staff make an effort to maintain procedures and routines; however, staff presence is minimal and redirection of	The school environment is calm and orderly in most locations and during most of the day. Rules and procedures are fairly clear, consistent, and evident. Routines seem somewhat apparent and institutionalized. Adults are present to	The school environment is calm and orderly. Rules and procedures are clear, specific, consistent, and evident. Routines are largely unspoken and institutionalized. Adults are consistently present to reinforce norms.

[1] The total amount of ELA instructional time per day at the secondary level can include reading- and/or writing-intensive coursework.

Note: The rubrics draw from the CSDE's School Quality Review and Network Walkthrough Tool, and Mass Insight Education's School Readiness Assessment.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary**
	there is very little re-direction.	misbehavior is lacking.	reinforce norms.	
4.5. Financial Management	The school and/or district do not make sound budgetary decisions based on student need and projected impact. Budget decisions are largely governed by past practice and do not account for sustainability. There is little to no evidence around school and/or district leaders successfully advocating for school resource needs.	Budget decisions are sometimes focused on factors unrelated to student needs and school goals. A number of expenditures and initiatives lack a plan for sustainability beyond the current school year. School and/or district leaders do not effectively advocate for school needs or pursue additional resources.	The school and/or district have emerging strategic budgeting practices. The school and/or district have begun to repurpose funds to align expenditures more closely with school goals and student needs. Sustainability may pose a concern. School/district leaders effectively advocate for school needs and pursue additional resources.	The school and district engage in strategic budgeting. The school and district invest in high-yield, research-based initiatives aligned to student needs and school goals. There is a clear sustainability plan for all major expenditures. School/district leaders effectively advocate for school needs, and build strategic relationships to pursue needed resources.

Network Walkthrough Tool
Supporting Rubric and "Look Fors"

School-wide Walkthrough Rubric:				
Indicator	**1 – Below Standard**	**2 – Developing**	**3 – Proficient**	**4 – Exemplary**
1. School Environment *(Culture and Climate)*	❑ Unkempt, rundown, or unsafe school facilities. ❑ Uninspiring, unwelcoming, or sterile learning environment. ❑ Little to no school branding or sense of school pride and identity. ❑ Little to no evidence of data. ❑ Little to no evidence of student work.	❑ Unkempt, rundown, or unsafe facilities in certain sections of the school. ❑ Somewhat inspiring and welcoming learning environment. ❑ Some school branding. ❑ Some evidence of data. ❑ Some evidence of student work in certain locations.	❑ Bright, clean, and well-kept school facilities. ❑ Welcoming and inspiring learning environment in most parts of the school. ❑ School branding and sense of school pride and identity. ❑ Data on display. ❑ Student work displayed throughout the building.	❑ Bright, clean, and well-kept facilities. ❑ Inspiring learning environment conducive to high-quality instruction. ❑ Branding and consistent messaging. ❑ Data and student work displayed effectively throughout the school. ❑ Staff frequently and consistently recognize students doing well.
2. Routines and Transitions *(Operations)*	❑ Chaotic and disorderly environment leading to concerns about student and adult safety. ❑ High noise levels during transitions. ❑ Little to no evidence of systems and routines. ❑ Little to no adult presence and redirection of disruptive behaviors.	❑ Somewhat chaotic and disorderly environment in certain locations and during most of the time observed. ❑ Moderate noise level. ❑ Somewhat clear rules and evidence of systems and routines. ❑ Some adult presence.	❑ Calm and orderly environment in most locations and during most of the time observed. ❑ Appropriate noise levels. ❑ Evidence of rules and routines. ❑ Adult presence to reinforce norms and expectations. ❑ Transitions (e.g., bathroom, hallways, lunch, recess, assemblies) occur with relative ease and consistency but may require some adult redirection.	❑ Calm and orderly environment throughout the school. ❑ Minimal noise during transitions. ❑ Clear, consistent, and evident rules and routines, with largely unspoken and institutionalized procedures. ❑ Strong adult presence narrating compliance instead of telling students what not to do. ❑ Planned, consistent, and learned transitions (e.g., bathroom, hallways, lunch, recess, assemblies) with infrequent adult redirection.
3. Interpersonal Interactions *(Culture and Climate)*	❑ Disrespectful interactions between students, and students and adults. ❑ Signs of divisiveness or hostility. ❑ Minimal connections between students and staff, with interactions that are largely transactional or triggered when students are off task.	❑ Students are somewhat respectful toward one another and adults. ❑ Some divisiveness; however, it does not define school culture. ❑ Somewhat positive interactions between students and staff.	❑ Students are generally respectful toward one another and adults. ❑ Mostly positive rapport with minimal teasing and divisiveness. ❑ Emerging connections between students and staff, with most staff seeming invested in their students. ❑ Clear directions to the main entrance and main office posted near main entrances. ❑ Office staff acknowledge students, families, and visitors in a friendly manner. ❑ Teachers' names and room numbers are clearly marked.	❑ Students are respectful and supportive of one another and adults. ❑ Positive and supportive rapport with an inclusive climate. ❑ Strong connections between staff and students, with an investment in student wellbeing and development ❑ Office staff immediately acknowledge visitors in a friendly manner. ❑ Teachers' names and room numbers are clearly marked. ❑ Clear directions to the main office, library, cafeteria, and auditorium, are posted throughout the school.

[1] Few or very few students = 0-25%; [2] Some students = 26-60%; [3] Most students = 61-85%; [4] All or almost all of students = 86-100%. Revised December 2014.

Network Walkthrough Tool
Supporting Rubric and "Look Fors"

Classroom Observation Rubric:				
Indicator	**1 – Below Standard**	**2 – Developing**	**3 – Proficient**	**4 – Exemplary**
1. Student Engagement *(Academics)*	❑ Weak or inadequate lesson objectives, failing to capture what students are to learn, demonstrate, and produce. ❑ Few students complete instructional tasks, volunteer responses and/or ask appropriate questions. ❑ Students are left without work to do for a significant portion of the period observed. ❑ Materials, resources and activities do not support the learning goals or do not require intellectual engagement appropriate for the content and student development levels.	❑ Emerging lesson objectives. ❑ Some strategies to address multiple learning styles. ❑ Some students complete instructional tasks, volunteer responses, and/or ask appropriate questions. ❑ Students are idle while waiting for the teacher or left with nothing to do for one or two minutes at a time. ❑ Materials, resources, and activities may support some learning goals or require some intellectual engagement appropriate for the content and student development levels.	❑ Somewhat clear lesson objectives identifying what students are to learn, demonstrate, and produce. ❑ Strategies for multiple learning styles are prevalent. ❑ Most students complete instructional tasks, volunteer responses, and/or ask appropriate questions. ❑ Students are idle for short periods of time (less than one minute at a time). ❑ Materials, resources, and activities support the learning goals and require intellectual engagement appropriate for the content and student development levels.	❑ Clear lesson objectives identifying what students are to learn, demonstrate, and produce. ❑ Lesson appeals to and supports diverse learning styles. ❑ All/Almost all students complete instructional tasks, volunteer responses, and/or ask appropriate questions. ❑ Students who finish assigned work early engage in meaningful learning without interrupting other students' learning. ❑ Teacher adapts or creates resources, activities, and/or materials that engage students in strategic and extended thinking.
2. Use of Time *(Operations)*	❑ Instructional time is frequently lost due to lesson structure, pacing, or inappropriate use of instructional time. ❑ Students do not execute transitions, procedures, and routines in an orderly manner. ❑ Teacher does not respond to student requests or responds to student requests in a manner that leads to significant interruptions to lesson flow or pacing.	❑ Instructional time is sometimes lost due to lesson structure, pacing, or inappropriate use of instructional time. ❑ Students sometimes execute transitions, routines and procedures in an orderly and efficient manner, and/or require substantial direction or narration. ❑ Teacher sometimes responds to student requests or responses lead to some interruption to the lesson flow or pacing.	❑ Teacher frequently paces instruction to provide students with the time needed to be engaged in meaningful work and develop mastery. ❑ Most students execute transitions, routines and procedures in an orderly and efficient manner, though they may require some direction or narration. ❑ Teacher responds to student requests without interrupting instruction.	❑ Teacher makes appropriate adjustments in pacing with a sense of urgency to adapt to student needs. ❑ Students assume responsibility for routines and procedures and execute them in an orderly, efficient and self-directed manner, requiring little or no direction or narration. ❑ Teacher consistently responds to student requests without interrupting instruction.
3. Classroom Learning Environment *(Culture and Climate)*	❑ Classroom is disorganized and neither warm nor inviting. ❑ Classroom lacks visual stimulation to support teaching and learning. ❑ Lack of systems and routines. ❑ Teacher rarely arranges the physical environment to accommodate instructional strategies and student needs.	❑ Classroom environment is not entirely inviting nor connected to the current unit or theme. ❑ Limited visual stimulation to support teaching and learning. ❑ Systems and routines are only somewhat evident and effective.	❑ Clean and visually stimulating classroom with an inviting learning environment connected to the current unit or theme. ❑ Adequate systems and routines to promote classroom efficiency and student engagement. ❑ Teacher arranges the physical environment to accommodate instructional strategies and student needs.	❑ Clean, inviting, and welcoming classroom that supports excellent teaching and learning through carefully selected visual stimuli. ❑ Strong systems and routines that promote efficiently and engagement. ❑ Teacher adapts and creates new and/or novel uses of the classroom space.

[1] Few or very few students = 0-25%; [2] Some students = 26-60%; [3] Most students = 61-85%; [4] All or almost all of students = 86-100%. Revised December 2014.

Network Walkthrough Tool
Supporting Rubric and "Look Fors"

Indicator	1 – Below Standard	2 – Developing	3 – Proficient	4 – Exemplary
4. Positive Behavior Management *(Culture and Climate)*	❑ Significant student misbehavior, demonstrating lack of staff control. ❑ Frequent misbehavior disrupts teaching and learning. ❑ Inadequate or ineffective adult responses to misbehavior with inconsistent approaches. ❑ Lack of a shared understanding of behavioral expectations. ❑ Mostly punitive discipline.	❑ Some misbehavior, suggesting a lack of staff control. ❑ Misbehavior periodically disrupts teaching and learning. ❑ Inconsistent responses to misbehavior. ❑ Some confusion among students and staff about expectations. ❑ Primarily punitive discipline; inconsistent use of positive reinforcements.	❑ Student behavior is under control with most students behaving in a calm and respectful manner. ❑ Quick, effective, and consistent teacher response to misbehavior. ❑ Mostly shared understanding of the discipline policy. ❑ Use of appropriate rewards and consequences ❑ Emerging teacher voice and movement around the classroom.	❑ Student behavior is calm, orderly, and respectful. ❑ Teacher consistently uses positive behavioral strategies, including interventions to increase and maintain appropriate behavior. ❑ Teacher adapts and create strategies for students' to regulate their own behaviors. ❑ Strong teacher voice and movement around the classroom.
5. Differentiation and Checking for Understanding *(Academics)*	❑ One-size-fits-all instructional approach with no obvious signs of differentiation. ❑ Little to no evidence around the use of data to inform instruction. ❑ Disconnect between student understanding and the pace/content of the lesson. ❑ Questions, tasks, or assessments do not yield data that allow the teacher to assess student progress toward learning goals. ❑ Student responses, work, and interactions demonstrate that most students are not on track to achieve learning goals.	❑ Some efforts to differentiate based on individual learning needs, but strategies are not seamless throughout the lesson. ❑ Some evidence around the use of data to scaffold instruction. ❑ Some students may struggle, and teacher does not address their learning needs in real time. ❑ Some questions, tasks, or assessments yield data that allow the teacher to assess student progress toward learning goals. ❑ Student responses, work, and interactions demonstrate that some students are on track.	❑ Teacher employs strategies to tier or scaffold instruction at various points in the lesson. ❑ Evidence to suggest the use of data to adapt instruction. ❑ Identification of and supports for those students who may struggle to engage with the content. ❑ Most questions, tasks, or assessments yield data that allow the teacher to assess student progress and adjust instruction. ❑ Student responses, work, and interactions demonstrate that most students are on track to achieve learning goals.	❑ Seamless differentiation throughout the observed period. ❑ Strong evidence to suggest the use of data to adapt instruction. ❑ Tight feedback loop between monitoring and instruction, where teaching feels individualized to meet unique learning needs. ❑ Questions, tasks, or assessments yield data that allow the teacher to assess students' progress and make adjustments to instruction. ❑ Student responses, work, and interactions demonstrate that all/almost all students are on track to achieve learning goals.
6. Academic Rigor and Ownership *(Academics)*	❑ Few students provide meaningful oral/written evidence to support their thinking. ❑ Students complete very little of the cognitive work during the observed period, such as reading, writing, discussion, analysis, computation, or problem-solving; teacher completes all/almost all of the cognitive work. ❑ Few students respond to their peers' thinking or ideas. ❑ Few students try hard to complete academic work or answer questions.	❑ Some students provide meaningful oral/written evidence to support their thinking. ❑ Students complete some of the cognitive work during the observed period, but the teacher or a very small number of students complete most of the cognitive work. ❑ Some students respond to their peers' thinking and/or provide feedback to their classmates. ❑ Some students try hard to complete challenging academic work and answer questions.	❑ Most students provide meaningful evidence to support their thinking. ❑ Students complete an appropriate amount of the cognitive work during the observed period; most of the students complete the cognitive work. ❑ Most students respond to their peers' thinking, ideas or answers and provide feedback to their classmates. ❑ Most students try hard to complete academic work and answer questions, even if challenging.	❑ All/Almost all students provide meaningful oral or written evidence to support their thinking. ❑ All/Almost all of students complete an appropriate amount of the cognitive work during the observed period. ❑ All/Almost all students routinely provide constructive feedback to their classmates and respond productively to their peers. ❑ All/Almost all students consistently try hard to complete academic work and answer questions, even if challenging.

[1] Few or very few students = 0-25%; [2] Some students = 26-60%; [3] Most students = 61-85%; [4] All or almost all of students = 86-100%. Revised December 2014.

Network School and Classroom Walkthrough Notes

School Walkthrough Information:				
School Name:		Date:		
Observer(s):		Time in/Time out:		

School-Wide Observations:	**Indicators:**	**Rating (1 – 4):**
	School Environment - Main Entrance:	
	School Environment - Hallways/Common Space:	
	Transitions and Routines - Arrival/Dismissal:	
	Transitions and Routines - Between Classes:	
	Interpersonal Interactions:	

Classroom Observations:		**Indicators:**	**Rating (1 – 4):**
Grade/Content Area:		Student Engagement:	
		Use of Time:	
		Classroom Learning Environment:	
		Positive Behavior Management:	
		Differentiation/Checking for Understanding:	
		Academic Rigor and Ownership:	
Grade/Content Area:		Student Engagement:	
		Use of Time:	
		Classroom Learning Environment:	
		Positive Behavior Management:	
		Differentiation/Checking for Understanding:	
		Academic Rigor and Ownership:	
Grade/Content Area:		Student Engagement:	
		Use of Time:	
		Classroom Learning Environment:	
		Positive Behavior Management:	
		Differentiation/Checking for Understanding:	
		Academic Rigor and Ownership:	

Action Items and Follow-up Activities:		
Action:	Owner:	Deadline:
1.		
2.		
3.		

2015-16 Alliance and Priority School District Consolidated Application Guidance

Form Number: ED - 705

Sections 10-262u and 10-266q of the Connecticut General Statutes

Date Issued: February 2015

Dr. Dianna Roberge-Wentzell
Interim Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue | Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 713-6705 | www.sde.ct.gov/

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The CSDE does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The CSDE does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding the CSDE's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie
Equal Employment Opportunity Director
State of Connecticut Department of Education
25 Industrial Park Road | Middletown, CT 06457 | 860-807-2071

PART I: 2015-16 APPLICATION OVERVIEW

1. APPLICATION OVERVIEW

In response to feedback from districts and in an effort to streamline and align district strategic planning processes, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is pleased to provide a consolidated grant application for 2015-16 for Alliance and Priority School Districts (PSDs). The purpose of the consolidated application is to centralize district reform priorities in one overarching plan, as supported and enabled by Alliance and PSD funding. To that end, the application is designed to ease reporting requirements and, more importantly, generate one unifying plan inclusive of grant expenditures supporting district transformation and school improvement efforts.

2. ALLIANCE DISTRICT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Alliance District program is a unique and targeted investment in Connecticut's 30 lowest-performing districts. C.G.S. § 10-262u established a process for identifying Alliance Districts and allocating increased Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding to support district strategies to dramatically increase student outcomes and close achievement gaps by pursuing bold and innovative reforms. In total, Alliance Districts serve over 200,000 students in more than 400 schools.

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 262u, each Alliance District's receipt of its designated ECS funding is conditioned upon district submission of and the Commissioner of Education's approval of a plan, district progress and performance relative to that plan, and subsequent annual amendments, in the context of the district's overall strategy to improve academic achievement. The CSDE reviews district plans on an annual basis and approves plans aligned to the goals of the program. Annual plan approval is predicated upon district implementation and performance during the prior year. Proposals for the use of Alliance District funding will be reviewed for the quality of the plan, as well as the degree of alignment between the proposed use of funds and the overall district strategy.

3. PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The PSD grant was established to provide support for school districts with the greatest academic need. During the 2015-16 school year, 14 Alliance Districts also qualify as PSDs. Such designation provides for additional funding and also imposes additional responsibilities. As outlined in C.G.S. § 10-266q, the PSD grant provides funds to support districts in the pursuit of all or some of the following eight approved reform areas:

1. Create or expand innovative programs related to dropout prevention.
2. Establish alternative and transitional programs for students having difficulty succeeding in traditional educational programs.
3. Create academic enrichment, tutorial and recreation programs or activities in school buildings during non-school hours and during the summer.
4. Develop or expand extended-day kindergarten programs.
5. Develop or expand early reading intervention programs which include summer and after-school programming.
6. Enhance the use of technology to support instruction or to improve parent and teacher communication.
7. Strengthen parent involvement in the education of children, and parent and other community involvement in school and school district programs, activities and educational policies.
8. Obtain accreditation for elementary and middle schools from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

PSDs must use at least 20 percent of the grant funding to support early reading interventions.

4. 2015-16 LIST OF ALLIANCE AND PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The following 30 districts are entering their fourth year in the Alliance District program. During 2015-16, 14 of these districts also qualify as PSDs and are identified with an asterisk (*) below.

Ansonia	East Hartford*	Manchester	New London*	Waterbury*
Bloomfield	East Haven	Meriden*	Norwalk*	West Haven
Bridgeport*	East Windsor	Middletown	Norwich*	Winchester
Bristol	Hamden	Naugatuck	Putnam*	Windham*
Danbury*	Hartford*	New Britain*	Stamford*	Windsor
Derby	Killingly	New Haven*	Vernon	Windsor Locks

5. APPLICATION SECTIONS AND DEADLINES

The 2015-16 application consists of the following sections due in draft form on April 10, 2015:

Section:	Format:
1. 2015-16 Consolidated AD/PSD Application and Budget	Separate Excel template
2. Statement of Assurances	Appendix A

6. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Carefully review and follow all directions when completing the various sections of the consolidated district application. Complete all of the required sections. Year 4 consolidated applications must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Excel (Section 1) and Word (Section 2) formats to SDEAllianceDistrict@ct.gov by 4:00 PM (EST) on Friday, April 10, 2015. Alliance Districts will have the opportunity to revise and finalize 2015-16 consolidated AD/PSD applications in July 2015 upon the release of FY 16 allocations and assessment data. Please ensure budget proposals align to guidance provided in the Local Fiscal Processing Manual and to the Uniform Chart of Accounts (available here: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/dgm/payments/lfpm.pdf).

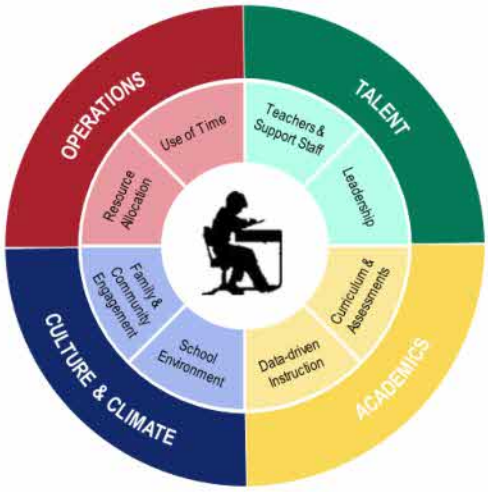
PLEASE NOTE: All applications become the property of the CSDE and are subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

7. TIMELINE SUMMARY

Activity:	Timeframe/Deadline:
1. CSDE releases the 2015-16 AD/PSD application guidance packet and planning template.	February 2015
2. Alliance Districts submit draft 2015-16 AD/PSD applications and assurances.	April 10, 2015
3. Alliance Districts revise and finalize 2015-16 AD/PSD plans and budgets informed by assessment data and final allocations.	July TBA, 2015

8. REFORM PRIORITIES

The CSDE's turnaround framework identifies four research-based levers to dramatically improve district and school performance and student achievement. School and district success requires strong systems and performance in each of the following areas shown in the framework at right:



1. **Talent:** Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.

2. **Academics:** Design and implement a rigorous and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels, including aligned curricula, instruction, and assessments.

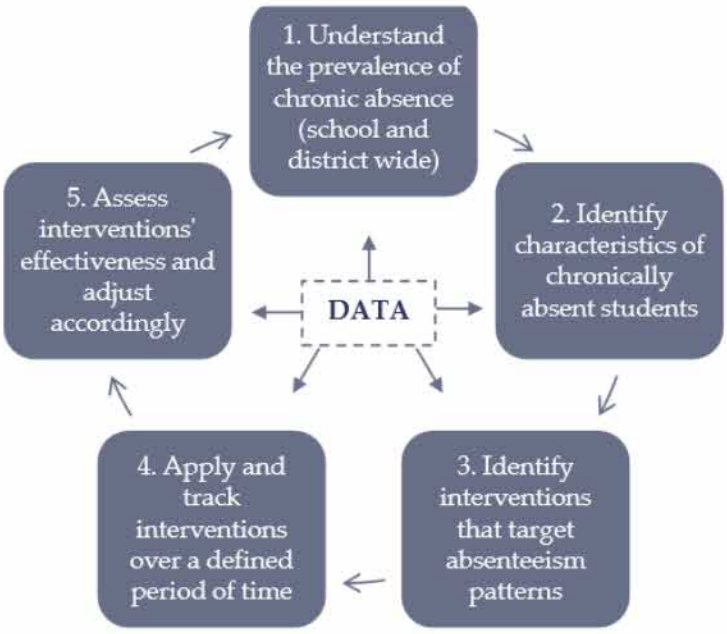
3. **Culture and Climate:** Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.

4. **Operations:** Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.

9. 2015-16 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Requirement #1: All Alliance Districts must have an educator evaluation plan approved by the CSDE's Talent Office in order to be considered for approval of the district's 2015-16 AD/PSD consolidation application.

Requirement #2: Alliance Districts with a 2013-14 student chronic absenteeism rate exceeding 10 percent must establish chronic absenteeism reduction as a priority in their 2015-16 AD/PSD application (see Culture and Climate tab/section). These districts must pursue comprehensive strategies aligned to elements 2-5 in the diagram shown at right.[1] During the May 7, 2015 Alliance District convening, districts will receive more information about this requirement and learn about best practices, strategies, and potential partnerships to decrease chronic absenteeism.



[1] John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities. (2012, April). *Collaborative Approaches to Reducing Absenteeism Among K-12 Students Policy Fact Sheet.* Retrieved from Stanford University: http://jgc.stanford.edu/resources/policy_fact_sheets/Absence_Interventions_PFS.pdf

10. QUESTIONS

Any and all questions regarding the Alliance and PSD programs and consolidated 2015-16 application should be directed to districts' CSDE points of contact and/or:

Iris White
Turnaround Office
Connecticut State Department of Education
Telephone: (860) 713-6794
Email: Iris.White@ct.gov

Appendix A. Statement of Assurances

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

PROJECT TITLE: **2015-16 Alliance and Priority School District Consolidated Application**

THE APPLICANT: _____ 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)

References in this section to "contract" shall mean this grant agreement and to "contractor" shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

i. "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
ii. "Contract" and "contract" include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
iii. "Contractor" and "contractor" include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
iv. "Gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose;
v. "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
vi. "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;
vii. "marital status" means being single, married as recognized by the state of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
viii. "mental disability" means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
ix. "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one 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 Connecticut General Statutes § 32-9n; and
x. "public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms "Contract" and "contract" do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, (2) a quasi-public agency, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-120, (3) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-267, (4) the federal government, (5) a foreign government, or (6) an agency of a subdivision, agency, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), (4) or (5).

(b) (1) 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, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability 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; and 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, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) 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; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the 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; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; and (5) 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 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works projects.

(c) 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.

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

(e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section 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 Connecticut General Statutes §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.

(f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.

(g) (1) 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 the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) 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; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; and (4) 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 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56.

(h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph 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 Connecticut General Statutes § 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)* _____

Title: *(typed)* _____

Date: _____

FY 16 AD and PSD Budget Summary

Directions: Do not enter budget information in this tab. This tab pulls financial data from the application tabs and auto-calculates total proposed investments. Please ensure that your total budgeted amounts match your district's AD and PSD allocation amounts.

	Talent AD Costs	Academic AD Costs	Academic PSD Costs	Climate AD Costs	Climate PSD Costs	Operations AD Costs	Operations PSD Costs	Non-Reform AD Costs	TOTAL AD	TOTAL PSD
100: Personnel Services - Salaries	$ 750,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 750,000.00**	**$ -**
200: Personnel Services - Benefits	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	**$ -**
300: Purchased Professional and Technical Services	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	**$ -**
400: Purchased Property Services	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	**$ -**
500: Other Purchased Services	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	**$ -**
600: Supplies	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	**$ -**
700: Property	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	**$ -**
800: Other Objects	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	**$ -**
TOTALS:	**$ 750,000.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ 750,000.00**	**$ -**

2015-16 1003(a) Application

Improving Student Achievement in Low-Performing Schools

Section 1003(a) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

Purpose: To leverage change and dramatically improve student achievement in Connecticut's lowest-performing schools by making targeted investments in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and/or operations.

Application Due: Friday, April 10, 2015

RFP #806 Published: February 2015

Dr. Dianna Roberge-Wentzell
Interim Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue | Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 713-6705 | www.sde.ct.gov/

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The CSDE does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The CSDE does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding the CSDE's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie
Equal Employment Opportunity Director
State of Connecticut Department of Education
25 Industrial Park Road | Middletown, CT 06457 | 860-807-2071

PART I: 2015-16 1003(a) APPLICATION OVERVIEW

1. PURPOSE

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is seeking to assist local education agencies (LEAs) in dramatically improving student achievement in their lowest-performing schools by making targeted investments in schools pursuing comprehensive and transformative improvement plans.

2. GRANT PERIOD

The anticipated grant period is May 15, 2015 – September 30, 2016. Federal 1003(a) funds awarded through this competitive grant process must be expended or obligated by September 30, 2016, and liquidated within 60 days of the end date of the grant. Grant recipients will automatically be considered for a second year of funding, contingent upon available funds, implementation effectiveness, and 2015-16 results.

3. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

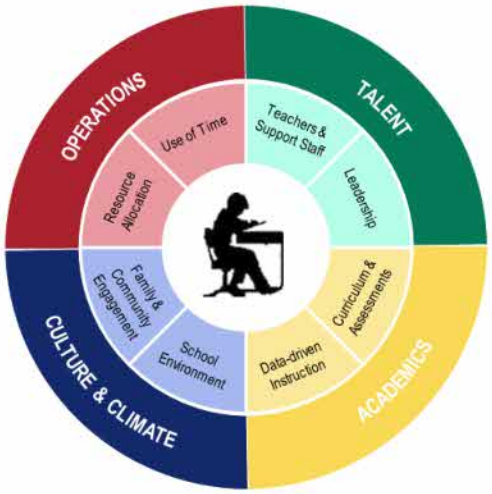
Applications will be accepted from LEAs on behalf of their Turnaround and/or Focus school(s). An LEA must submit a separate application for each school the district would like to have considered for competitive 1003(a) funds. Please visit the CSDE's website for a list of eligible Turnaround and Focus schools. Review schools are not eligible to submit an application.

Schools that applied for and received 1003(a) funds during the 2014-15 school year will automatically be considered for a second year of funding during 2015-16. Pending a successful review of school data during Quarter 3 Alliance District monitoring meetings, 2014-15 grant recipients may be asked to submit a budget proposal for up to $200,000 in new 1003(a) funds during the 2015-16 school year. Successful 2014-15 grant recipients need not apply for a continuation of funds during 2015-16; the CSDE will make Year 2 funding determinations based on school implementation effectiveness, progress, and data.

4. FUNDING AND USE OF FUNDS

Eligible applicants may submit an application for up to $200,000 per school in 1003(a) funding. This competitive grant application requires LEAs to describe how such funds would support bold reform efforts at the school level. Funding requests must support at least one of the following objectives:

1. **Talent:** Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.
2. **Academics:** Design and implement a rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels.
3. **Culture and Climate:** Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.
4. **Operations:** Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.



The awarding of funding is contingent upon an application's selection on the basis of the criteria described in Sections 5-6 and Appendix B of this RFP, the availability of funds, and approval by the CSDE. The CSDE may choose to fund all, some, or none of the total funding request. In awarding federal 1003(a) funds, the CSDE may give preference to schools not receiving other competitive grant funding (e.g., Commissioner Network funds, federal School Improvement Grant 1003(g) funds). The CSDE may also give preference to LEAs that demonstrate a substantial local investment in the school's turnaround efforts. LEAs may demonstrate a local investment by describing, in the Budget Proposal, how the district will use local, Alliance District, Priority School District, Title I, and/or other local, state, federal, and private grant funding to support the successful implementation of the school's improvement plan. Please note that federal 1003(a) funds may not be used to supplant other funding already committed by the district.

5. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Format: All applications must be completed using the Excel template found on the CSDE's Alliance District webpage, including the following components:

1. **Cover and Needs Analysis (Tab 1, Excel Template)**

   The application must summarize the school's strengths and growth areas, citing specific data and evidence. Strategies and expenditures proposed in the School Improvement Plan and Budget Proposal sections must reflect school data and needs identified in the needs analysis.

2. **School Improvement Plan (Tab 2, Excel Template)**

   The plan must describe school priorities, aligned strategies, and measurable goals to advance school performance and student achievement in the following areas: (1) talent; (2) academics; (3) culture and climate; and/or (4) operations. Please ensure close alignment between the School Improvement Plan and 1003(a) Budget Proposal.

3. **Budget Proposal (Tab 3, Excel Template)**

   Complete a budget proposal using the ED 114 budget template. Using the budget template, explain how the LEA proposes to invest 1003(a) funds to execute the School Improvement Plan and drive significant gains in student achievement. Summarize the proposed costs and provide a detailed justification for each of the proposed investments (e.g., number of FTEs, number of units, cost per unit). Include any district efforts to invest other local, state, federal, and/or private grants funds in the school turnaround effort to support the sustainability of 1003(a) investments. Please ensure budget proposals align to guidance provided in the Local Fiscal Processing Manual and to the Uniform Chart of Accounts (guidance available here: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/dgm/payments/lfpm.pdf).

4. **Statement of Assurances (see application Appendix A)**

   Review and sign the Statement of Assurances found in Appendix A of this RFP.

B. Minimum Submission Requirements:

Any application that does not meet the following requirements will be deemed unacceptable and ineligible for further review and consideration:

1. Being an eligible applicant, as defined in Section 3.

2. Submitting a complete application by following the required format, as described in Section 5.A.
3. Meeting the submission deadline of Friday, April 10, 2015, at 4:00 PM EST.

Applications that do not comply with these requirements may be considered non-responsive and excluded from review. Omission of any required document or form, failure to use required formats for response, or failure to respond to any requirements may lead to rejection of the proposal prior to any formal review. The CSDE reserves the right to make grant awards under this program without discussion with the applicants. Therefore, proposals should represent the applicant's best effort from both a technical and cost stand point.

C. Questions:

Any and all questions regarding this application should be directed to: Michelle Rosado, Turnaround Office, Michelle.Rosado@ct.gov.

D. Submissions:

All applications (Excel template and Appendix A: Statement of Assurances) must be submitted by e-mail to SDEAllianceDistrict@ct.gov. **All applications must be received by 4:00 PM on Friday, April 10, 2015.**

E. Freedom of Information:

All complete applications shall become the sole property of the State and will not be returned. All of the information contained in an application is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Section 1-200 et seq. of the Connecticut General Statutes. FOIA declares that, expect as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in statute) are public records and every person has a right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records in accordance with the terms of FOIA.

6. SELECTION CRITERIA

Using the rubric presented in Appendix B, a selection committee will review and score all applications that meet the minimum submission requirements, as described in Sections 5.A-B. All awards are subject to the availability of funds. Grants are not final until the award letter is executed. Given the number of eligible applicants, the CSDE anticipates a highly competitive process resulting in funding being awarded to only those applicants submitting well-developed applications and transformative plans.

APPENDIX A: STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

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

PROJECT TITLE: **Improving Student Achievement in Low-Performing Schools**
1003(a) Application

THE APPLICANT: _____ 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)

References in this section to "contract" shall mean this grant agreement and to "contractor" shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

i. "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
ii. "Contract" and "contract" include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
iii. "Contractor" and "contractor" include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
iv. "Gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose;
v. "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
vi. "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;
vii. "marital status" means being single, married as recognized by the state of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
viii. "mental disability" means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
ix. "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one 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 Connecticut General Statutes § 32-9n; and
x. "public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms "Contract" and "contract" do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, (2) a quasi-public agency, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-120, (3) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-267, (4) the federal government, (5) a foreign government, or (6) an agency of a subdivision, agency, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), (4) or (5).

(b) (1) 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, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability 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; and 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, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) 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; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the 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; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; and (5) 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 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works projects.

(c) 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.

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

(e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section 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 Connecticut General Statutes §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.

(f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.

(g) (1) 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 the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) 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; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; and (4) 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 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56.

(h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph 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 Connecticut General Statutes § 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)* _____

Title: *(typed)* _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B: APPLICATION RUBRIC

Overview
1003(a) applications will be evaluated using the criteria outlined below. Each section of the application will be rated as: 0 – Below Standard; 2 – Developing; 4 – Proficient; or 6 – Exemplary. 1003(a) is a competitive grant, and awards and award amounts will be based on the quality and transformative potential of the application.

Rating Key/Points Available:
0 Points – Below Standard: The response lacks meaningful detail, demonstrates a lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant's understanding of the issues in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice. Proposed strategies are not transformative in nature. **2 Points – Developing:** The response lacks critical details in certain areas. The response requires additional information in order to be considered reasonably comprehensive and transformative, and to demonstrate a clear vision for the school. **4 Points – Proficient:** The response indicates solid preparation and a grasp of the key issues, as demonstrated by a comprehensive and sufficiently transformative response. It provides a clear, realistic picture of how the school will operate. The response somewhat demonstrates the applicant's ability to execute the vision described in the response. **6 Points – Exemplary:** The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and alignment to school needs. The response indicates careful preparation for successful implementation, and a clear and compelling picture of how the school will operate. The response demonstrates the readiness of the applicant to successfully execute the vision described in the response.

Section:	Points Available:
1. Needs Analysis	6
2. Talent Section	6
3. Academics Section	6
4. Culture and Climate Section	6
5. Operations Section	6
6. Budget Proposal	6
7. Statement of Assurances	N/A – Required of all applicants.
Total Points Available:	**36**

2015-16 School Priorities and Goals

Step 1: Please identify the school's 2015-16 improvement priorities aligned to the CSDE's turnaround framework, which identifies reform levers in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Place an "X" beside the school's reform priorities and explain those priorities through aligned strategies below. Schools are encouraged to select a manageable number of priorities tied to the school's most significant needs impacting student achievement.

Talent Priorities:	Academic Priorities:	Culture and Climate Priorities:	Operations Priorities:
☐ Instructional practice	☐ Academic rigor	☐ School environment	☐ Adequate instructional time
☐ Evaluation and professional culture	☐ Student engagement	☐ Student attendance	☐ Use of instructional time
☐ Recruitment and retention strategies	☐ Differentiation	☐ Student behavior	☐ Use of staff time
☐ Professional development	☐ Curriculum aligned to the CCSS	☐ Interpersonal interactions	☐ Routines and transitions
☐ Leadership effectiveness	☐ Supports for special populations	☐ Family engagement	☐ Financial management
☐ Instructional leadership	☐ Assessment systems and data culture	☐ Community partners/wraparound	☐ Other: _____
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____	

Step 2: Identify a core set of strategies to advance the school's reform priorities (identified in Step 1). Summarize school strategies and identify a S.M.A.R.T. goal aligned to each strategy that is specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and time-bound. S.M.A.R.T. goals will be central to 2015-16 quarterly progress monitoring. Add or remove rows as necessary.

	Talent Priorities and Strategies:	Aligned SMART Goals:
1.1.	***Sample:*** **Embedded Literacy Coach:** School will hire a K-5 literacy coach. Coach will work with school administrators to create and implement a 4-week teacher coaching cycle, ensuring the all teachers receive some form of coaching over the school year. Coach will provide instructional coaching, biweekly professional development, model lessons, and co-taught lessons. Coach will build out K-5 writing lesson and unit plans. Coach will receive Workshop Model training in summer 2015.	Increase the percentage of students scoring at or above grade-level on the end-of-year benchmark reading assessment from 55% in 2015 to 75% in 2016. Increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding benchmark reading assessment growth goals from 60% in 2015 to 80% in 2016.
1.2.		
1.3.		
	Academic Priorities and Strategies:	**Aligned SMART Goals:**
2.1.		

2.2.		
2.3.		
	Climate Priorities and Strategies:	**Aligned SMART Goals:**
3.1.		
3.2.		
3.3.		
	Operations Priorities and Strategies:	**Aligned SMART Goals:**
4.1.		
4.2.		
4.3.		

Essential School Systems

High-performing schools create and maintain systems to develop and attract top talent, provide excellent academics, foster a positive school culture and climate, and ensure seamless operations. Success in each of these areas necessitates thoughtful planning and sophisticated procedures and routines. Network schools will consider the following list, which outlines essential school systems to advance talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations, and prioritize planning work based on the relative strengths of the school's existing systems in these areas.

Talent

Professional Development Plan: A comprehensive plan to support staff development, including a calendar of school and district professional learning opportunities. A schedule and protocols to facilitate vertical and horizontal collaboration.

Evaluation and Coaching System: Tools to evaluate staff performance over time, allowing for actionable feedback, targeted development, and strategic staffing. A coaching cycle aligned to school's goals and staff development needs.

Recruitment and Retention Strategy: Human capital systems to recruit, identify, and hire highly-effective educators and staff. Mechanisms and strategies to proactively recognize and retain exemplary staff members.

Staffing Structure: A clear and coherent school staffing and organizational structure, including defined roles and responsibilities, and committees facilitating distributed leadership and shared accountability and decision-making.

Culture and Climate

Student Attendance Plan: A proactive plan detailing strategies to ensure that all students arrive at school on time every day and ready to learn, and a clear set of interventions to address chronic absenteeism.

Behavior Management Strategy: A detailed approach to behavior management, including staff training and strategies to promote and reinforce positive behaviors. A clear discipline policy outlining consistent consequences for infractions.

Family Engagement Plan: A plan to engage families in their children's academic development. Strategies to engage families in a deep, meaningful, and sustained manner (e.g., family events, committees, volunteer opportunities).

Wraparound Strategy: A holistic approach for providing wraparound services to address students' and families' health and wellness needs. A community asset map identifying and linking families to local resources.

Academics

Comprehensive Assessment Strategy: A comprehensive plan for administering formative, benchmark, and summative assessments in all grade levels and content areas (e.g., test type, frequency, and data output).

Core Academic Program: An articulation of the school's core academic programming and course offerings, including curricula and programs for all grade levels, content areas, and student performance levels.

Instructional Framework: Instructional priorities and expectations promoting rigor, coherence, and alignment (e.g., unit/lesson plan templates, pacing guides, curriculum scope and sequence, homework policy, grading policy).

SRBI Strategy: Systems, processes, and tools to gather data and provide timely and targeted interventions. Structures to meet the needs of special populations, including special education students and English language learners.

Operations

School Calendar and Daily Schedule: Tools that maximize student and staff time, such as a daily bell schedule and master calendar. A detailed plan for extended learning time, providing enrichment and intervention opportunities.

Communications Plan: A communications plan using multiple modes of communication (e.g., website, newsletters, social media, e-blasts) to regularly communicate with internal and external audiences and community stakeholders.

Budget: A detailed budget outlining all sources of funds (e.g., local, state, federal, grants) and strategic investments aligned to school operations and program areas. Tools and processes for ongoing accounting.

Technology and Facilities Plan: A plan to maintain school facilities and grounds, creating a welcoming environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. A plan to acquire and use technology to enhance instruction.

Nutmeg Elementary School

Essential School Systems
Professional Development Plan

SAMPLE

Principal FIRST/LAST NAME
Commissioner's Network
DISTRICT Public Schools
MONTH 2014

Nutmeg School | Professional Development Plan

DEFINITION:

A professional learning calendar comprehensively supports staff development and includes a calendar of school and district professional learning opportunities, and a schedule and protocols to facilitate vertical and horizontal collaboration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

I. Professional Development Goals and Priorities ..... p.

II. Vehicles for Professional Development ..... p.

III. Professional Development Calendar ..... p.

IV. School-Wide Professional Development Schedule ..... p.

V. School-Level Expertise ..... p.

VI. Common Planning Time/Professional Learning Communities ..... p.

VII. Implementation Monitoring ..... p.

Note: All Essential School System templates provide a recommended layout and guiding questions to support school teams in building and refining school systems. Schools are not required to use this template. Schools are encouraged to delete guiding questions as they complete each system. The enclosed template also provides sample text; sample text is by no means comprehensive or prescriptive. Sample text provides initial guidance; schools should reference the resources for ideas and replace ***sample italicized text*** with school-specific content.

I. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

Key Questions:

- What are the school's staff-wide PD goals and instructional priorities?
- What are the most significant staff development areas, as identified through student data, informal classroom observations, and teacher evaluations?
- What new school and district programs and initiatives necessitate training?
- How will administrators and staff developers introduce and prioritize different content and skills at various points throughout the school year?

2013-14 Teacher Evaluation Growth Areas:

- ***2.b.*** *Promoting student engagement and shared responsibility for learning*
- ***3.a.*** *Planning of instructional content is aligned with standards, builds on students' prior knowledge and provides for appropriate level of challenge*
- ***3.b.*** *Planning instructional strategies to actively engage students in the content*
- ***4.a.*** *Implementing instructional content for learning*
- ***5.c.*** *Comprehensive data analysis, interpretation and communication*

2014-15 School-Wide PD Priorities:

- *Adopting the Readers' and Writers' Workshop Model;*
- *Transitioning to the new STAR assessments;*
- *Differentiating instruction and using data to target and deliver timely interventions and enrichment;*
- *Supporting the needs of special education students and ELLs in the general education setting;*
- *Planning and delivering rigorous and relevant lessons;*
- *Supporting positive behavior management and effective classroom management; and*
- *Engaging parents and families in their children's academic development.*

II. VEHICLES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Key Questions:

- What are the various mechanisms or formats for delivering high-quality PD?
- How is the school offering multiple modes of PD to meet the diverse needs of adult learners?
- What is the general purpose and frequency of each type of PD? Who oversees the various PD offerings?

Format:	Purpose:	Frequency:	Primary Owner:
School-Wide PD Days	• *Provide dedicated time for actionable, whole-school PD.* • *Offer school-based PD aligned to school goals and staff development needs.*	*August and June blocks*	*Principal and Assistant Principal*
Monthly Staff Meetings/PD	• *Share announcements and updates with staff.* • *Deliver PD aligned to school-wide, monthly instructional foci.*	*First Tuesday of every month*	*Principal and Instructional Coaches*
Common Planning Time/ Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)	• *Analyze student data.* • *Establish shared goals.* • *Review lesson plans and engage in collaborative curriculum development.* • *Discuss pedagogy and instructional strategies.*	*Every Thursday*	*Teacher leaders and Instructional Coaches*
One-on-One Coaching	• *Provide targeted coaching for new and/or developing teachers.* • *Engage in co-teaching and deliver model lessons.*	*6-week embedded coaching cycle*	*Instructional coaches*
	•		
	•		
	•		
	•		

III. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR:

Key Questions:

- What are the various opportunities for PD throughout the school year?
- How is the school creating protected time for staff trainings, staff collaboration, and individualized goal-based professional learning?
- How is the school being strategic about using concentrated PD time at the end/start of the school year?

August						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30/31

September						
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March						
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May						
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					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30/31

June						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Calendar Key	
	School-wide PD
	Monthly staff meeting/PD
	Common planning time
	Book club

IV. SCHOOL-WIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

Key Questions:

- What PD opportunities will the school and district offer to staff throughout the school year? How do these topics align to the goals and priorities identified for school-wide PD?
- How will the school structure concentrated PD opportunities at the beginning/end of the school year?
- Who are the school's core PD providers, both internally and externally?

August 2014	
August 27, 2014 *9:00 AM-3:00 PM*	***Welcome and School Goals | Auditorium*** *(9:00 AM - 12:00 PM)* ***Presenter:*** *Principal Smith* *Principal Smith will welcome faculty and staff back to school for the 2014-15 school year! Faculty and staff will review and discuss the school's mission and vision, and specific goals and priorities for 2014-15. Principal Smith will welcome new staff and review school policies and procedures.* ***Lunch Break*** *(12:00 PM – 1:00 PM)* ***Afternoon Workshops*** *(1:00 PM – 3:00 PM)* *Faculty and staff select one session to attend during the afternoon session based on interest and personal professional development goals.* • ***Classroom Behavior Management | Room #101*** ***Presenter:*** *Mr. Chen, Grade 3 Teacher Leader* *How can we successfully and consistently reinforce positive behaviors, while also quickly redirecting off-track behaviors? Teachers will unpack the school's new PBIS strategy and protocols. Teachers will discuss strategies to set and maintain high expectations for all students, resulting in well-managed classrooms and increased time on task. Teachers will calibrate around behaviors that merit rewards and infractions that warrant interventions.* • ***SIOP Training | Room #102*** ***Presenter:*** *Mrs. Brown, Bilingual Teacher* *Nutmeg serves a high concentration of English language learners (ELLs). The SIOP model provides a framework for teaching academic content and language skills. During this session, teachers will gain strategies to meet the needs of ELLs in the mainstream learning environment.* • ***Formative Assessments | Room #103*** ***Presenter:*** *Mr. Rodriguez, Assistant Principal* *Teachers will discuss questioning strategies to periodically monitor and check for student understanding. Teachers will learn about the revised Bloom's taxonomy and levels of comprehension. Teachers will share and practice various formative assessment techniques (e.g., exit slips; thumbs up, thumbs down).*

August 28, 2014 *9:00 AM - 3:00 PM*	***STAR Assessment System | Cafeteria*** *(9:00 AM – 11:30 AM)* ***Presenter:*** *Principal Smith* *Nutmeg School will launch STAR assessments in mathematics and reading in Grades K through 6 during the 2014-15 school year. During this session, teachers will receive the STAR assessment schedule and learn how to generate reports on the STAR platform. Teachers will meet with their grade-level data teams to practice using STAR data.* ***Lunch Break*** *(11:30 PM – 12:30 PM)* ***Readers' and Writers' Workshop| Cafeteria*** *(12:30 PM – 3:00 PM)* ***Presenter:*** *Mrs. Jones, Literacy Coach* *Nutmeg School will launch the Readers' and Writers' Workshop Model during the 2014-15 school year. The Workshop Model exposes students to sustained writing, writing in short bursts, and peer conferencing. The Model encourages students to explore texts of their choosing, emphasizing fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Teachers teach reading skills by focusing on the continuum of mastery for specific skills, such as synthesis, prediction, or interpretation. During this session, staff will become more familiar with the program and aligned pedagogical strategies.*
September 2014	
September 10, 2014 *7:00 - 9:00 AM*	***Lesson Planning | Room #100*** ***Presenter:*** *Mr. Rodriguez, Assistant Principal* *Teachers will review the core components of a strong classroom lesson. Teachers will discuss strategies to design lessons that are well-paced, rigorous, and engaging for students with various learning styles. Teachers should bring a recent lesson plan to the session; teachers will form small groups to workshop components of their lessons.*
September 15, 2014 *3:00 - 4:30 PM*	***Flipped Classroom | Room #100*** ***Facilitator:*** *Mrs. Arnold, Grade 5 Teacher* *We live in an increasingly digital age. How can technology revolutionize teaching and learning in your classroom? Mrs. Arnold will introduce the flipped classroom concept, where students learn new content at their own pace through archived virtual lessons as homework, and spend time applying new content with the teacher's support during classroom instruction.*
October 2014	
October XX, 2014 *XX:XX - XX:XX PM*	***Session Name | Room #XX*** ***Presenter:*** *Facilitator Name* *3-5 sentence description of the PD session.*
October XX, 2014 *XX:XX - XX:XX PM*	***Session Name | Room #XX*** ***Presenter:*** *Facilitator Name* *3-5 sentence description of the PD session.*

V. SCHOOL EXPERTISE

Key Questions:

- How is the school building a cadre of experts on topics relevant to student, staff, and school needs?
- Who on staff can serve as on-site trainers and staff developers? On what topic?
- How are PD opportunities intentionally designed to build staff capacity, expertise, skill/content leadership?

Topic:	Expert:
ELA and the Common Core State Standards	*Mrs. Jones, Literacy Coach*
PBIS and classroom behavior management	*Mr. Chen, Grade 3 Teacher Leader*

VI. COMMON PLANNING TIME/PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Key Questions:

- What is the purpose of collaborative planning time and professional learning communities (PLCs)?
- How are staff members organized for common planning and PLCs and committees to facilitate collaboration and distributed leadership?
- How is the school promoting vertical and horizontal planning?
- How often do PLCs meet, and what is the standing format and structure for these meetings? Do PLCs advance through a goal-setting cycle with different agendas for the various phases in the process?
- What are the reporting expectations to school leadership?

VII. IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING

Key Questions:

- How do school leaders monitor to ensure that PD positively impacts classroom instruction and student comprehension?
- What follow-up supports are available to teachers to ensure full and proper implementation of content and skills developed during PD sessions (e.g., co-teaching, peer observations, coaching)?
- What are the expected outcomes of the school's professional development strategy?

Professional Development Plan

Sample Tools, Resources, and Exemplars

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND DELIVERY:

- **Staff PD Needs and Interest Survey**
  Source: *Adapted from K12 Insight*
  This sample faculty and staff survey is designed to gather staff input regarding the design and delivery of PD. Survey questions ask staff to evaluate past PD experiences, rate their level of interest and familiarity with specific topics and instructional strategies, rate their level of interest and familiarity with school and district initiatives, and indicate their preferences for the times and locations of PD throughout the school year.

- **PD Calendars**
  Source: *The School District of Philadelphia Online Calendar and Printable PD Menu*
  Source: *YES Prep PD Calendar*
  The links above highlight several sample school and district PD calendars. These calendars – presented in various formats – outline PD opportunities for teachers and staff. Strong calendars provide the name of the PD sessions, dates, locations, presenters, session objectives, and recommended attendees. Calendars provide a comprehensive menu for teachers outlining professional learning opportunities over the course of the school year.

- **PD Lesson Plan Template**
  Source: *Generated by CSDE Turnaround Office*
  This PD lesson plan template supports the design and planning of PD sessions. This simple yet structured format allows those developing and delivering PD to map out session objectives and show alignment to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT). The template then provides a format to structure and pace the PD session, as well as identify necessary follow-up supports for teachers and "look fors" to monitoring successful implementation of PD skills and content.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION AND MONITORING:

- **Exit Surveys/Questionnaires**
  Source: *Baltimore City Public Schools Exit Survey*
  Source: *Committing to the Core "Triangle, Circle, Square" Exit Slip*
  Source: *Serve Center Exit Questionnaire*
  The links above connect educators to a variety of exit surveys and questionnaires designed to collect feedback on the quality and effectiveness of PD sessions or workshops. The various sample tools provide immediate staff feedback regarding the impact and relevance of the PD session, as well as identifying outstanding questions and potential follow-up sessions.

- **CSDE Turnaround Office Walkthrough Rubric and Audit Tool**
  Source: *Generated by the CSDE Turnaround Office*
  These tools facilitate informal classroom observations and evaluations of school-wide performance. The CSDE's walkthrough and school audit tools provide rubrics to evaluate key indicators in the areas of talent,

academics, culture and climate, and operations. The classroom walkthrough protocol is meant to facilitate short, informal classroom observations. The CSDE uses the longer audit tool to evaluate school systems and performance when schools join the Network, and again on an annual basis at the midyear point. The walkthrough rubric and audit tool should inform midcourse corrections.

COMMON PLANNING TIME/PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES:

- **Protocols for Collaboration**
  Source: *National School Faculty Reform*
  Source: *National Staff Development Council*
  These discussion protocols can be used to guide and structure collaborative planning time. The protocols linked above help to facilitate and generate rich and meaningful conversations among teachers and staff on targeted topics. Discussion protocols are designed to lessen prep work for facilitators, create norms and routines for discussions, and elicit fruitful conversations. The resource banks above provide protocols for lesson studies, problems of practice, data analysis, inquiry, team/co-planning, etc.

- **Common Planning/PLC Meeting Agenda and Meeting Minutes Templates**
  Source: *Generated by the CSDE Turnaround Office*
  These templates support the facilitation of common planning and/or PLC time. The agenda template provides a standing template to structure collaborative time, ensuring that time is well spent, structured, and paced. The meeting minutes template provides a format for participants to log notes and capture next steps, particularly as the team advances through a multi-week goal-setting and implementation process. The sample agenda and minutes templates follow a 3-step PLC cycle: (1) data analysis and goal-setting; (2) strategies and implementation; and (3) evaluation and closure. Administrators may want to collect such templates in order to maintain a pulse on the content and outcomes of collaborative staff time.

- **Common Planning Time Handbook**
  Source: *Massachusetts Department of Education*
  This comprehensive handbook includes tools and strategies for common planning time. Prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Education, this handbook is both informational and action-oriented. It provides best practices to evaluate and refine a school's common planning time structure. The toolkit also provides templates for common planning time meetings, peer observations, etc.

COMPREHENSIVE PD TOOLKITS:

- **Comprehensive PD Toolkits**
  Source: *New Hampshire Department of Education*
  Source: *Indiana Department of Education*
  Source: *Broward County Public Schools*
  The links above highlight several comprehensive toolkits around teacher professional development. These toolkits offer a systemic and holistic approach to professional development. The various toolkits are designed to codify the goals and various formats for PD, in addition to providing helpful templates (e.g., exit surveys, discussion protocols). These toolkits are dense, yet contain rich information and applicable tools.

Network NetStat Session | December 10, 2014

Date and Time:	December 10, 2014 | 11:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Location:	Four Points by Sheraton, 275 Research Parkway, Meriden, CT 06450
Attendees:	Commissioner's Network and SIG School and District Leaders

11:30 AM – 11:55 AM **Registration and Lunch (Charter Oak A Ballroom & Foyer)**

12:00 – 12:30 PM **Welcome and Opening Remarks (Charter Oak A Ballroom)**

12:40 – 2:20 PM **Essential School System (ESS) Deep Dive**
Instructional Coaching: Observation and Feedback Cycle for Continuous Improvement (Charter Oak A Ballroom)

Network teams will come together to discuss strategies to improve teaching and learning through effective instructional coaching. We will begin by reviewing classroom walkthrough data and hearing a brief presentation on best practices for instructional coaching. School representatives will work in small groups to explore the presented concepts. Participants will re-join their school teams to reflect upon coaching and feedback processes currently in place and ways to strengthen these systems.

2:20 – 2:30 PM **Break (Charter Oak A Ballroom & Foyer)**

All school teams reconvene for an afternoon snack, served in the foyer.

2:40 – 3:30 PM **ESS Problems of Practice**

Each school will identify a problem or challenge aligned to one of their school systems. Schools will take turns presenting their problems of practice to their Network colleagues and gathering feedback and suggestions from other school teams. We will follow a 4-step problem-solving protocol for each school. The presenting school will have 5 minutes to present their problem. The remaining schools will have 7minutes to ask clarifying and probing questions, and spend 7 minutes discussing strategies and potential solutions in a fishbowl format. The presenting school will then have 5 minutes to identify their next steps informed by what they heard.

- **Elementary Schools (Brunswick Room):** *Facilitator: Kaylan Ricciardi*
  Stanton, Walsh, Uncas, Barry, O'Brien, West Rock, Dunbar
- **PK/K- 8 Schools (Arlington Room):** *Facilitator: Emily Pallin*
  Curiale, Marin, DiLoreto, Milner, Clark, Lincoln-Bassett
- **Middle and High Schools (Danbury Room):** *Facilitator: Patty Foley*
  Windham, Slade, Pulaski, Crosby, Cross, Briggs, HSC

DRAFT

3:40 – 4:15 PM **ESS School-Led Workshops**

Several school teams will present on various ESS, including components of their school systems and, more importantly, what successful implementation looks like at the school and classroom levels. These concurrent sessions, each focusing on a different system, will include a brief presentation of concrete, actionable practices, followed by an open discussion among presenters and participants in the room. Thank you to our school presenters!

Comprehensive Assessment Strategy (Arlington Room)
Presenter: Stanton Network Elementary School
A comprehensive plan for administering formative, benchmark, and summative assessments in all grade levels and content areas (e.g., test type, frequency, and data output).

Behavior Management Strategy (Brunswick Room)
Presenter: Marin School, with Cooperative Educational Services (CES)
A detailed approach to behavior management, including staff training and strategies to promote and reinforce positive behaviors. A clear discipline policy outlining consistent consequences for infractions.

Professional Learning Plan (Danbury Room)
Presenter: Milner School
A comprehensive plan to support staff development, including a calendar of school and district professional learning opportunities. A schedule and protocols to facilitate vertical and horizontal collaboration.

4:20 – 4:30 PM **Conclusion and Next Steps**

Please be sure to give your completed exit survey to a facilitator before leaving.

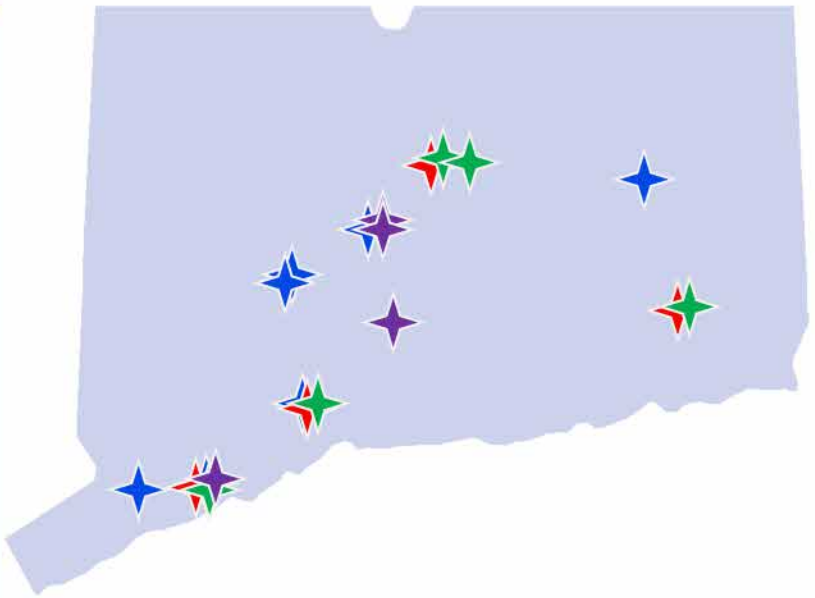
DRAFT

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Network NetStat Session

December 10, 2014

Commissioner's Network and SIG Schools



Our Collective Impact:

- **11,000 +** Students
- **20** Schools
- **10** Districts

Cohort I Schools

- Stanton, Norwich
- Milner, Hartford
- Curiale, Bridgeport
- HSC, New Haven

Cohort II Schools

- Dunbar, Bridgeport
- DiLoreto, New Britain
- Walsh, Waterbury
- Windham MS, Windham
- Cross, New Haven
- Briggs, Norwalk
- Crosby, Waterbury

Cohort III Schools

- Lincoln-Bassett, New Haven
- Uncas, Norwich
- Marin, Bridgeport
- O'Brien, East Hartford
- Clark, Hartford

SIG Schools

- West Rock Author's Academy, New Haven
- John Barry, Meriden
- Slade, New Britain
- Pulaski, New Britain

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Our Objectives for the Day…

1

Review recent Network-wide data to acknowledge school progress and identify ongoing priorities.

2

Leverage the collective experiences of Network leaders, identifying solutions to problems of practice.

3

Build and refine systems for effective instructional coaching to promote continuous improvement.

4

Review school successes and challenges, including Q1 data and Essential School Systems implementation.

Today's Agenda

Time:	System/Focus:
12:00 PM	Welcome and Opening Remarks
12:40 PM	ESS Deep Dive: Coaching and Feedback
2:20 PM	Break with Snack
2:40 PM	ESS Problems of Practice
3:40 PM	ESS School-Led Workshops: Comprehensive Assessment Strategy Behavior Management Strategy Professional Learning Plan
4:20 PM	Closing Remarks and Next Steps

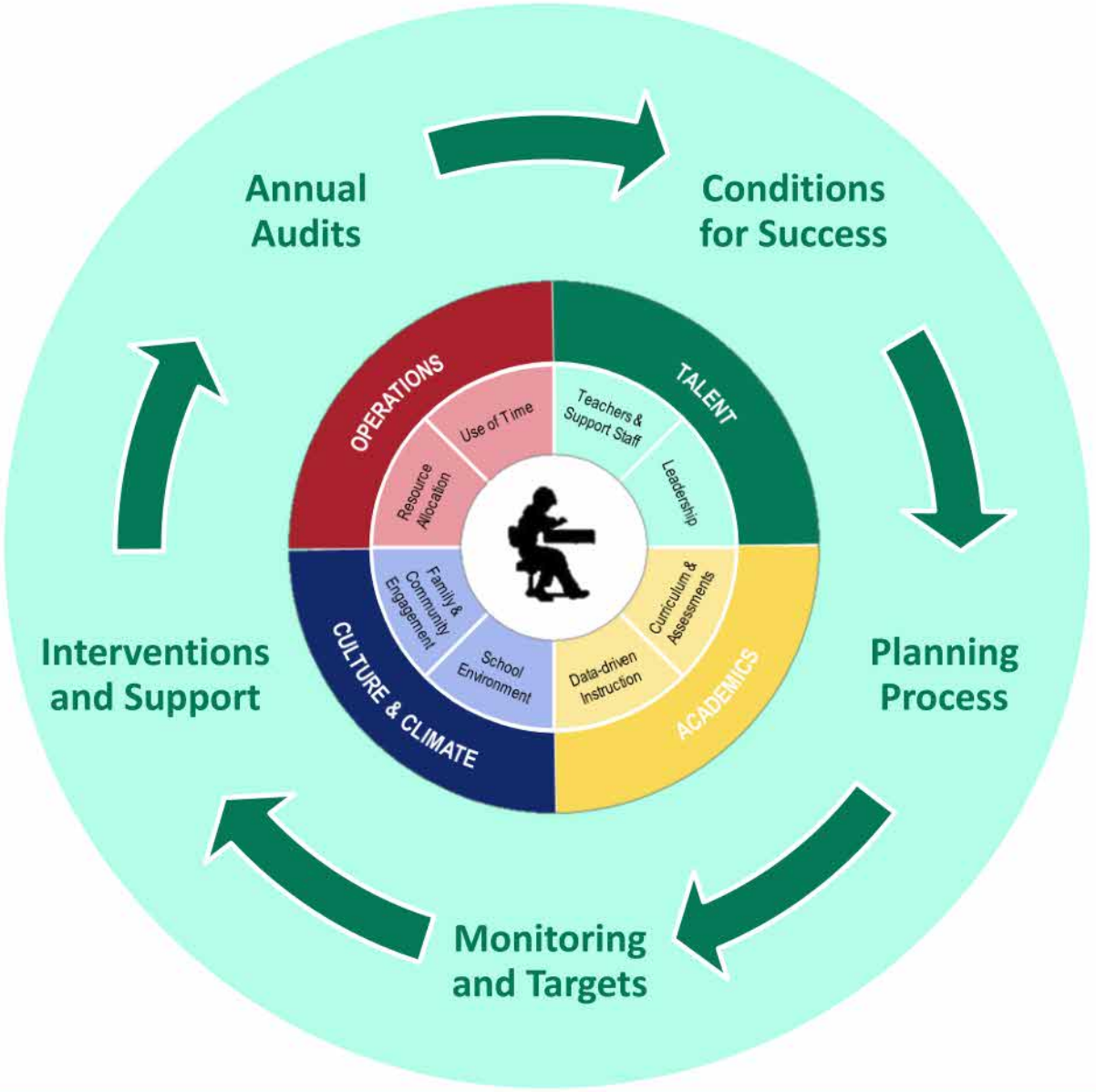
Breakout Rooms for 2:40 Session:

Brunswick Room:
Stanton, Walsh, Uncas, Barry, O'Brien, West Rock, Dunbar

Arlington Room:
Curiale, Marin, DiLoreto, Milner, Clark, Lincoln-Bassett

Danbury Room:
Windham, Slade, Pulaski, Crosby, Cross, Briggs, HSC

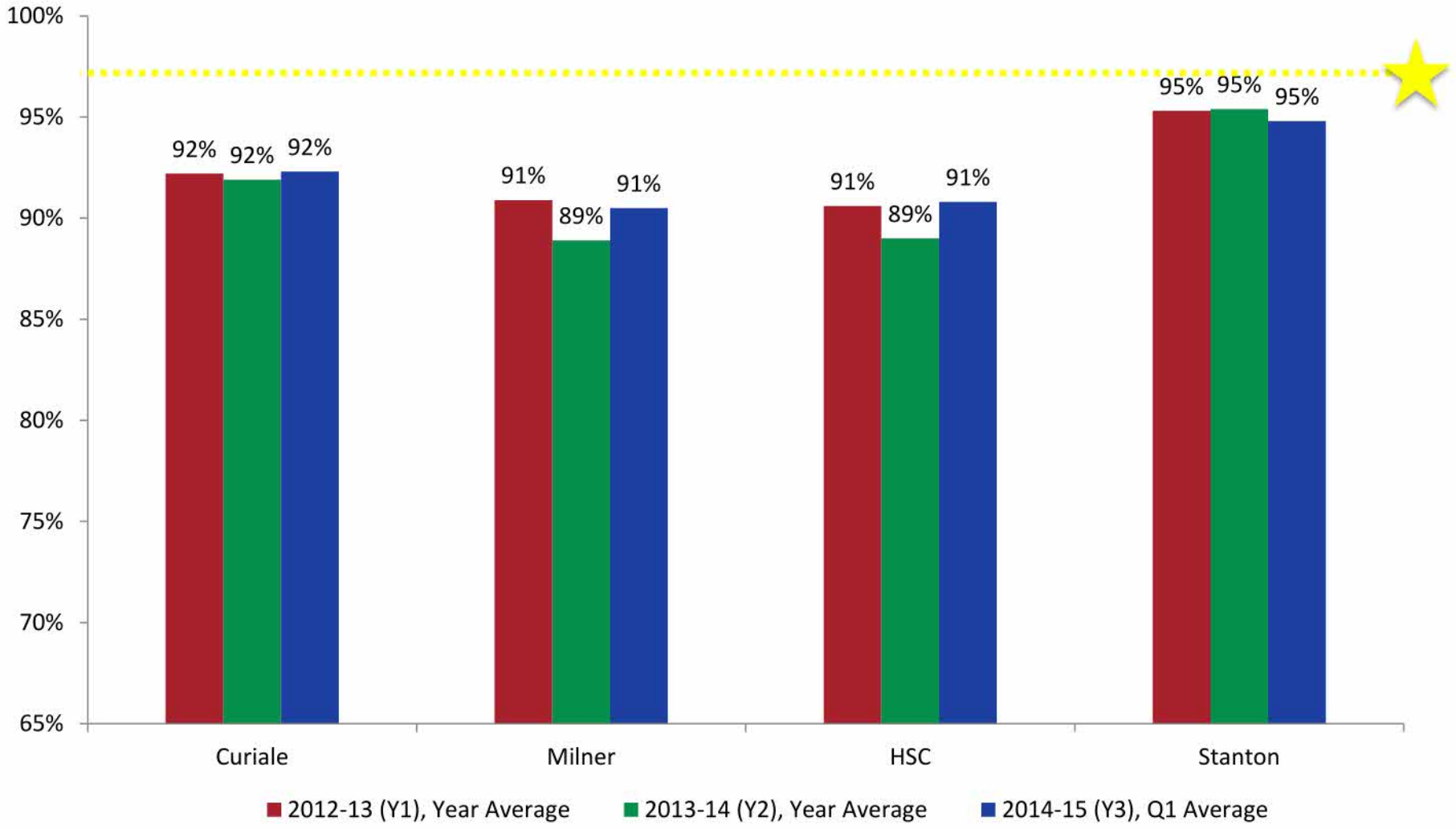
Cycle of Continuous Improvement



Turnaround Office Update

QUARTER 1 DATA

Average Daily Student Attendance Rate: Cohort I



N.B. 2014-15 data were self-reported by school/district. Data from previous years were reported by CSDE Performance Office.

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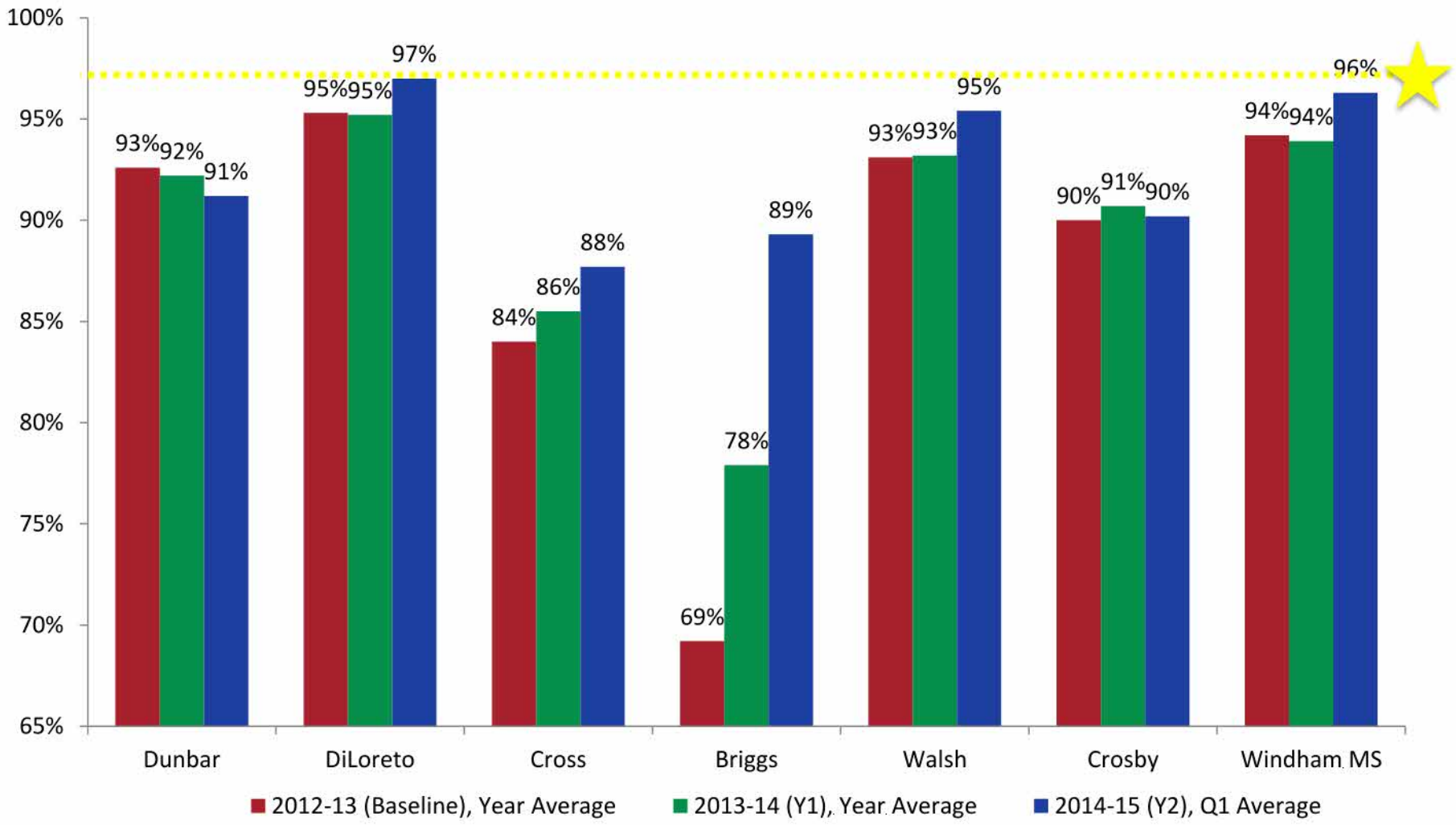
Average Daily Student Attendance Rate: Cohort II



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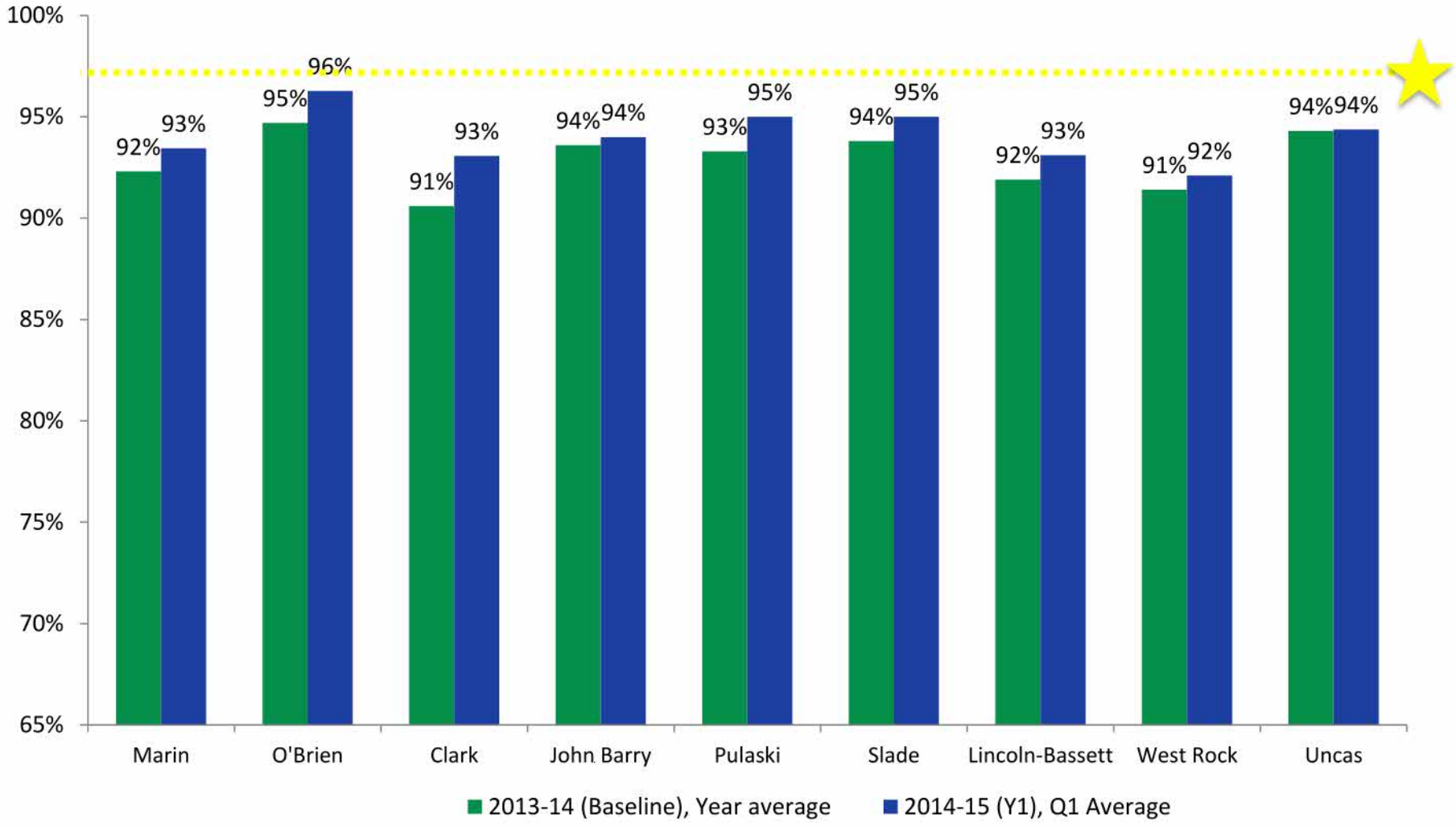
Average Daily Student Attendance Rate: Cohort III



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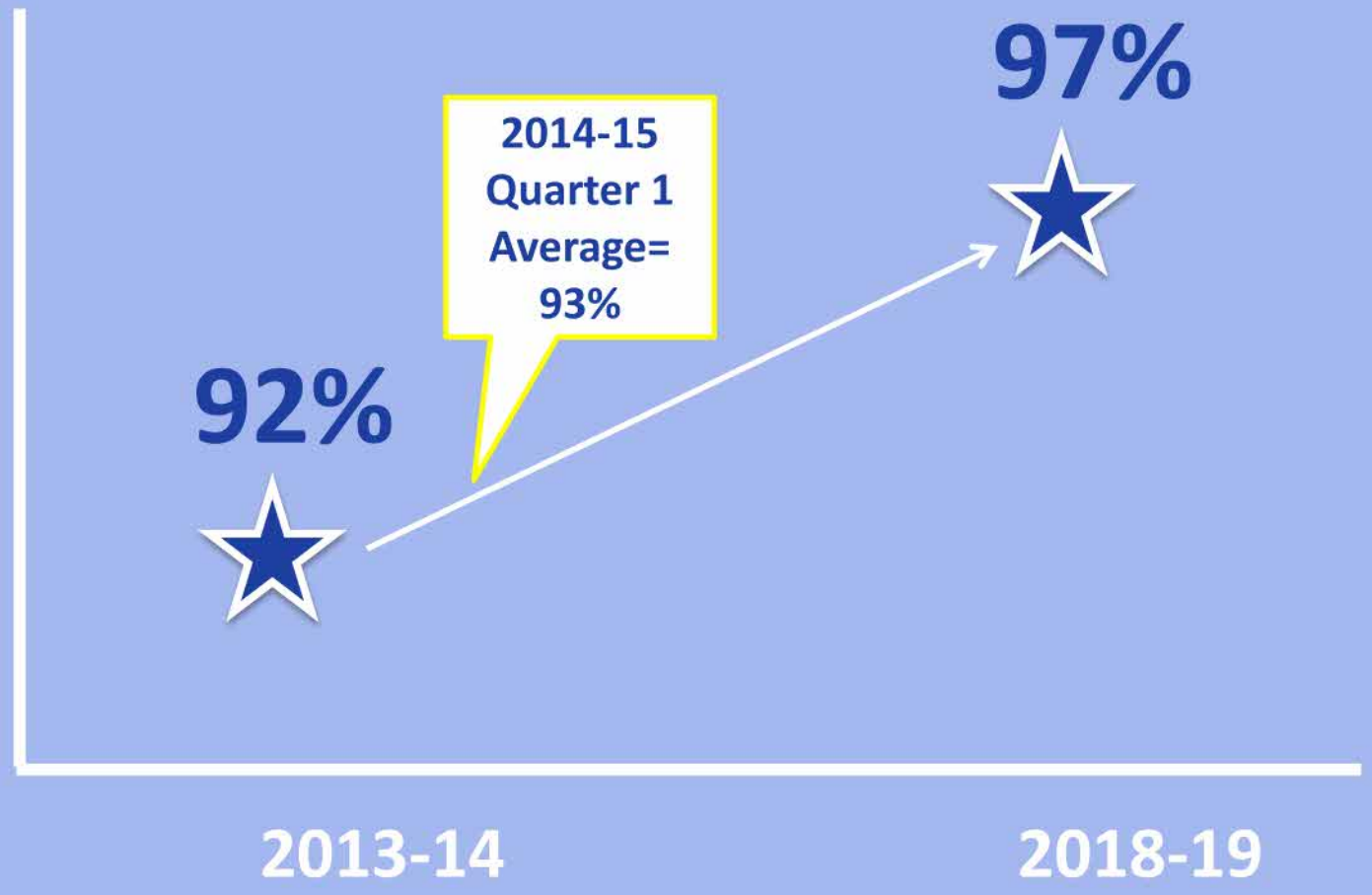
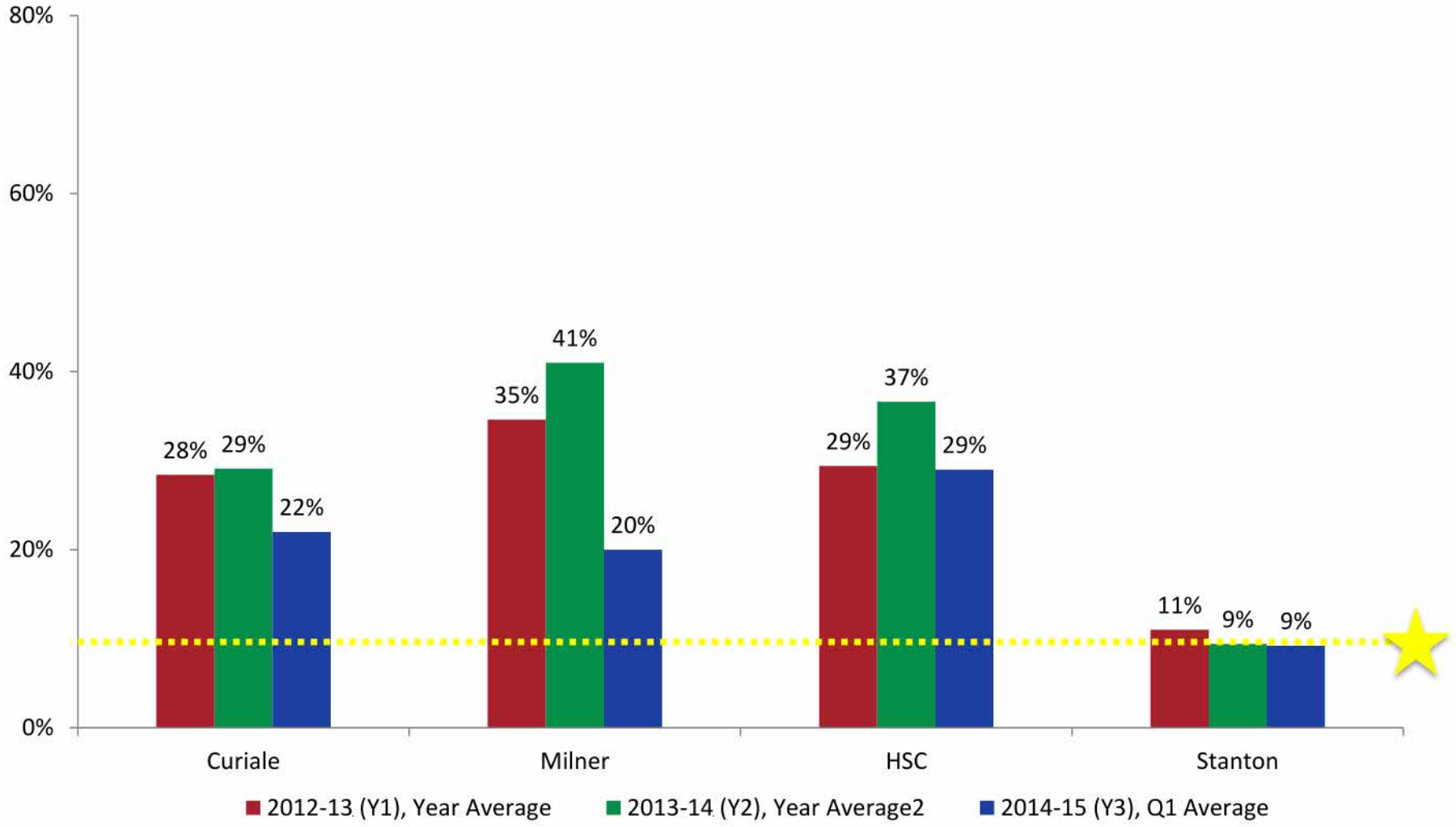
Average Daily Attendance



Student Chronic Absenteeism Rate: Cohort I



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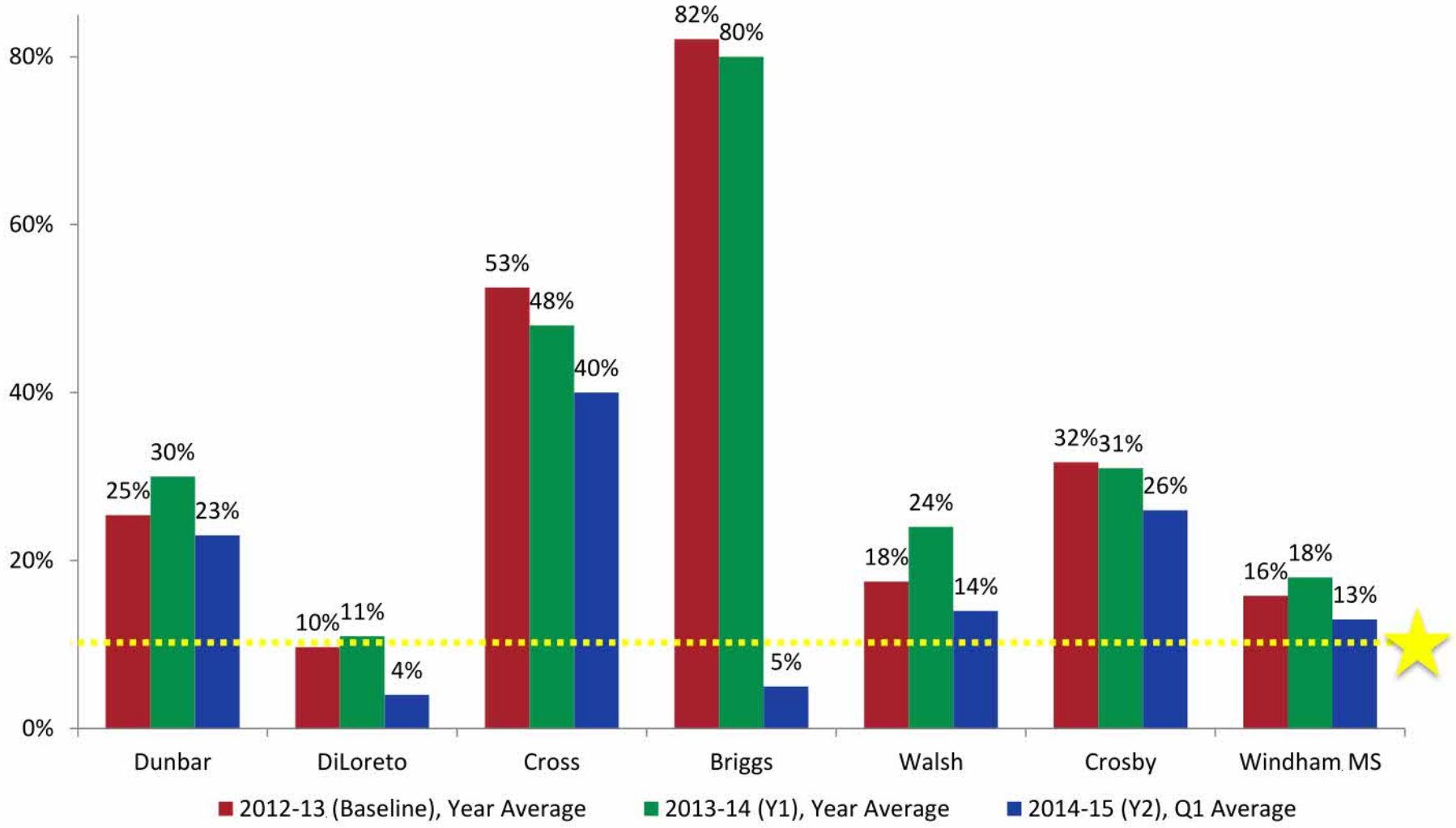
Student Chronic Absenteeism Rate: Cohort II



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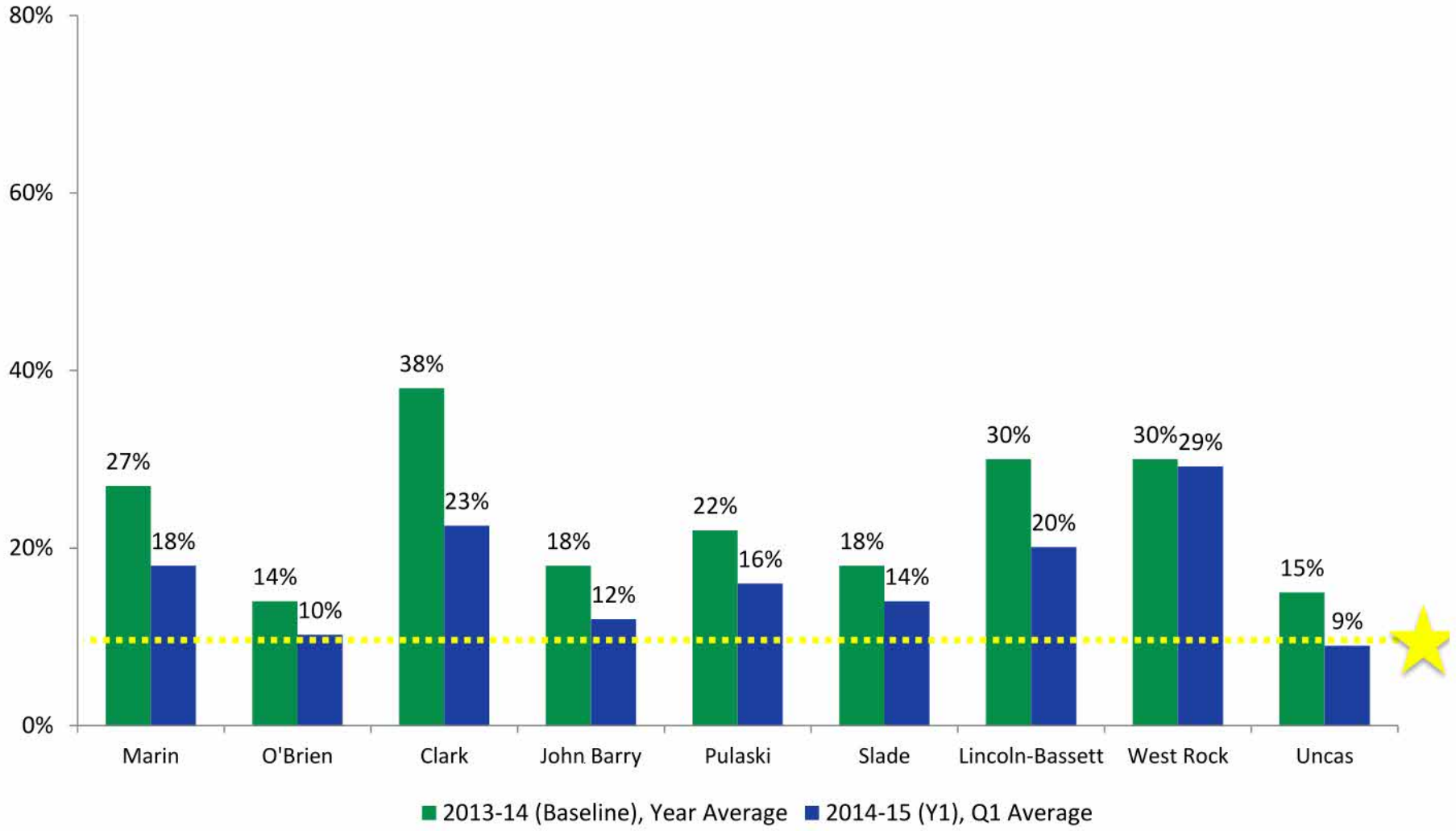
Student Chronic Absenteeism Rate: Cohort III



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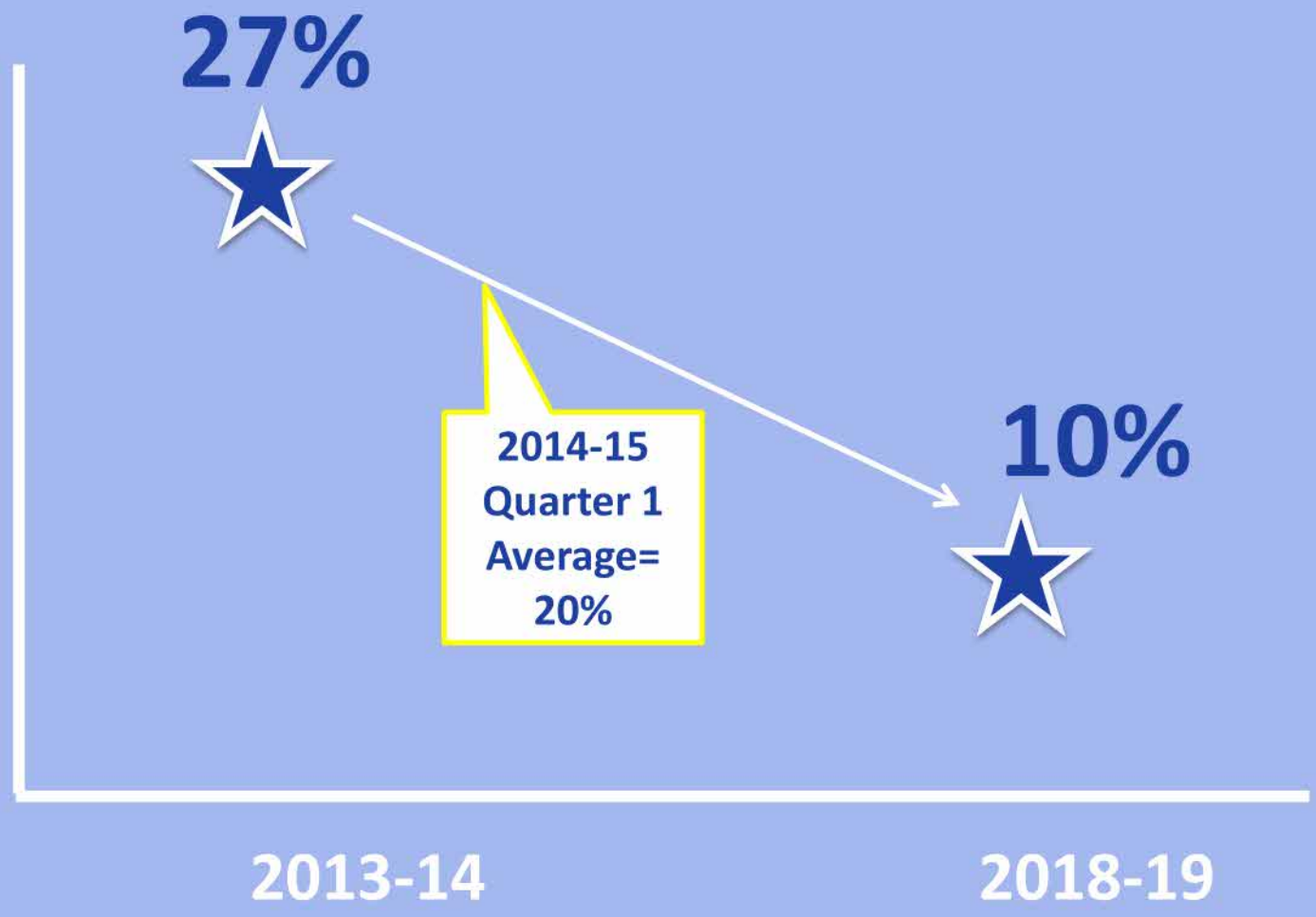
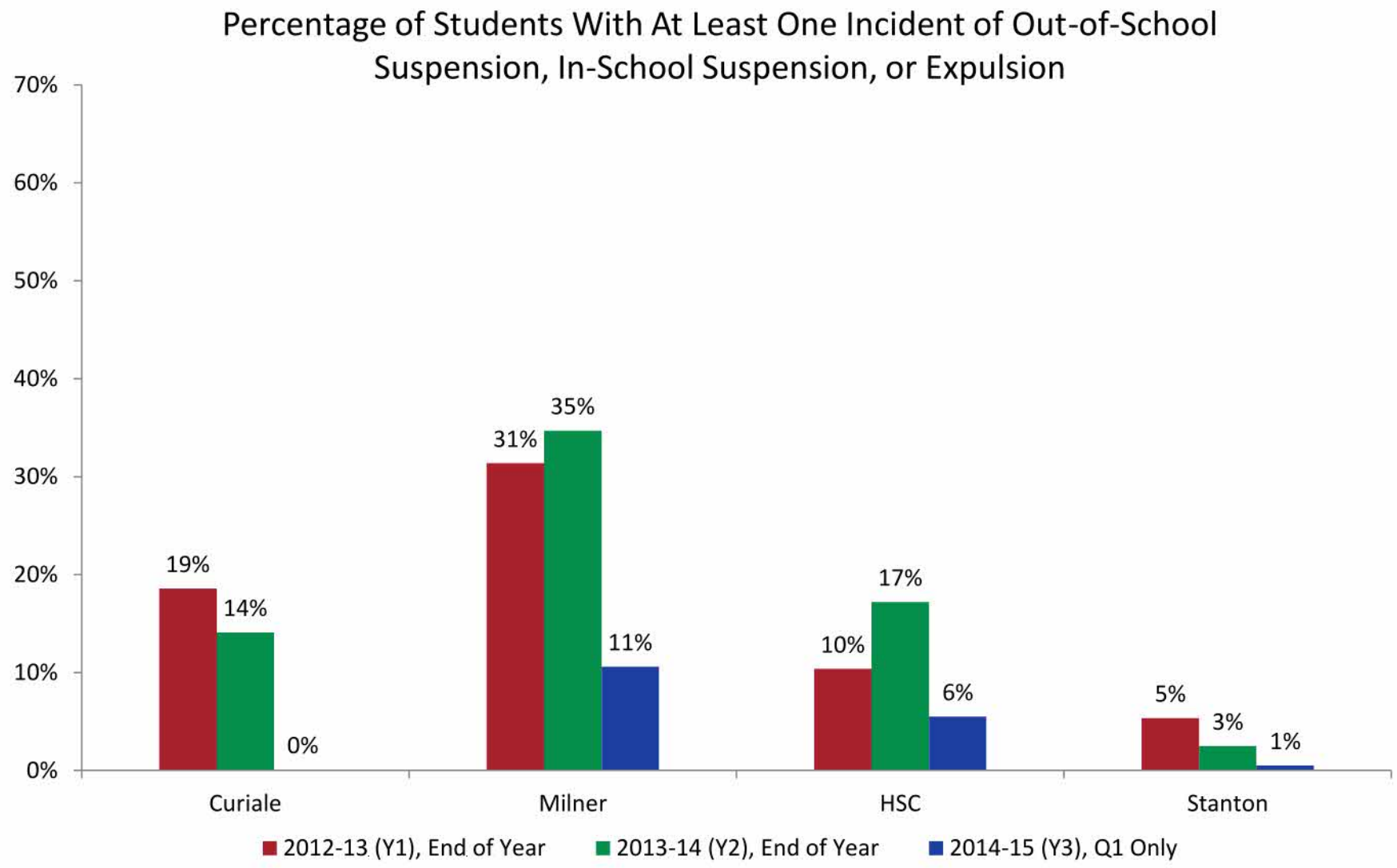
Chronic Absenteeism



Discipline Concentration Trend: Cohort I



N.B. 2014-15 data were self-reported by school/district. Data from previous years were reported by CSDE Performance Office.

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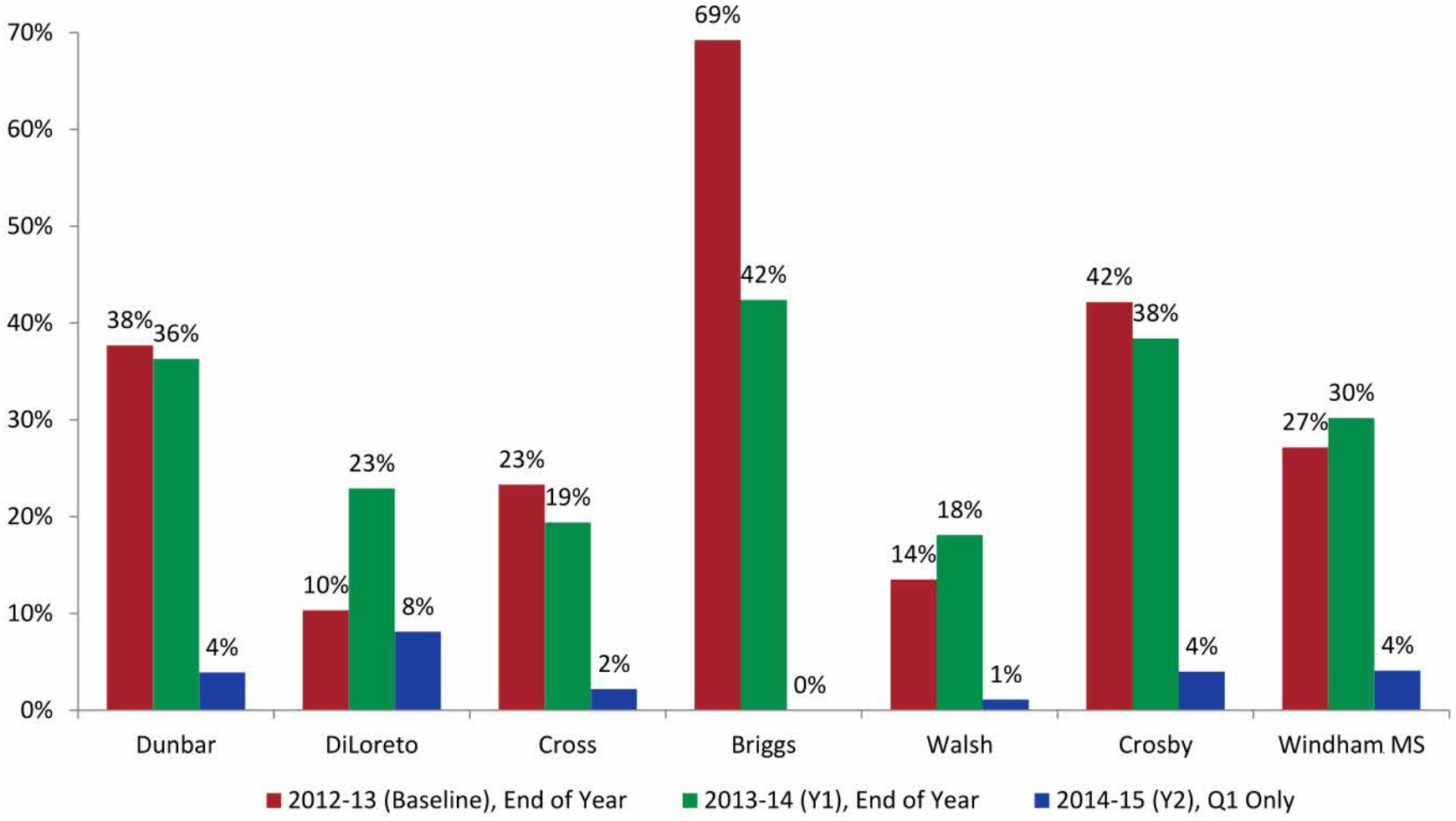
Discipline Concentration Trend: Cohort II

Percentage of Students With At Least One Incident of Out-of-School Suspension, In-School Suspension, or Expulsion



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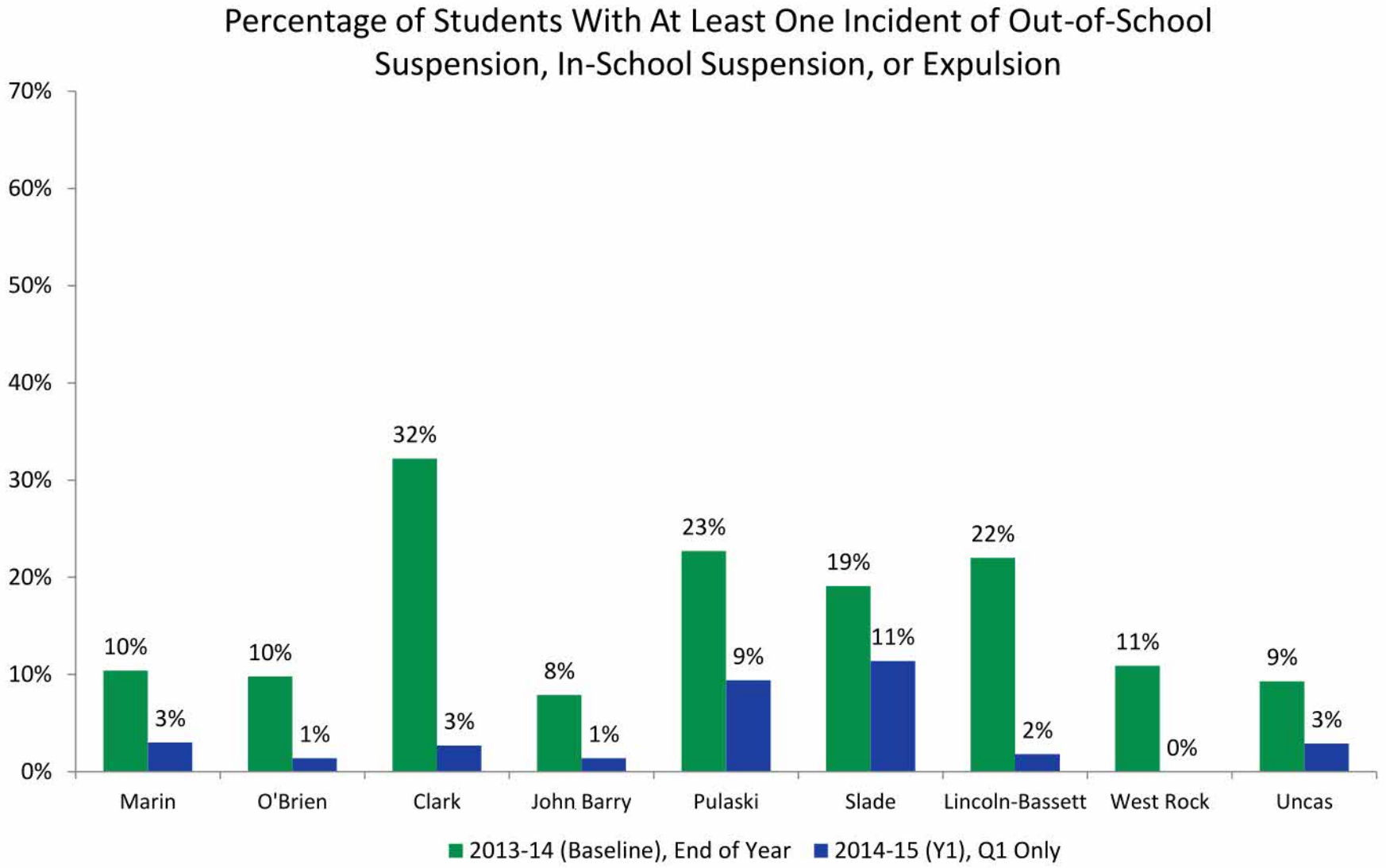
Discipline Concentration Trend: Cohort III



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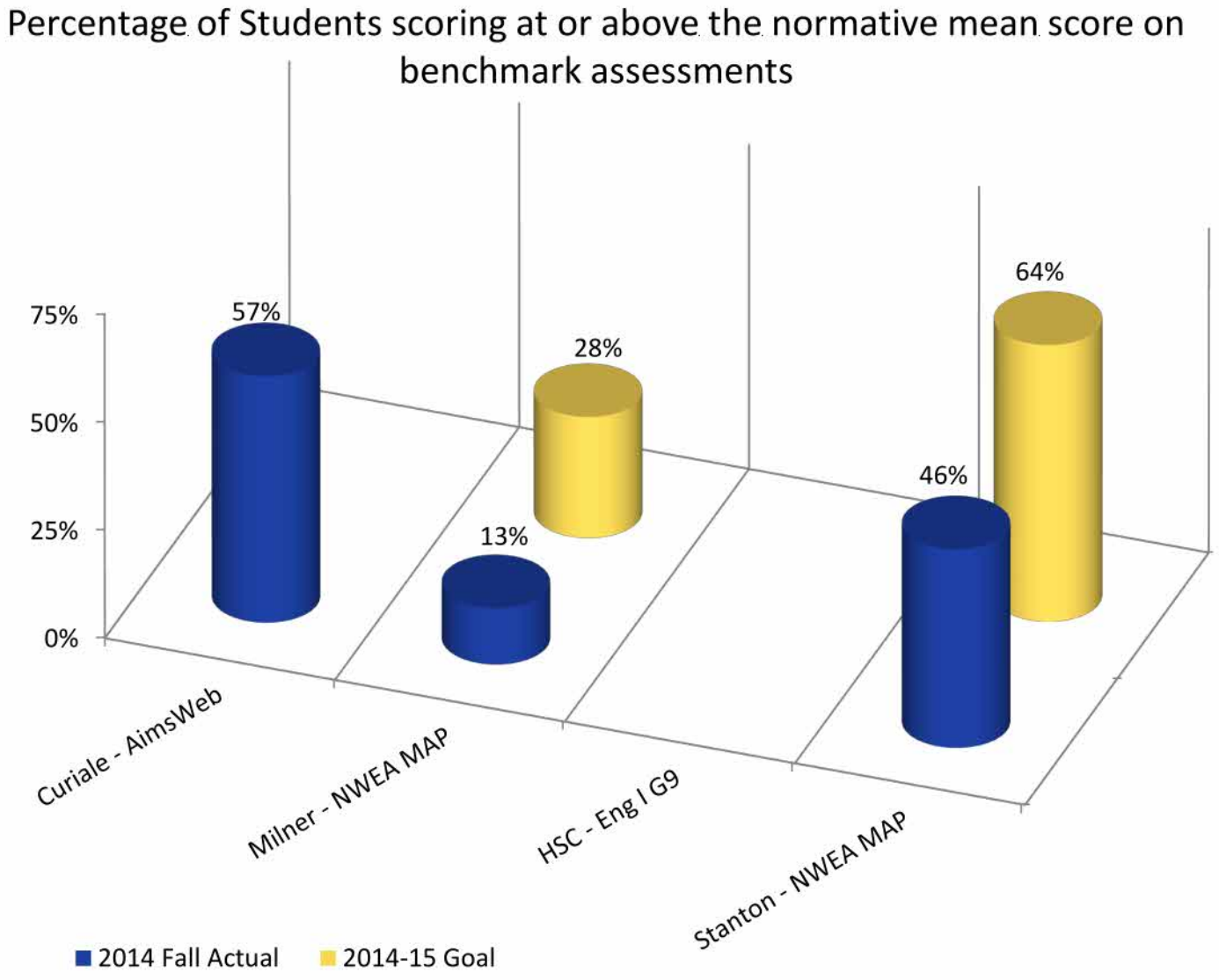
Reading Proficiency: Cohort I



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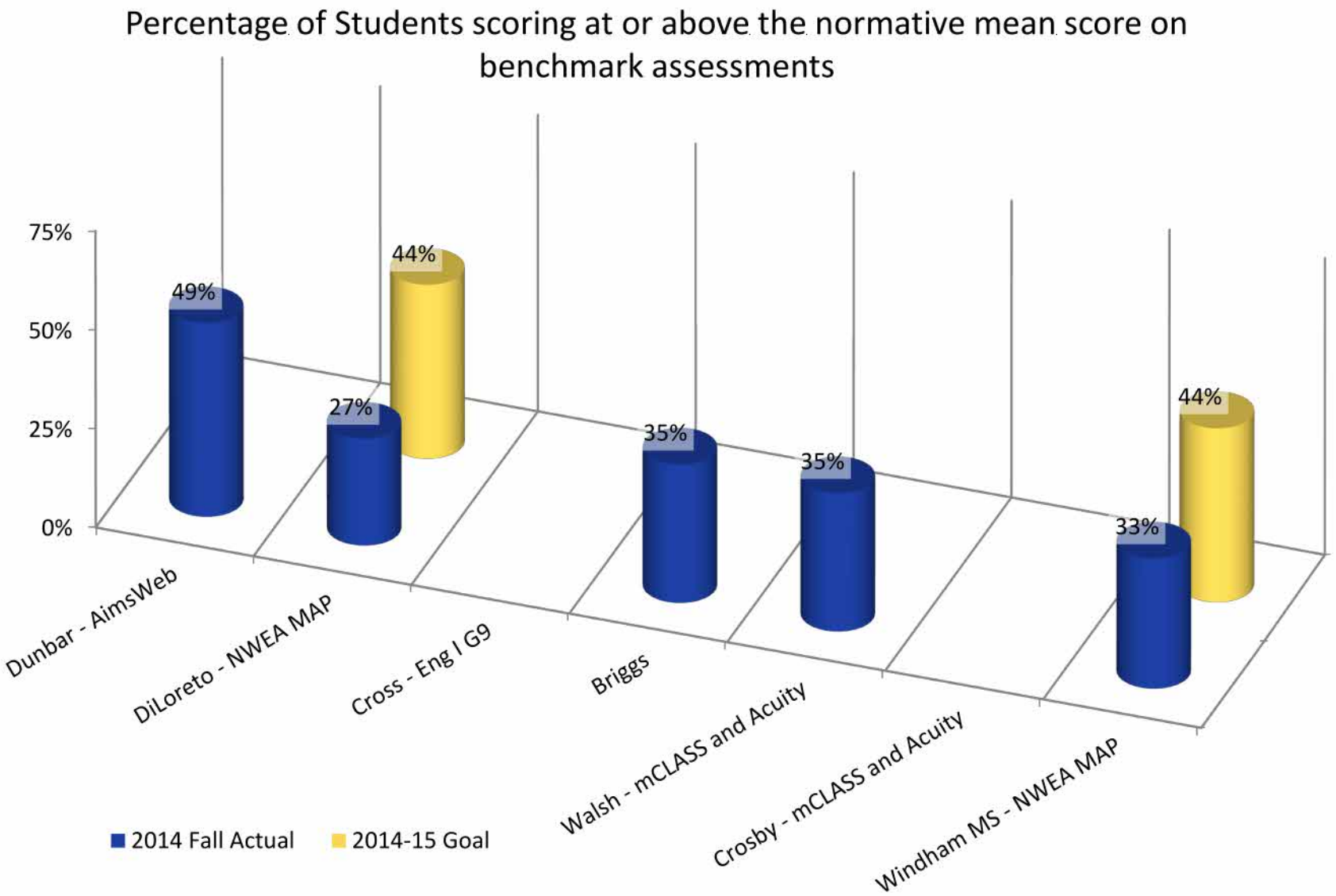
Reading Proficiency: Cohort II



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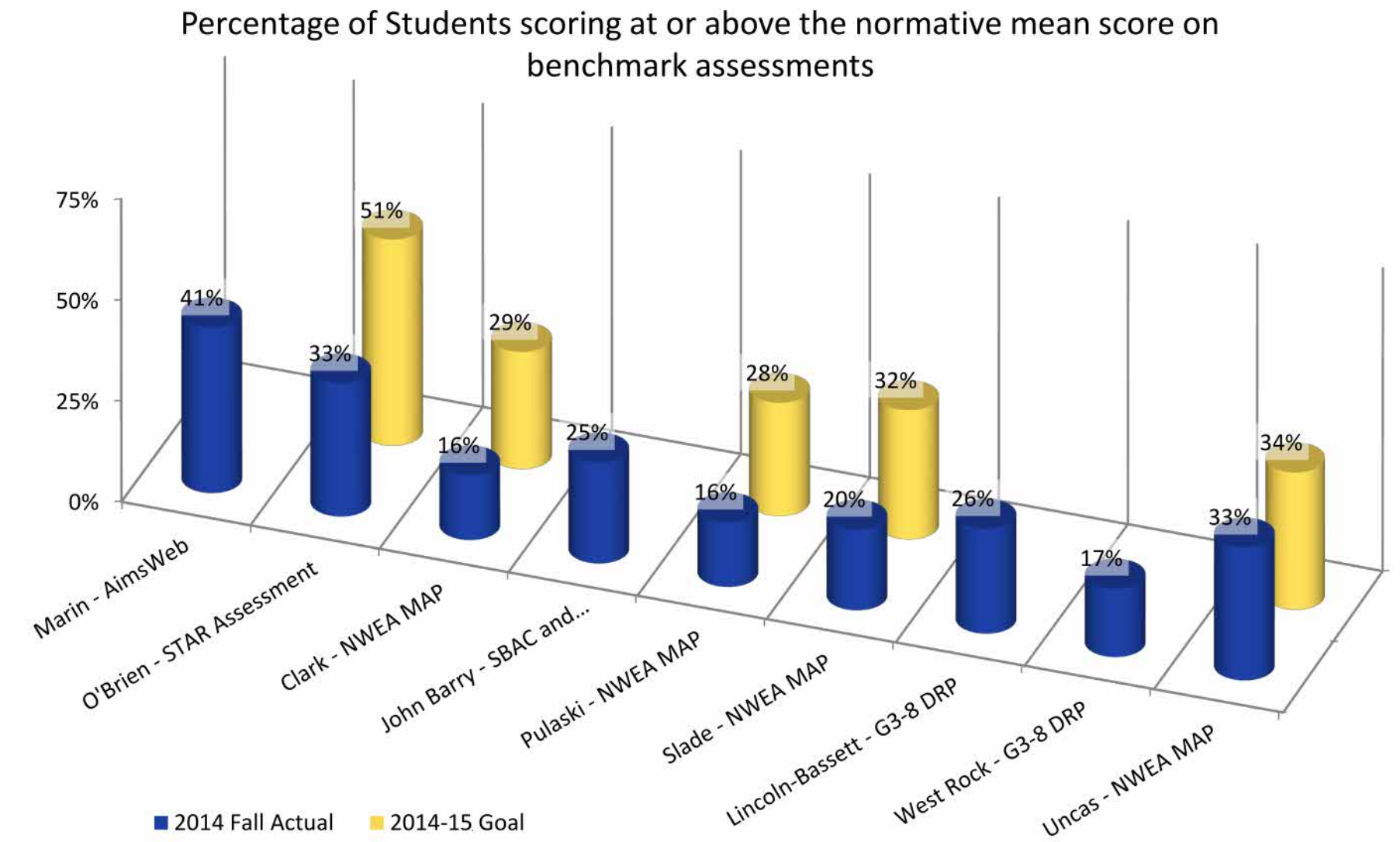
Reading Proficiency: Cohort III



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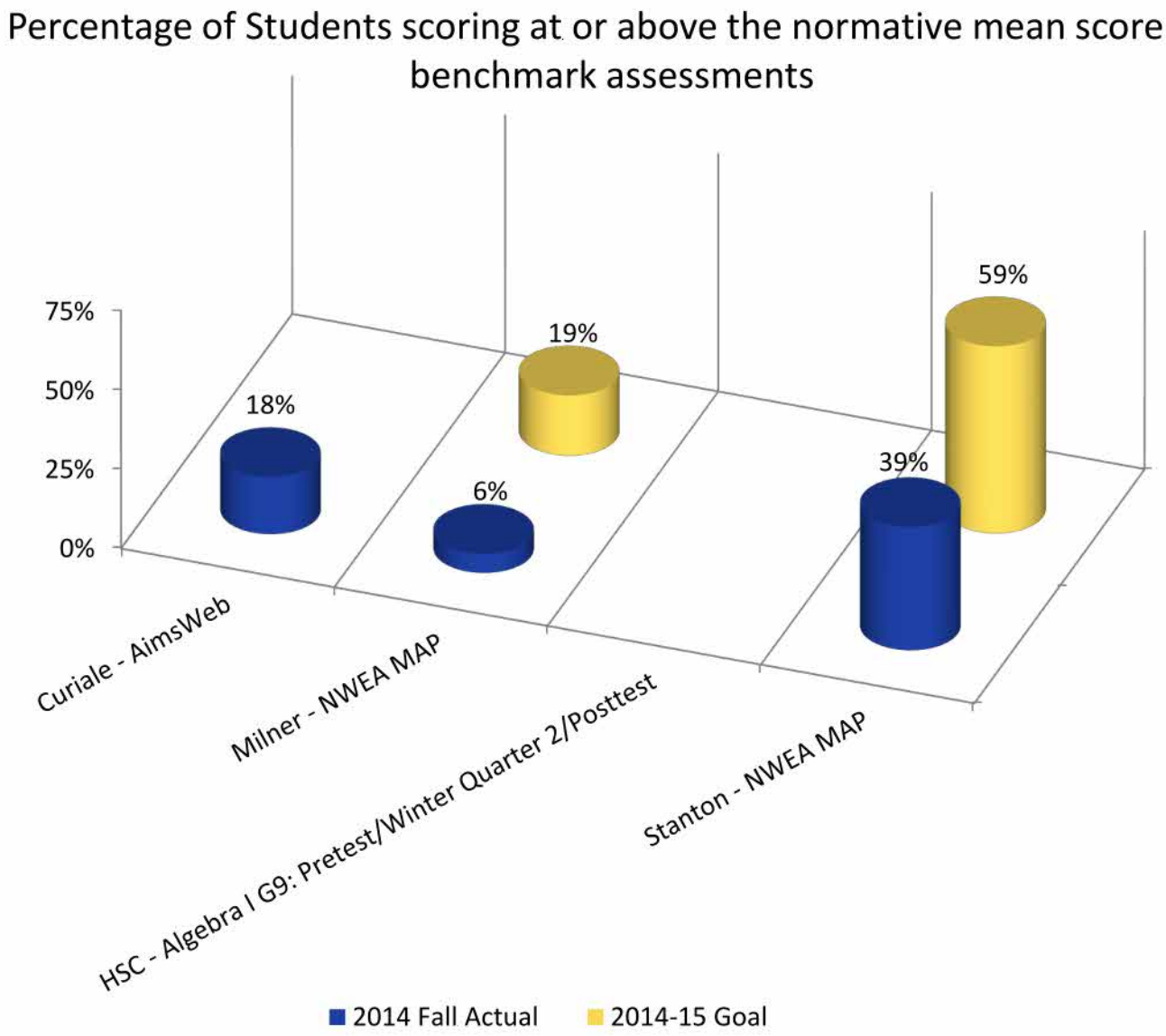
Math Proficiency: Cohort I



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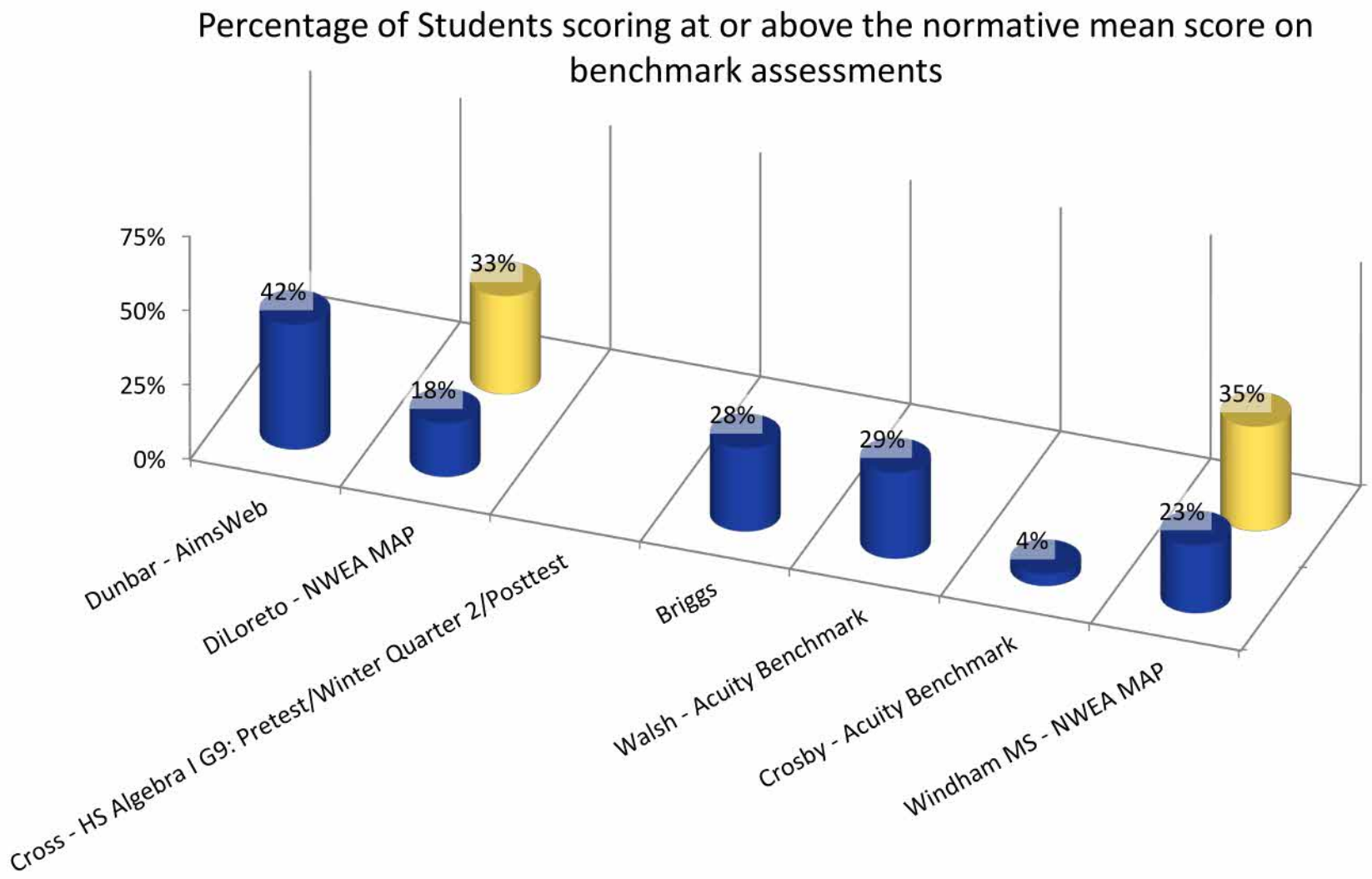
Math Proficiency: Cohort II



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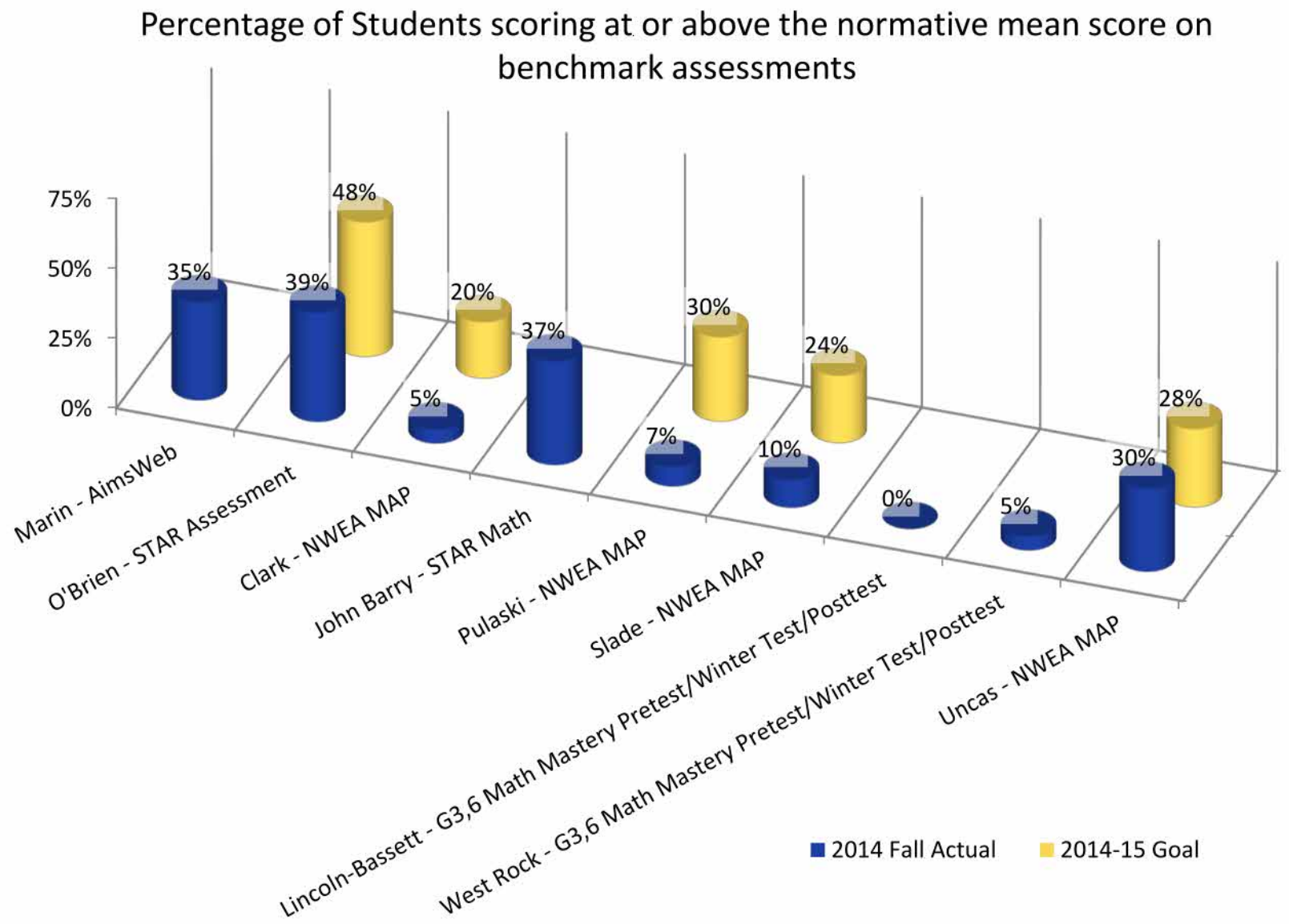
Math Proficiency: Cohort III



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Turnaround Office Update

MIDYEAR SCHOOL AUDITS

Network School Midyear Audit Overview

Data review

Auditors will review the quantitative and qualitative data districts/schools have reported in the quarterly monitoring tracker.

School Site Visit

Auditors will observe school systems and classrooms, and meet with members of the school community.

Audit Report

Auditors will synthesize information from the data review and the school site visit to generate a report summarizing school strengths, growth areas, and recommendations.

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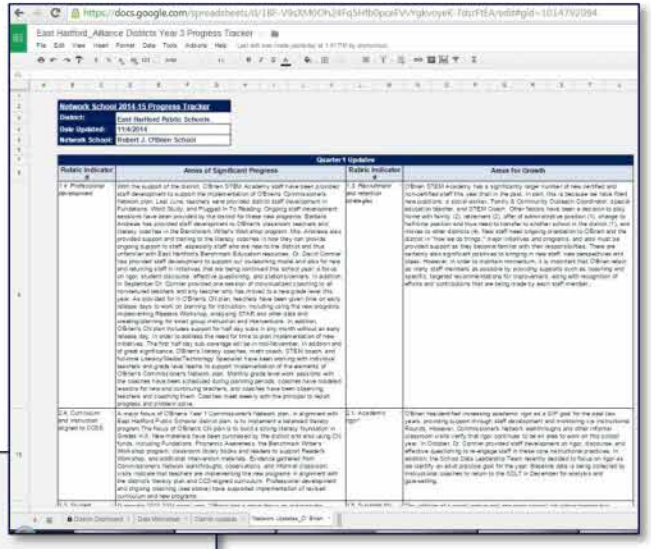
Network School Midyear Audit Overview

Data review



Alliance District Year 3 Progress Tracker

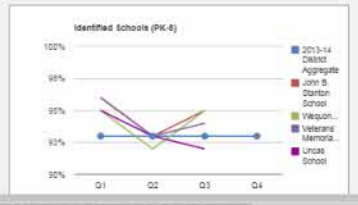
District:

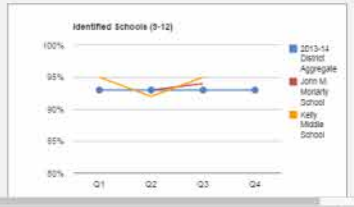
Date Updated:

Attendance

School	Classification	Grades Served	Enrollment	YTD Average Daily Student Attendance					YTD Student Chronic Absenteeism Rate (% of students missing 10% or more days)					YTD Average Daily Teacher Attendance				
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend
2013-14 District Aggregate				93%	93%	93%	93%		15%	15%	15%	15%		95%	95%	95%	95%	
District Aggregate				88%	93%	100%			10%	30%	25%			96%	95%	95%	94%	
John B. Stanton School	Review	PK-5		96%	93%	95%			6%	24%	22%			96%	95%	95%	94%	
Wequonnoc School	Review	PK-5		95%	92%	95%			13%	35%	26%			96%	95%	96%	92%	
Veterans' Memorial School	Focus	PK-5		96%	93%	94%			8%	29%	33%			96%	94%	95%	93%	
Uncas School	Review	K-5		95%	93%	92%			8%	26%	24%			95%	95%	95%	92%	
John M. Moriarty School	Focus	K-5			93%	94%			12%	30%	28%				95%	94%	91%	
Kelly Middle School	Review	PK-8		95%	92%	95%			10%	35%	29%			97%	94%	93%	94%	

Average Daily Student Attendance





District Dashboard | Data Worksheet | District Tracker | Network Tracker | 1003(a) and HS Redesign Tracker

Indicators:

- Student attendance
- Chronic absenteeism
- Teacher attendance
- Discipline Concentration
- Math and Reading Proficiency (benchmark assessments)

Network School Midyear Audit Overview

School Site Visit

Sample Site Visit Schedule:

Time:	Activity:
7:30 am - 8:00 am	Observations of morning arrivals and school tour
8:00 am - 9:00 am	Principal interview
9:00 am - 10:00 am	4-5 classroom observations
10:00 am - 10:45 am	Teacher focus group #1
10:45 am - 11:15 am	Student focus group
11:15 am- 12:00 pm	Leadership Team/Assistant Principal interview
12:00 pm - 12:15 pm	Lunchtime/Cafeteria observations
12:15 pm - 12:45 pm	Lunch break
12:45 pm - 1:30 pm	Teacher focus group #2
1:30 pm – 2:15 pm	Interview with district leadership
2:15 pm – 3:00 pm	Family/Community/SGC focus group

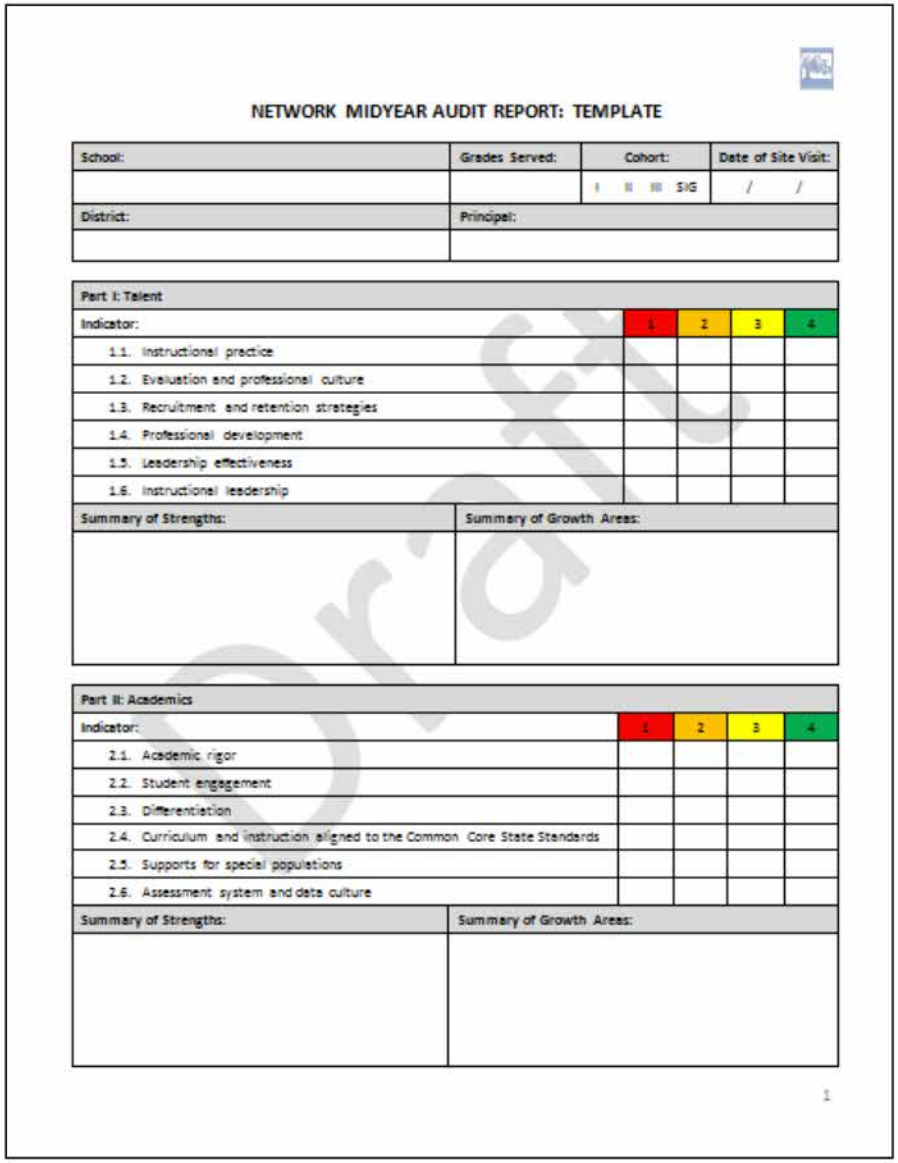
Network School Midyear Audit Overview

Audit Report

1. Sections for:
   - Talent
   - Academics
   - Culture and climate
   - Operations

2. Within each section:
   - Ratings for each indicator
   - Summary of strengths
   - Summary of growth areas

3. Final recommendations section



NETWORK MIDYEAR AUDIT REPORT: TEMPLATE

School:	Grades Served:	Cohort:	Date of Site Visit:
		I II III SIG	/ /
District:	**Principal:**		

Part I: Talent				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
1.1. Instructional practice				
1.2. Evaluation and professional culture				
1.3. Recruitment and retention strategies				
1.4. Professional development				
1.5. Leadership effectiveness				
1.6. Instructional leadership				

Summary of Strengths:	Summary of Growth Areas:

Part II: Academics				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
2.1. Academic rigor				
2.2. Student engagement				
2.3. Differentiation				
2.4. Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards				
2.5. Supports for special populations				
2.6. Assessment system and data culture				

Summary of Strengths:	Summary of Growth Areas:

1

Draft

Today's Agenda

Time:	System/Focus:
12:00 PM	Welcome and Opening Remarks
12:35 PM	ESS Problems of Practice
2:05 PM	Break with Snack
2:20 PM	ESS Deep Dive: Coaching and Feedback
3:40 PM	ESS School-Led Workshops: Comprehensive Assessment Strategy Behavior Management Strategy Professional Learning Plan
4:20 PM	Closing Remarks and Next Steps

Breakout Rooms for 12:35 Session

Network Elementary Schools:
Brunswick Room

Network PK/K-8 Schools:
Arlington Room

Network Secondary Schools:
Danbury Room

Alliance District Convening

Meeting Agenda | January 16, 2014

Date and Time:	January 16, 2014 | 8:00 am – 1:30 pm
Location:	Institute of Technology and Business Development (ITBD) |185 Main St., New Britain, CT http://www.itbd.ccsu.edu/Directions/default.htm
Attendees:	Alliance District Superintendents and Leadership

8:00 am – 8:30 am — **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

When you arrive, please park in the Municipal Parking Lot. You will receive a sticker to validate your parking. ITBD's wireless internet password is "itbdcenter."

8:30 am – 9:30 am — **Welcome and Opening (Room 313)**

Morgan Barth, Division Director of the Turnaround Office, will welcome Alliance Districts to the winter convening. The CSDE will provide highlights from the quarterly monitoring process, including innovative strategies and improved outcomes in several districts. The CSDE will introduce the Alliance and Priority School District Year 3 consolidated application, and share several exciting school-level grant opportunities. Dr. Robert Villanova, Director of LEAD Connecticut, will provide an update regarding supports for districts around leadership recruitment and development.

9:35 am – 11:00 am — **Breakout Sessions I**

Participants will select from a variety of action-oriented workshops, including sessions aligned to each of our framework areas: talent; academics; culture and climate; and operations.

- **Continuous Improvement: Lessons learned in implementing educator evaluation and support (Room 305)**
  Presenters: CSDE Talent Office
  Moderator: Kathleen Wedge, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: The CSDE Talent Office will share updates and strategies to support the successful implementation of new talent management systems at the district and school levels. Alliance Districts will share best practices for the successful rollout of new teacher and administrator evaluations, such as the use of complementary evaluators and effective calibration exercises. Participants will also strategize around how to use evaluation data to inform professional development offerings.

- **Accountability in Connecticut: A review of the present with an eye on the future (Room 319)**
  Presenter: Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Bureau Chief, CSDE Performance Office; Renee Savoie, NAEP State Coordinator, CSDE Academic Office; Jennifer Leeper, Education Service Specialist, CSDE Performance Office
  Moderator: Megan Alubicki Flick, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: In December, the CSDE released 2012-13 School and District Performance Reports, reflecting full implementation of Connecticut's new accountability system. Through a facilitated discussion and group activity, participants will use the data to identify strengths and opportunities, deepen their understanding of the school classification system, improve their ability to explain performance results to stakeholders, and provide suggestions for improving reporting in the future. Please bring to this session the 2012-13 Performance Reports for your district and for at least one elementary/middle and one high school.

- **Maximizing Instructional Time (Room 316)**
  Presenters: Rob Travaglini, National Center for Time and Learning
  Moderator: Iris White, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: Participants will become familiar with the School Time Analysis Tool (STAT), a web-based application hosted by the National Center on Time and Learning to help schools better understand how they are currently using time across a typical week and school year. The STAT asks schools to identify their use of time in three broad categories: academic; non-core academic; and other. Participants will utilize this tool to analyze their own schedules and begin the discussion of how to maximize learning time for students and planning time for teachers. Please bring a sample schedule from one of your district's schools to this session.

- **Early Literacy Initiative (Room 313)**
  Presenters: CSDE Academic Office
  Moderator: Patty Foley, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: This session is geared toward the 17 districts and schools participating in Phase I of the K-3 Literacy Model expansion project. School leadership teams (including the school principal and literacy expert, along with the key district contact) should plan to attend. The session will start with a self-assessment of alignment to the K-3 Literacy Model in the following areas: instructional leadership; capacity building; universal screening and progress monitoring; and core literacy curriculum and instruction. The session will include individualized planning around next steps on a multi-year phase-in of the K-3 Literacy Model.

- **District Strategic Planning (Room 311)**
  Presenters: Jeffrey Villar, Ph.D., Executive Director, Connecticut Council for Education Reform (CCER); Mary Anne Butler, Assistant Superintendent, Windsor Public Schools
  Moderator: Michelle Rosado, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: CCER will share best practices and tools for district-wide, long-term strategic planning. This will include strategies to establish Board of Education goals, develop district indicators of success, and design a process to monitor implementation. Districts will also learn about how the CCER can help districts workshop their Year 3 Alliance and Priority School District consolidated applications.

11:05 am – 12:30 pm **Breakout Sessions II**

- **Early Literacy Initiative – Part II (Room 313)**
  Presenters: CSDE Academic Office
  Moderator: Patty Foley, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: This session will be a continuation of the morning session.

- **School Budget Hold'em – Strategic resource use is the name of the game (Room 305)**
  Presenters: Joseph Trawick-Smith, Principal Associate, Education Resource Strategies (ERS); Katie Roy, Chief Operating Officer, CCER
  Moderator: Michelle Rosado, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: School Budget Hold'em is more than a game. It's an interactive exploration of the thoughtful trade-offs school district leaders must make, especially in challenging budget times. It evolved out of ERS' experience working with urban districts across the country. Hold'em helps change the conversation from "Where do we cut?" to "How can we best use each dollar to achieve our long term vision for student success?" Experience the game and see how you can use it in your district. Each participating district will get a set of "Hold'em" cards to take back to their district. ERS and CCER will also discuss their joint collaboration to perform a school district funding analysis for a Alliance District and how they can help your district.

- **Building Strong Instructional Teams: Recruitment and Hiring (Room 319)**
  Presenters: Jessica Varevice, The New Teacher Project (TNTP)
  Moderator: Kathleen Wedge, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: This session will focus on how a disciplined hiring process can help districts choose top talent by avoiding common pitfalls (late hiring, lack of rigor, and lack of data). In this session, participants will receive access to a suite of tools to better support attracting and selecting the right teacher candidates, including: the "Ideal Teacher" and job descriptions; sample hiring processes and timelines, including resume reviews, phone screens, interviews and demonstration lessons; selection criteria and rubrics; and systems for analyzing recruitment data to improve practice.

- **District Focus on Attendance (Room 322)**
  Presenters: Sharon Locke, Chief Academic Officer, and Joe Vaverchak, Attendance Supervisor, New Britain Public Schools; Sarah Harris, Principal of Vance Village Elementary School; and Laura Downs, Morrison Downs Associates
  Moderator: Megan Alubicki Flick, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: How can a district launch an effective attendance campaign? Leaders from New Britain will describe their work with Attendance Works (an outside partner) and the district's strategy to improve attendance district-wide. Working in small groups, participants will brainstorm strategies for their districts and schools.

- **High School Redesign (Room 311)**
  Presenter: Michael Contompasis, Executive Chairman and Senior Field Consultant, Mass Insight Education, and former Superintendent of Boston Public Schools
  Moderator: Nasir Qadree, Education Staff Assistant, CSDE Turnaround Office
  Summary: School turnaround is complex and challenging work, particularly at the high school level. During this session, attendees will discuss strategies for comprehensive high school redesign. Aligned to the new HS Redesign Grant Application, participants will learn about and discuss strategies to transition to smaller learning communities or autonomous academies, as a means to increase student achievement and engagement.

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm **Working Lunch**

During lunch, attendees will walk through the Alliance and Priority School District Year 3 consolidated application. District teams will have time to engage in a mini self-diagnostic to begin thinking about Year 3 priority areas. District teams will also have time to strategize around interventions in low-performing schools.

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm **Optional Session: School Grant Opportunities (Room 305)**

Presenters: Morgan Barth, Division Director, CSDE Turnaround Office; Michelle Rosado, Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office
Summary: During this optional session, districts will learn more about several competitive school-level grant opportunities. Districts with Turnaround or Focus schools, and/or Review high schools are encouraged to attend this session to learn more about the School Improvement Grant, 1003(a) application, and High School Redesign application.

IV. A.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO BE PROPOSED:
June 27, 2012

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to sections 51 through 56 of P.A. 12-116, amended by sections 23 and 24 of P.A. 12-2 of the June 12 Special Session, and in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), adopts guidelines for a model teacher and administrator evaluation and support program.

Approved, as amended, by a vote of 10:0, this twenty-seventh day of June, Two Thousand Twelve.

Signed: (b)(6)

Stefan Pryor, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 27, 2012

SUBJECT: Recommendation for the Adoption of the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents the evaluation core requirements, formally entitled "Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, June 2012," which the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) has developed and advanced by consensus.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Subsection (a) of Section 10-151b of the 2012 Supplemental to the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), as amended by Sec. 51 of P.A. 12-116, requires, in part, that the "superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall continuously evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher, in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section." Subsection (c) of Section 10-151b, as amended by Sec. 51 of P.A. 12-116 (C.G.S.), requires that "on or before July 1, 2012, the State Board of Education shall adopt, in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council established pursuant to section 10-151d, guidelines for a model teacher evaluation program. Such guidelines shall provide guidance on the use of multiple indicators of student academic growth in teacher evaluations. Such guidelines shall include, but not be limited to: (1) Methods for assessing student academic growth; (2) a consideration of control factors tracked by the state-wide public school system, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-10a, that may influence teacher performance ratings, including, but not limited to, student characteristics, student attendance and student mobility; and (3) minimum requirements for teacher evaluation instruments and procedures." For this section, the term "teacher" shall include each certified professional employee below the rank of superintendent employed by a board of education for at least ninety days in a position requiring a certificate issued by the State Board of Education.

Beginning in November 2010, PEAC (formally named in July 2011 when Section 10-151d (C.G.S) was revised) began meeting to discuss the evaluation of teachers and administrators. This group met regularly to develop eleven foundational principles upon which an effective teacher and administrator evaluation process should be based. Additionally, this group identified multiple indicators of student learning. On January 25, 2012, PEAC reached unanimous agreement on the required evaluation framework for teacher evaluation and on February 6, 2012, PEAC reached unanimous agreement on the required evaluation framework for administrator evaluation.

Over the past several months, PEAC has built upon these frameworks in order to develop and advance these guidelines by consensus.

RECOMMENDATIONS/JUSTIFICATIONS

Therefore, the State Department of Education, in collaboration with PEAC, recommends the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, dated June 2012, be approved by the State Board of Education and serve as the guidelines for a model teacher and administrator evaluation and support program.

CONNECTICUT GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATOR EVALUATION

Connecticut State Department of Education

June 2012

Preface

Connecticut's educators are committed to ensuring that students develop the skills and acquire the knowledge they will require to lead meaningful and productive lives as citizens in an interconnected world. This responsibility is shared among students, teachers, administrators, parents, the community, local boards of education, the state board of education, and local and state governments. The following educator evaluation guidelines will help ensure that Connecticut's schools develop the talented workforce that it requires to inspire our students to higher levels of performance.

Excellent schools begin with great school leaders and teachers. The importance of highly-skilled educators is beyond dispute, as a strong body of evidence now confirms what parents, students, teachers, and administrators have long known: effective teachers are among the most important school-level factors in student learning and effective leadership is an essential component of any successful school.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is committed to raising the overall quality of our schools' workforce. To meet this goal, the state, in partnership with local and regional school districts, aims to create a comprehensive approach to developing Connecticut's educators so that Connecticut prepares, recruits, hires, supports, develops, and retains the best educators to lead our classrooms and schools.

Educator evaluation is the cornerstone of this holistic approach and contributes to the improvement of individual and collective practice, and the growth and development of teachers and leaders. High-quality evaluations are necessary to inform the individualized professional development and support that an educator may require. Such evaluations also identify professional strengths which should form the basis of new professional opportunities. High-quality evaluations are also necessary to make fair employment decisions based on teacher and leader effectiveness. Used in this way, high-quality evaluations will bring greater accountability and transparency to schools and instill greater confidence to employment decisions across the state.

Educator evaluation also serves to articulate our priorities. The evaluation and support framework adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education, in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, gives student learning the priority that it deserves. The components of this framework, requiring multiple indicators of student academic growth and development and multiple observations of teacher and leader practice from a variety of perspectives, also aim to ensure that formative and summative ratings are a fair, valid, reliable, useful, and accurate reflection of an educator's work.

The following educator evaluator guidelines provide direction to school districts as they develop and adopt new systems of educator evaluation and support. These guidelines aim to ensure that districts have common and high expectations that educators are evaluated in a fair and consistent manner, and that employment decisions are based on fair, valid, reliable and useful indicators of a educator's work.

Educators in Connecticut are committed to ensuring that all students achieve and develop the skills that will enable them to become lifelong learners and productive citizens in a global world. This shared responsibility must be reached collaboratively in order to help students attain excellence.

Connecticut's *Core Requirements for Educator Evaluation* will assist districts in accomplishing this goal.

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Context

Sections 51 through 56 of P.A. 12-116, signed into law by Governor Dannel P. Malloy on May 15, 2012, and amended by sections 23 and 24 of P.A. 12-2 of the June 12 Special Session, requires the State Board of Education to adopt, on or before July 1, 2012 and in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), guidelines for a model teacher evaluation and support program. The PEAC have renamed these guidelines to "Core Requirements." The following Core Requirements were developed pursuant to this statutory requirement and replace the Connecticut Core Requirements for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development adopted by the State Board of Education in May of 1999. See appendix for statue language referenced.

Connecticut State Department of Education and national publications form the foundation of the new requirements:

(1) Connecticut's Common Core Standards, which clearly establishes high expectations for learning for all of Connecticut's children.

(2) Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT), adopted February 2010 (replacing the Common Core of Teaching adopted in 1999), which defines effective teaching practice throughout the career continuum of educators from pre-service to induction to experienced teaching status in six domains:

1. Content and Essential Skills;
2. Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning;
3. Planning for Active Learning;
4. Instruction for Active Learning;
5. Assessment for Learning; and
6. Professional Responsibilities and Educator Leadership.

(3) Common Core of Leading: Connecticut Leadership Standards, adopted in June of 2012, which use the national Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards as their foundation and define effective administrative practice through six performance expectations:

1. Vision, Mission and Goals
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Organizational Systems and Safety
4. Families and Stakeholders
5. Ethics and Integrity
6. The Education System.

(4) National Pupil Personnel Standards documents.

Using these documents as the foundation for educator evaluation establishes critical links among effective teaching, professional learning and increased student achievement. It should be noted that the term "teacher" refers to all individuals in positions requiring certification, including, but not limited to classroom teachers. "Leaders" refer to those individuals in positions requiring an administrative certification, including, but not limited to principals.

Pursuant to subsection (c) of 10-151b of the 2012 Supplement to the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), as amended by Sec. 51 of P.A. 12-116 and Sec. 23 of P.A. 12-2 the June 12 Special Session, on or before July 1, 2013, the State Board of Education shall adopt, in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, guidelines for a model teacher evaluation program. Such guidelines shall provide guidance on the use of multiple indicators of student academic growth in teacher evaluations. Such guidelines shall include, but not be limited to: (1) Methods for assessing student academic growth; (2) a consideration of control factors tracked by the state-wide public school information system, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-10a of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.), that may influence teacher performance ratings, including, but not limited to, student characteristics, student attendance and student mobility; and (3) minimum requirements for teacher evaluation instruments and procedures. Consideration of such control factors and minimum requirements shall be undertaken and accomplished through the joint deliberations and determinations of the goal-setting conference process.

1.2 Introduction and Guiding Principles

(1) The primary goal of the educator evaluation and support system is to strengthen individual and collective practices so as to increase student learning and development. Connecticut's Core Requirements for Educator Evaluation are based on Connecticut's *Common Core of Teaching* and the *Common Core of Leading*: *Connecticut School Leadership Standards,* which guide the observation of professional practice. The Core Requirements also include multiple indicators of student academic growth and development, stakeholder feedback and the context in which an educator works. Evaluation processes are designed to promote collaboration and shared ownership for professional growth, renewal, and employment decisions.

The Connecticut Core Requirements for Educator Evaluation are based on the following guiding principles:

(a) The primary purpose of educator evaluation is to strengthen individual and collective practices in order to improve student growth;

(b) Educator evaluation is standards-based, using the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching for teacher evaluation, Common Core of Leading: Connecticut Leadership Standards for administrator evaluation, and National Pupil Personnel Services standards documents for evaluation of educators in pupil services;

(c) Connecticut's Common Core Standards, The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards, the CMT/CAPT Assessments (Smarter Balanced Assessments), as well as locally-developed curriculum standards are the basis for establishing outcomes at the district and school levels;

(d) The Core Requirements foster continuing collaborative dialogue around teaching and learning in order to increase student academic growth and development;

(e) The Core Requirements clearly connect professional learning to the outcomes of the evaluation process.

1.3 Evaluation Approval Process

(1) Educator evaluation and support systems plans or revisions to such plans must be approved annually by the State Department of Education prior to district implementation. Such process will be an iterative one—between the State Department of Education and district superintendent or in the instance of a consortium of districts, superintendents—until the State Department of Education approves the teacher and administrator evaluation and support systems plan. The State Department of Education will inform districts of the approval process timeline.

(2) The State Department of Education will provide models for teacher and administrator evaluation and support systems. These models serve as options for districts that choose to implement pre-approved evaluation systems. Districts may choose to propose variations upon the teacher and administrator model so long as the model is consistent with the Connecticut Core Requirements for Educator Evaluation.

(3) In accordance with the requirement in the 1999 Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development, in establishing or amending the local teacher evaluation plan, the local or regional board of education shall include a process for resolving disputes in cases where the evaluator and teacher cannot agree on objectives, the evaluation period, feedback or the professional development plan. Regarding the aforementioned subjects, this provision is to be utilized in accordance with the specified processes and parameters regarding objectives, evaluation period, feedback, and professional development contained in the document entitled "Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation," dated June 2012. Should the process established as required by the document entitled "Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation," dated June 2012 not result in resolution of a given issue, the determination regarding that issue may be made by the superintendent. An example will be provided within the State model.

1.4 Effect of the Neag Study on the Core Requirements

Upon completion of the study, but not later than January 1, 2014, the Neag School of Education at The University of Connecticut shall submit to the State Board of Education such study and any recommendation concerning validation of the teacher evaluation and support program core requirements adopted by the State Board of Education. The results of the study will help determine any changes needed to the core requirements.

Should pilot districts identify promising practices within the Core Requirements, to implement during the pilot that vary from the established guidelines, those practices must be approved by the State Department of Education in consultation with PEAC and be incorporated into the scope of the Neag study.

Section 2: Core Requirements for the Evaluation of Teachers

As provided in subsection (a) of Sec. 10-151b (C.G.S.), as amended by Sec. 51 of P.A. 12-116, the superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher, in accordance with the requirements of this section. Local or regional boards of education shall develop and implement teacher evaluation programs consistent with these requirements. For the purposes of these Core Requirements, the term "teacher" refers to any teacher serving in a position requiring teacher certification within a district, but not requiring 092 certification. What follows are the Core Requirements of the Educator Evaluation System for teachers.

2.1: 4-Level Matrix Rating System

(1) Annual summative evaluations provide each teacher with a summative rating aligned to one of four performance evaluation designators: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing and Below Standard.

(a) The performance levels shall be defined as follows:

- Exemplary – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- Proficient – Meeting indicators of performance
- Developing – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- Below standard – Not meeting indicators of performance

(b) In order to determine summative rating designations for each teacher, districts shall:

1. Rate teacher performance in each of four categories – indicators of student academic growth and development; observations of teacher performance and practice; parent or peer feedback, which may include surveys; and whole-school student learning indicators or student feedback, which may include surveys.

2. Combine the indicators of student growth and development rating and whole-school student learning indicators or student feedback rating into a single rating, taking into account their relative weights; this will represent an overall "outcomes rating" of Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard.

3. Combine the observations of teacher performance and practice rating and the peer or parent feedback rating into a single rating, taking into account their relative weights; this will represent an overall "practice rating" of Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard.

4. Combine the outcomes rating and practice rating into a final rating. In undertaking this step, the district must assign a summative rating category of Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard. See appendix for example.

2.2: Teacher Evaluation Process

The annual evaluation process for a teacher shall at least include, but not be limited to, the following steps, in order:

(1) Goal-setting conference:

(a) Orientation on process – To begin the process, the principal or designee provides the teacher with materials outlining the evaluation process and other information as appropriate and meets and reviews these materials. The orientation shall not occur later than November 15 of a given school year.

(b) Goal-setting conference – At the start of the school year, the principal or designee and teacher meet to discuss information relevant to the evaluation process and set goals for the year.

(c) Evidence collection and review – The teacher collects evidence about his/her practice and the principal or designee collects evidence about teacher practice to support the review.

See 2.3 for details on the Teacher Evaluation Process.

(2) Mid-year check-ins:

(a) The principal or designee and teacher hold at least one mid-year check-in.

See 2.3 for details on the Teacher Evaluation Process.

(3) End-of-year summative review:

(a) Teacher self-assessment - The teacher reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a self-assessment for review by the principal or designee. This self-assessment may focus specifically on the areas for development established in the Goal-setting conference.

(b) End-of-year conference - The principal or designee and the teacher meet to discuss all evidence collected to date. Following the conference, the principal assigns a summative rating and generates a summary report of the evaluation before the end of the school year.

See 2.3 for details on the Teacher Evaluation Process.

(4) Local reporting – The district superintendent shall report the status of teacher evaluations to the local or regional board of education on or before June first of each year.

(5) State reporting – Not later than June thirtieth of each year, each superintendent shall report to the Commissioner of Education the status of the implementation of teacher evaluations, including the frequency of evaluations, aggregate evaluation ratings, the number of administrators and teachers who have not been evaluated and other requirements as determined by the Department of Education.

(6) Summative rating revisions – After all data, including state test data, are available, the principal or designee may adjust the summative rating if the state test data may have a significant impact on a final rating. A final rating may be revised when state test data are available, before September 15 of a school year.

2.3: Teacher Evaluation Components

(1) Forty-five percent (45%) of a teacher's evaluation shall be based on attainment of goals and/or objectives for student growth, using multiple indicators of academic growth and development to measure those goals/objectives.

(a) The process for assessing student growth using multiple indicators of academic growth and development for teacher evaluation will be developed through mutual agreement by each teacher and their evaluator at the beginning of the year.

(b) The process for assessing student growth will have three phases:

1. Goal-setting conference:

a. Each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator, will select at least 1 but no more than 4 goals/objectives for student growth, the exact number based on a consideration of a reasonable number of goals/objectives taking into account teaching responsibilities and teacher experience. For each objective/goal, each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator, will select Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGD) and evidence of the IAGD based on the range of criteria used by the district.

b. Each goal/objective will:

i. take into account the academic track record and overall needs and strengths of the students the teacher is teaching that year/semester;
ii. Address the most important purposes of a teacher's assignment through self-reflection;
iii. Be aligned with school, district and state student achievement objectives;
iv. Take into account their students' starting learning needs vis a vis relevant baseline data when available.
v. Pursuant to section 10-151b (C.G.S.), as amended by subsection (c) of Sec. 51 of P.A. 12-116, such guidelines shall include consideration of control factors tracked by the state-wide public school information system that may influence teacher performance ratings, including, but not limited to, student characteristics, student attendance and student mobility and minimum requirements for teacher evaluation instruments and procedures. Consideration of such control factors and minimum requirements shall be undertaken and accomplished through the joint deliberations and determinations of the Goal Setting process. (Also see 1.1.)

2. Mid-year check-ins:

a. Evaluators and teachers will review progress toward the goals/objectives at least once during the school year, which is to be considered the midpoint of the school year, using available information, including agreed upon indicators. This review may result in revisions to the strategies or approach being used and/or teachers and evaluators may mutually agree on mid-year adjustment of student learning goals to accommodate changes (e.g., student populations, assignment).

3. End-of-year summative review:

a. Teacher Self-Assessment – The teacher reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a self-assessment for review by the principal or designee. This self-assessment may focus specifically on the areas for development established in the Goal-setting conference.

b. End of Year Conference – The teacher shall collect evidence of student progress toward meeting the student learning goals/objectives. This evidence will be produced by using the multiple indicators selected to align with each student learning goal/objective. The evidence will be submitted to the evaluator, and the teacher and evaluator will discuss the extent to which the students met the learning goals/objectives. Following the conference, the evaluator will rate the extent of student progress toward meeting the student learning goals/objectives, based on criteria for 4 levels of performance. If state test data may have a significant impact on a final rating, a final rating may be revised before September 15 when state test data are available.

(c) One half (or 22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development used as evidence of whether goals/objectives are met shall be based on the state test for those teaching tested grades and subjects or another standardized indicator for other grades and subjects where available. For the other half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development, there may be:

a. A maximum of one additional standardized indicator, if there is mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute resolution procedure as described in 1.3.
b. A minimum of one non-standardized indicator.

(d) Examples of indicators that may be used to produce evidence of academic growth and development include but are not limited to:

1. Standardized indicators;
    a. Standardized assessments are characterized by the following attributes:
        i. Administered and scored in a consistent – or "standard" – manner;
        ii. Aligned to a set of academic or performance "standards;"
        iii. Broadly administered (e.g. nation- or statewide);
        iv. Commercially produced;
        v. often administered only once a year.
    b. Standardized assessments include, but are not limited to:
        i. AP exams;
        ii. SAT-9;
        iii. DRA (administered more than once a year);
        iv. DIBELS (administered more than once a year);
        v. NWEA (administered more than once a year);
        vi. Trade certification exams;
        vii. Standardized vocational ED exams;
        viii. Curriculum based assessments taken from banks of state-wide or assessment consortium assessment item banks.

2. Non-standardized Indicators
    a. Non-standardized indicators include, but are not limited to:
        i. Performances rated against a rubric (such as: music performance, dance performance);
        ii. Performance assessments or tasks rated against a rubric (such as: constructed projects, student oral work, and other written work);
        iii. Portfolios of student work rated against a rubric;
        iv. Curriculum-based assessments, including those constructed by a teacher or team of teachers;
        v. Periodic assessments that document student growth over time (such as: formative assessments, diagnostic assessments, district benchmark assessments);
        vi. Other indicators (such as: teacher developed tests, student written work, constructed project).

(e) When selecting indicators used to gauge attainment of goals/objectives, teachers and their evaluators shall agree on a balance in the weighting of standardized and non-standardized indicators as described in 2.3.d.

(f) Within the process, the following are descriptions of selecting indicators of academic growth and development: In the context of the evaluation of a teacher's performance, 2.3.f.1 is an opportunity to evaluate the degree to which the teacher provides students fair opportunity and 2.3.f.2 is an opportunity to evaluate the context in which the teacher is working to show that the teacher is given fair opportunity. Indicators of academic growth and development should be fair, reliable, valid and useful to the greatest extent possible. These terms are defined as follows:

1. Fair to students - The indicator of academic growth and development is used in such a way as to provide students an opportunity to show that they have met or are making progress in meeting the learning objective. The use of the indicator of academic growth and development is as free as possible from bias and stereotype.

2. Fair to teachers - The use of an indicator of academic growth and development is fair when a teacher has the professional resources and opportunity to show that his/her students have made growth and when the indicator is appropriate to the teacher's content, assignment and class composition.

3. Reliable - Use of the indicator is consistent among those using the indicators and over time.

4. Valid - The indicator measures what it is intended to measure.

5. Useful - The indicator may be used to provide the teacher with meaningful feedback about student knowledge, skills, perspective and classroom experience that may be used to enhance student learning and provide opportunities for teacher professional growth and development.

(2) Forty percent (40%) of a teacher's evaluation shall be based on observation of teacher practice and performance.

(a) Teacher evaluation programs developed and implemented by local or regional boards of education shall ensure that processes related to observation of teacher practice and performance:

1. Facilitate and encourage effective means for multiple in-class visits necessary for gathering evidence of the quality of teacher practice;

2. Provide constructive oral and written feedback of observations in a timely and useful manner;

3. Provide on-going calibration of evaluators in the district;

4. Use a combination of formal, informal, announced, and unannounced observation;

5. Consider differentiating the number of observations related to experience, prior ratings, needs and goals.

6. Include pre- and post-conferences that include deep professional conversations that allow evaluators and teachers to set goals, allow administrators to gain insight into the teacher's progress in addressing issues and working toward their goals, and share evidence each has gathered during the year.

(b) Observations of teacher practice and performance shall meet the following minimum criteria:

1. Observation models must be standards-based. Examples of acceptable standards based frameworks include, but are not limited to the Danielson, Marzano and Marshall frameworks, or locally developed frameworks based on best practice.

2. Observation models must be aligned to the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching. Districts that do not adopt the state model must specify how district-selected or developed models demonstrate this alignment.

3. Observations must be rated using rubrics that have four performance levels.

(c) First and second year teachers shall receive at least three in-class formal observations. Two of the three observations must include a pre-conference, and all of the observations must include a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback.

(d)Teachers who receive a performance evaluation designation of below standard or developing shall receive a number of observations appropriate to their individual development plan, but no fewer than three in-class formal observations. Two of the three observations must include a pre-conference, and all of the observations must include a post-conference with timely written and verbal feedback.

(e) Teachers who receive a performance evaluation designation of proficient or exemplary shall receive a combination of at least three formal observations/reviews of practice, one of which must be a formal in-class observation. The exact combination shall be mutually agreed upon by the teacher and evaluator at the beginning of the evaluation process. Examples of non-classroom observations or reviews of practice include but are not limited to: observations of data team meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers, review of lesson plans or other teaching artifacts.

(f) Districts shall provide all evaluators with training in observation and evaluation, and how to provide high-quality feedback. Districts shall describe how evaluators must demonstrate proficiency on an ongoing basis in conducting teacher evaluations.

(3) Five percent (5%) of a teacher's evaluation shall be based on whole-school student learning indicators or student feedback.

(a) For districts that include whole-school student learning indicators in teacher evaluations, a teacher's indicator ratings shall be represented by the aggregate rating for multiple student learning indicators established for the administrator's evaluation rating.

(b) For districts that include student surveys:

1. Student responses must be anonymous.

2. Surveys must demonstrate properties of fairness, reliability, validity and usefulness.

3. School governance councils shall assist in the development of whole-school surveys, if applicable, in order to encourage alignment with school improvement goals.

4. An age-appropriate student survey must be administered to each student. Both the language used in the survey and the administration protocol (e.g., paper or on-line; read by student or read by an adult) shall be appropriate for the grade level.

5. Results from surveys addressed by teachers should align with student learning goals.

6. For whole-school student surveys, ratings may be based on one of two options:
   a. Evidence from teacher developed student level indicators of improvement in areas of need as identified by the school level survey results; or
   b. Evidence of teacher's implementation of strategies to address areas of need as identified by the survey results.

7. Teacher ratings in this area may be based on a teacher's improvement in performance goals based on student feedback or on the criteria found in Domain 6 (Professional Practice) of the Common Core of Teaching. See appendix for details.

(c) Approaches such as focus groups, interviews, or teachers' own surveys may be used to collect information from students.

(d) The whole-school student learning indicators rating or student feedback rating shall be among four performance levels.

(4) Ten percent (10%) of a teacher's evaluation shall be based on parent or peer feedback, including surveys.

(a) For districts that include parent surveys:

1. Parent responses must be anonymous.

2. Surveys must demonstrate properties of fairness, reliability, validity and usefulness.

3. School governance councils shall assist in the development of whole-school surveys, if applicable, in order to encourage alignment with school improvement goals.

4. Survey is administered to each parent either on-line or paper version.

5. Results from surveys addressed by teachers should align with student improvement goals.

6. For whole-school parent surveys, ratings may be based on one of two options:
   a. Evidence from teacher developed student level indicators of improvement in areas of need as identified by the school level survey results; or
   b. Evidence of teacher's implementation of strategies to address areas of need as identified by the survey results.

7. Teacher ratings in this area may be based on a teacher's improvement in performance goals based on parent feedback or on the criteria found in Domain 6 (Professional Practice) of the Common Core of Teaching. See appendix for details.

(b) Approaches such as focus groups, interviews, or teachers' own surveys may be used to collect information from parents.

(c) Peer observation or peer focus groups may be developed.

(d) The parent or peer feedback rating shall be among four performance levels.

2.4 Evaluation-based Professional Learning

Districts and schools shall provide professional learning opportunities for teachers, pursuant to subsection (b) of Sec. 10-220a of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.), based on the individual or group of individuals' needs that are identified through the evaluation process. These learning opportunities shall be clearly linked to the specific outcomes of the evaluation process as it relates to student learning results, observation of professional practice or the results of stakeholder feedback. See appendix for statutory language referenced.

2.5 Individual Teacher Improvement and Remediation Plans

Districts shall create plans of individual teacher improvement and remediation for teachers whose performance is developing or below standard, collaboratively developed with such teacher and his or her exclusive bargaining representative for certified teachers chosen pursuant to section 10-153b of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.), and that (A) identify resources, support and other strategies to be provided by the local or regional board of education to address documented deficiencies, (B) indicate a timeline for implementing such resources, support, and other strategies, in the course of the same school year as the plan is issued, and (C) include indicators of success including a summative rating of proficient or better at the conclusion of the improvement and remediation plan.

2.6 Career Development and Growth

Districts must provide opportunities for career development and professional growth based on performance identified through the evaluation process. Examples of opportunities include, but are not limited to: observation of peers; mentoring/coaching early-career teachers; participating in development of teacher improvement and remediation plans for peers whose performance is developing or below standard; leading Professional Learning Communities for their peers; differentiated career pathways; and targeted professional development based on areas of need.

2.7 Orientation Programs

The local or regional board of education or regional educational service center for the school district shall offer annual orientation programs regarding the teacher evaluation and support system to teachers who are employed by such local or regional board of education and whose performance is being evaluated.

2.8 Defining Effectiveness and Ineffectiveness; Evaluation Audit and Validation

(1) Each district shall define effectiveness and ineffectiveness utilizing a pattern of summative ratings derived from the new evaluation system.

(2) At the request of a district or employee, the State Department of Education or a third-party entity approved by the SDE will audit the evaluation components that are combined to determine an individual's summative rating in the event that such components are significantly dissimilar (i.e. include both exemplary and below standard ratings) to determine a final summative rating.

(3) The State Department of Education or a third-party designated by the SDE will audit evaluations ratings of exemplary and below standard to validate such exemplary or below standard ratings by selecting ten districts at random annually and reviewing evaluation evidence files for a minimum of two educators rated exemplary and two educators rated below standard in those districts selected at random, including at least one classroom teacher rated exemplary and at least one teacher rated below standard per district selected.

Section 3: Core Requirements for the Evaluation of Administrators who Serve in Roles Requiring a 092 Certification

As provided in subsection (a) of 10-151b (C.G.S.) as amended by Sec. 51 of P.A. 12-116, the superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each administrator who serves in a role requiring a 092 certification, in accordance with the requirements of this section. Local or regional boards of education shall develop and implement administrator evaluation programs consistent with these requirements. Except where noted below as applying to particular job roles, the requirements apply to all roles requiring a 092 certification. 092 certificate holders whose primary job duties include teaching students shall be evaluated using the requirements in Section 2.

3.1: 4-Level Matrix Rating System

(1) Annual summative evaluations provide each administrator with a summative rating aligned to one of four performance evaluation designators: Exemplary, proficient, developing and below standard.

(a) The performance levels shall be defined as follows:

- Exemplary – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- Proficient – Meeting indicators of performance
- Developing – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- Below standard – Not meeting indicators of performance

(b) In order to determine summative rating designations for each administrator, districts shall:

1. Rate administrator performance in each of four categories – multiple student learning indicators, teacher effectiveness outcomes, observations of administrator performance and practice, and stakeholder feedback.

2. Combine the multiple-student learning indicator rating and the teacher effectiveness outcomes rating into a single rating, taking into account their relative weights; this will represent an overall "outcomes rating" of Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard.

3. Combine the observations of administrator performance and practice rating and stakeholder feedback rating into a single rating, taking into account their relative weights; this will represent an overall "practice rating" of Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, or Below Standard.

4. Combine the outcomes rating and practice rating into a final rating that equally weights the outcomes and practice ratings. In undertaking this step, the district must assign a summative rating performance level (i.e., Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, and Below Standard). The district must provide at the start of each school year how the "practice rating" and "outcomes rating" will be combined into one summative rating. See appendix for example.

3.2 Administrator Evaluation Process

(1) The annual evaluation process for an administrator shall at least include, but not be limited to, the following steps, in order:

(a) Orientation on process – To begin the process, the superintendent or designee provides the administrator with materials outlining the evaluation process and other information as appropriate. Process information provided in orientation must include the rubric used for assessing administrator practice, the instruments to be used to gather feedback from staff, families, and/or students and their alignment to the rubric, the process and calculation by which all evaluation elements will be integrated into an overall rating.

(b) Goal-setting conference – At the start of the school year, the superintendent or designee and administrator meet to discuss information relevant to the evaluation process, and agree on the specific measures and performance targets for the student learning indicators, teacher effectiveness outcomes, and stakeholder feedback. In the absence of agreement, the superintendent or designee makes the final determination about the performance targets. The evaluator and administrator also identify focus areas for development of administrator practice aligned to the Connecticut School Leadership Standards. The evaluator and administrator also discuss the appropriate resources and professional development needs to support the administrator in meeting the performance targets.

(c) Evidence collection – The administrator collects evidence about his/her practice and the superintendent or designee collects evidence about administrator practice to support the review.

1. The superintendent or designee must conduct at least two school site observations for any administrator and should conduct at least four school site observations for administrators who are new to their district, school, the profession, or who have received ratings of developing or below standard.

2. The evaluator of an assistant principal shall conduct at least four observations of the practice of said assistant principal.

(2) Examples of school site observations could include observing the administrator leading professional development or facilitating teacher teams, observing the administrator working with parents and community members, observing classrooms and instructional quality, or assessing elements of the school culture.

(3) Mid-year formative review – The superintendent or designee and administrator hold a mid-year formative conference, with explicit discussion of progress toward student learning targets, as well as any areas of performance related to standards of performance and practice

(4) End-of-year summative review:

(a) Administrator self-assessment - The administrator reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a self-assessment for review by the superintendent or designee. This self-assessment may focus specifically on the areas for development established in the Goal-setting conference.

(b) End-of-year conference -The superintendent or designee and the administrator meet to discuss all evidence collected to date. Following the conference, the superintendent or designee assigns a summative rating and generates a summary report of the evaluation before the end of the school year.

(5) Local reporting – The district superintendent shall report the status of administrator evaluations to the local or regional board of education on or before June first of each year.

(6) State reporting – Not later than June thirtieth of each year, each superintendent shall report to the Commissioner of Education the status of the implementation of administrator evaluations, including the frequency of evaluations, aggregate evaluation ratings, the number of administrators who have not been evaluated and other requirements as determined by the Department of Education.

(7) Summative rating revisions – After all data, including state test data, are available, the superintendent or designee may adjust the summative rating if the state test data may have a significant impact on a final rating. A final rating may be revised when state test data are available, before September 15 of a school year.

3.3 Administrator Evaluation Components

(1) Forty five percent (45%) of an administrator's summative rating shall be based on multiple student learning indicators.

(a) Twenty-two point five percent (22.5%) of an administrator's evaluation shall be based only on student performance and/or growth on the state-administered assessments in core content areas that are part of the state's approved school accountability system.
This portion must include:

1. School Performance Index (SPI) progress from year to year;
2. SPI progress for student subgroups.

This portion may include:

1. SPI rating
2. SPI rating for student subgroups

Districts may determine locally the relative weight on each of components 1-4 within 3.3.a.

For 092 holders serving in central office administrative roles, districts shall rate performance based on results in the group of schools, group of students, or subject area most relevant to the administrator's job responsibilities, or on district-wide student learning results.

All protections related to the assignment of school accountability ratings (e.g., the minimum number of days a student must be enrolled in order for that student's scores to be included in an accountability measure) shall apply to the use of state test data for administrator evaluation. If the state adds a student growth indicator tied to content-area assessments to the state accountability system for schools, then that indicator shall become a required element of this portion of the administrator evaluation system.

For any school that does not have tested grades (such as a K-2 school), the entire 45% of an administrator's rating on student learning indictors shall be based on the locally-determined indicators described below in subsection (b).

(b) Twenty-two point five percent (22.5%) of an administrator's evaluation shall be based on at least two locally-determined indicators of student learning, at least one of which must include student outcomes from subjects and/or grades not assessed on state-administered assessments. Locally determined indicators must align to Connecticut learning standards. In instances where there are no such standards that apply to a subject/grade level, districts must provide evidence of alignment to research-based learning standards.
For administrators in high schools, selected indicators must include:

1. The cohort graduation rate and the extended graduation rate, as defined in the State's approved application for flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. All protections related to the assignment of school accountability ratings for cohort graduation rate and extended graduation rate shall apply to the use of graduation data for principal evaluation.

(c) For all school-based administrators, selected indicators must be relevant to the student population (e.g., grade levels) served by the administrator's school, and may include:

1. Student performance or growth on state-administered assessments and/or district-adopted assessments not included in the state accountability measures (e.g., commercial content area assessments, Advanced Placement examinations, International Baccalaureate examinations).

2. Students' progress toward graduation in the school using strong predictive indicators, including but not limited to 9th and/or 10th grade credit accumulation and/or the percentage of students that pass 9th and/or 10th grade subjects most commonly associated with graduation.

3. Students' performance or growth on school- or classroom-developed assessments in subjects and grade levels for which there are not available state assessments.

4. Other indicators proposed by the district.

(d) For assistant principals, indicators may focus on student results from a subset of teachers, grade levels, or subjects, consistent with the job responsibilities of the assistant principal being evaluated.

(e) For central office administrators, indicators may be based on results in the group of schools, group of students, or subject area most relevant to the administrator's job responsibilities, or on district-wide student learning results.

In selecting indicators, districts may establish district-wide indicators or may allow administrators and their evaluators to craft mutually agreed-upon student learning objectives specific to that administrator. The school or district must be able to collect adequate information on any chosen indicator to make a fair judgment about whether the administrator met the established goal. When setting targets or objectives, the superintendent or designee must include a review of relevant student characteristics (e.g., mobility, attendance, demographic and learning characteristics). The evaluator and administrator must also discuss the professional resources appropriate to supporting the administrator in meeting the performance targets.

For any administrator assigned to a school in "review" or "turnaround" status in the state's accountability system, the indicators used for administrator evaluation must align with the performance targets set out in the school's mandated Improvement Plan. Districts are encouraged to have such alignment for all administrators.

(2) Five percent (5%) of an administrator's summative rating shall be based on teacher effectiveness outcomes.
Acceptable measures include:

(a) Improving the percentage (or meeting a target of a high percentage) of teachers who meet the student learning objectives outlined in their performance evaluations (If this measure is used, districts should have a process for ensuring that the process for setting student learning objectives is rigorous).

(b) Other locally-determined measures of teacher effectiveness.

For assistant principals, measures of teacher effectiveness shall focus only on those teachers the assistant principal is responsible for evaluating. If the assistant principal's job duties do not include teacher evaluation, then the teacher effectiveness rating for the principal of the school shall apply to the assistant principal.

(3) Forty percent (40%) of an administrator's evaluation shall be based on ratings of administrator performance and practice by the district superintendent or her/his designee(s).
Ratings must be based on evidence collected about leadership practice as described in the Common Core of Leading: Connecticut School Leadership Standards using a rubric aligned to those standards.

For principals, districts may vary the relative weights of standards, but must weight the Teaching and Learning Standard at least twice as much as any other standard. The other standards of practice must all have a weighting of at least 5% of the overall evaluation. The weighting of standards may be different for each administrator, but the weights must be established by the evaluator as part of the goal setting conference at the start of the school year.
An assistant principal's rating must be based on evidence collected about leadership practice as described in the Common Core of Leading: Connecticut School Leadership Standards. Districts may vary the relative weights of standards, but must include all six standards and weight each of them at least 5% of the overall evaluation of practice. Within the standards, evaluators may limit the rating to those elements that are relevant to the assistant principal's job duties. The weighting of standards may be different for each assistant principal, but the weights must be established by the evaluator as part of the goal setting conference at the start of the school year. Districts are encouraged to use the observation of assistant principal practice to highlight an individual's readiness for the principalship.

Performance ratings that the superintendent or designee make based on direct observations of school-based administrator practice shall be based on a locally-developed or locally-selected rubric that meets the following criteria:

- It is aligned to the Common core of Leading: Connecticut School Leadership Standards.
- It clearly distinguishes among at least four levels of performance.
- It clearly identifies administrator leadership actions related to improving teacher effectiveness, including conducting teacher evaluations.

For central office administrators, a rubric is not required. Districts may generate ratings from evidence collected directly from the Common Core of Leading: Connecticut School Leadership Standards.

In rating administrators against the rubric, the evaluator must identify a performance rating with written evidence to support the rating for each leadership standard; further, the evaluator must identify the strengths and growth areas of the administrator.

Districts selecting or designing rubrics other than the state-developed rubric shall provide training of evaluators focused on the language of the rubric and its use in practice.

The superintendent or designee shall provide feedback on administrator performance at least, but not limited to, in the mid-year conference and end-of-year conference. It is recommended that such feedback be provided as soon after an observation as is practical.

The district shall provide all evaluators of administrators with training focused on the administrator evaluation system, including at least, but not limited to, training on conducting effective observations and providing high-quality feedback.

The district may conduct the training or have evaluators participate in state-sponsored training.

(4) Ten percent (10%) of an administrator's summative rating shall be based on feedback from stakeholders on areas of principal and/or school practice described in the Connecticut Leadership Standards.

Districts may select a subset of elements and indicators within the Leadership Standards for purposes of gathering feedback. For school-based administrators, stakeholders solicited for feedback must include teachers and parents, but may include other stakeholders (e.g., other staff, community members, students, etc.). Central office administrators shall be rated based on feedback from the stakeholders whom the administrator directly serves.

The instrument(s) selected for gathering feedback must be valid (that is, it measures what it is intended to measure) and reliable (that is, the use of the instrument is consistent among those using it and is consistent over time). In order to minimize burden on schools and stakeholders, the instruments chosen need not be implemented exclusively for purposes of principal evaluation.

More than half of the rating of a principal on stakeholder feedback must be based on an assessment of improvement over time. Districts may also rate administrators based on status performance and may have less of a focus on improvement over time if status performance surpasses a district-determined threshold of adequate performance. Districts may set common targets of improvement and performance for all administrators or set specific targets for individual administrators.

Focus groups, interviews, teacher-level surveys, or other methods may be used to gather stakeholder feedback as long as these methods meet the above definitions of valid and reliable.

If districts elect to use surveys to gather feedback, they may include the survey response rate as an input to the rating on feedback (as a way to increase the accuracy of survey results).

3.4 Evaluation-based Professional Learning

Districts and schools shall provide professional learning opportunities for administrators, pursuant to subsection (b) of Sec. 10-220a of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.), based on the individual or group of individuals' needs that are identified through the evaluation process. These learning opportunities shall be clearly linked to the specific outcomes of the evaluation process as it relates to student learning results, observation of professional practice or the results of stakeholder feedback include the provision of useful and timely feedback and improvement opportunities. See appendix for statue language referenced.

3.5 Individual Administrator Improvement and Remediation Plans

Districts shall create plans of individual principal improvement and remediation for principals whose performance is developing or below standard, collaboratively developed with such teacher and his or her exclusive bargaining representative for certified principals chosen pursuant to section 10-153b of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.), and that (A) identify resources, support and other strategies to be provided by the local or regional board of education to address documented deficiencies, (B) indicate a timeline for implementing such resources, support, and other strategies, in the course of the same school year as the plan is issued, and (C) include indicators of success including a summative rating of proficient or better at the conclusion of the improvement and remediation plan.

3.6 Career Development and Growth

Districts must provide opportunities for career development and professional growth based on performance identified through the evaluation process. Examples of opportunities include, but are not limited to: observation of peers; mentoring/coaching early-career administrators; participating in development of administrator improvement and remediation plans for peers whose performance is developing or below standard; leading Professional Learning Communities for their peers; differentiated career pathways; and, targeted professional development based on areas of need.

3.7 Orientation Programs

The local or regional board of education or regional educational service center for the school district shall offer annual orientation programs regarding the administrator evaluation and support program to administrators who are employed by such local or regional board of education and whose performance is being evaluated and shall train administrators who are employed by such local or regional board of education and who are conducting performance evaluations.

3.8 Defining Effectiveness and Ineffectiveness; Evaluation Audit and Validation

(1) Each district shall define effectiveness and ineffectiveness utilizing a pattern of summative ratings derived from the new evaluation system.

(2) At the request of a district or employee, the State Department of Education or a third-party entity approved by the SDE will audit the evaluation components that are combined to determine an individual's summative rating in the event that such components are significantly dissimilar (i.e. include both exemplary and below standard ratings) to determine a final summative rating.

(3) The State Department of Education or a third-party designated by the SDE will audit evaluations ratings of exemplary and below standard to validate such exemplary or below standard ratings by selecting ten districts at random annually and reviewing evaluation evidence files for a minimum of two educators rated exemplary and two educators rated below standard in those districts selected at random, including at least one administrator rated exemplary and at least one administrator rated below standard per district selected.

Section 4: Core Requirements for the Evaluation of Student and Educator Support Specialists

As provided in Sec. 10-151b of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.) as amended by section 51 of P.A. 12-116, "The superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each Student and Educator Support Specialist", in accordance with the requirements of this section. Local or regional boards of education shall develop and implement Student and Educator Support evaluation programs consistent with these requirements.

4.1 Flexibility from Core Requirements for the Evaluation of Teachers

(1) Student and Educator Support Specialists shall have a clear job descriptions and delineation of their role and responsibilities in the school to guide the setting of indicators of academic growth and development, feedback and observation.

(2) Because of the unique nature of the roles fulfilled by Student and Educator Support Specialists, districts shall be granted flexibility in applying the Core Requirements of teacher evaluation in the following ways:

(a) Districts shall be granted flexibility in using Indicators of Academic Growth and Development to measure attainment of goals and/or objectives for student growth. The Goal-setting conference for identifying the IAGD shall include the following steps:

1. The educator and evaluator will agree on the students or caseloads that the educator is responsible for and his/her role.

2. The educator and evaluator will determine if the indicator will apply to the individual teacher, a team of teachers, a grade level or the whole school.

3. The educator and evaluator should identify the unique characteristics of the population of students which would impact student growth (i.e. high absenteeism, highly mobile population in school).

4. The educator and evaluator will identify the learning standard to measure: the assessment, data or product for measuring growth; the timeline for instruction and measurement; how baseline will be established; how targets will be set so they are realistic yet rigorous; the strategies that will be used; and the professional development the educator needs to improve their learning to support the areas targeted.

(b) Because some Student and Educator Support Specialists do not have a classroom and may not be involved in direct instruction of students, the educator and evaluator shall agree to appropriate venues for observations and an appropriate rubric for rating practice and performance at the beginning of the school year. The observations will be based on standards when available. Examples of appropriate venues include but are not limited to: observing Student and Educator Support Specialist staff working with small groups of children, working with adults, providing professional development, working with families, participation in team meetings or Planning and Placement Team meetings.

(c) When student, parent and/or peer feedback mechanisms are not applicable to Student and Educator Support Specialists, districts may permit local development of short feedback mechanisms for students, parents, and peers specific to particular roles or projects for which the Student and Educator Support Specialists are responsible.

Appendix

I. An Act Educational Reform: Sections 51 through 56 of P.A. 12-116, as amended by section 23 and 24 of P.A. 12-2 of the June 12 Special Session *

Sec. 51. Section 10-151b of the 2012 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) The superintendent of each local or regional board of education hall [continuously] annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher, in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and such other guidelines as may be established by mutual agreement between the local or regional board of education and the teachers' representative chosen pursuant to section 10-153b, and may conduct additional formative evaluations toward producing an annual summative evaluation. An evaluation pursuant to this subsection shall include, but need not be limited to, strengths, areas needing improvement, strategies for improvement and multiple indicators of student academic growth. Claims of failure to follow the established procedures of such evaluation and support programs shall be subject to the grievance procedure in collective bargaining agreements negotiated subsequent to July 1, 2004. In the event that a teacher does not receive a summative evaluation during the school year, such teacher shall receive a "not rated" designation for such school year. The superintendent shall report the status of teacher evaluations to the local or regional board of education on or before June first of each year. For purposes of this section, the term "teacher" shall include each professional employee of a board of education, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

(b) [Each] (1) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, each local and regional board of education shall develop and implement teacher evaluation programs consistent with guidelines [established] adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this

section, and consistent with the plan developed in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of section 10-220a.

(2) Not later than June thirtieth of each year, each superintendent shall report to the Commissioner of Education the status of the implementation of teacher evaluations, including the frequency of evaluations, aggregate evaluation ratings, the number of teachers who have not been evaluated and other requirements as determined by the Department of Education.

(c) On or before July 1, 2012, the State Board of Education shall adopt, in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council established pursuant to section 10-151d, guidelines for a model teacher evaluation and support program. Such guidelines shall [provide guidance on] include, but not be limited to, (1) the use of four performance evaluations designators: Exemplary, proficient, developing and below standard; (2) the use of multiple indicators of student academic growth and development in teacher evaluations; [. Such guidelines shall include, but not be limited to: (1) Methods] (3) methods for assessing student academic growth and development; [(2)] (4) a consideration of control factors tracked by the state-wide public school information system, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-10a, that may influence teacher performance ratings, including, but not limited to, student characteristics, student attendance and student mobility; [and (3)] (5) minimum requirements for teacher evaluation instruments and procedures, including scoring systems to determine exemplary, proficient, developing and below standard ratings; (6) the development and implementation of periodic training programs regarding the teacher evaluation and support program to be offered by the local or regional board of education or regional educational service center for the school district to teachers who are employed by such local or regional board of education and whose performance is being evaluated and to administrators who are employed by such local or regional board of education and who are conducting performance evaluations; (7) the provision of professional development services based on the individual or group of individuals' needs that are identified through the evaluation process; (8) the creation of individual teacher improvement and remediation plans for teachers whose performance is developing or below standard, designed in consultation with such teacher and his or her exclusive bargaining representative for certified teachers chosen pursuant to section 10-153b, and that (A) identify resources, support and other strategies to be provided by the local or regional board of education to address documented deficiencies, (B) indicate a timeline for implementing such resources, support, and other strategies, in the course of the same school year as the plan is issued, and (C) include indicators of success including a summative rating of proficient or better immediately at the conclusion of the improvement and remediation plan; (9) opportunities for career development and professional growth; and (10) a validation procedure to audit evaluation ratings of exemplary or below standard by the department, or a third-party entity approved by the department, to validate such exemplary or below standard evaluation ratings. The State Board of Education, following the completion of the teacher evaluation and support pilot program, pursuant to section 52 of this act, and the submission of the study of such pilot program, pursuant to section 53 of this act, shall validate the guidelines adopted under this subsection.

(d) The State Board of Education may waive the provisions of subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section for any local or regional board of education that has developed a teacher evaluation program prior to the validation of the model teacher evaluation and support program guidelines described in subsection (c) of this section and that the State Board of Education determines is in substantial compliance with such model teacher evaluation and support program guidelines.

Sec. 52. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, the Commissioner of Education shall administer a teacher evaluation and support pilot program. Not later than June 1, 2012, the commissioner shall select, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this section, at least eight school districts *or consortia of school districts*, but not more than ten school districts *or consortia of school districts* to participate in a teacher evaluation and support program based on the guidelines adopted pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by *public act 12-116* For purposes of this section, the term "teacher" shall include each professional employee of a board of education, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

(b) The teacher evaluation and support pilot program described in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section shall (1) assess and evaluate the implementation of a teacher evaluation and support program developed by a local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by *public act 12-116*, that is in compliance with the guidelines for a teacher evaluation and support program adopted pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by *public act 12-116* (2) identify district needs for technical assistance and support in implementing such teacher evaluation and support program, (3) provide *orientation* to administrators in how to conduct performance evaluations under the teacher evaluation and support program, (4) provide training to teachers being evaluated under the teacher evaluation and support program, (5) include a validation process for performance evaluations to be conducted by the Department of Education, or the department's designee, and (6) provide funding for the administration of the teacher evaluation and support program developed by the local or regional board of education.

(c) On or before May 25, 2012, a local or regional board of education may apply, on a form provided and in a manner prescribed by the commissioner, to participate in the teacher evaluation and support pilot program.

(d) The commissioner shall select a diverse group of rural, suburban and urban school districts with varying levels of student academic performance to participate in the teacher evaluation and support pilot program. If the commissioner does not receive an adequate amount of applications for participation in the teacher evaluation and support pilot program, the commissioner shall select school districts for participation in such teacher evaluation and support pilot program to satisfy the representation requirements under this subsection.

Sec. 53. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Neag School of Education at The University of Connecticut shall study the implementation of the teacher evaluation and support pilot program described in section 52 of this act. Such study shall (1) analyze and evaluate the implementation of the teacher evaluation and support program adopted pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, for each local or regional board of education participating in the teacher evaluation and support pilot program, (2) compare such teacher evaluation and support program adopted by each local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, to the teacher evaluation and support program guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to subsection (c) of said section 10-151b, and (3) compare and evaluate the use of student performance data on the state-wide mastery examination, pursuant to section 10-14n of the general statutes, and the use of student performance data on progress monitoring tests approved by the State Board of Education as an indicator of and method for student academic growth and development.

(b) Upon completion of such study, but not later than January 1, 2014, the Neag School of Education at The University of Connecticut shall (1) submit to the State Board of Education such study and any recommendation concerning validation of the teacher evaluation and support program guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and (2) submit such study to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

Sec. 54. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2012*) Prior to the implementation of the teacher evaluation and support program developed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, but not later than July 1, 2014, each local and regional board of education shall conduct training programs for all evaluators and orientation for all teachers employed by such board relating to the provisions of such teacher evaluation and support program developed by such board of education. Such training shall provide instruction to evaluators in how to conduct proper performance evaluations prior to conducting an evaluation under the teacher evaluation and support program. Such orientation shall be completed by each teacher before a teacher receives an evaluation under the teacher evaluation and support program. For purposes of this section, the term "teacher" shall include each professional employee of a board of education, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

Sec. 55. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2012*) On July 1, 2014, and annually thereafter, the Commissioner of Education shall randomly select, within available appropriations, at least ten teacher evaluation and support programs developed pursuant to section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, to be subject to a comprehensive audit conducted by the Department of Education. The department shall submit the results of such audits to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

Sec. 56. Subsection (a) of section 10-220a of the 2012 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2012*): (a) Each local or regional board of education shall provide an in-service training program for its teachers, administrators and pupil personnel who hold the initial educator, provisional educator or professional educator certificate. Such program shall provide such teachers, administrators and pupil personnel with information on (1) the nature and the relationship of drugs, as defined in subdivision (17) of section 21a-240, and alcohol to health and personality development, and procedures for discouraging their abuse, (2) health and mental health risk reduction education which includes, but need not be limited to, the prevention of risk-taking behavior by children and the relationship of such behavior to substance abuse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-infection and AIDS, as defined in section 19a-581, violence, teen dating violence, domestic violence, child abuse and youth suicide, (3) the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, including, but not limited to, children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder or learning disabilities, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special needs children in a regular classroom, (4) school violence prevention, conflict resolution, the prevention of and response to youth suicide and the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, as defined in subsection (a) of section 10-222d, except that those boards of education that implement any evidence-based model approach that is approved by the Department of Education and is consistent with subsection (d) of section 10-145a, subsection (a) of section 10-220a, <u>as amended by this act,</u> sections 10-222d, 10-222g and 10-222h, subsection (g) of section 10-233c and sections 1 and 3 of

public act 08-160, shall not be required to provide in-service training on the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, (5) cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency life saving procedures, (6) computer and other information technology as applied to student learning and classroom instruction, communications and data management, (7) the teaching of the language arts, reading and reading readiness for teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, (8) second language acquisition in districts required to provide a program of bilingual education pursuant to section 10-17f, [and] (9) the requirements and obligations of a mandated reporter. Each local and regional board of education may allow any paraprofessional or noncertified employee to participate, on a voluntary basis, in any in-service training program provided pursuant to this section, and (10) the teacher evaluation and support program developed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-151b, as amended by this act. The State Board of Education, within available appropriations and utilizing available materials, shall assist and encourage local and regional boards of education to include: (A) Holocaust and genocide education and awareness; (B) the historical events surrounding the Great Famine in Ireland; (C) African-American history; (D) Puerto Rican history; (E) Native American history; (F) personal financial management; (G) domestic violence and teen dating violence; and (H) topics approved by the state board upon the request of local or regional boards of education as part of in-service training programs pursuant to this subsection.

*Underlined language was added in P.A. 12-116. Italicized language indicates amendments enacted in sections 23 and 24 of P.A. 12-2 of the June Special Session.

II. Section 10-151b of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.), as amended by Section 51 of P.A. 12-116—Evaluation by superintendent of certain educational personnel

(a) The superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall [continuously] annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher, in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and such other guidelines as may be established by mutual agreement between the local or regional board of education and the teachers' representative chosen pursuant to section 10-153b, and may conduct additional formative evaluations toward producing an annual summative evaluation. An evaluation pursuant to this subsection shall include, but need not be limited to, strengths, areas needing improvement, strategies for improvement and multiple indicators of student academic growth. Claims of failure to follow the established procedures of such evaluation and support programs shall be subject to the grievance procedure in collective bargaining agreements negotiated subsequent to July 1, 2004. In the event that a teacher does not receive a summative evaluation during the school year, such teacher shall receive a "not rated" designation for such school year. The superintendent shall report the status of teacher evaluations to the local or regional board of education on or before June first of each year. For purposes of this section, the term "teacher" shall include each professional employee of a board of education, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

(b) [Each] (1) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, each local and regional board of education shall develop and implement teacher evaluation programs consistent with guidelines [established] adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and consistent with the plan developed in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of section 10-220a.

(2) Not later than June thirtieth of each year, each superintendent shall report to the Commissioner of Education the status of the implementation of teacher evaluations, including the frequency of evaluations, aggregate evaluation ratings, the number of teachers who have not been evaluated and other requirements as determined by the Department of Education.

(c) On or before July 1, 2012, the State Board of Education shall adopt, in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council established pursuant to section 10-151d, guidelines for a model teacher evaluation and support program. Such guidelines shall [provide guidance on] include, but not be limited to, (1) the use of four performance evaluations designators: Exemplary, proficient, developing and below standard; (2) the use of multiple indicators of student academic growth and development in teacher evaluations; [.Such guidelines shall include, but not be limited to: (1) Methods] (3) methods for assessing student academic growth and development; [(2)] (4) a consideration of control factors tracked by the state-wide public school information system, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-10a, that may influence teacher performance ratings, including, but not limited to, student characteristics, student attendance and student mobility; [and (3)] (5) minimum requirements for teacher evaluation instruments and procedures, including scoring systems to determine exemplary, proficient, developing and below standard ratings; (6) the development and implementation of periodic training programs regarding the teacher evaluation and support program to be offered by the local or regional board of education or regional educational service center for the school district to teachers who are employed by such local or regional board of education and whose performance is being evaluated and to administrators who are employed by such local or regional board of education and who are conducting performance evaluations; (7) the provision of professional development services based on the individual or group of individuals' needs that are identified through the evaluation process; (8) the creation of individual teacher improvement and remediation plans for teachers whose performance is developing or below standard, designed in consultation with such teacher and his or her exclusive bargaining representative for certified teachers chosen pursuant to section 10-153b, and that (A) identify resources, support and other strategies to be provided by the local or regional board of education to address documented deficiencies, (B) indicate a timeline for implementing such resources, support, and other strategies, in the course of the same school year as the plan is issued, and (C) include indicators of success including a summative rating of proficient or better immediately at the conclusion of the improvement and remediation plan; (9) opportunities for career development and professional growth; and (10) a validation procedure to audit evaluation ratings of exemplary or below standard by the department, or a third-party entity approved by the department, to validate such exemplary or below standard evaluation ratings. The State Board of Education, following the completion of the teacher evaluation and support pilot program, pursuant to section 52 of this act, and the submission of the study of such pilot program, pursuant to section 53 of this act, shall validate the guidelines adopted under this subsection.

(d) The State Board of Education may waive the provisions of subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section for any local or regional board of education that has developed a teacher evaluation program prior to the validation of the model teacher evaluation and support program guidelines described in subsection (c) of this section and that the State Board of Education determines is in substantial compliance with such model teacher evaluation and support program guidelines.

Sec. 52. (NEW) (Effective from passage) (a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, the Commissioner of Education shall administer a teacher evaluation and support pilot program. Not later than June 1, 2012, the commissioner shall select, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this section, at least eight school districts, but not more than ten school districts to participate in a

teacher evaluation and support program based on the guidelines adopted pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act. For purposes of this section, the term "teacher" shall include each professional employee of a board of education, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

(b) The teacher evaluation and support pilot program described in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section shall (1) assess and evaluate the implementation of a teacher evaluation and support program developed by a local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that is in compliance with the guidelines for a teacher evaluation and support program adopted pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, (2) identify district needs for technical assistance and support in implementing such teacher evaluation and support program, (3) provide training to administrators in how to conduct performance evaluations under the teacher evaluation and support program, (4) provide training to teachers being evaluated under the teacher evaluation and support program, (5) include a validation process for performance evaluations to be conducted by the Department of Education, or the department's designee, and (6) provide funding for the administration of the teacher evaluation and support program developed by the local or regional board of education.

(c) On or before May 25, 2012, a local or regional board of education may apply, on a form provided and in a manner prescribed by the commissioner, to participate in the teacher evaluation and support pilot program.

(d) The commissioner shall select a diverse group of rural, suburban and urban school districts with varying levels of student academic performance to participate in the teacher evaluation and support pilot program. If the commissioner does not receive an adequate amount of applications for participation in the teacher evaluation and support pilot program, the commissioner shall select school districts for participation in such teacher evaluation and support pilot program to satisfy the representation requirements under this subsection.

III. Section 10-151d of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.)—Performance Evaluation Advisory Council

(a) There is established a Performance Evaluation Advisory Council within the Department of Education. Membership of the council shall consist of: (1) The Commissioners of Education and Higher Education, or their designees, (2) one representative from each of the following associations, designated by the association, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, the Connecticut Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut, and (3) persons selected by the Commissioner of Education who shall include, but not be limited to, teachers, persons with expertise in performance evaluation processes and systems, and any other person the commissioner deems appropriate.

(b) The council shall be responsible for (1) assisting the State Board of Education in the development and implementation of the teacher evaluation guidelines, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-151b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and (2) the data collection and evaluation support system, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-10a of the general statutes. The council shall meet at least quarterly.

IV. Section10-10a of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.)—Public school information system.

(1) "Teacher" means any certified professional employee below the rank of superintendent employed by a board of education for at least ninety days in a position requiring a certificate issued by the State Board of Education;

(2) "Teacher preparation program" means a program designed to qualify an individual for professional certification as an educator provided by institutions of higher education or other providers approved by the Department of Education, including, but not limited to, an alternate route to certification program.

[(a)] (b) The Department of Education shall develop and implement a state-wide public school information system. The system shall be designed for the purpose of establishing a standardized electronic data collection and reporting protocol that will facilitate compliance with state and federal reporting requirements, improve school-to-school and district-to-district information exchanges, and maintain the confidentiality of individual student and staff data. The initial design shall focus on student information, provided the system shall be created to allow for future compatibility with financial, facility and staff data. The system shall provide for the tracking of the performance of individual students on each of the state-wide mastery examinations under section 10-14n in order to allow the department to compare the progress of the same cohort of students who take each examination and to better analyze school performance. The department shall assign a unique student identifier to each student prior to tracking the performance of a student in the public school information system.

(c) On or before July 1, 2013, the department shall expand the state-wide public school information system as follows:
(1) Track and report data relating to student, teacher and school and district performance growth and make such information available to local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating educational performance and growth of teachers and students enrolled in public schools in the state. Such information shall be collected or calculated based on information received from local and regional boards of education and other relevant sources. Such information shall include, but not be limited to:

(A) In addition to performance on state-wide mastery examinations pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, data relating to students shall include, but not be limited to, (i) the primary language spoken at the home of a student, (ii) student transcripts, (iii) student attendance and student mobility, and (iv) reliable, valid assessments of a student's readiness to enter public school at the kindergarten level;

(B) Data relating to teachers shall include, but not be limited to, (i) teacher credentials, such as master's degrees, teacher preparation programs completed and certification levels and endorsement areas, (ii) teacher assessments, such as whether a teacher is deemed highly qualified pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110, or deemed to meet such other designations as may be established by federal law or regulations for the purposes of tracking the equitable distribution of instructional staff, (iii) the presence of substitute teachers in a teacher's classroom, (iv) class size, (v) numbers relating to absenteeism in a teacher's classroom, and (vi) the presence of a teacher's aide. The department shall assign a unique teacher identifier to each teacher prior to collecting such data in the public school information system;

(C) Data relating to schools and districts shall include, but not be limited to, (i) school population, (ii) annual student graduation rates, (iii) annual teacher retention rates, (iv) school disciplinary records, such as data relating to suspensions, expulsions and other disciplinary actions, (v) the percentage of students whose primary language is not English, (vi) the number of and professional credentials of support personnel, and (vii) information relating to instructional technology, such as access to computers.

(2) Collect data relating to student enrollment in and graduation from institutions of higher education for any student who had been assigned a unique student identifier pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, provided such data is available.

(3) Develop means for access to and data sharing with the data systems of public institutions of higher education in the state.

(d) On or before July 1, 2011, and each year thereafter until July 1, 2013, the Commissioner of Education shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education on the progress of the department's efforts to expand the state-wide public school information system pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. The report shall include a full statement of those data elements that are currently included in the system and those data elements that will be added on or before July 1, 2013.

[(b)] (e) The system database of student information shall not be considered a public record for the purposes of section 1-210. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the ability of a full-time permanent employee of a nonprofit organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as from time to time amended, and that is organized and operated for educational purposes, to obtain information in accordance with the provisions of subsection [(e)] (h) of this section.

[(c)] (f) All school districts shall participate in the system, and report all necessary information required by this section, provided the department provides for technical assistance and training of school staff in the use of the system.

[(d)] (g) Local and regional boards of education and preschool programs which receive state or federal funding shall participate, in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, in the state-wide public school information system described in subsection [(a)] (b) of this section. Participation for purposes of this subsection shall include, but not be limited to, reporting on (1) student experiences in preschool by program type and by numbers of months in each such program, and (2) the readiness of students entering kindergarten and student progress in kindergarten. Such reporting shall be done by October 1, 2007, and annually thereafter.

V. Subsection (b) of Sec. 10-220a (C.G.S.) of the 2012 Supplement—Professional Development Committee

Pursuant to Public Act No. 09-1 each local and regional board of education shall establish a professional development committee consisting of certified employees, and such other school personnel as the board deems appropriate, including representatives of the exclusive bargaining representative for such employees chosen pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-153. The duties of such committees shall include, but not be limited to, the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive local professional development plan for certified employees of the district. Such plan shall: (1) Be

directly related to the educational goals prepared by the local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220, (2) on and after July 1, 2011, be developed with full consideration of the priorities and needs related to student outcomes as determined by the State Board of Education, and (3) provide for the ongoing and systematic assessment and improvement of both teacher evaluation and professional development of the professional staff members of each such board, including personnel management and evaluation training or experience for administrators, shall be related to regular and special student needs and may include provisions concerning career incentives and parent involvement. The State Board of Education shall develop guidelines to assist local and regional boards of education in determining the objectives of the plans and in coordinating staff development activities with student needs and school programs.

(c) The Department of Education, in cooperation with one or more regional educational service centers, is authorized to provide institutes annually for Connecticut educators. Such institutes shall serve as model programs of professional development and shall be taught by exemplary Connecticut teachers and administrators and by other qualified individuals as selected by the Department of Education. The Department of Education shall charge fees for attending such institutes provided such fees shall be based on the actual cost of such institutes.

(d) The Department of Education may fund, within available appropriations, in cooperation with one or more regional educational service centers: (1) A cooperating teacher program to train Connecticut public school teachers and certified teachers at private special education facilities approved by the Commissioner of Education and at other facilities designated by the commissioner, who participate in the supervision, training and evaluation of student teachers; and (2) institutes to provide continuing education for Connecticut public school educators and cooperating teachers, including institutes to provide continuing education for Connecticut public school educators offered in cooperation with the Connecticut Humanities Council. Funds available under this subsection shall be paid directly to school districts for the provision of substitute teachers when cooperating teachers are released from regular classroom responsibilities and for the provision of professional development activities for cooperating and student teachers. The cooperating teacher program shall operate in accordance with regulations adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance with chapter 54, except in cases of placement in other countries pursuant to written cooperative agreements between Connecticut institutions of higher education and institutions of higher education in other countries. A Connecticut institution may enter such an agreement only if the State Board of Education and Board of Governors of Higher Education have jointly approved the institution's teacher preparation program to enter into such agreements. Student teachers shall be placed with trained cooperating teachers. Cooperating teachers who are Connecticut public school teachers shall be selected by local and regional boards of education. Cooperating teachers at such private special education and other designated facilities shall be selected by the authority responsible for the operation of such facilities. If a board of education is unable to identify a sufficient number of individuals to serve in such positions, the commissioner may select qualified persons who are not employed by the board of education to serve in such positions. Such regulations shall require primary consideration of teachers' classroom experience and recognized success as educators. The provisions of sections 10-153a to 10-153n, inclusive, shall not be applicable to the selection, placement and compensation of persons participating in the cooperating teacher program pursuant to the provisions of this section and to the hours and duties of such persons. The State Board of Education shall protect and save harmless, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-235, any cooperating teacher while serving in such capacity.

VI. Common Core of Teaching: Domain 6: Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership

Teachers maximize support for student learning by developing and demonstrating professionalism, collaboration with others, and leadership by:

6.1 Continually engaging in reflection, self-evaluation and professional development to enhance their understandings of content, pedagogical skills, resources and the impact of their actions on student learning;

6.2 Seeking professional development opportunities to enhance skills related to teaching and meeting the needs of all students;

6.3 Collaborating with colleagues, administrators, students and their families to develop and sustain a positive school climate;

6.4 Collaborating with colleagues and administrators to examine student learning data, instructional strategies, curricula, and organizational structures16 to support continuous school and district improvement;

6.5 Guiding and coaching paraprofessionals and collaborating with colleagues, administrators, and special services staff to monitor the impact of instructional or behavioral support and interventions;

6.6 Proactively communicating in culturally respectful and sensitive ways with families in order to ensure their ongoing awareness of student progress and encourage opportunities to support their child's learning;

6.7 Understanding the legal rights of students with disabilities and their families within the intervention, referral, and individualized education plan process;

6.8 Understanding how one's race, gender and culture affect professional interactions with students, families and colleagues;

6.9 Using communication technology in a professional and ethical manner;

6.10 Collaborating with colleagues, administrators, and families in the development of individualized student success plans to address goal setting, personal and academic development, post-secondary and career exploration, and/or capstone projects; and

6.11 Conducting themselves as professionals in accordance with the Connecticut's Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators.

(a) Preamble

The Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators is a set of principles which the education profession expects its members to honor and follow. These principles set forth, on behalf of the education profession and the public it serves, standards to guide conduct and the judicious appraisal of conduct in situations that have professional and ethical implications. The Code adheres to the fundamental belief that the student is the foremost reason for the existence of the profession.

The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professionalism. Therefore, the educator accepts both the public trust and the responsibilities to practice the profession according to the highest possible degree of ethical conduct and standards. Such responsibilities include the commitment to the students, the profession, the community and the family.

Consistent with applicable law, the Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators shall serve as a basis for decisions on issues pertaining to certification and employment. The code shall apply to all educators holding, applying or completing preparation for a certificate, authorization or permit or other credential from the State Board of Education. For the purposes of this section, "educator" includes superintendents, administrators, teachers, special services professionals, coaches, substitute teachers and paraprofessionals.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(b) Responsibility to the student

(1) The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the student, shall:

(A) Recognize, respect and uphold the dignity and worth of students as individual human beings, and, therefore, deal justly and considerately with students;

(B) Engage students in the pursuit of truth, knowledge and wisdom and provide access to all points of view without deliberate distortion of content area matter;

(C) Nurture in students lifelong respect and compassion for themselves and other human beings regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, social class, disability, religion, or sexual orientation;

(D) Foster in students the full understanding, application and preservation of democratic principles and processes;

(E) Guide students to acquire the requisite skills and understanding for participatory citizenship and to realize their obligation to be worthy and contributing members of society;

(F) Assist students in the formulation of worthy, positive goals;

(G) Promote the right and freedom of students to learn, explore ideas, develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and necessary learning skills to acquire the knowledge needed to achieve their full potential;

(H) Remain steadfast in guaranteeing equal opportunity for quality education for all students;

(I) Maintain the confidentiality of information concerning students obtained in the proper course of the educational process, and dispense such information only when prescribed or directed by federal or state law or professional practice;

(J) Create an emotionally and physically safe and healthy learning environment for all students; and

(K) Apply discipline promptly, impartially, appropriately and with compassion.

(c) Responsibility to the profession

(1) The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession, shall:

(A) Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her actions reflect directly upon the status and substance of the profession;

(B) Uphold the professional educator's right to serve effectively;

(C) Uphold the principle of academic freedom;

(D) Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment;

(E) Engage in professional learning to promote and implement research-based best educational practices;

(F) Assume responsibility for his or her professional development;

(G) Encourage the participation of educators in the process of educational decision making;

(H) Promote the employment of only qualified and fully certificated, authorized or permitted educators;

(I) Encourage promising, qualified and competent individuals to enter the profession;

(J) Maintain the confidentiality of information concerning colleagues and dispense such information only when prescribed or directed by federal or state law or professional practice;

(K) Honor professional contracts until fulfillment, release, or dissolution mutually agreed upon by all parties to contract;

(L) Create a culture that encourages purposeful collaboration and dialogue among all stakeholders;

(M) Promote and maintain ongoing communication among all stakeholders; and

(N) Provide effective leadership to ensure continuous focus on student achievement.

(d) Responsibility to the community

(1) The professional educator, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the profession, shall:

(A) Be cognizant of the influence of educators upon the community-at-large, obey local, state and national laws;

(B) Encourage the community to exercise its responsibility to be involved in the formulation of educational policy;

(C) Promote the principles and ideals of democratic citizenship; and

(D) Endeavor to secure equal educational opportunities for all students.

(e) Responsibility to the student's family

(1) The professional educator in recognition of the public trust vested in the profession, shall:

(A) Respect the dignity of each family, its culture, customs, and beliefs;

(B) Promote, respond, and maintain appropriate communications with the family, staff and administration;

(C) Consider the family's concerns and perspectives on issues involving its children; and

(D) Encourage participation of the family in the educational process.

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT*

(f) The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the student, shall not:

(A) Abuse his or her position as a professional with students for private advantage;

(B) Discriminate against students.

(C) Sexually or physically harass or abuse students;

(D) Emotionally abuse students; or

(E) Engage in any misconduct which would put students at risk; and

(g) The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession, shall not:

(A) Obtain a certificate, authorization, permit or other credential issued by the state board of education or obtain employment by misrepresentation, forgery or fraud;

(B) Accept any gratuity, gift or favor that would impair or influence professional decisions or actions;

(C) Misrepresent his, her or another's professional qualifications or competencies;

(D) Sexually, physically or emotionally harass or abuse district employees;

(E) Misuse district funds and/or district property; or

(F) Engage in any misconduct which would impair his or her ability to serve effectively in the profession; and

(h) The professional educator, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the profession, shall not:

(A) Exploit the educational institution for personal gain;

(B) Be convicted in a court of law of a crime involving moral turpitude or of any crime of such nature that violates such public trust; or

(C) Knowingly misrepresent facts or make false statements.

*Unprofessional conduct is not limited to the descriptors listed above. When in doubt regarding whether a specific course of action constitutes professional or unprofessional conduct please seek advice from your school district or preparation institution.

(i) Code revision

This Code shall be reviewed for potential revision concurrently with the revision of the Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits and Authorizations, by the Connecticut Advisory Council for Teacher Professional Standards. As a part of such reviews, a process shall be established to receive input and comment from all interested parties.

VII. Example of a matrix rating system

		Practice Rating			
		4	**3**	**2**	**1**
Outcome Rating	**4**	**Rate Exemplary**	**Rate Exemplary**	Rate Proficient	*Gather further information*
	3	**Rate Exemplary**	Rate Proficient	Rate Developing	**Rate Below Standard**
	2	Rate Proficient	Rate Developing	Rate Developing	**Rate Below Standard**
	1	*Gather further information*	**Rate Below Standard**	**Rate Below Standard**	**Rate Below Standard**

VIII. Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) Members

Names	Title	Organization Represented
Bruce Douglas	Executive Director	CREC (RESC)
Carole Clifford	Consultant, Professional Development	American Federation of Teachers-CT (AFT)
Dennis Carrithers	Assistant Executive Director	CT Association of Schools (CAS)
Diane Ullman	Interim Chief Talent Officer	CSDE
Ed Malin	Department of Education Chair	Sacred Heart University
Joe Cirasuolo	Executive Director	CT Association of Public School Superintendents, Inc. (CAPSS)
Karissa Niehoff	Executive Director	CT Association of Schools (CAS)
Linette Branham	Education Issues Specialist	CT Education Association (CEA)
Malia Sieve	Associate Director	Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR)
Mary Loftus Levine	Executive Director	CT Education Association (CEA)
Mike Buckley	Associate Executive Director	CT Association of Schools (CAS)
Nancy Pugliese	Bureau Chief	CSDE
Patrice McCarthy	Deputy Executive Director	CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
Paula Colen	Executive Director	EASTCONN (RESC)
Phil Apruzzese	President	CT Education Association (CEA)
Robert Rader	Executive Director	CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
Roch Girard	President	CT Federation of School Administrators (CFSA)
Sharon Palmer	Executive Director	CT-American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
Stefan Pryor	Commissioner	CSDE

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Approval of the above Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, dated June 2012, will allow the Department to institute evaluation systems for teachers and administrators state-wide in accordance with these Guidelines.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES PLANNED

The PEAC will meet at least quarterly to discuss the progress of the pilot districts and evaluation study.

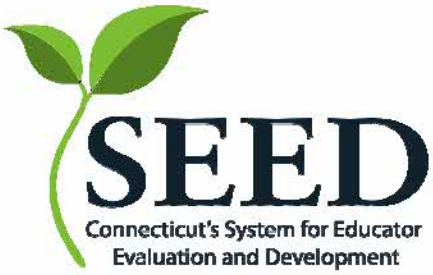
Approved by:

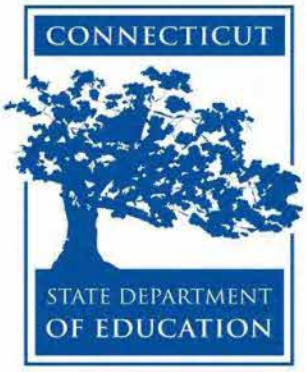
Stefan Pryor
Commissioner of Education

Connecticut State Department of Education

2014 SEED Handbook Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development

Connecticut's State Model for Educator Evaluation





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Bureau of Educator Effectiveness and Professional Learning
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Introduction

Excellent schools begin with great school leaders and teachers. The importance of highly-skilled educators is beyond dispute as a strong body of evidence now confirms what parents, students, teachers and administrators have long known: effective teachers are among the most important school-level factor in student learning, and effective leadership is an essential component of any successful school.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is committed to raising the overall quality of our schools' workforce. To meet this goal, the state, in partnership with local and regional school districts and many other stakeholder groups, aims to create a comprehensive approach to supporting and developing Connecticut's educators so that the state prepares, recruits, hires, supports, develops and retains the best educators to lead our classrooms and schools.

Educator evaluation is the cornerstone of this holistic approach and contributes to the improvement of individual and collective practice. High-quality evaluations are necessary to inform the individualized professional learning and support that all educators require. Such evaluations also identify professional strengths which should form the basis of new professional opportunities. High-quality evaluations are also necessary to make fair employment decisions based on teacher and administrator effectiveness. Used in this way, high-quality evaluations will bring greater accountability and transparency to schools and instill greater confidence in employment decisions across the state.

Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) is a model evaluation and support system that is aligned to the ***Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation*** (Core Requirements), which were adopted by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) in June of 2012. In February 2014, PEAC adopted additional flexibilities to the existing core requirements for teacher evaluation in response to feedback from various stakeholder groups. These flexibility options are described in subsections 2.9 and 2.10 of the Core Requirements.

The SEED model was informed by a large body of research, including the Gates Foundation's **Measures of Effective Teaching (MET)** study. In 2012-13, ten districts/district consortia piloted SEED and provided feedback through an implementation study conducted by the University of Connecticut Neag School of Education which further guided the model design.

The system clearly defines effective practice, encourages the exchange of accurate, useful information about strengths and development areas, and promotes collaboration and shared ownership for professional growth. The primary goal of Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system is to develop the talented workforce required to provide a superior education for Connecticut's 21st-century learners.

As provided in subsection (a) of Sec. 10-151b (C.G.S.), as amended by P.A. 13-245, the superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher. For the purposes of this document, the term "teacher" refers to any teacher serving in a position requiring teacher certification within a district, but not requiring a 092 certification. Furthermore the superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each administrator who serves in a role requiring a 092 certification, in accordance with the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Purpose and Rationale

When teachers succeed, students succeed. Research has proven that no school-level factor matters more to students' success than high-quality teachers and effective leaders. To support our teachers and administrators, we need to clearly define excellent practice and results, give accurate, useful information about educators' strengths and development areas and provide opportunities for professional learning, growth and recognition. The purpose of the Connecticut's educator evaluation and support model is to fairly and accurately evaluate performance and to help each educator strengthen his/her practice to improve student learning.

Core Design Principles

The following principles guided the design of the teacher and administrator evaluation models, developed in partnership with Education First and New Leaders:

- Consider multiple standards-based measures of performance;
- Emphasize growth over time;
- Promote both professional judgment and consistency;
- Foster dialogue about student learning;
- Encourage aligned professional learning, coaching and feedback to support growth; and
- Ensure feasibility of implementation.

Consider multiple, standards-based measures of performance

An evaluation and support system that uses multiple sources of information and evidence results in a fair, accurate and comprehensive picture of an educator's performance. The new model defines four components of teacher effectiveness: student growth and development (45%), teacher performance and practice (40%), parent feedback (10%) and whole-school student learning indicators or student feedback (5%). The model defines four components of administrator effectiveness: multiple student learning indicators (45%), leadership practice (40%), stakeholder feedback (10%) and teacher effectiveness outcomes (5%).

The four components of the SEED model are grounded in research-based standards for educator effectiveness, Common Core State Standards, as well as Connecticut's standards: The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT); the Common Core of Leading (CCL): Connecticut School Leadership Standards; the Connecticut Framework K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards; the Smarter Balanced Assessments[1]; and locally-developed curriculum standards.

Emphasize growth over time

The evaluation of an educator's performance should consider his/her improvement from an established starting point. This applies to professional practice focus areas and the student outcomes they are striving to reach. Attaining high levels of performance matters—and for some educators maintaining high results is a critical aspect of their work—but the model encourages educators to pay attention to continually improving their practice. The goal-setting process in this model encourages a cycle of continuous improvement over time.

Promote both professional judgment and consistency

Assessing an educator's professional practice requires evaluators to constantly use their professional judgment. No rubric or formula, however detailed, can capture all of the nuances of how teachers and leaders interact with one another and with students. Synthesizing multiple sources of information into performance ratings is inherently more complex than checklists or numerical averages. At the same time, educators' atings should depend on their performance, not on their evaluators' biases. Accordingly, the model aims to minimize the variance between evaluations of practice and support fairness and consistency within and across schools.

Foster dialogue about student learning

In the quest for accuracy of ratings, there is a tendency to focus exclusively on the numbers. The SEED model is designed to show that of equal importance to getting better results is the professional conversation between an educator and his/her supervisor which can be accomplished through a well-designed and well-executed evaluation and support system. The dialogue in the SEED model occurs more frequently and focuses on what students are learning and what administrators can do to support teaching and learning.

Encourage aligned professional learning, coaching and feedback to support growth

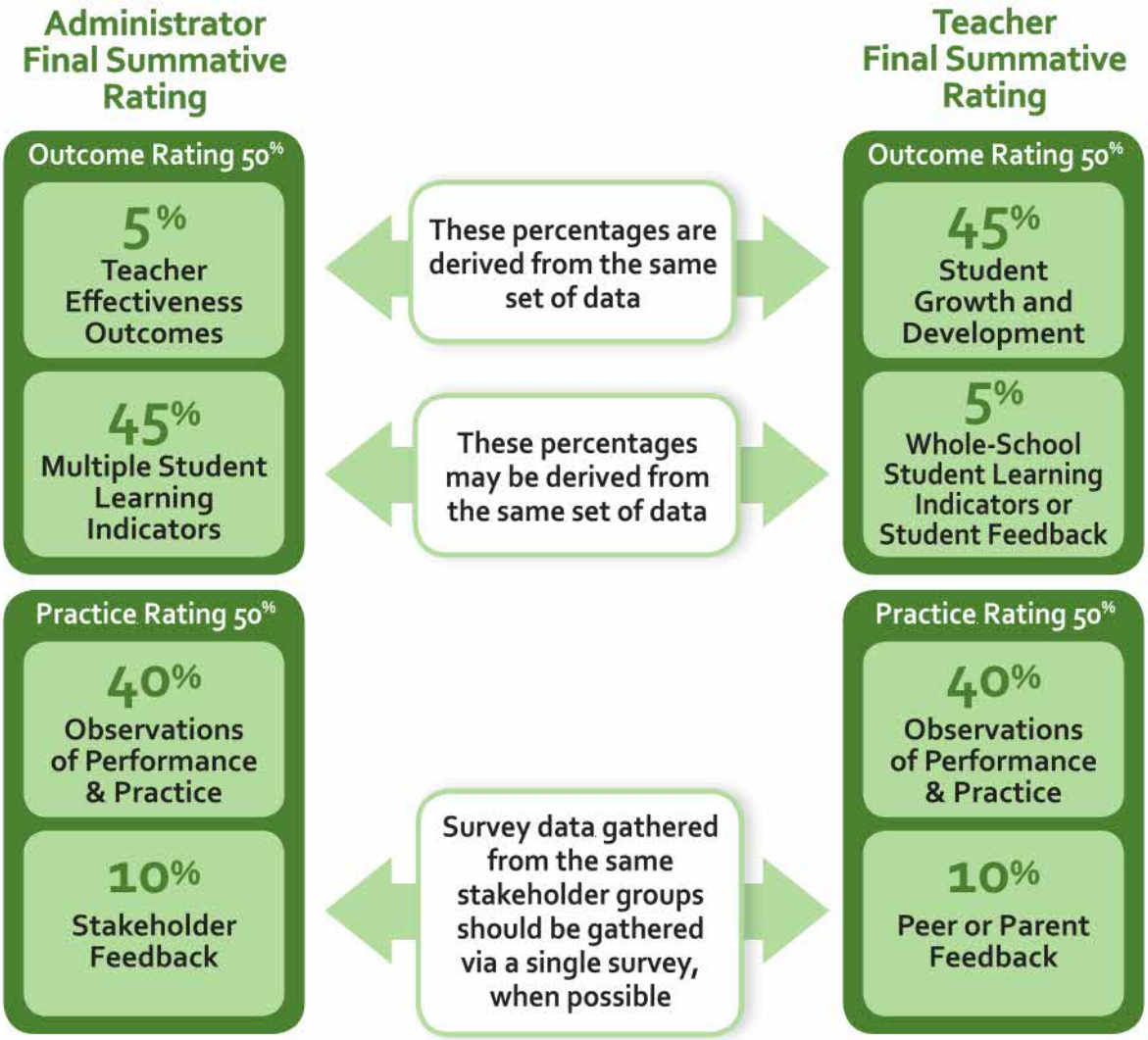
Novice and veteran educators alike deserve detailed, constructive feedback and professional learning tailored to the individual needs of their classrooms and students. SEED promotes a shared language of excellence to which professional learning, coaching and feedback can align to improve practice.

1 Smarter Balanced Assessments *will be administered for the first time in the 2014-15 academic year. These assessments are administered in Grades 3-8 and Grade 11. Pending on approval of the waiver submitted to the United States Department of Education (USED) regarding the use of student test data in educator evaluation in 2014-15, districts may not be required to link student test data to educator evaluation and support in 2014-15 only.*

Ensure feasibility of implementation

Launching the SEED model will require hard work. Throughout each district, educators will need to develop new skills and to think differently about how they manage and prioritize their time and resources. Sensitive to the tremendous responsibilities and limited resources that administrators have, the model is aligned with other responsibilities (e.g., writing a school improvement plan) and emphasizes the need for evaluators to build important skills in setting goals, observing practice and providing high-quality feedback. The model aims to balance high expectations with flexibility for the time and capacity considerations within districts.

Improving student achievement sits at the center of the work for all educators. The SEED model recognizes that student learning is a shared responsibility between teachers, administrators and district leaders. When teachers and administrators develop goals and objectives in a way that supports overall school improvement, opportunities for success have no boundaries. Therefore, by design, the SEED model creates a relationship between component ratings for teachers and administrators as depicted in the diagram below.



For clarity, see the example below to illustrate how administrators receive a final summative rating for Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes (5%) as derived from teachers' aggregate final summative rating for Student Growth and Development (45%):

Example:

Administrator Final Summative Rating (5%) Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes	Teacher Final Summative Rating (45%) Student Growth and Development
The administrator receives a final summative rating of proficient (3) for Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes (5%) if...	the aggregate final summative rating for Student Growth and Development (45%) for greater than 60% of staff is proficient (3).

See the example below to illustrate how teachers receive a final summative rating for Whole-School Student Learning Indicator as derived from an administrator's final summative rating for Multiple Student Learning Indicators (45%):

Example:

Administrator Final Summative Rating (45%) Multiple Student Learning Indicators	Teacher Final Summative Rating (5%) Whole-School Student Learning Indicators
If the administrator receives a final summative rating of proficient (3) for Multiple Student Learning Indicators (45%) then...	teachers evaluated by that administrator receive a final summative rating of proficient (3) for the Whole-School Student Learning Indicator (5%) rating.

Teacher Evaluation and Support

The CSDE designed model for the evaluation and support of teachers in Connecticut is based on the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (Core Requirements), developed by a diverse group of educators in June 2012 and based upon best practice research from around the country. The contents of this document are meant to guide districts in the implementation of Connecticut's SEED model. The CSDE, in consultation with the Performance and Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC) and the State Board of Education (SBE), may continue to refine the tools provided in this document for clarity and ease of use.

The SEED model for teacher evaluation and support includes specific guidance for the four components of teacher evaluation*:

- Teacher Performance and Practice (40%)
- Parent Feedback (10%)

Teacher Practice Related Indicators

- Student Growth and Development (45%)
- Either Whole-School Student Learning or Student Feedback (5%)

Student Outcomes Related Indicators

Additional Requirements for Educator Evaluation and Support Plans

In addition, this document includes "Points for District Consideration" to assist district Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDEC) in developing processes or enhancing existing processes necessary for ongoing development and support of teachers in the following areas:

- Evaluator Training and Monitoring
- Evaluation-Informed Professional Learning
- Improvement and Remediation Plans
- Career Development and Growth

PLEASE NOTE: *In electing to implement the SEED model, your district is expected to implement the four components of evaluation and support, as well as the additional requirements outlined above, with fidelity as outlined in this handbook. In response to requests from districts for further clarification on these requirements, we have provided "Points for Consideration" to assist districts and their PDEC in plan development. In addition, evaluators of teachers are expected to participate in the multi-day CSDE sponsored training as described within this document.*

Any variation from the components of teacher evaluation and support as written within this document is no longer the SEED model and would be considered a "district-developed" evaluation and support plan. Districts are required to submit an educator evaluation and support plan annually to the CSDE.

Teacher Evaluation Overview

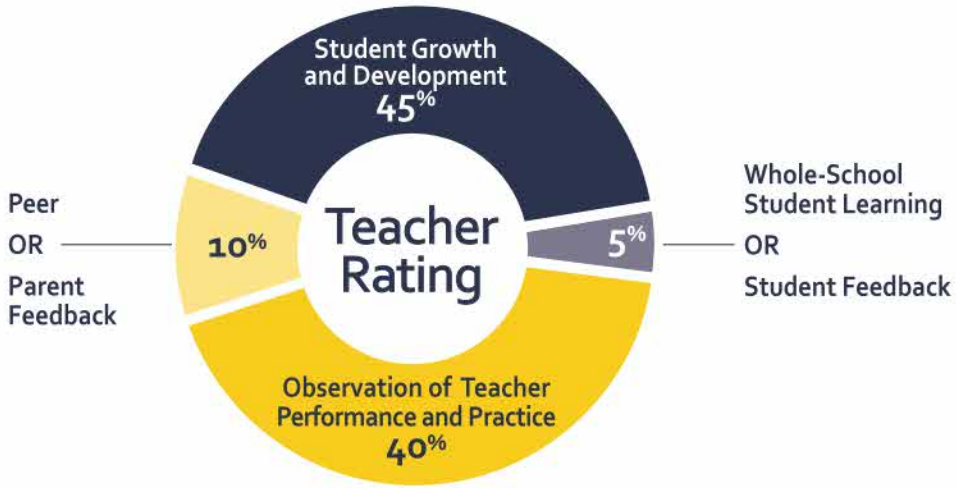
Teacher Evaluation and Support Framework

The evaluation and support system consists of multiple measures to paint an accurate and comprehensive picture of teacher performance. All teachers will be evaluated in four components, grouped into two types of major categories: Teacher Practice and Student Outcomes.

1. **Teacher Practice Related Indicators:** An evaluation of the core instructional practices and skills that positively affect student learning. This category is comprised of two components:
   - **(a) Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice (40%)** as defined within the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*, which articulates four domains and twelve indicators of teacher practice
   - **(b) Parent Feedback (10%)** on teacher practice through surveys
2. **Student Outcomes Related Indicators:** An evaluation of teachers' contributions to student academic progress at the school and classroom level. There is also an option in this category to include student feedback. This area is comprised of two components:
   - (a) Student Growth and Development (45%) as determined by the teacher's Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and associated Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs)
   - (b) Whole-School Measures of Student Learning as determined by aggregate student learning indicators or Student Feedback (5%)

Scores from each of the four components will be combined to produce a summative performance rating designation of *Exemplary*, *Proficient*, *Developing* or *Below Standard*. The performance levels are defined as:

- Exemplary – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- Proficient – Meeting indicators of performance
- Developing – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- Below Standard – Not meeting indicators of performance



Process and Timeline

The annual evaluation process between a teacher and an evaluator (principal or designee) is anchored by three conferences, which guide the process at the beginning, middle and end of the year. The purpose of these conversations is to clarify expectations for the evaluation process, provide comprehensive feedback to each teacher on his/her performance, set development goals and identify development opportunities. These conversations are collaborative and require reflection and preparation by both the evaluator and the teacher in order to be productive and meaningful.

If state test data may have a significant impact on a final rating, a final rating may be revised by September 15 when state test data are available.

GOAL-SETTING AND PLANNING:

Timeframe: Target is October 15, must be completed by November 15

1. ***Orientation on Process*** – To begin the evaluation process, evaluators meet with teachers, in a group or individually, to discuss the evaluation process and their roles and responsibilities within it. In this meeting, they will discuss any school or district priorities that should be reflected in teacher practice focus areas and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), and they will commit to set time aside for the types of collaboration required by the evaluation and support process.

2. ***Teacher Reflection and Goal-Setting*** – The teacher examines student data, prior year evaluation and survey results, and the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* to draft a proposed performance and practice focus area, a parent feedback goal, two SLOs and a student feedback goal (if required) for the school year. The teacher may collaborate in grade-level or subject-matter teams to support the goal-setting process.

3. ***Goal-Setting Conference*** – The evaluator and teacher meet to discuss the teacher's proposed focus area, goals and objectives in order to arrive at mutual agreement about them. The teacher collects evidence about his/her practice and the evaluator collects evidence about the teacher's practice to support the review. The evaluator may request revisions to the proposed focus area(s), goals and objectives if they do not meet approval criteria.

MID-YEAR CHECK-IN:

Timeframe: January and February

1. ***Reflection and Preparation*** – The teacher and evaluator collect and reflect on evidence to date about the teacher's practice and student learning in preparation for the check-in.

2. ***Mid-Year Conference*** – The evaluator and teacher complete at least one mid-year check-in conference during which they review evidence related to the teacher practice focus area and progress towards SLOs and other goals. The mid-year conference is an important point in the year for addressing concerns and reviewing results for the first half of the year. Evaluators may deliver mid-year formative information on indicators of the evaluation framework for which evidence has been gathered and analyzed. If needed, teachers and evaluators can mutually agree to revisions on the strategies or approaches used and/or mid-year adjustment of SLOs to accommodate changes (e.g., student populations, assignment). They also discuss actions that the teacher can take and supports the evaluator can provide to promote teacher growth in his/her focus area. A **Mid-Year Conference Discussion Guide** is available to assist evaluators in conducting the conference.

END-OF-YEAR SUMMATIVE REVIEW:

Timeframe: May and June; must be completed by June 30

1. ***Teacher Self-Assessment*** – The teacher reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a self-assessment for review by the evaluator. This self-assessment may focus specifically on the areas for development established in the Goal-Setting Conference.

2. ***Scoring*** – The evaluator reviews submitted evidence, self-assessments and observation data and uses them to generate component ratings. The component ratings are combined to calculate scores for Teacher Practice Related Indicators and Student Outcomes Related Indicators. These scores generate the final, summative rating. After all data, including state test data, are available, the evaluator may adjust the summative rating if the state test data would significantly change the Student-Related Indicators final rating. Such revisions should take place as soon as state test data are available and before September 15.

3. ***End-of-Year Conference*** – The evaluator and the teacher meet to discuss all evidence collected to date and to discuss component ratings. Following the conference, the evaluator assigns a summative rating and generates a summary report of the evaluation before the end of the school year and before June 30[2].

2 The district superintendent *shall report the status of teacher evaluations to the local or regional board of education on or before June 1, each year. Not later than* ***June 30****, of each year, each superintendent shall report to the Commissioner of Education the status of the implementation of teacher evaluations, including the frequency of evaluations, aggregate evaluation ratings, the number of teachers who have not been evaluated and other requirements as determined by the CSDE.*

Complementary Observers

The primary evaluator for most teachers will be the school principal or assistant principal who will be responsible for the overall evaluation process, including assigning summative ratings. Some districts may also decide to use complementary observers to assist the primary evaluator. Complementary observers are certified educators. They may have specific content knowledge, such as department heads or curriculum coordinators. Complementary observers must be fully trained as evaluators in order to be authorized to serve in this role.

Complementary observers may assist primary evaluators by conducting observations, including pre- and post-conferences, collecting additional evidence, reviewing SLOs and providing additional feedback. A complementary observer should share his/her feedback with the primary evaluator as it is collected and shared with teachers.

Primary evaluators will have sole responsibility for assigning final summative ratings. Both primary evaluators and complementary observers must demonstrate proficiency in conducting standards-based observations.

Ensuring Fairness and Accuracy: Evaluator Training, Monitoring and Auditing

All evaluators, including complementary observers, are required to complete extensive training on the SEED evaluation and support model. The purpose of training is to provide educators who evaluate instruction with the tools that will result in evidence-based classroom observations; professional learning opportunities tied to evaluation feedback and improved student performance.

The CSDE will provide districts with training opportunities to support district administrators, evaluators and teachers in implementing the model across their schools. Districts can adapt and build on these tools to provide comprehensive training and support to their schools and to ensure that evaluators are proficient in conducting teacher evaluations.

School districts who have adopted the SEED model are expected to engage in the CSDE sponsored multi-day training. This comprehensive training will give evaluators the opportunity to:

- Understand the nature of learning for students and educators and its relation to the priorities of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*;
- Establish a common language that promotes professionalism and a culture for learning through the lens of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*;
- Understand how coaching conversations support growth-producing feedback;
- Establish inter-rater reliability through calibrations of observer interpretations of evidence and judgments of teaching practice; and
- Collaborate with colleagues to deepen understanding of the content.

Participants in the training will have opportunities to interact with colleagues and engage in practice and proficiency exercises to:

- Deepen understanding of the evaluation criteria;
- Define proficient teaching;
- Collect, sort and analyze evidence across a continuum of performance;
- Engage in professional conversations and coaching scenarios; and
- Determine a final summative rating across multiple indicators.

Completion of the multi-day training and demonstration of proficiency using established criteria enables evaluators to begin to engage in the evaluation and support process.

PLEASE NOTE: School districts who have a locally-developed evaluation and support plan can also choose to participate in the CSDE-sponsored training opportunities for evaluators, however, if training opportunities are internally-developed or contracted with a reputable vendor, the following are points for consideration:

Points for District Consideration:

- Development or selection of an evaluation framework/rubric to measure and provide feedback on teacher performance and practice
- Identification of criteria for demonstrating proficiency as an evaluator
- Provision of ongoing calibration activities
- Determination of training and frequency for proficiency status renewal

At the request of a district or employee, the CSDE or a third-party entity approved by the CSDE will audit the evaluation components that are combined to determine an individual's summative rating in the event that such components are significantly dissimilar (i.e., include both *exemplary* and *below standard* ratings) ratings in different components. In these cases, the CSDE or a third-party entity will determine a final summative rating.

Additionally, there is an annual audit of evaluations. "The CSDE or a third-party designated by the CSDE will audit ratings of *exemplary* and *below standard* to validate such *exemplary* or *below standard* ratings by selecting ten districts at random annually and reviewing evaluation evidence files for a minimum of two educators rated *exemplary* and two educators rated *below standard* in those districts selected at random, including at least one classroom teacher rated *exemplary* and at least one teacher rated below standard per district selected." [Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation 2.8 (3)]

Support and Development

Evaluation alone cannot hope to improve teacher practice and student learning. However, when paired with effective, relevant and timely support, the evaluation process has the potential to help move teachers along the path to exemplary practice.

Evaluation-Informed Professional Learning

Student success depends on effective teaching, learning and leadership. The CSDE vision for professional learning is that each and every Connecticut educator engages in continuous learning every day to increase professional effectiveness, resulting in positive outcomes for all students. For Connecticut's students to graduate college and career ready, educators must engage in strategically planned, well supported, standards-based, continuous professional learning focused on improving student outcomes.

Throughout the process of implementing Connecticut's SEED model, in mutual agreement with their evaluators all teachers will identify professional learning needs that support their goal and objectives. The identified needs will serve as the foundation for ongoing conversations about the teacher's practice and impact on student outcomes. The professional learning opportunities identified for each teacher should be based on the individual strengths and needs that are identified through the evaluation process. The process may also reveal areas of common need among teachers, which can then be targeted with school-wide or district-wide professional learning opportunities.

Points for District Consideration:

Schools that align professional learning to student curriculum standards, practice data and performance goals at the individual, team, school and district levels, are more likely to improve student learning. Best practices include:

- Creating learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, accountability and goal alignment;
- Prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources tied to goals /objectives and evidence-based feedback provided as part of the evaluation process;
- Aligning job-embedded professional learning with school and district goals and priorities, curriculum and assessments.

Another key component of success is the development of leadership capacity in these alignment and coherence efforts.

This is accomplished by:

- Developing well-supported and effective coaches, teacher leaders, and principals who are strategically selected based on valid indicators of effectiveness; empowered to support and monitor teacher learning; and provide meaningful, evidence-based, actionable feedback that supports teachers' reflection and analysis of their practice.
- Creating structures and systems that enable teams of educators to engage in job-embedded professional learning on an ongoing basis.

Improvement and Remediation Plans

If a teacher's performance is rated as *developing* or *below standard*, it signals the need for focused support and development. Districts must develop a system to support teachers not meeting the proficiency standard. Improvement and remediation plans should be developed in consultation with the teacher and his/her exclusive bargaining representative and be differentiated by the level of identified need and/or stage of development.

Districts may develop a system of stages or levels of support. For example:

1. **Structured Support:** An educator would receive structured support when an area(s) of concern is identified during the school year. This support is intended to provide short-term assistance to address a concern in its early stage.

2. **Special Assistance:** An educator would receive special assistance when he/she earns an overall performance rating of *developing* or *below standard* and/or has received structured support. An educator may also receive special assistance if he/she does not meet the goal(s) of the structured support plan. This support is intended to assist an educator who is having difficulty consistently demonstrating proficiency.

3. **Intensive Assistance:** An educator would receive intensive assistance when he/she does not meet the goal(s) of the special assistance plan. This support is intended to build the staff member's competency.

Points for District Consideration:

Well-articulated Improvement and Remediation Plans:

- Clearly identify targeted supports, in consultation with the teacher, which may include specialized professional development, collegial and administrative assistance, increased supervisory observations and feedback, and/or special resources and strategies aligned to the improvement outcomes.
- Clearly delineate goals linked to specific indicators and domains within the observation of practice framework/rubric that specify exactly what the teacher must demonstrate at the conclusion of the Improvement and Remediation Plan in order to be considered "proficient."
- Indicate a timeline for implementing such resources, support and other strategies, in the course of the same school year as the plan is developed. Determine dates for interim and final reviews in accordance with stages of support.
- Include indicators of success, including a rating of proficient or better at the conclusion of the improvement and remediation plan.

Career Development and Growth

Rewarding exemplary performance identified through the evaluation process with opportunities for career development and professional growth is a critical step in both building confidence in the evaluation and support system itself and in building the capacity and skills of all teachers.

Examples of such opportunities include, but are not limited to: observation of peers; mentoring early-career teachers; participating in development of teacher improvement and remediation plans for peers whose performance is *developing* or *below standard*; leading Professional Learning Communities; differentiated career pathways; and focused professional learning based on goals for continuous growth and development.

Points for District Consideration:

Creating Sustainable Teacher Career Pathways: A 21st Century Imperative

In 2013, the National and State Teachers of the Year (NNSTOY) defined the conditions necessary to create comprehensive teacher career pathways as outlined below:

- Re-examine district human resource policies to see if they are effective in recruiting teachers who are high academic achievers; identify and manage talent; and provide diverse and flexible career options as part of retaining "high achievers."
- Re-think the one teacher/one classroom organization of schools to facilitate new staffing structures that differentiate roles of teachers and extend the reach of highly effective teachers.
- Implement flexible job structures that recognize the life and career cycles of teachers, such as sabbaticals, job-sharing, and part time work.
- Take advantage of technology in extending the reach of highly effective teachers through blended learning structures and promoting teacher collaboration and professional development through social media and other technological tools.

http://www.nnstoy.org/download/Final%20updated%20Research%20Report.pdf

The NEA Teacher Leader Model Standards help to define how teacher leadership can be distinguished from, but work in tandem with, administrative leadership roles to support effective teaching and promote student learning.

http://www.nea.org/home/43946.htm

Teacher Practice Related Indicators

The Teacher Practice Related Indicators evaluate the teacher's knowledge of a complex set of skills and competencies and how these are applied in a teacher's practice. Two components comprise this category:

- Teacher Performance and Practice, which counts for 40%; and
- Parent Feedback, which counts for 10%.

These two components will be described in detail below:

Component #1: Teacher Performance and Practice (40%)

The Teacher Performance and Practice component is a comprehensive review of teaching practice conducted through multiple observations, which are evaluated against a standards-based rubric. It comprises 40% of the summative rating. Following observations, evaluators provide teachers with specific feedback to identify strong practice, to identify teacher development needs and to tailor support to meet those needs.

Teacher Practice Framework- *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*

The *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*, as revised in 2014, is available on the SEED website and represents the most important skills and knowledge that teachers need to demonstrate in order to prepare students to be career, college and civic ready. The rubric was revised through the collaborative efforts of the CSDE, representatives from the regional educational service centers (RESCs), the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), the two statewide teachers' unions and teachers and school leaders with experience in using the observation instrument. The *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* is aligned with the CCT and includes references to **Connecticut Core Standards** and other content standards. The *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* is organized into four domains, each with three indicators. Forty percent of a teacher's final annual summative rating is based on his/ her performance across all four domains. The domains represent essential practice and knowledge and receive equal weight when calculating the summative Performance and Practice rating.

CCT RUBRIC FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING 2014 - AT A GLANCE

Evidence Generally Collected Through **In-Class Observations**

DOMAIN 1: Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning[3]

Teachers promote student engagement, independence and interdependence in learning and facilitate a positive learning community by:

1a. Creating a positive learning environment that is responsive to and respectful of the learning needs of all students

1b. Promoting developmentally appropriate standards of behavior that support a productive learning environment for all students; and

1c. Maximizing instructional time by effectively managing routines and transitions.

DOMAIN 2: Planning for Active Learning

Teachers plan instruction in order to engage students in rigorous and relevant learning and to promote their curiosity about the world at large by:

2a. Planning instructional content that is aligned with standards, builds on students' prior knowledge and provides for appropriate level of challenge for all students;

2b. Planning instruction to cognitively engage students in the content; and

2c. Selecting appropriate assessment strategies to monitor student progress.

DOMAIN 3: Instruction for Active Learning

Teachers implement instruction in order to engage students in rigorous and relevant learning and to promote their curiosity about the world at large by:

3a. Implementing instructional content for learning;

3b. Leading students to construct meaning and apply new learning through the use of a variety of differentiated and evidence-based learning strategies; and

3c. Assessing student learning, providing feedback to students and adjusting instruction.

DOMAIN 4: Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership

Teachers maximize support for student learning by developing and demonstrating professionalism, collaboration with others and leadership by:

4a. Engaging in continuous professional learning to impact instruction and student learning;

4b. Collaborating with colleagues to examine student learning data and to develop and sustain a professional learning environment to support student learning; and

4c. Working with colleagues, students and families to develop and sustain a positive school climate that supports student learning.

Evidence Generally Collected Through **Non-Classroom Observations/Reviews of Practice**

3 Domain 5 Assessment *is embedded throughout the four domains.*

Observation Process

Observations in and of themselves are not useful to teachers – it is the feedback, based on observations, that helps teachers reach their full potential. All teachers deserve the opportunity to grow and develop through observations and timely feedback. In fact, teacher surveys conducted nationally demonstrate that most teachers are eager for more observations and feedback to inform their practice throughout the year.

Therefore, in the SEED teacher evaluation and support model:

- Each teacher should be observed between three and eight times per year through both formal and informal observations as defined below.
  - **Formal:** Observations that last at least 30 minutes and are followed by a post-observation conference, which includes timely written and verbal feedback.
  - **Informal:** Observations that last at least ten minutes and are followed by written and/or verbal feedback.
  - **Non-classroom observations/reviews of practice include but are not limited to:** Observations of data team meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers, student work or other teaching artifacts.

PLEASE NOTE: *reviewing lesson plans in a pre-conference, prior to a scheduled observation, generally provides evidence for the planning domain and is considered a part of the formal observation process. It is not a separate observation or review of practice.*

- All observations must be followed by feedback, either verbal (e.g., a post-conference, conversation in the hallway) or written (e.g., via email, comprehensive write-up, quick note in mailbox) or both, within a timely manner. It is recommended that feedback be provided within five business days, but districts are encouraged to consult with evaluators and teachers to establish a mutually agreed upon timeframe.

- Providing both verbal and written feedback after an informal observation or a review of practice is ideal, but school leaders are encouraged to discuss feedback preferences and norms with their staff.

- In order to capture an authentic view of practice and to promote a culture of openness and comfort with frequent observations and feedback, it is recommended that evaluators use a combination of announced and unannounced observations.

- Districts and evaluators can use their discretion to establish a mutually agreed upon number of observations based on school and staff needs and in accordance with the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation. The table on the next page summarizes the recommendations within the SEED model as compared with requirements established in the Guidelines.

PLEASE NOTE: *Flexibility options, adopted in February 2014, are described in subsections 2.9 and 2.10 of the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (see Appendix 1).*

Teacher Categories	SEED State Model	Guideline Requirements
First and Second Year Novice Teachers	3 formal **in-class** observations; 2 of which include a pre-conference and all of which include a post-conference; and 3 informal observations	At least 3 **in-class** formal observations; 2 of which include a pre-conference and all of which include a post-conference
Below Standard and ***Developing***	3 formal **in-class** observations; 2 of which include a pre-conference and all of which must include a post-conference; and 5 informal observations	At least 3 **in-class** formal observations; 2 of which include a pre-conference and all of which must include a post-conference
Proficient and ***Exemplary***	A combination of at least 3 formal observations/reviews of practice; 1 of which must be a formal **in-class** observation	A combination of at least 3 formal observations/reviews of practice; 1 of which must be a formal in-class observation

PLEASE NOTE: *To establish baseline data during the first year of evaluation under SEED, districts should set expectations for a required number of observations, which meets the minimum requirements as outlined. After the first year of implementation, observations should be structured according to the table above.*

Pre-Conferences and Post-Conferences

Pre-conferences are valuable for establishing the context for the lesson, providing information about the students to be observed and setting expectations for the observation process and provide the evidence for Domain 2: Planning for Active Learning. Pre-conferences are optional for observations except where noted in the requirements described in the table above. A pre-conference can be held with a group of teachers, where appropriate.

Post-conferences provide a forum for reflecting on the observation against the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* and for generating action steps that will lead to the teacher's improvement. A good post-conference:

- Begins with an opportunity for the teacher to share his/her reflections on the lesson;
- Cites objective evidence to paint a clear picture for both the teacher and the evaluator about the teacher's successes, what improvements will be made and where future observations may focus;
- Involves written and verbal feedback from the evaluator; and
- Occurs within a timely manner, typically within five business days.

Classroom observations generally provide the most evidence for Domains 1 and 3 of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*. Non-classroom observations/reviews of practice generally provide the most evidence for Domains 2 and 4. Both pre-and post-conferences provide the opportunity for discussion of all four domains, including practice outside of classroom instruction (e.g., lesson plans, reflections on teaching). **Pre- and Post-Conference Forms** are available on the SEED website.

Because the evaluation and support model aims to provide teachers with comprehensive feedback on their practice as defined by the four domains of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*, all interactions with teachers that are relevant to their instructional practice and professional conduct may contribute to their performance evaluation. Non-classroom observations/reviews of practice generally provide the most evidence for Domains 2 and 4 of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*. These interactions may include, but are not limited to, reviews of lesson/unit plans and assessments, planning meetings, data team meetings, Professional Learning Community meetings, call logs or notes from parent-teacher meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers and/or attendance records from professional learning or school-based activities/events.

Feedback

The goal of feedback is to help teachers grow as educators and inspire high achievement in all of their students. With this in mind, evaluators should be clear and direct, presenting their comments in a way that is supportive and constructive. Feedback should include:

- Specific evidence and formative ratings, where appropriate, on observed indicators of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*;
- Prioritized commendations and recommendations for development actions;
- Next steps and supports to improve teacher practice; and
- A timeframe for follow up.

Teacher Performance and Practice Focus Area

As described in the Evaluation Process and Timeline section, teachers develop one performance and practice focus area that is aligned to the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*. The focus area will guide observations and feedback conversations throughout the year.

Each teacher will work with his/ her evaluator to develop a practice and performance focus area through mutual agreement. All focus areas should have a clear link to student achievement and should move the teacher towards *proficient* or *exemplary* on the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014*. Schools may decide to create school-wide or grade-specific focus areas aligned to a particular indicator (e.g., 3b: Leading students to construct meaning and apply new learning through the use of a variety of differentiated and evidence-based learning strategies.)

Growth related to the focus area should be referenced in feedback conversations throughout the year. The focus area and action steps should be formally discussed during the Mid-Year Conference and the End-of-Year Conference. Although performance and practice focus areas are not explicitly rated as part of the Teacher Performance and Practice component, growth related to the focus area will be reflected in the scoring of Teacher Performance and Practice evidence.

Teacher Performance and Practice Scoring

During observations, evaluators should take evidence-based, scripted notes, capturing specific instances of what the teacher and students said and did in the classroom. Once the evidence has been recorded, the evaluator can align the evidence with the appropriate indicator(s) on the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* and then make a determination about which performance level the evidence supports. Evaluators are **not required** to provide an overall rating for each observation, but they should be prepared to discuss evidence for the rubric indicators at the performance level that was observed.

Summative Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice Rating

Primary evaluators must determine a final teacher performance and practice rating and discuss this rating with teachers during the End-of-Year Conference. Within the SEED model, each domain of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* carries equal weight in the final rating. The final teacher performance and practice rating will be calculated by the evaluator in a three-step process:

1. Evaluator holistically reviews evidence collected through observations, interactions and reviews of practice (e.g., team meetings, conferences) and uses professional judgment to determine indicator ratings for each of the 12 indicators.

2. Evaluator averages indicators within each domain to a tenth of a decimal to calculate domain-level scores of 1.0-4.0.

3. Evaluator averages domain scores to calculate an overall Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice rating of 1.0-4.0.

Each step is illustrated below:

1. Evaluator holistically reviews evidence collected through observations and reviews of practice and uses professional judgment to determine indicator level ratings for each of the 12 indicators.

   By the end of the year, evaluators should have collected a variety of evidence on teacher practice from the year's observations and reviews of practice. Evaluators then analyze the consistency, trends and significance of the evidence to determine a rating for each of the 12 indicators. Some questions to consider while analyzing the evidence include:

   - **Consistency:** What levels of performance have I seen relatively uniform, homogenous evidence for throughout the semester/year? Does the evidence paint a clear, unambiguous picture of the teacher's performance in this area?

- **Trends:** Have I seen improvement over time that overshadows earlier observation outcomes? Have I seen regression or setbacks over time that overshadows earlier observation outcomes?
- **Significance:** Are some data more valid than others? (Do I have notes or ratings from "meatier" lessons or interactions where I was able to better assess this aspect of performance?)

Once a rating has been determined, it is then translated to a 1-4 score. Below Standard = 1 and Exemplary = 4. See example below for Domain 1:

Domain 1	Indicator Level Rating	Evaluator's Score
1a	*Developing*	2
1b	*Developing*	2
1c	*Exemplary*	4
Average Score		2.7

2. Evaluator averages indicators with each domain to a tenth of a decimal to calculate domain-level scores:

Domain	Averaged Domain-Level Score
1	2.7
2	2.6
3	3.0
4	2.8

3. The evaluator averages domain level scores to calculate an overall observation of Teacher Performance and Practice rating of 1.0-4.0.

Domain	Score
1	2.7
2	2.6
3	3.0
4	2.8
Average Score	**2.8**

Steps 2 and 3 can be performed by district administrators and/or using tools/technology that calculates the averages for the evaluator.

The summative Teacher Performance and Practice component rating and the domain/indicator level ratings will be shared and discussed with teachers during the End-of-Year Conference. This process can also be followed in advance of the Mid-Year Conference to discuss formative progress related to the Teacher Performance and Practice rating.

Component #2: Parent Feedback (10%)

Feedback from parents will be used to help determine the remaining 10% of the Teacher Practice Indicators category of SEED[4].

The process for determining the parent feedback rating includes the following steps:

1. The school conducts a whole-school parent survey (meaning data is aggregated at the school level);
2. Administrators and teachers determine several school-level parent goals based on the survey feedback;
3. The teacher and evaluator identify **one** related parent engagement goal and set improvement targets;
4. Evaluator and teacher measure progress on growth targets; and
5. Evaluator determines a teacher's summative rating, based on four performance levels.

Administration of a Whole-School Parent Survey

Parent surveys should be conducted at the whole-school level as opposed to the teacher-level, meaning parent feedback will be aggregated at the school level. This is to ensure adequate response rates from parents.

Parent surveys must be administered in a way that allows parents to feel comfortable providing feedback without fear of retribution. Surveys should be confidential, and survey responses should not be tied to parents' names. The parent survey should be administered every spring and trends analyzed from year to year.

PLEASE NOTE: *The CSDE recognizes that in the first year of implementation, baseline parent feedback may not be available. Teachers can set a goal based on previously-collected parent feedback, or if none is available, teachers can set a parent engagement goal that is not based on formal parent feedback.*

To ensure that districts use effective survey instruments in the evaluation process and to allow educators to share results across district boundaries, the CSDE has adopted recommended survey instruments as part of the SEED state model for teacher evaluation and support. Panorama Education developed sample surveys for use in the State of Connecticut, and districts are strongly encouraged to use these available surveys though they may also use existing survey instruments or develop their own.

4 Peer feedback *is permitted by Connecticut's Guidelines for Educator Evaluation as an alternative for this component. However, it is not included in the state model, SEED. If districts wish to utilize peer feedback instead of parent feedback, they must submit a plan to do so to the CSDE when they submit their Educator Evaluation and Support plan annually.*

School districts are encouraged to work closely with teachers to select the survey and interpret results. Parent representatives may be included in the process. If a school governance council exists, the council shall assist in the development of whole-school surveys in order to encourage alignment with school improvement goals. Parent surveys deployed by districts should be valid (that is, the instrument measures what it is intended to measure) and reliable (that is, the use of the instrument is consistent among those using it and is consistent over time).

Determining School-Level Parent Goals

Evaluators and teachers should review the parent survey results at the beginning of the school year to identify areas of need and set general parent engagement goals. Ideally, this goal-setting process would occur between the principal and teachers (possibly during faculty meetings) in August or September so agreement can be reached on two to three improvement goals for the entire school.

Selecting a Parent Engagement Goal and Improvement Targets

After the school-level goals have been set, teachers will determine through consultation and mutual agreement with their evaluators one related parent goal they would like to pursue as part of their evaluation. Possible goals include improving communication with parents, helping parents become more effective in support of homework, improving parent-teacher conferences, etc. See the sample state model survey for additional questions that can be used to inspire goals.

The goal should be written in SMART language format and must include specific improvement targets. For instance, if the goal is to improve parent communication, an improvement target could be specific to sending more regular correspondence to parents such as sending bi-weekly updates to parents or *developing* a new website for their class. Part of the evaluator's job is to ensure (1) the goal is related to the overall school improvement parent goals, and (2) that the improvement targets are aligned, ambitious and attainable.

Measuring Progress on Growth Targets

Teachers and their evaluators should use their judgment in setting growth/improvement targets for the parent feedback component. There are two ways teachers can measure and demonstrate progress on their growth targets. Teachers can:

1. Measure how successfully they implement a strategy to address an area of need (like the examples in the previous section); and/or
2. They can collect evidence directly from parents to measure parent-level indicators they generate.

For example, teachers can conduct interviews with parents or a brief parent survey to see if they improved on their growth target.

Arriving at a Parent Feedback Rating

The Parent Feedback rating should reflect the degree to which a teacher successfully reaches his/her parent goal and improvement targets. This is accomplished through a review of evidence provided by the teacher and application of the following scale:

Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Below Standard (1)
Exceeded the goal	Met the goal	Partially met the goal	Did not meet the goal

Student Outcomes Related Indicators

Student Outcomes Related Indicators capture a teacher's impact on student learning and comprise half of the teacher's final summative rating. The inclusion of student outcomes indicators acknowledges that teachers are committed to the learning and growth of their students and carefully consider what knowledge, skills and talents they are responsible for developing in their students each year. As a part of the evaluation and support process, teachers document their goals of student learning and anchor them in data.

Two components comprise this category:

- Student Growth and Development, which counts for 45%; and
- *Either* Whole-School Student Learning *or* Student Feedback *or* a combination of the two, which counts for 5% of the total evaluation rating.

These components will be described in detail below.

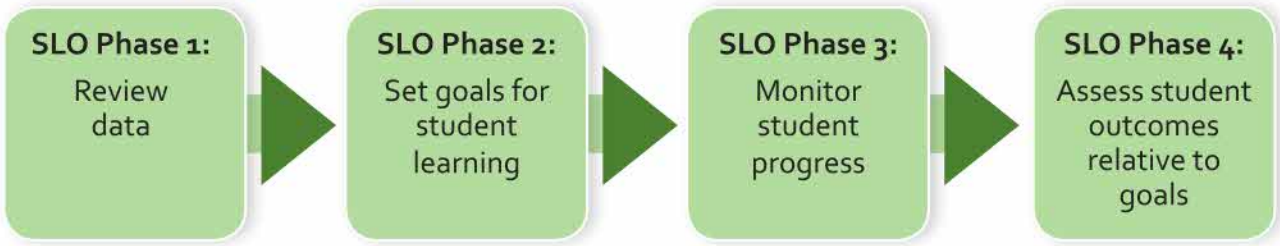
Component #3: Student Growth and Development (45%)

Overview of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Each teacher's students, individually and as a group, are different from other teachers' students, even in the same grade level or subject at the same school. For student growth and development to be measured for teacher evaluation and support purposes, it is imperative to use a method that takes each teacher's assignment, students and context into account. Connecticut, like many other states and localities around the nation, has selected a goal-setting process grounded in Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) as the approach for measuring student growth during the school year.

SLOs are carefully planned, long-term academic objectives. SLOs should reflect high expectations for learning or improvement and aim for mastery of content or skill development. SLOs are measured by Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs) which include specific assessments/measures of progress and targets for student mastery or progress. Research has found that educators who set high-quality SLOs often realize greater improvement in student performance.

The SLO process, as outlined within the SEED model, will support teachers in using a planning cycle that will be familiar to most educators:



Developing SLOs is a process rather than a single event. The purpose is to craft SLOs that serve as a reference point throughout the year as teachers document their students' progress toward achieving the IAGD targets. While this process should feel generally familiar, the SEED model asks teachers to set more specific and measureable targets than they may have done in the past. Teachers may develop them through consultation with colleagues in the same grade level or teaching the same subject. The final determination of SLOs and IAGDs is made through mutual agreement between the teacher and his/her evaluator. The four phases of the SLO process are described in detail below:

PHASE 1: Review the Data

This first phase is the discovery phase which begins with reviewing district initiatives and key priorities, school/district improvement plans, and the building administrator's goals. Once teachers know their class rosters, they should examine multiple sources of data about their students' performance to identify an area(s) of need. Documenting the "baseline" data, or where students are at the beginning of the year, is a key aspect of this step. It allows the teacher to identify where students are with respect to the grade level or content area the teacher is teaching.

Examples of Data Review

A teacher may use but is not limited to the following data in developing an SLO:

a) Initial performance for current interval of instruction (writing samples, student interest surveys, pre-assessments etc.)

b) Student scores on previous state standardized assessments

c) Results from other standardized and non-standardized assessments

d) Report cards from previous years

e) Results from diagnostic assessments

f) Artifacts from previous learning

g) Discussions with other teachers (across grade levels and content areas) who have previously taught the same students

h) Conferences with students' families

i) Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) and 504 plans for students with identified special education needs

j) Data related to English Language Learner (EL) students and gifted students

k) Attendance records

l) Information about families, community and other local contexts

It is important that the teacher understands both the individual student and group strengths and challenges. This information serves as the foundation for setting the ambitious yet realistic goals in the next phase.

PHASE 2: Set Two SLOs

Based on a review of district and building data, teachers will develop two SLOs[5] that address identified needs. A form for the development of SLOs can be found on the SEED website. To create their SLOs, teachers will follow these four steps:

Step 1: Decide on the Student Learning Objectives

The SLOs are broad goal statements for student learning and expected student improvement. These goal statements identify core ideas, domains, knowledge and/or skills students are expected to acquire for which baseline data indicate a need. Each SLO should address a central purpose of the teacher's assignment and should pertain to a large proportion of his/her students, including specific target groups where appropriate. Each SLO statement should reflect high expectations for student learning at least a year's worth of growth (or a semester's worth for shorter courses) and should be aligned to relevant state, national (e.g., Common Core State Standards) or district standards for the grade level or course. Depending on the teacher's assignment, an SLO statement might aim for content mastery or else it might aim for skill development.

SLO broad goal statements can unify teachers within a grade level or department while encouraging collaborative work across multiple disciplines. Teachers with similar assignments may have identical SLOs although they will be individually accountable for their own students' results.

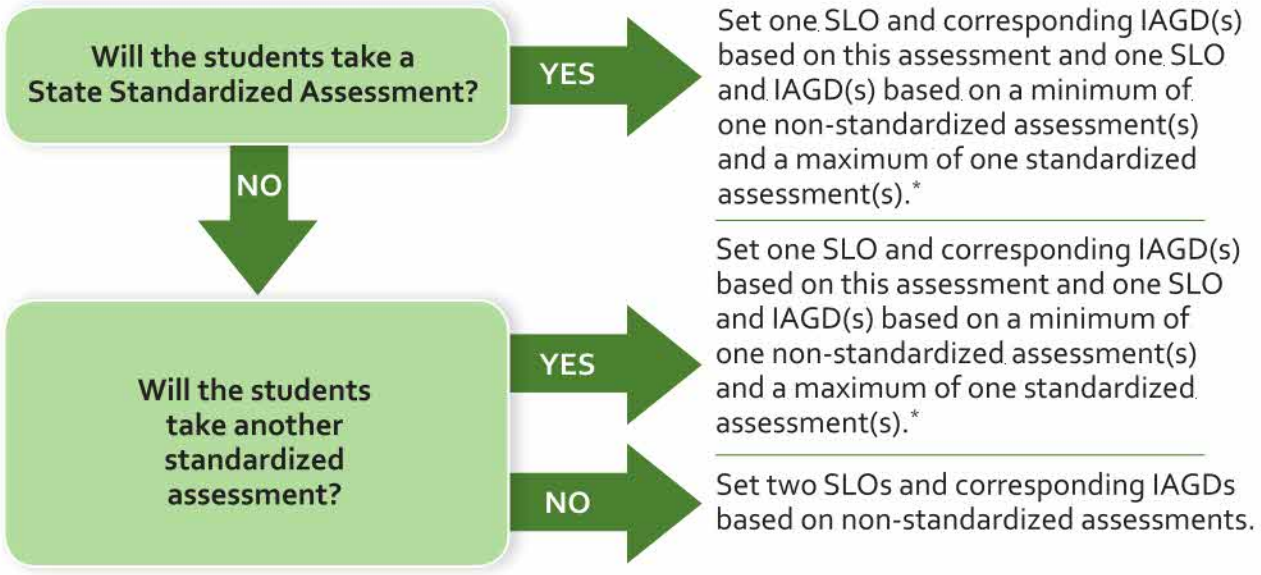
5 Connecticut's Guidelines for Educator Evaluation *state that each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator, will select 1 but no more than 4 goals/objectives for student growth. The SEED model requires two SLOs for every teacher in each academic year.*

The following are examples of SLOs based on student data:

Grade/Subject	Student Learning Objective
6th Grade Social Studies	Students will produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences.
9th Grade Information Literacy	Students will master the use of digital tools for learning to gather, evaluate and apply information to solve problems and accomplish tasks.
11th Grade Algebra II	Students will be able to analyze complex, real-world scenarios using mathematical models to interpret and solve problems.
9th Grade English/ Language Arts	Students will cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
1st and 2nd Grade Tier 3 Reading	Students will improve reading accuracy and comprehension leading to an improved attitude and approach toward more complex reading tasks.

Step 2: Select Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs)

An Indicator of Academic Growth and Development (IAGD) is an assessment/measure of progress to include a quantitative target that will demonstrate whether the SLO was met. Each SLO must include at least one IAGD but may include multiple, differentiated IAGDs where appropriate. Teachers whose students take a standardized assessment will create one SLO with an IAGD(s) using that assessment and one SLO with an IAGD(s) based on a minimum of one non-standardized measure and a maximum of one additional standardized measure. All other teachers will develop their two SLOs with IAGDs based on non-standardized measures. Use the following flow chart to determine appropriate IAGDs.



*One half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development used as evidence of whether goals/objectives are met shall not be determined by a single isolated standardized test score, but shall be determined through the comparison of data across assessments administered over time, including the state test for those teaching tested grades and subjects or another standardized indicator for other grades and subjects where available. A state test can be used only if there are interim assessments that lead to that test, and such interim assessments shall be included in the overall score for those teaching tested grades and subjects. Those without an available standardized indicator will select, through mutual agreement subject to the local dispute-resolution process of the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, an additional non-standardized indicator *(see Appendix 2)*.

For the other half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development, there may be:

- a maximum of one additional standardized indicator, if there is mutual agreement and;
- a minimum of one non-standardized indicator

PLEASE NOTE: *Connecticut is awaiting USED approval for a request for flexibility regarding the use of state test data in teacher evaluation for the 2014-2015 academic year.*

In the calculation to determine the summative student growth and development rating, the SLOs are weighted equally, each representing 22.5% of the final summative rating.

The SEED model uses a specific definition of "standardized assessment." As stated in the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, a standardized assessment is characterized by the following attributes:

IAGDs should be written in SMART goal language:

S	=	**Specific and Strategic**
M	=	**Measurable**
A	=	**Aligned and Attainable**
R	=	**Results-Oriented**
T	=	**Time-Bound**

- Administered and scored in a consistent – or "standard" – manner;
- Aligned to a set of academic or performance "standards;"
- Broadly-administered (e.g., nation-or statewide);
- Commercially-produced; and
- Often administered only once a year, although some standardized assessments are administered two or three times per year.

IAGDs should be rigorous, attainable and meet or exceed district expectations (rigorous targets reflect both greater depth of knowledge and complexity of thinking required for success). Each indicator should make clear:

1. What evidence/measure of progress will be examined;

2. What level of performance is targeted; and

3. What proportion of students is projected to achieve the targeted performance level.

IAGDs can also address student subgroups, such as high or low-performing students or EL students. It is through the Phase 1 examination of student data that teachers will determine what level of performance to target for which population(s) of students.

IAGDs are unique to the teacher's particular students; teachers with similar assignments may use the same assessment(s)/measure of progress for their SLOs, but it is unlikely they would have identical targets established for student performance. For example, all 2nd grade teachers in a district might set the same SLO and use the same reading assessment (measure of progress) to measure their SLOs, but the target(s) and/or the proportion of students expected to achieve proficiency would likely vary among 2nd grade teachers. Additionally, individual teachers may establish multiple differentiated targets for students achieving at various performance levels.

Taken together, an SLO and its IAGD(s) provide the evidence that the objective was met. The following are some examples of IAGDs that might be applied to the previous SLO examples:

Grade/Subject	SLO	IAGD(s)
6th Grade Social Studies	Students will produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences.	**By May 15:** ■ Students who scored a 0-1 out of 12 on the pre-assessment will score 6 or better ■ Students who scored a 2-4 will score 8 or better. ■ Students who scored 5-6 will score 9 or better. ■ Students who scored 7 will score 10 or better **This is one IAGD (assessment/measure of progress) that outlines differentiated targets based on pre-assessments.*
9th Grade Information Literacy	Students will master the use of digital tools for learning to gather, evaluate and apply information to solve problems and accomplish tasks.	**By May 30:** ■ 90%-100% of all students will be proficient (scoring a 3 or 4) or higher on 5 of the 6 standards (as measured by 8 items) on the digital literacy assessment rubric. **This is one IAGD (assessment/measure of progress) illustrating a minimum proficiency standard for a large proportion of students.*
11th Grade Algebra 2	Students will be able to analyze complex, real-world scenarios using mathematical models to interpret and solve problems.	**By May 15:** ■ 80% of Algebra 2 students will score an 85 or better on a district Algebra 2 math benchmark. **This is one IAGD (assessment/measure of progress) illustrating a minimum proficiency standard for a large proportion of students.*
9th Grade ELA	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.	**By June 1:** ■ 27 students who scored 50-70 on the pre-test will increase scores by 18 points on the post test. ■ 40 students who score 30-49 will increase by 15 points. ■ 10 students who scored 0-29 will increase by 10 points. **This is one IAGD (assessment/measure of progress) that has been differentiated to meet the needs of varied student performance groups.*
1st and 2nd Grade Tier 3 Reading	Students will improve reading accuracy and comprehension leading to an improved attitude and approach toward more complex reading tasks.	**By June:** **IAGD #1:** Students will increase their attitude towards reading by at least 7 points from baseline on the full scale score of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, as recommended by authors, McKenna and Kear. **IAGD #2:** Students will read instructional level text with 95% or better accuracy on the DRA. ■ Grade 1- Expected outcome- Level 14-16 ■ Grade 2- Expected outcome- Level 22-24 **These are two IAGDs using two assessments/measures of progress. IAGD #2 has also been differentiated to meet the needs of varied student performance groups.*

Step 3: Provide Additional Information

During the goal-setting process, teachers and evaluators will document the following:

- Baseline data used to determine SLOs and set IAGDs;
- Selected student population supported by data;
- Learning content aligned to specific, relevant standards;
- Interval of instruction for the SLO;
- Assessments/measures of progress teacher plans to use to gauge students' progress;
- Instructional strategies;
- Any important technical information about the indicator evidence (like timing or scoring plans); and
- Professional learning/supports needed to achieve the SLOs.

Step 4: Submit SLOs to Evaluator for Review

SLOs are proposals until the teacher and the evaluator mutually agree upon them. Prior to the Goal-Setting Conference, the evaluator will review each SLO relative to the following criteria to ensure that SLOs across subjects, grade levels and schools are both rigorous and comparable:

- Baseline – Trend Data
- Student Population
- Standards and Learning Content
- Interval of Instruction
- Assessments/Measures of Progress
- Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs)/Growth Targets
- Instructional Strategies and Supports

An SLO Development Guide is provided for districts to use in this process. The evaluator may provide written comments and discuss the feedback with the teacher during the Goal-Setting Conference.

PHASE 3: Monitor Students Progress

Once SLOs are finalized, teachers should monitor students' progress towards the objectives. Teachers can, for example, examine student work; administer interim assessments and track students' accomplishments and struggles. Teachers can share their interim findings with colleagues during collaborative time, and they can keep their evaluator apprised of progress. Progress towards SLOs/IAGDs and action steps for achieving progress should be referenced in feedback conversations throughout the year.

If a teacher's assignment changes, or if his/her student population shifts significantly, the SLOs can be adjusted during the Mid-Year Conference between the evaluator and the teacher.

PHASE 4: Assess Student Outcomes Relative to SLOs

At the end of the school year, the teacher should collect the evidence required by their IAGDs, upload artifacts to the data management software system, where available and appropriate, and submit it to their evaluator. Along with the evidence, teachers will complete and submit a self-assessment, which asks teachers to reflect on the SLO outcomes by responding to the following four statements:

1. Describe the results and provide evidence for each IAGD.

2. Provide your overall assessment of whether this objective was met.

3. Describe what you did that produced these results.

4. Describe what you learned and how you will use that learning going forward.

Evaluators will review the evidence and the teacher's self-assessment and assign one of four ratings to each SLO: Exceeded (4 points), Met (3 points), Partially Met (2 points) or Did Not Meet (1 point). These ratings are defined as follows:

Exceeded (4)	All or most students met or substantially exceeded the target(s) contained in the indicator(s).
Met (3)	Most students met the target(s) contained in the indicators within a few points on either side of the target(s).
Partially Met (2)	Many students met the target(s), but a notable percentage missed the target by more than a few points. However, taken as a whole, significant progress towards the goal was made.
Did Not Meet (1)	A few students met the target(s) but a substantial percentage of students did not. Little progress toward the goal was made.

For SLOs with more than one IAGD, the evaluator may score each indicator separately, and then average those scores for the SLO score, or he/she can look at the results as a body of evidence regarding the accomplishment of the objective and score the SLO holistically.

The final student growth and development rating for a teacher is the average of their two SLO scores. For example, if one SLO was "Partially Met," for a rating of 2, and the other SLO was "Met," for a rating of 3, the Student Growth and Development rating would be 2.5 [(2+3)/2]. The individual SLO ratings and the Student Growth and Development rating will be shared and discussed with teachers during the End-of-Year Conference.

	Averaged Domain-Level Score
SLO 1	2
SLO 2	3
Student Growth and Development Rating	**2.5**

PLEASE NOTE: *For SLOs that include an indicator(s) based on state standardized assessments, results may not be available in time to score the SLO prior to the June 30 deadline. In this instance, if evidence for other indicators in the SLO is available, the evaluator can score the SLO on that basis. Or, if state assessments are the basis for all indicators and no other evidence is available to score the SLO, then the teacher's student growth and development rating will be based only on the results of the second SLO. However, once the state assessment data is available, the evaluator should score or rescore the SLO, then determine if the new score changes the teacher's final (summative) rating. The evaluation rating can be amended at that time as needed, but no later than September 15. See Summative Teacher Evaluation Scoring (page 37) for details.*

Component #4: Whole-School Student Learning Indicator and/or Student Feedback (5%)

Districts can decide to use a whole-school student learning indicator (option 1), student feedback (option 2) or a combination of the two (option 3) to determine this fourth component of SEED.

Option 1: Whole-School Student Learning Indicator

For districts that include the whole-school student learning indicator in teacher evaluations, a teacher's indicator rating shall be equal to the aggregate rating for multiple student learning indicators established for his/her administrator's evaluation rating. For most schools, this will be based on the school performance index (SPI) and the administrator's progress on SLO targets, which correlates to the Student Learning rating on an administrator's evaluation (equal to the 45% component of the administrator's final rating).

See example of the interrelationship between Whole-School Student Learning Indicator (5%) for teachers and Multiple Student Learning Indicators (45%) for administrators on page 6.

Option 2: Student Feedback

Districts can use feedback from students, collected through whole-school or teacher-level surveys, to comprise this component of a teacher's evaluation rating.

Eligible Teachers and Alternative Measures

Student surveys will not be applicable and appropriate for all teachers. Ultimately, school districts should use their judgment in determining whether student surveys should be included in a particular teacher's summative rating. Here are important guidelines to consider:

- Students in grades K-3 should not be surveyed unless an age-appropriate instrument is available.
- Special education students who would not be able to respond to the survey, even with accommodations, should not be surveyed.
- Surveys should not be used to evaluate a teacher if fewer than 15 students would be surveyed or if fewer than 13 students ultimately complete the survey.
- School governance councils shall assist in development of whole-school surveys, if applicable, in order to encourage alignment with school improvement goals.

When student surveys are not appropriate for a particular teacher, the 5% allocated for student feedback should be replaced with the whole-school student learning indicator described in Option 1.

Survey Instruments

To ensure that districts use effective survey instruments in the evaluation process and to allow educators to share results across district boundaries, the CSDE has adopted recommended survey instruments as part of the SEED state model for teacher evaluation. Panorama Education developed the surveys for use in the State of Connecticut, and districts are strongly encouraged to use the state model surveys.

The recommended surveys that can be used to collect student feedback are available on the SEED website. Districts may use these surveys or use other existing survey instruments. Student survey instruments should be aligned to the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT) and the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* whenever possible.

Districts may choose to use different surveys for different grade levels, such as an elementary survey for students in grades 4-6 and a secondary survey for grades 6-12. Districts may also choose to use different surveys for different types of classes. For example, a district might establish a standard survey for all 6-12 classes and then add additional questions for core classes such as English and math.

The surveys selected by a district must be valid (that is, the instrument measures what it is intended to measure) and reliable (that is, the use of the instrument is consistent among those using it and is consistent over time).

Districts are encouraged to use instruments that will offer teachers constructive feedback they can use to improve their practice. Districts may include feedback-only questions that are not used for evaluation purposes and districts may allow individual schools and teachers to add questions to the end of the survey, where feasible. If a school governance council exists, the council must be included in this process.

Survey Administration

Student surveys must be administered in a way that allows students to feel comfortable providing feedback without fear of retribution. Surveys should be confidential, and survey responses must not be tied to students' names.

If a secondary school teacher has multiple class periods, students should be surveyed in all classes. If an elementary school teacher has multiple groups of students, districts should use their judgment in determining whether to survey all students or only a particular group.

Fall Baseline and Feedback Survey

If it is feasible, it is recommended but not required that schools conduct two student feedback surveys each year. The first, administered in the fall, will not affect a teacher's evaluation but could be used as a baseline for that year's targets, instead of using data from the previous school year. The second, administered in the spring, will be used to calculate the teacher's summative rating and provide valuable feedback that will help teachers achieve their goals and grow professionally. Additionally, by using a fall survey as a baseline rather than data from the previous year, teachers will be able to set better goals because the same group of students will be completing both the baseline survey and the final survey. If conducting two surveys in the same academic year is not possible, then teachers should use the previous spring survey to set growth targets.

Establishing Goals

Teachers and their evaluators should use their judgment in setting goals for the student feedback components. In setting a goal, a teacher must decide what he/she wants the goal to focus on. A goal will usually refer to a specific survey question (e.g., "My teacher makes lessons interesting"). However, some survey instruments group questions into components or topics, such as "ClassroomControl" or "Communicating Course Content," and a goal may also refer to a component rather than an individual question.

Additionally, a teacher (or the district) must decide how to measure results for the selected question or topic. The CSDE recommends that teachers measure performance in terms of the percentage of students who responded favorably to the question. (Virtually all student survey instruments have two favorable /answer choices for each question.) For example, if the survey instrument asks students to respond to questions with "Strongly Disagree," "Disagree," "Neutral," "Agree," and "Strongly Agree," performance on a goal would be measured as the percentage of students who responded "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to the corresponding question. Next, a teacher must set a numeric performance target. As described above, this target should be based on growth or on maintaining performance that is already high. Teachers are encouraged to bear in mind that growth may become harder as performance increases. For this reason, we recommend that teachers set maintenance of high performance targets (rather than growth targets) when current performance exceeds 70% of students responding favorably to a question.

Finally, where feasible, a teacher may optionally decide to focus a goal on a particular subgroup of students. (Surveys may ask students for demographic information, such as grade level, gender and race.) For example, if a teacher's fall survey shows that boys give much lower scores than girls in response to the survey question "My teacher cares about me," the teacher might set a growth goal for how the teacher's male students respond to that question.

The following are examples of effective SMART goals:

- The percentage of students who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with "My teacher believes I can do well" will increase from 50% to 60% by May 15;
- The percentage of students who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with "My teacher makes what we're learning interesting" will remain at 75% by May 15; and
- The percentage of 9th graders who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with "I feel comfortable asking my teacher for extra help" will increase from 60% to 70% by May 15.

Student feedback goals should be written in SMART language:

S = Specific and Strategic
M = Measurable
A = Aligned and Attainable
R = Results-Oriented
T = Time-Bound

See the example surveys on the SEED website for additional questions that can be used to develop goals.

Arriving at a Student Feedback Summative Rating:

In most cases, summative ratings should reflect the degree to which a teacher makes growth on feedback measures, using data from the prior school year or the fall of the current year as a baseline for setting growth targets. For teachers with high ratings already, summative ratings should reflect the degree to which ratings remain high. This is accomplished in the following steps, undertaken by the teacher being evaluated through mutual agreement with the evaluator:

1. Review survey results from prior period (previous school year or fall survey).
2. Set one measurable goal for growth or performance (see above).
3. Discuss parameters for exceeding or partially meeting goals.
4. Later in the school year, administer surveys to students.
5. Aggregate data and determine whether the goal was achieved.
6. Assign a summative rating, using the following scale to be discussed and finalized during the End-of-Year Conference.

Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
Exceeded the goal	Met the goal	Partially met the goal	Did not meet the goal

Option 3: Whole-School Student Learning Indicators or Student Feedback

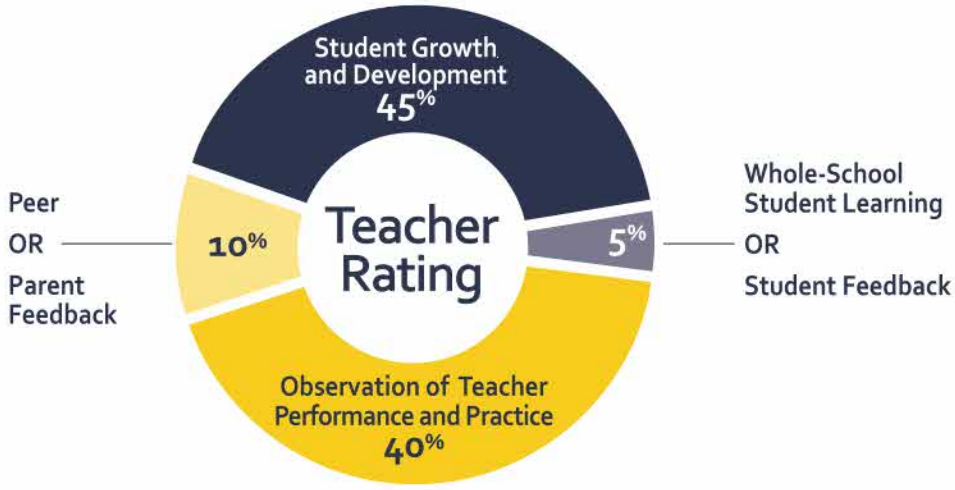
As previously mentioned, districts can use whole-school student learning indicators for certain teachers and feedback from students for others depending on their grade level, content area or other considerations.

PLEASE NOTE: *If the whole-school student learning indicator rating is not available when the summative rating is calculated, then the student growth and development score will be weight-ed 50% and the whole-school student learning indicator will be weighted 0 (see Summative Teacher Evaluation Scoring). However, once the state data is available, the evaluator should revisit the final rating and amend at that time as needed, but no later than* ***September 15****.*

Summative Teacher Evaluation Scoring

Summative Scoring

The individual summative teacher evaluation rating will be based on the four components, grouped in two major categories: Student Outcomes Related Indicators and Teacher Practice Related Indicators.



Every educator will receive one of four performance* ratings:

Exemplary **– Substantially exceeding indicators of performance**

Proficient **– Meeting indicators of performance**

Developing **– Meeting some indicators of performance but not others**

Below Standard **– Not meeting indicators of performance**

**The term "performance" in the above shall mean "progress as defined by specified indicators." Such indicators shall be mutually agreed upon, as applicable. Such progress shall be demonstrated by evidence (see Appendix 2).*

The rating will be determined using the following steps:

1. Calculate a Teacher Practice Related Indicators score by combining the observation of teacher performance and practice score (40%) and the parent feedback score (10%)
2. Calculate a Student Outcomes Related Indicators score by combining the student growth and development score (45%) and whole-school student learning indicator or student feedback (5%).
3. Use the Summative Matrix to determine the Summative Rating

Each step is illustrated below:

1. Calculate a Teacher Practice Related Indicators rating by combining the observation of teacher performance and practice score and the parent feedback score.

The observation of teacher performance and practice counts for 40% of the total rating and parent feedback counts for 10% of the total rating. Simply multiply these weights by the component scores to get the category points. The points are then translated to a rating using the rating table below.

Component	Score (1-4)	Weight	Points (score x weight)
Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice	2.8	40	112
Parent Feedback	3	10	30
Total Teacher Practice Related Indicators Points			**142**

Rating Table

Teacher Practice Related Indicators Points	Teacher Practice Related Indicators Rating
50-80	**Below Standard**
81-126	**Developing**
127-174	**Proficient**
175-200	**Exemplary**

1. Calculate a Student Outcomes Related Indicators rating by combining the student growth and development score and whole-school student learning indicators or student feedback score.

The student growth and development component counts for 45% of the total rating and the whole-school student learning indicators or student feedback component counts for 5% of the total rating. Simply multiply these weights by the component scores to get the category points. The points are then translated to a rating using the rating table below.

Component	Score (1-4)	Weight	Points (score x weight)
Student Growth and Development (SLOs)	3.5	45	157.5
Whole School Student Learning Indicator or Student Feedback	3	5	15
Total Student Outcomes Related Indicators Points			172.5 → **173**

Rating Table

Student Outcomes Related Indicators Points	Student Outcomes Related Indicators Rating
50-80	**Below Standard**
81-126	**Developing**
127-174	**Proficient**
175-200	**Exemplary**

2. Use the Summative Matrix to determine the Summative Rating

Using the ratings determined for each major category: Student Outcomes Related Indicators and Teacher Practice-Related Indicators, follow the respective column and row to the center of the matrix. The point of intersection indicates the summative rating. For the example provided, the Teacher Practice Related Indicators rating is *proficient* and the Student Outcomes Related Indicators rating is *proficient*. The summative rating is therefore *proficient*. If the two major categories are highly discrepant (e.g., a rating of *exemplary* for Teacher Practice and a rating of *below standard* for Student Outcomes), then the evaluator should examine the data and gather additional information in order to determine a summative rating.

		Teacher Practice Related Indicators Rating			
		4	3	2	1
Student Outcomes Related Indicators Rating	4	Rate Exemplary	Rate Exemplary	Rate Proficient	*Gather further information*
	3	Rate Exemplary	Rate Proficient	Rate Proficient	Rate Developing
	2	Rate Proficient	Rate Proficient	Rate Developing	Rate Developing
	1	*Gather further information*	Rate Developing	Rate Developing	Rate Below Standard

Adjustment of Summative Rating

Summative ratings must be provided for all teachers by **June 30**, of a given school year and reported to the CSDE per state guidelines. Should state standardized test data not yet be available at the time of calculating a summative rating, a rating must be completed based on evidence that is available. When the summative rating for a teacher may be significantly impacted by state standardized test data, the evaluator should recalculate the teacher's summative rating when the data is available and submit the adjusted rating no later than **September 15**. These adjustments should inform goal setting in the new school year.

Definition of Effectiveness and Ineffectiveness

Each district shall define effectiveness and ineffectiveness utilizing a pattern of summative ratings derived from the new evaluation and support system. A pattern may consist of a pattern of one rating. The state model recommends the following patterns:

Novice teachers shall generally be deemed effective if said educator receives at least two sequential *proficient* ratings, one of which must be earned in the fourth year of a novice teacher's career. A *below standard* rating shall only be permitted in the first year of a novice teacher's career. There should be a trajectory of growth and development as evidenced by a subsequent rating of developing or higher in year two and sequential *proficient* ratings in years three and four.

A post-tenure educator shall generally be deemed ineffective if said educator receives at least two sequential developing ratings or one *below standard* rating at any time.

Dispute-Resolution Process

The local or regional board of education shall include a process for resolving disputes in cases where the evaluator and teacher cannot agree on goals/objectives, the evaluation period, feedback or the professional development plan. When such agreement cannot be reached, the issue in dispute will be referred for resolution to a subcommittee of the professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC). The superintendent and the respective collective bargaining unit for the district will each select one representative from the PDEC to constitute this subcommittee, as well as a neutral party, as mutually agreed upon between the superintendent and the collective bargaining unit. In the event that the designated committee does not reach a unanimous decision, the issue shall be considered by the superintendent whose decision shall be binding *(see Appendix 2)*.

CORE REQUIREMENTS for the Evaluation of Student and Educator Support Specialists

As provided in Sec.10-151b of the 2012 Supplement (C.G.S.) as amended by P.A. 13-245, "The superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each Student and Educator Support Specialist," in accordance with the requirements of this section. Local or regional boards of education shall develop and implement Student and Educator Support Specialist evaluation programs consistent with these requirements.

Flexibility from Core Requirements for the Evaluation of Teachers

1. Student and Educator Support Specialists (SESS) shall have a clear job descriptions and delineation of their role and responsibilities in the school to guide the setting of Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs), feedback and observation.
2. Because of the unique nature of the roles fulfilled by Student and Educator Support Specialists, districts shall be granted flexibility in applying the Core Requirements of teacher evaluation in the following ways:
   a. Districts shall be granted flexibility in using IAGDs to measure attainment of goals and/or objectives for student growth. The Goal-Setting Conference for identifying the IAGDs shall include the following steps:
      i. The educator and evaluator will agree on the students or caseloads that the educator is responsible for and his/her role.
      ii. The educator and evaluator will determine if the indicator will apply to the individual teacher, a team of teachers, a grade level or the whole school.

iii. The educator and evaluator should identify the unique characteristics of the population of students which would impact student growth (e.g. high absenteeism, highly mobile population in school).

iv. The educator and evaluator will identify the learning standard to measure: the assessment/measure of progress, data or product for measuring growth; the timeline for instruction and measurement; how baseline will be established; how targets will be set so they are realistic yet rigorous; the strategies that will be used; and the professional development the educator needs to improve their learning to support the areas targeted.

b. Because some Student and Educator Support Specialists do not have a classroom and may not be involved in direct instruction of students, the educator and evaluator shall agree to appropriate venues for observations and an appropriate rubric for rating practice and performance at the beginning of the school year. The observations will be based on standards when available. Examples of appropriate venues include but are not limited to: observing Student and Educator Support Specialist staff working with small groups of children, working with adults, providing professional development, working with families, participation in team meetings or Planning and Placement Team meetings.

c. When student, parent and/or peer feedback mechanisms are not applicable to Student and Educator Support Specialists, districts may permit local development of short feedback mechanisms for students, parents and peers specific to particular roles or projects for which the Student and Educator Support Specialists are responsible.

Currently available on the http://www.connecticutseed.org website are white papers developed by various discipline-specific workgroups and an adapted version of the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching* for use with some SESS educators. Specifically, this adapted rubric was identified for use with:

- **School Psychologists;**
- **Speech and Language Pathologists;**
- **Comprehensive School Counselors ; and**
- **School Social Workers.**

While these disciplines have agreed that the SESS/CCT adapted rubric would more appropriately assist an evaluator in examining their practice, a validation study of the SESS/CCT adapted rubric will begin in the summer of 2014 to explore its use moving forward. The SESS/CCT adapted rubric has been made available as a resource for use by Connecticut school districts. Although **not required** for use within the SEED model, the alignment of the SESS adapted rubric to the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2014* will benefit evaluators as they conduct observations of performance and practice across all content areas.

Administrator Evaluation and Support

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CDSE) designed model for the evaluation and support of administrators in Connecticut is based on the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation (Core Requirements), developed by a diverse group of educators in June 2012 and based upon best practice research from around the country. The contents of this document are meant to guide districts in the implementation of Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) Administrator Evaluation and Support model. The CDSE, in consultation with PEAC and the SBE, may continue to refine the tools provided in this document for clarity and ease of use.

The SEED Model for administrator evaluation and support includes specific guidance for the four components of administrator evaluation:

- Observation of Leadership Performance and Practice (40%)
- Stakeholder Feedback (10%)

Leader Practice Related Indicators

- Student Learning (45%)
- Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes (5%)

Student Outcomes Related Indicators

This document includes "Points for Consideration" to assist district PDEC in developing processes or enhancing existing processes necessary for ongoing development and support of administrators for the following requirements:

- Evaluator Training
- Evaluation-Informed Professional Learning
- Improvement and Remediation Plans
- Career Development and Growth

PLEASE NOTE: *In electing to implement the SEED model , your district is expected to implement the components of evaluation and support , as well as the additional requirements referenced above with fidelity as outlined in this handbook. In addition, evaluators of administrators are expected to participate in the multi-day CSDE sponsored training as described within this document. In response to requests from districts for further clarification on these requirements, we have provided "Points for Consideration" to assist districts and their PDEC in plan development.*

Any variation from the components of administrator evaluation and support as outlined within this handbook is no longer the SEED model and would be considered a "district-developed" evaluation and support plan. Districts are required to submit an Educator Evaluation and Support plan annually to the CSDE.

ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION and development

Purpose and Rationale

This section of the 2014 SEED Handbook outlines the state model for the evaluation of school and school district administrators in Connecticut. A robust administrator evaluation system is a powerful means to develop a shared understanding of leader effectiveness for the state of Connecticut. The Connecticut administrator evaluation and support model defines administrator effectiveness in terms of (1) administrator practice (the actions taken by administrators that have been shown to impact key aspects of school life); (2) the results that come from this leadership (teacher effectiveness and student achievement); and (3) the perceptions of the administrator's leadership among key stakeholders in his/her community.

The model describes four levels of performance for administrators and focuses on the practices and outcomes of *Proficient* administrators. These administrators can be characterized as:

- Meeting expectations as an instructional leader;
- Meeting expectations in at least 3 other areas of practice;
- Meeting 1 target related to stakeholder feedback;
- Meeting state accountability growth targets on tests of core academic subjects[6];
- Meeting and making progress on 3 Student Learning Objectives aligned to school and district priorities; and
- Having more than 60% of teachers proficient on the student growth portion of their evaluation.

The model includes an exemplary performance level for those who exceed these characteristics, but exemplary ratings are reserved for those who could serve as a model for leaders across their district or even statewide. A proficient rating represents fully satisfactory performance, and it is the rigorous standard expected of most experienced administrators.

This model for administrator evaluation has several benefits for participants and for the broader community. It provides a structure for the ongoing development of principals and other administrators to establish a basis for assessing their strengths and growth areas so they have the feedback they need to get better. It also serves as a means for districts to hold themselves accountable for ensuring that every child in their district attends a school with effective leaders.

6 Smarter Balanced Assessments *will be administered for the first time in the 2014-2015 academic year. These assessments are administered in Grades 3-8 and Grade 11. Contingent upon approval of the waiver submitted to the U.S .Department of Education (USED) regarding the use of student test data in educator evaluation in 2014-2015, districts may not be required to link student test data to educator evaluation and support in 2014-2015 only. Additionally, due to the transition to the new state assessments, there will not be an SPI available for 2014-2015.*

As noted, the model applies to all administrators holding an 092 endorsement. Because of the fundamental role that principals play in building strong schools for communities and students, and because their leadership has a significant impact on outcomes for students, the descriptions and examples focus on principals. However, where there are design differences for assistant principals and central office administrators, the differences are noted.

System Overview

Administrator Evaluation and Support Framework

The evaluation and support system consists of multiple measures to paint an accurate and comprehensive picture of administrator performance. All administrators will be evaluated in four components, grouped into two major categories: Leadership Practice and Student Outcomes.

1. **Leadership Practice Related Indicators:** An evaluation of the core leadership practices and skills that positively affect student learning. This category is comprised of two components:
   a) **Observation of Leadership Performance and Practice (40%)** as defined in the Common Core of Leading (CCL): Connecticut School Leadership Standards.
   b) **Stakeholder Feedback (10%)** on leadership practice through surveys.
2. **Student Outcomes Related Indicators:** An evaluation of an administrator's contribution to student academic progress, at the school and classroom level. This category is comprised of two components:
   a) **Student Learning (45%)** assessed in equal weight by: (a) progress on the academic learning measures in the state's accountability system for schools and (b) performance and growth on locally-determined measures.
   b) **Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes (5%)** as determined by an aggregation of teachers' success with respect to Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Scores from each of the four components will be combined to produce a summative performance rating of *Exemplary*, *Proficient*, *Developing* or *Below Standard*. The performance levels are defined as:

- ***Exemplary*** – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- ***Proficient*** – Meeting indicators of performance
- ***Developing*** – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- ***Below Standard*** – Not meeting indicators of performance

Process and Timeline

This section describes the process by which administrators and their evaluators collect evidence about practice and results over the course of a year, culminating with a final rating and recommendations for continued improvement. The annual cycle (see **Figure 1** below) allows for flexibility in implementation and lends itself well to a meaningful and doable process. Often the evaluation process can devolve into a checklist of compliance activities that do little to foster improvement and leave everyone involved frustrated. To avoid this, the model encourages two things:

1. That evaluators prioritize the evaluation process, spending more and better time in schools observing practice and giving feedback; and
2. That both administrators and evaluators focus on the depth and quality of the interactions that occur in the process, not just on completing the steps.

Each administrator participates in the evaluation process as a cycle of continuous improvement. The cycle is the centerpiece of state guidelines designed to have all educators play a more active, engaged role in their professional growth and development. For every administrator, evaluation begins with goal-setting for the school year, setting the stage for implementation of a goal-driven plan. The cycle continues with a Mid-Year Formative Review, followed by continued implementation. The latter part of the process offers administrators a chance to self-assess and reflect on progress to date, a step that informs the summative evaluation. Evidence from the summative evaluation and self-assessment become important sources of information for the administrator's subsequent goal setting, as the cycle continues into the subsequent year.

Superintendents can determine when the cycle starts. For example, many will want their principals to start the self-assessment process in the spring in order for goal-setting and plan development to take place prior to the start of the next school year. Others may want to concentrate the first steps in the summer months.

Figure 1: This is a typical timeframe:

** Summative assessment to be finalized in August.*

Step 1: Orientation and Context-Setting

To begin the process, the administrator needs five things to be in place:

1. Student learning data are available for review by the administrator and the state has assigned the school a School Performance Index (SPI) rating[7].
2. Stakeholder survey data are available for review by the administrator.
3. The superintendent has communicated his/her student learning priorities for the year.
4. The administrator has developed a school improvement plan that includes student learning goals.
5. The evaluator has provided the administrator with this document in order to orient her/him to the evaluation process.Only #5 is required by the approved Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, but the data from #1-4 are essential to a robust goal-setting process.

Step 2: Goal-Setting and Plan Development

Before a school year starts, administrators identify three Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and one survey target, drawing on available data, the superintendent's priorities, their school improvement plan and prior evaluation results (where applicable). They also determine two areas of focus for their practice. This is referred to as "3-2-1 goal-setting."

7 Smarter Balanced Assessments *will be administered for the first time in the 2014-2015 academic year. These assessments are administered in Grades 3-8 and Grade 11. Contingent on approval of the waiver submitted to the U.S .Department of Education (USED) regarding the use of student test data in educator evaluation in 2014-2015, districts may not be required to link student test data to educator evaluation and support in 2014-2015 only. Additionally, due to the transition to the new state assessments, there will not be an SPI available for 2014-2015.*

Administrators should start with the outcomes they want to achieve. This includes setting three SLOs (see page 69 for details) and one target related to stakeholder feedback (see **page 62** for details).

Then administrators identify the areas of focus for their practice ***that will help them accomplish*** their SLOs and survey targets, choosing from among the elements of the Connecticut School Leadership Standards. While administrators are rated on all six Performance Expectations, administrators are not expected to focus on improving their practice in all areas in a given year. Rather, they should identify two specific focus areas of growth to facilitate professional conversation about their leadership practice with their evaluator. It is likely that at least one and perhaps both, of the practice focus areas will be in instructional leadership, given its central role in driving student achievement. What is critical is that the administrator can connect improvement in the practice focus areas to the outcome goals and survey targets, creating a logical through-line from practice to outcomes.

Next, the administrator and the evaluator meet to discuss and agree on the selected outcome goals and practice focus areas. This is an opportunity to discuss the administrator's choices and to explore questions such as:

- Are there any assumptions about specific goals that need to be shared because of the local school context?
- Are there any elements for which proficient performance will depend on factors beyond the control of the principals? If so, how will those dependencies be accounted for in the evaluation process?
- What are the sources of evidence to be used in assessing an administrator's performance?

The evaluator and administrator also discuss the appropriate resources and professional learning needs to support the administrator in accomplishing his/her goals. Together, these components – the goals, the practice areas and the resources and supports – comprise an individual's evaluation and support plan. In the event of any disagreement, the evaluator has the authority and responsibility to finalize the goals, supports and sources of evidence to be used. **The following completed form represents a sample evaluation and support plan.**

The focus areas, goals, activities, outcomes and timeline will be reviewed by the administrator's evaluator prior to beginning work on the goals. The evaluator may suggest additional goals as appropriate.

DOES THE DISTRICT HAVE A GOOD EVALUATION PLAN?

Here are some questions to consider in assessing whether an administrator's evaluation and support plan is likely to drive continuous improvement:

1. Are the goals clear and measurable so that an evaluator will know whether the administrator has achieved them?
2. Can the evaluator see a through line from district priorities to the school improvement plan to the evaluation and support plan?
3. Do the practice focus areas address growth needs for the administrator? Is at least one of the focus areas addressing instructional leadership?

Sample Evaluation AND SUPPORT Plan

Adminstrator's Name _____

Evaluator's Name _____

School _____

Key Findings from Student Achievement and Stakeholder Survey Data	Outcome Goals – 3 SLOs and 1 Survey	Leadership Practice Focus Areas (2)	Strategies	Evidence of Success	Additional Skills, Knowledge and Support Needed	Timeline for Measuring Goal Outcomes
75% of students report that teachers present material in a way that is easy for them to understand and learn from. EL Cohort Graduation Rate is 65% and the extended graduation rate is 70%.	**SLO 1:** Increase EL cohort graduation rate by 2% and the extended graduation rate by 3%.	**Focus Area 1:** Use assessments, data systems and accountability strategies to improve achievement, monitor and evaluate progress, close achievement gaps and communicate progress. (PE: 2, E: C)	Develop Support Service SLOs to address intervention needs and strategies.	EL graduation rate increases by 2% over last year and the extended graduation rate increases by 3%.	Support needed in reaching out to the EL student population and families to increase awareness of the graduation requirements and benefits.	Credit status will be determined after summer school.
80% of students complete 10th grade with 12 credits.	**SLO 2:** 90% of students complete 10th grade with 12 credits.	**Focus Area 2:** Improve instruction for the diverse needs of all students; and collaboratively monitor and adjust curriculum and instruction. (PE: 2, E B) Use current data to monitor EL student progress and to target students for intervention.	Develop content teacher SLOs to address CT Common Core reading strategies and expectations.	90% of students have at least 12 credits when entering the 11th grade.	Work with school counselors to ensure students are enrolled in credit earning courses in 9th and 10th grades and that deficient students are contacted re: summer remedial offerings.	
87% of 10th graders are proficient in reading, as evidenced by CAPT scores (if available).	SLO 3: 95% of students are reading at grade level at the end of 10th grade.		Provide teacher PL experiences as needed to target skills in differentiation of instruction.	STAR assessments indicate that 95% of students are reading on grade level at the end of 10th grade		
75% of students report that teachers present material in a way that is easy for them to understand and learn from. EL Cohort Graduation Rate is 65% and the extended graduation rate is 70%.	**Survey 1:** 90% of students report that teachers present material in a way that makes it easy for them to understand and learn.			90% of students report by survey response that teachers present material in a way they can understand and learn from.		

Step 3: Plan Implementation and Evidence Collection

As the administrator implements the plan, he/she and the evaluator both collect evidence about the administrator's practice. For the evaluator, this must include at least two and preferably more, school site visits. Periodic, purposeful school visits offer critical opportunities for evaluators to observe, collect evidence and analyze the work of school leaders. At a minimum, fall, winter and spring visits to the school leader's work site will provide invaluable insight into the school leader's performance and offer opportunities for ongoing feedback and dialogue.

Unlike visiting a classroom to observe a teacher, school site visits to observe administrator practice can vary significantly in length and setting. It is recommended that evaluators plan visits carefully to maximize the opportunity to gather evidence relevant to an administrator's practice focus areas. Further, central to this process is providing meaningful feedback based on observed practice: see the SEED website for forms that evaluators may use in recording observations and providing feedback. Evaluators should provide timely feedback after each visit.

Besides the school site visit requirement, there are no prescribed evidence requirements. The model relies on the professional judgment of the administrator and evaluator to determine appropriate sources of evidence and ways to collect evidence.

Building on the sample evaluation and support plan on page 49, this administrator's evaluator may want to consult the following sources of evidence to collect information about the administrator in relation to his or her focus areas and goals:

- Data systems and reports for student information
- Artifacts of data analysis and plans for response
- Observations of teacher team meetings
- Observations of administrative/leadership team meetings
- Observations of classrooms where the administrator is present
- Communications to parents and community
- Conversations with staff
- Conversations with students
- Conversations with families
- Presentations at Board of Education meetings, community resource centers, parent groups etc.

Further, the evaluator may want to establish a schedule of school site visits with the administrator to collect evidence and observe the administrator's work. The first visit should take place near the beginning of the school year to ground the evaluator in the school context and the administrator's evaluation and support plan. Subsequent visits might be planned at two-to three-month intervals.

A note on the frequency of school site observations:

State guidelines call for an administrator's evaluation to include:

- 2 observations for each administrator.
- 4 observations for any administrator new to their district, school, the profession or who has received ratings of *developing* or *below standard*.

School visits should be frequent, purposeful and adequate for sustaining a professional conversation about an administrator's practice.

Step 4: Mid-Year Formative Review

Midway through the school year (especially at a point when interim student assessment data are available for review) is an ideal time for a formal check-in to review progress. In preparation for meeting:

- The administrator analyzes available student achievement data and considers progress toward outcome goals.
- The evaluator reviews observation and feedback forms to identify key themes for discussion.

The administrator and evaluator hold a Mid-Year Formative Conference, with explicit discussion of progress toward student learning targets, as well as any areas of performance related to standards of performance and practice. The meeting is also an opportunity to surface any changes in the context (e.g., a large influx of new students) that could influence accomplishment of outcome goals; goals may be changed at this point. **Mid-Year Conference Discussion Prompts** are available on the SEED website.

Step 5: Self-Assessment

In the spring, the administrator takes an opportunity to assess his/her practice on all 18 elements of the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards. For each element, the administrator determines whether he/she:

- Needs to grow and improve practice on this element;
- Has some strengths on this element but needs to continue to grow and improve;
- Is consistently effective on this element; or
- Can empower others to be effective on this element.

The administrator should also review his/her focus areas and determine if he/she considers him/herself on track or not.

In some evaluation systems, self-assessment occurs later in the process after summative ratings but before goal setting for the subsequent year. In this model the administrator submits a self-assessment prior to the End-of-Year Summative Review as an opportunity for the self-reflection to inform the summative rating.

Step 6: Summative Review and Rating

The administrator and evaluator meet in the late spring to discuss the administrator's self-assessment and all evidence collected over the course of the year. While a formal rating follows this meeting, it is recommended that evaluators use the meeting as an opportunity to convey strengths, growth areas and their probable rating. After the meeting, the evaluator assigns a rating based on all available evidence.

Ensuring Fairness and Accuracy: Evaluator Training, Monitoring and Auditing

All evaluators are required to complete training on the SEED evaluation and support model. The purpose of training is to provide evaluators of administrators with the tools that will result in evidence-based school site observations; professional learning opportunities tied to evaluation feedback, improved teacher effectiveness and student performance.

The CSDE will provide districts with training opportunities to support district evaluators of administrators in implementation of the model across their schools. Districts can adapt and build on these tools to provide comprehensive training and support to ensure that evaluators are proficient in conducting administrator evaluations.

School districts who have adopted the SEED model will be expected to engage in the CSDE sponsored multi-day training. This comprehensive training will give evaluators the opportunity to:

- Understand the various components of the SEED administrator evaluation and support system;
- Understand sources of evidence that demonstrate proficiency on the CCL Leader Evaluation Rubric;
- Establish a common language that promotes professionalism and a culture for learning through the lens of the CCL Leader Evaluation Rubric;
- Establish inter-rater reliability through calibrations of observer interpretations of evidence and judgments of leadership practice; and
- Collaborate with colleagues to deepen understanding of the content.

Participants in the training will have opportunities to interact with colleagues and engage in practice and *optional* proficiency exercises to:

- Deepen understanding of the evaluation criteria;
- Define proficient leadership;
- Collect, sort and analyze evidence across a continuum of performance; and
- Determine a final summative rating across multiple indicators.

PLEASE NOTE: *School districts who have a locally-developed evaluation and support plan can also choose to participate in the CSDE-sponsored training opportunities for evaluators, however if training opportunities are internally developed or contracted with a reputable vendor, the following are points for consideration:*

Points for District Consideration:

- Development or selection of an evaluation framework/rubric to measure and provide feedback on leader performance and practice
- Identification of criteria to demonstrate proficiency (optional)
- Provision of ongoing calibration activities
- Determination of frequency for proficiency status renewal if applicable

The evaluator completes the summative evaluation report, shares it with the administrator and adds it to the administrator's personnel file with any written comments attached that the administrator requests to be added within two weeks of receipt of the report.

Summative ratings must be completed for all administrators by June 30 of a given school year. Should state standardized test data not yet be available at the time of a final rating, a rating must be completed based on evidence that is available. When the summative rating for an administrator may be significantly impacted by state standardized test data or teacher effectiveness ratings, the evaluator should recalculate the administrator's summative rating when the data is available and submit the adjusted rating no later than September 15. This adjustment should take place before the start of the new school year so that prior year results can inform goal setting in the new school year.

Initial ratings are based on all available data and are made in the spring so that they can be used for any employment decisions as needed. Since some components may not be completed at this point, here are rules of thumb to use in arriving at a rating:

- If stakeholder survey results are not yet available, then the observation of practice rating should count for 50% of the preliminary rating.
- If the teacher effectiveness outcomes ratings are not yet available, then the student learning measures should count for 50% of the preliminary rating.
- If the state accountability measures are not yet available, then the Student Learning Objectives should count for the full assessment of student learning.
- If none of the summative student learning indicators can yet be assessed, then the evaluator should examine the most recent interim assessment data to assess progress and arrive at an assessment of the administrator's performance on this component.

Support and Development

Evaluation alone cannot hope to improve leadership practice, teacher effectiveness and student learning. However, when paired with effective, relevant and timely support, the evaluation process has the potential to help move administrators along the path to exemplary practice.

Evaluation-Informed Professional Learning

Student success depends on effective teaching, learning and leadership. The CSDE vision for professional learning is that each and every Connecticut educator engages in continuous learning every day to increase professional effectiveness, resulting in positive outcomes for all students. For Connecticut's students to graduate college and career ready, educators must engage in strategically planned, well supported, standards-based, continuous professional learning focused on improving student outcomes.

Throughout the process of implementing Connecticut's SEED model, in mutual agreement with their evaluators all teachers will identify professional learning needs that support their goal and objectives.. The identified needs will serve as the foundation for ongoing conversations about the teacher's practice and impact on student outcomes. The professional learning opportunities identified for each teacher should be based on the individual strengths and needs that are identified through the evaluation process. The process may also reveal areas of common need among teachers, which can then be targeted with school-wide or district-wide professional learning opportunities.

Points for District Consideration:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate and create support systems for professional learning.

– Learning Forward, 2014
http://learningforward.org/standards/leadership#.Uxn-fD9dXuQ

- **Develop Capacity for Learning and Leading-** Systems that recognize and advance shared leadership promote leaders from all levels of the organization. Leaders work collaboratively with others to create a vision for academic success and set clear goals for student achievement based on educator and student learning data.
- **Advocate for Professional Learning-** As advocates of professional learning, leaders make their own career-long learning visible to others. They participate in professional learning within and beyond their own work environment. Leaders consume information in multiple fields to enhance their practice.
- **Create Support Systems and Structures-** Skillful leaders establish organizational systems and structures that support effective professional learning and ongoing continuous improvement. They equitably distribute resources to accomplish individual, team, school and school system goals through blended learning structures and promoting teacher collaboration and professional development through social media and other technological tools.

Improvement and Remediation Plans

If an administrator's performance is rated as *developing* or *below standard*, it signals the need for focused support and development. Districts must develop a system to support administrators not meeting the proficiency standard. Improvement and remediation plans should be developed in consultation with the administrator and his/her exclusive bargaining representative, when applicable, and be differentiated by the level of identified need and/or stage of development.

Districts may develop a system of stages or levels of support. For example:

1. **Structured Support:** An administrator would receive structured support when an area(s) of concern is identified during the school year. This support is intended to provide short-term assistance to address a concern in its early stage.
2. **Special Assistance:** An administrator would receive special assistance when he/she earns an overall performance rating of *developing* or *below standard* and/or has received structured support. An educator may also receive special assistance if he/she does not meet the goal(s) of the structured support plan. This support is intended to assist an educator who is having difficulty consistently demonstrating proficiency.
3. **Intensive Assistance:** An administrator would receive intensive assistance when he/she does not meet the goal(s) of the special assistance plan. This support is intended to build the staff member's competency.

Points for District Consideration:

Well-articulated Improvement and Remediation Plans:

- Clearly identify targeted supports, in consultation with the administrator, which may include specialized professional development, collegial assistance, increased supervisory observations and feedback, and/or special resources and strategies aligned to the improvement outcomes.
- Clearly delineate goals linked to specific indicators and domains within the observation of practice framework/rubric that specify exactly what the administrator must demonstrate at the conclusion of the Improvement and Remediation Plan in order to be considered "proficient."
- Indicate a timeline for implementing such resources, support and other strategies, in the course of the same school year as the plan is developed. Determine dates for interim and final reviews in accordance with stages of support.
- Include indicators of success, including a rating of proficient or better at the conclusion of the improvement and remediation plan.

Career Development and Growth

Rewarding exemplary performance identified through the evaluation process with opportunities for career development and professional growth is a critical step in both building confidence in the evaluation and support system itself and in building the capacity and skills of all leaders.

Examples of such opportunities include, but are not limited to: observation of peers; mentoring aspiring and early-career administrators; participating in development of administrator improvement and remediation plans for peers whose performance is *developing* or *below standard*; leading Professional Learning Communities; differentiated career pathways; and focused professional learning based on goals for continuous growth and development.

Points for District Consideration:

- Align job descriptions to school leadership standards.
- Identify replicable practices and inform professional development.
- Support high-quality evaluation that aligns school accountability with teacher and principal evaluation and support.
- Provide focused targeted professional learning opportunities identified through the evaluation process and school/district needs.
- Ensure that the new principal role is sustainable. Explore ways to alleviate administrative and operational duties to allow for greater focus on the role of instructional leader.
- Recognize and reward effective principals.

Leadership Practice Related Indicators

The Leadership Practice Related Indicators evaluate the administrator's knowledge of a complex set of skills and competencies and how these are applied in leadership practice. It is comprised of two components:

- Observation of Leadership Practice, which counts for 40%; and
- Stakeholder Feedback, which counts for 10%.

Component #1: Observation of Leadership Practice (40%)

An assessment of an administrator's leadership practice – by direct observation of practice and the collection of other evidence – is 40% of an administrator's summative rating.

Leadership practice is described in the Common Core of Leading (CCL) Connecticut School Leadership Standards adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education in June of 2012, which use the national Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards as their foundation and define effective administrative practice through six performance expectations.

1. **Vision, Mission and Goals:** Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by guiding the development and implementation of a shared vision of learning, a strong organizational mission and high expectations for student performance.
2. **Teaching and Learning:** Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by monitoring and continuously improving teaching and learning.
3. **Organizational Systems and Safety:** Education leaders ensure the success and a chievement of all students by managing organizational systems and resources for a safe, high-performing learning environment.
4. **Families and Stakeholders:** Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by collaborating with families and stakeholders to respond to diverse community interests and needs and to mobilize community resources.
5. **Ethics and Integrity:** Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by being ethical and acting with integrity.
6. **The Education System:** Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students and advocate for their students, faculty and staff needs by influencing systems of political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts affecting education.

All six of these performance expectations contribute to successful schools, but research shows that some have a bigger impact than others. In particular, improving teaching and learning is at the core of what effective educational leaders do. As such, **Performance Expectation 2 (Teaching and Learning)** comprises approximately half of the leadership practice rating and the other five performance expectations are equally weighted.

Figure 3: Leadership Practice – 6 Performance Expectations

These weightings should be consistent for all principals and central office administrators. For assistant principals and other school-based 092 certificate holders in non-teaching roles, the six performance expectations are weighed equally, reflecting the need for emerging leaders to develop the full set of skills and competencies in order to assume greater responsibilities as they move forward in their careers. While assistant principals' roles and responsibilities vary from school to school, creating a robust pipeline of effective principals depends on adequately preparing assistant principals for the principalship.

In order to arrive at these ratings, administrators are measured against the CCL Leader Evaluation Rubric which describes leadership actions across four performance levels for each of the six performance expectations and associated elements. The four performance levels are:

- ***Exemplary***: The Exemplary Level focuses on the concepts of developing capacity for action and leadership beyond the individual leader. Collaboration and involvement from a wide range of staff, students and stakeholders is prioritized as appropriate in distinguishing Exemplary performance from Proficient performance.
- ***Proficient***: The rubric is anchored at the Proficient Level using the indicator language from the Connecticut School Leadership Standards. The specific indicator language is highlighted in bold at the Proficient level.
- ***Developing***: The Developing Level focuses on leaders with a general knowledge of leadership practices but most of those practices do not necessarily lead to positive results.
- ***Below Standard***: The Below Standard Level focuses on a limited understanding of leadership practices and general inaction on the part of the leader.

Two key concepts, indicated by bullets, are often included as indicators. Each concept demonstrates a continuum of performance across the row, from *below standard* to *exemplary*.

Examples of Evidence are provided for each element of the rubric. While these Examples of Evidence can be a guide for evaluator training and discussion, they are only examples and should not be used as a checklist. As evaluators learn and use the rubric, they should review these Examples of Evidence and generate additional examples from their own experience that could also serve as evidence of Proficient practice.

Strategies for Using the CCL Leader Evaluation Rubric:

Helping administrators get better: The rubric is designed to be developmental in use. It contains a detailed continuum of performance for every indicator within the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards in order to serve as a guide and resource for school leaders and evaluators to talk about practice, identify specific areas for growth and development, and have language to use in describing what improved practice would be.

Making judgments about administrator practice: In some cases, evaluators may find that a leader demonstrates one level of performance for one concept and a different level of performance for a second concept within a row. In those cases, the evaluator will use judgment to decide on the level of performance for that particular indicator.

Assigning ratings for each performance expectation: Administrators and evaluators will not be required to complete this rubric at the Indicator level for any self-assessment or evaluation process. Evaluators and administrators will review performance and complete evaluation detail at the Performance Expectation level and may discuss performance at the Element level, using the detailed Indicator rows as supporting information as needed. As part of the evaluation process, evaluators and school leaders should identify a few specific areas for ongoing support and growth.

Assessing the practice of administrators other than principals: All indicators of the evaluation rubric may not apply to assistant principals or central office administrators. Districts may generate ratings using evidence collected from applicable indicators in the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards[8].

8 Central Office Administrators have been given an additional year before being required to participate in Connecticut's new evaluation and support system while further guidance is being developed. All Central Office Administrators will be required to participate in the new system in the 2015-2016 school year.

Performance Expectation 1: Vision, Mission and Goals

Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by guiding the development and implementation of a shared vision of learning, a strong organizational mission and high expectations for student performance.

Element A: High Expectations for All

Leaders* ensure that the creation of the vision, mission and goals establishes high expectations for all students and staff**.

The Leader...

Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
1. Information & analysis shape vision, mission and goals	relies on their own knowledge and assumptions to shape school-wide vision, mission and goals.	uses data to set goals for students. shapes a vision and mission based on basic data and analysis.	uses varied sources of information and analyzes data about current practices and outcomes to shape a vision, mission and goals.	uses a wide range of data to inform the development of and to collaboratively track progress toward achieving the vision, mission and goals.
2. Alignment to policies	does not align the school's vision, mission and goals to district, state or federal policies.	establishes school vision, mission and goals that are partially aligned to district priorities.	aligns the vision, mission and goals of the school to district, state and federal policies.	builds the capacity of all staff to ensure the vision, mission and goals are aligned to district, state and federal policies.

*Leader: Connecticut School Leaders who are employed under their immediate administrator 092 certificate (e.g., curriculum coordinator, principal, assistant principal, department head and other supervisory positions.)
**Staff: All educators and non-certified staff

Arriving at a Leadership Practice Summative Rating

Summative ratings are based on the evidence for each performance expectation in the CCL Leader Evaluation Rubric. Evaluators collect written evidence about and observe the administrator's leadership practice across the six performance expectations described in the rubric. Specific attention is paid to leadership performance areas identified as needing development.

This is accomplished through the following steps, undertaken by the administrator being evaluated and by the evaluator completing the evaluation:

The administrator and evaluator meet for a Goal-Setting Conference to identify focus areas for development of the administrator's leadership practice.

1. The administrator collects evidence about his/her practice and the evaluator collects evidence about administrator practice with a particular emphasis on the identified focus areas for development. **Evaluators of administrators must conduct at least two school site observations for any administrator and should conduct at least four school site observations for administrators who are new to their district, school, the profession or who have received ratings of *developing* or *below standard*.**
2. The administrator and evaluator hold a Mid-Year Formative Conference with a focused discussion of progress toward proficiency in the focus areas identified as needing development.
3. Near the end of the school year, the administrator reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a summative self-assessment for review by the evaluator, identifying areas of strength and continued growth, as well as progress on the focus areas.
4. The evaluator and the administrator meet to discuss all evidence collected to date. Following the conference, the evaluator uses the preponderance of evidence to assign a summative rating of *exemplary*, *proficient*, *developing* or *below standard* for each performance expectation. Then the evaluator assigns a total practice rating based on the criteria in the chart below and generates a summary report of the evaluation before the end of the school year.

Principals and Central Office Administrators:

Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
Exemplary on Teaching and Learning +	At least *Proficient* on Teaching and Learning +	At least *Developing* on Teaching and Learning +	*Below Standard* on Teaching and Learning or
Exemplary on at least 2 other performance expectations +	At least *Proficient* on at least 3 other performance expectations +	At least *Developing* on at least 3 other performance expectations	*Below Standard* on at least 3 other performance expectations
No rating below *Proficient* on any performance expectation	No rating below *Developing* on any performance expectation		

Assistant Principals and Other School-Based Administrators:

Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
Exemplary on at least half of measured performance expectations + No rating below *Proficient* on any performance expectation	At least *Proficient* on at least a majority of performance expectations + No rating below *Developing* on any performance expectation	At least *Developing* on at least a majority of performance expectations	*Below Standard* on at least half of performance expectations

Component #2: Stakeholder Feedback (10%)

Feedback from stakeholders – assessed by administration of a survey with measures that align to the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards – is 10% of an administrator's summative rating.

For each administrative role, the stakeholders surveyed should be those in the best position to provide meaningful feedback. For school-based administrators, stakeholders solicited for feedback must include teachers and parents, but may include other stakeholders (e.g., other staff, community members, students, etc.). If surveyed populations include students, they can provide valuable input on school practices and climate for inclusion in evaluation of school-based administrative roles.

Applicable Survey Types

There are several types of surveys – some with broader application for schools and districts – that align generally with the areas of feedback that are relevant for administrator evaluation. These include:

- **Leadership practice surveys** focus directly on feedback related to a leader's performance and the impact on stakeholders. Leadership Practice Surveys for principals and other administrators are available and there are also a number of instruments that are not specific to the education sector, but rather probe for information aligned with broader leadership competencies that are also relevant to Connecticut administrators' practice. Typically, leadership practice surveys for use in principal evaluations collect feedback from teachers and other staff members.

- **School practice surveys** capture feedback related to the key strategies, actions and events at a school. They tend to focus on measuring awareness and impact from stakeholders, which can include faculty and staff, students, and parents.
- **School climate surveys** cover many of the same subjects as school practice surveys but are also designed to probe for perceptions from stakeholders on the school's prevailing attitudes, standards and conditions. They are typically administered to all staff as well as to students and their family members.

To ensure that districts use effective survey instruments in the administrator evaluation process, and to allow educators to share results across district boundaries, the CSDE has adopted recommended survey instruments as part of the SEED state model for administrator evaluation and support. Panorama Education developed the surveys for use in the State of Connecticut, and districts are strongly encouraged to use these state model surveys.

See the SEED website for examples of each type of survey as well as sample questions that align to the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards. See the SEED website for **Panorama Education surveys.**

The survey(s) selected by a district for gathering feedback must be valid (that is, the instrument measures what it is intended to measure) and reliable (that is, the use of the instrument is consistent among those using it and is consistent over time). In order to minimize the burden on schools and stakeholders, the surveys chosen need not be implemented exclusively for purposes of administrator evaluation, but may have broader application as part of teacher evaluation systems, school-or district-wide feedback and planning or other purposes. Adequate participation and representation of school stakeholder population is important; there are several strategies districts may choose to use to ensure success in this area, including careful timing of the survey during the year, incentivizing participation and pursuing multiple means of soliciting responses.

Any survey selected must align to some or all of the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards, so that feedback is applicable to measuring performance against those standards. In most cases, only a subset of survey measures will align explicitly to the Leadership Standards, so administrators and their evaluators are encouraged to select relevant portions of the survey's results to incorporate into the evaluation and support model.

For each administrative role, stakeholders providing feedback might include:

SCHOOL-BASED ADMINISTRATORS

Principals:

All family members
All teachers and staff members
All students

Assistant Principals and other school-based administrators:

All or a subset of family members
All or a subset of teachers and staff members
All or a subset of students

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS

Line managers of instructional staff (e.g., Assistant/Regional Superintendents):

Principals or principal supervisors
Other direct reports
Relevant family members

Leadership for offices of curriculum, assessment, special services and other central academic functions:

Principals
Specific subsets of teachers
Other specialists within the district
Relevant family members

Leadership for offices of finance, human resources and legal/employee relations offices and other central shared services roles

Principals
Specific subsets of teachers
Other specialists within the district

Stakeholder Feedback Summative Rating

Ratings should reflect the degree to which an administrator makes growth on feedback measures, using data from the prior year or beginning of the year as a baseline for setting a growth target.

Exceptions to this include:

- Administrators with high ratings already, in which case, the rating should reflect the degree to which measures remain high.
- Administrators new to the role, in which case, the rating should be based on a reasonable target, using district averages or averages of schools in similar situations.

This is accomplished in the following steps, undertaken by the administrator being evaluated and reviewed by the evaluator:

1. Select appropriate survey measures aligned to the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards.
2. Review baseline data on selected measures, which may require a fall administration of the survey in year one.
3. Set 1 target for growth on selected measures (or performance on selected measures when growth is not feasible to assess or performance is already high).
4. Later in the school year, administer surveys to relevant stakeholders.
5. Aggregate data and determine whether the administrator achieved the established target.
6. Assign a rating, using this scale:

Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
Substantially exceeded target	Met target	Made substantial progress but did not meet target	Made little or no progress against target

Establishing what results in having "substantially exceeded" the target or what constitutes "substantial progress" is left to the discretion of the evaluator and the administrator being evaluated in the context of the target being set. However, more than half of the rating of an administrator on stakeholder feedback must be based on an assessment of improvement over time.

Examples of Survey Applications

Example #1:

School #1 has mid-range student performance results and is working diligently to improve out-comes for all students. As part of a district-wide initiative, the school administers a climate survey to teachers, students and family members. The results of this survey are applied broadly to inform school and district planning as well as administrator and teacher evaluations. Baseline data from the previous year's survey show general high performance with a few significant gaps in areas aligned to the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards. The principal, district Superintendent and the school leadership team selected one area of focus – building expectations for student achievement – and the principal identified leadership actions related to this focus area which are aligned with the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards. At the end of the year, survey results showed that, although improvement was made, the school failed to meet its target.

Measure and Target	Results (Target met?)
Percentage of teachers and family members agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement "*Students are challenged to meet high expectations at the school*" would increase from 71% to 77%.	No; results at the end of the year showed an increase of 3% to 74% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement.
Stakeholder Feedback Rating: "Developing"	

Example #2:

School #2 is a low-performing school in a district that has purchased and implemented a 360° tool measuring a principal's leadership practice which collects feedback from teachers, the principal and the principal's supervisor. The resulting scores from this tool are incorporated in the district's administrator evaluation and support system as stakeholder input.

Baseline data from the prior year reflects room for improvement in several areas and the principal, her supervisor and the school leadership team decides to focus on ensuring a safe, high performing learning environment for staff and students (aligned with Performance Expectation #3). Together, the principal and her supervisor focus on the principal's role in establishing a safe, high-performing environment and identify skills to be developed that are aligned to this growth area. They then set a target for improvement based on specific measures in the survey, aiming for an increase of 7% in the number of stakeholders who agreed or strongly agreed that that there was growth in the identified area. Results at the end of the school year show that the principal had met her target, with an increase of 9%.

Measure and Target	Results (Target met?)
Percentage of teachers, family members and other respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the principal had taken effective action to establish a safe, effective learning environment would increase from 71% to 78%.	Yes; results at the end of the year showed an increase of 9% to 80% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing.
Stakeholder Feedback Rating: "Proficient"	

The Student Outcomes Related Indicators capture the administrator's impact on student learning and comprise half of the final rating.

Student Outcomes Related Indicators includes two components:

- Student Learning, which counts for 45%; and
- Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes, which counts for 5%.

Component #3: Student Learning (45%)

Student learning is assessed in equal weight by: (a) performance and progress on the academic learning measures in the state's accountability system for schools and (b) performance and growth on locally-determined measures. Each of these measures will have a weight of 22.5% and together they will account for 45% of the administrator's evaluation.

State Measures of Academic Learning

With the state's new school accountability system, a school's SPI—an average of student performance in all tested grades and subjects for a given school—allows for the evaluation of school performance across all tested grades, subjects and performance levels on state tests. The goal for all Connecticut schools is to achieve an SPI rating of 88, which indicates that on average all students are at the 'target' level.

Currently, the state's accountability system[9] includes two measures of student academic learning:

1. **School Performance Index (SPI) progress –** changes from baseline in student achievement on Connecticut's standardized assessments.

   PLEASE NOTE: *SPI calculations will not be available for the 2014-15 school year due to the transition from state legacy tests to the Smarter Balanced Assessment. Therefore, 45% of an administrator's rating for Student Learning will be based on student growth and performance on locally determined measures.*

2. **SPI progress for student subgroups –** changes from baseline in student achievement for subgroups on Connecticut's standardized assessments.

9 All of the current academic learning measures in the state accountability system assess status achievement of students or changes in status achievement from year to year. There are no true growth measures. If the state adds a growth measure to the accountability model, it is recommended that it count as 50% of a principal's state academic learning rating in Excelling schools, 60% in Progressing and Transition schools, and 70% in Review and Turnaround schools.

For a complete **definition of Connecticut's measures of student academic learning,** including a definition of the SPI see the SEED website.

Yearly goals for student achievement should be based on approximately 1/12 of the growth needed to reach 88, capped at 3 points per year. See below for a sample calculation to determine the SPI growth target for a school with an SPI rating of 52.

$$\frac{88 - 52}{12} = 3$$

Evaluation ratings for administrators on these state test measures are generated as follows:

Step 1: Ratings of SPI Progress are applied to give the administrator a score between 1 and 4, using the table below:

SPI Progress (all students and subgroups)

SPI>=88	Did not Maintain	Maintain		
	1	4		
SPI<88	**< 50% target progress**	**50-99% target progress**	**100-125% target progress**	**> 125% target progress**
	1	2	3	4

PLEASE NOTE: *Administrators who work in schools with two SPIs will use the average of the two SPI ratings to apply for their score.*

Step 2: Scores are weighted to emphasize improvement in schools below the State's SPI target of 88 and to emphasize subgroup progress and performance in schools above the target. While districts may weigh the two measures according to local priorities for administrator evaluation, the following weights are recommended:

SPI Progress	100% minus subgroup %
SPI Subgroup Progress*	10% per subgroup; up to 50%

**Subgroup(s) must exist in year prior and in year of evaluation*

Below is a sample calculation for a school with two subgroups:

Measure	Score	Weight	Summary Score
SPI Progress	3	.8	2.4
SPI Subgroup 1 Progress	2	.1	.2
SPI Subgroup 2 Progress	2	.1	.2
		TOTAL	**2.8**

Step 3: The weighted scores in each category are summed, resulting in an overall state test rating that is scored on the following scale:

Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
At or above 3.5	2.5 to 3.4	1.5 to 2.4	Less than 1.5

All protections related to the assignment of school accountability ratings (e.g., the minimum number of days a student must be enrolled in order for that student's scores to be included in an accountability measure) shall apply to the use of state test data for administrator evaluation.

For any school that does not have tested grades (such as a K-2 school), the entire 45% of an administrator's rating on student learning indictors is based on the locally-determined indicators described below.

Locally-Determined Measures (Student Learning Objectives)

Administrators establish three Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) on measures they select. In selecting measures, certain parameters apply:

- All measures must align to Common Core State Standards and Connecticut Content Standards. In instances where there are no such standards that apply to a subject/grade level, districts must provide evidence of alignment to research-based learning standards.
- At least one of the measures must focus on student outcomes from subjects and/or grades not assessed on state-administered assessments.
- For administrators in high school, one measure must include the cohort graduation rate and the extended graduation rate, as defined in the State's approved application for flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. All protections related to the assignment of school accountability ratings for cohort graduation rate and extended graduation rate shall apply to the use of graduation data for principal evaluation.
- For administrators assigned to a school in "review" or "turnaround" status, indicators will align with the performance targets set in the school's mandated improvement plan.

	SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 3
Elementary or Middle School Principal	Non-tested subjects or grades	Broad discretion	
High School Principal	Graduation (meets the non-tested grades or subjects requirement)	Broad discretion	
Elementary or Middle School AP	Non-tested subjects or grades	Broad discretion: Indicators may focus on student results from a subset of teachers, grade levels or subjects, consistent with the job responsibilities of the assistant principal being evaluated.	
High School AP	Graduation (meets the non-tested grades or subjects requirement)	Broad discretion: Indicators may focus on student results from a subset of teachers, grade levels or subjects, consistent with the job responsibilities of the assistant principal being evaluated.	
Central Office Administrator	(meets the non-tested grades or subjects requirement) Indicators may be based on results in the group of schools, group of students or subject area most relevant to the administrator's job responsibilities, or on district-wide student learning results.		

Beyond these parameters, administrators have broad discretion in selecting indicators, including, but not limited to:

- Student performance or growth on state-administered assessments and/or district-adopted assessments not included in the state accountability measures (e.g., commercial content area assessments, Advanced Placement examinations, International Baccalaureate examinations).
- Students' progress toward graduation in the school using strong predictive indicators, including but not limited to 9th and/or 10th grade credit accumulation and/or the percentage of students that pass 9th and/or 10th grade subjects most commonly associated with graduation.

- Students' performance or growth on school-or classroom-developed assessments in subjects and grade levels for which there are not available state assessments. Below are a few examples of indicators, goals and SLOs for administrators:

Grade Level	SLO
2nd Grade	Among second graders who remain enrolled in school and in good attendance from September to May, 80% will make at least one year's growth in reading as measured by MAP/NWEA assessments.
Middle School Science	78% of students will attain *proficient* or higher on the science inquiry strand of the CMT in May.
High School	9th grade students will accumulate sufficient credits to be in good standing as sophomores by June.
Central Office Administrator	By June 1, 2014, the percentage of grade 3 students across the district (in all 5 elementary schools) reading at or above grade level will improve from 78% to 85%. (Curriculum Coordinator)

The process for selecting measures and creating SLOs should strike a balance between alignment to district student learning priorities and a focus on the most significant school-level student learning needs. To do so, it is critical that the process follow a pre-determined timeline.

- First, the district establishes student learning priorities for a given school year based on available data. These may be a continuation for multi-year improvement strategies or a new priority that emerges from achievement data.
- The administrator uses available data to craft an improvement plan for the school/area. This is done in collaboration with other stakeholders and includes a manageable set of clear student learning targets.
- The administrator chooses student learning priorities for her/his own evaluation that are (a) aligned to district priorities (unless the school is already doing well against those priorities) and (b) aligned with the school improvement plan.
- The administrator chooses measures that best assess the priorities and develops clear and measurable SLOs for the chosen assessments/indicators (see the Administrator's SLO Handbook, **SLO Form** and **SLO Quality Test**).

- The administrator shares the SLOs with her/his evaluator, informing a conversation designed to ensure that:
  - The objectives are adequately ambitious.
  - There is adequate data that can be collected to make a fair judgment about whether the administrator met the established objectives.
  - The objectives are based on a review of student characteristics (e.g., mobility, attendance, demographic and learning characteristics) relevant to the assessment of the administrator against the objective.
  - The professional resources are appropriate to supporting the administrator in meeting the performance targets.
- The administrator and evaluator collect interim data on the SLOs to inform a mid-year conversation (which is an opportunity to assess progress and, as needed, adjust targets) and summative data to inform summative ratings.

Based on this process, administrators receive a rating for this portion, as follows

Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
Met all 3 objectives and substantially exceeded at least 2 targets	Met 2 objectives and made at least substantial progress on the 3rd	Met 1 objective and made substantial progress on at least 1 other	Met 0 objectives OR Met 1 objective and did not make substantial progress on either of the other 2

Arriving at Student Learning Summative Rating

To arrive at an overall student learning rating, the ratings for the state assessment and the locally-determined ratings in the two components are plotted on this matrix:

		State Measures of Academic Learning			
		4	3	2	1
Locally Determined Measures of Academic Learning	4	Rate Exemplary	Rate Exemplary	Rate Proficient	*Gather further information*
	3	Rate Exemplary	Rate Proficient	Rate Proficient	Rate Developing
	2	Rate Proficient	Rate Proficient	Rate Developing	Rate Developing
	1	*Gather further information*	Rate Developing	Rate Developing	Rate Below Standard

Component #4: Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes (5%)

Teacher effectiveness outcomes – as measured by an aggregation of teachers' student learning objectives (SLOs) – make up 5% of an administrator's evaluation.

Improving teacher effectiveness outcomes is central to a administrator's role in driving improved student learning. That is why, in addition to measuring the actions that administrators take to increase teacher effectiveness – from hiring and placement to ongoing professional learning to feedback on performance – the administrator evaluation and support model also assesses the outcomes of all of that work.

As part of Connecticut's teacher evaluation state model, teachers are assessed in part on their accomplishment of SLOs. This is the basis for assessing administrators' contribution to teacher effectiveness outcomes. In order to maintain a strong focus on teachers setting ambitious SLOs for their evaluation, it is imperative that evaluators of administrators discuss with the administrator their strategies in working with teachers to set SLOs. Without attention to this issue, there is a substantial risk of administrators not encouraging teachers to set ambitious SLOs.

Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Below Standard
> 80% of teachers are rated proficient or *exemplary* on the student learning objectives portion of their evaluation	> 60% of teachers are rated proficient or *exemplary* on the student learning objectives portion of their evaluation	> 40% of teachers are rated proficient or *exemplary* on the student learning objectives portion of their evaluation	< 40% of teachers are rated proficient or *exemplary* on the student learning objectives portion of their evaluation

- Central Office Administrators will be responsible for the teachers under their assigned role.
- All other administrators will be responsible for the teachers they directly evaluate.

Summative Administrator Evaluation Rating

Summative Scoring

Every educator will receive one of four performance* ratings:

1. ***Exemplary***: Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
2. ***Proficient***: Meeting indicators of performance
3. ***Developing***: Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
4. ***Below standard***: Not meeting indicators of performance

**The term "performance" in the above shall mean "progress as defined by specified indicators." Such indicators shall be mutually agreed upon, as applicable. Such progress shall be demonstrated by evidence (see Apppendix 2).*

Proficient represents fully satisfactory performance. It is the rigorous standard expected for most experienced administrators. Specifically, proficient administrators can be characterized as:

- Meeting expectations as an instructional leader;
- Meeting expectations in at least 3 other areas of practice;
- Meeting and making progress on 1 target related to stakeholder feedback;
- Meeting state accountability growth targets on tests of core academic subjects;
- Meeting and making progress on 3 student learning objectives aligned to school and district priorities; and
- Having more than 60% of teachers proficient on the student growth portion of their evaluation.

Supporting administrators to reach proficiency is at the very heart of this evaluation model.

Exemplary ratings are reserved for performance that significantly exceeds proficiency and could serve as a model for leaders district-wide or even statewide. Few administrators are expected to demonstrate exemplary performance on more than a small number of practice elements.

A rating of *developing* means that performance is meeting proficiency in some components but not others. Improvement is necessary and expected and two consecutive years at the developing level is, for an experienced administrator, a cause for concern. On the other hand, for administrators in their first year, performance rating of *developing* is expected. If, by the end of three years, performance is still rated *developing*, there is cause for concern.

A rating of *below standard* indicates performance that is below proficient on all components or unacceptably low on one or more components.

Determining Summative Ratings

The rating will be determined using the following steps:

1. Determining a Leader Practice Rating;
2. Determining an Student Outcomes Rating; and
3. Combining the two into an overall rating using the Summative Matrix.

Each step is illustrated below:

A. PRACTICE: Leadership Practice (40%) + Stakeholder Feedback (10%) = 50%

The practice rating derives from an administrator's performance on the six performance expectations of the Common Core of Leading Evaluation Rubric (CCL) and the one stakeholder feedback target. The observation of administrator performance and practice counts for 40% of the total rating and stakeholder feedback counts for 10% of the total rating. Simply multiply these weights by the component scores to get the category points. The points are then translated to a rating using the rating table below.

Component	Score (1-4)	Weight	Summary Score
Observation of Leadership Practice	2	40	80
Stakeholder Feedback	3	10	30
TOTAL LEADER PRACTICE-RELATED POINTS			**110**

Leader Practice-Related Points	Leader Practice-Related Rating
50-80	Below Standard
81-126	Developing
127-174	Proficient
175-200	Exemplary

B. OUTCOMES: Student Learning (45%) + Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes (5%) = 50%

The outcomes rating is derived from student learning – student performance and progress on academic learning measures in the state's accountability system (SPI) and student learning objectives – and teacher effectiveness outcomes. As shown in the **Summative Rating Form**, state reports provide an assessment rating and evaluators record a rating for the student learning objectives agreed to in the beginning of the year. Simply multiply these weights by the component scores to get the category points. The points are then translated to a rating using the rating table page 82.

Component	Score (1-4)	Weight	Points (score x weight)
Student Learning (SPI Progress and SLOs)	3	45	135
Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes	2	5	10
TOTAL STUDENT OUTCOMES-RELATED POINTS			**145**

Student Outcomes Related Indicators Points	Student Outcomes Related Indicators Rating
50-80	Below Standard
81-126	Developing
127-174	Proficient
175-200	Exemplary

C. OVERALL: Leader Practice + Student Outcomes

The overall rating combines the practice and outcomes ratings using the matrix below. Using the ratings determined for each major category: Student Outcomes-Related Indicators and Leader Practice-Related Indicators, follow the respective column and row to the center of the matrix. The point of intersection indicates the summative rating. For the example provided, the Leader Practice-Related rating is developing and the Student Outcomes-Related rating is proficient. The summative rating is therefore proficient.

If the two major categories are highly discrepant (e.g., a rating of *exemplary* for Leader Practice and a rating of *below standard* for Student Outcomes), then the evaluator should examine the data and gather additional information in order to determine a summative rating.

		Overall Leader Practice Rating			
		4	3	2	1
Overall Student Outcomes Rating	4	Rate Exemplary	Rate Exemplary	Rate Proficient	*Gather further information*
	3	Rate Exemplary	Rate Proficient	Rate Proficient	Rate Developing
	2	Rate Proficient	Rate Proficient	Rate Developing	Rate Developing
	1	*Gather further information*	Rate Developing	Rate Developing	Rate Below Standard

Adjustment of Summative Rating:

Summative ratings must be completed for all administrators by June 30 of a given school year. Should state standardized test data not yet be available at the time of a summative rating, a rating must be completed based on evidence that is available. When the summative rating for an administrator may be significantly affected by state standardized test data, the evaluator should recalculate the administrator's final summative rating when the data is available and submit the adjusted rating not later than September 15. These adjustments should inform goal setting in the new school year.

Definition of Effectiveness and Ineffectiveness

Each district shall define effectiveness and ineffectiveness utilizing a pattern of summative ratings derived from the new evaluation system. A pattern may consist of a pattern of one rating. The state model recommends the following patterns:

Novice administrators shall generally be deemed effective if said administrator receives at least two sequential proficient ratings, one of which must be earned in the fourth year of a novice administrator's career. A *below standard* rating shall only be permitted in the first year of a novice administrator's career, assuming a pattern of growth of developing in year two and two sequential proficient ratings in years three and four.

An experienced administrator shall generally be deemed ineffective if said administrator receives at least two sequential *developing* ratings or one *below standard* rating at any time.

Dispute-Resolution Process

The local or regional board of education shall include a process for resolving disputes in cases where the evaluator and administrator cannot agree on goals/objectives, the evaluation period,feedback or the professional development plan. When such agreement cannot be reached, the issue in dispute will be referred for resolution to a subcommittee of the professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC). The superintendent and the respective collective bargaining unit for the district will each select one representative from the PDEC to constitute this subcommittee, as well as a neutral party, as mutually agreed upon between the superintendent and the collective bargaining unit. In the event that the designated committee does not reach a unanimous decision, the issue shall be considered by the superintendent whose decision shall be binding *(see Appendix 2)*.

Appendix 1

Flexibilities to the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation Adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education on February 6, 2014

Section 2.9: Flexibility Components

Local and regional school districts may choose to adopt one or more of the evaluation plan flexibility components described within Section 2.9, in mutual agreement with district's professional development and evaluation committee pursuant to 10-151b(b) and 10-220a(b), to enhance implementation. Any district that adopts flexibility components in accordance with this section in the 2013-14 school year shall, within 30 days of adoption of such revisions by its local or regional board of education, and no later than March 30, 2014, submit their plan revisions to the State Department of Education (SDE) for its review and approval. For the 2014-15 and all subsequent school years, the submission of district evaluation plans for SDE review and approval, including flexibility requests, shall take place no later than the annual deadline set by the SDE.

a. Each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator, will select 1 goal/objective for student growth. For each goal/objective, each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator, will select multiple Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGD) and evidence of those IAGDs based on the range of criteria used by the district. For any teacher whose primary responsibility is not the direct instruction of students, the mutually agreed upon goal/objective and indicators shall be based on the assigned role of the teacher.

b. One half (or 22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development used as evidence of whether goal/objective is met shall be based on standardized indicators other than the state test (CMT, CAPT, or SBAC) for the 2014-15 academic year, pending federal approval. Other standardized indicators for other grades and subjects, where available, may be used. For the other half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development, there may be:

1. A maximum of one additional standardized indicator other than the state test (CMT, CAPT or SBAC) for the 2014-15 academic year, pending federal approval, if there is mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute resolution procedure as described in 1.3.

2. A minimum of one non-standardized indicator.

c. Teachers who receive and maintain an annual summative performance evaluation designation of proficient or exemplary (or the equivalent annual summative ratings in a pre-existing district evaluation plan) during the 2012-13 or any subsequent school year and who are not first or second year teachers shall be evaluated with a minimum of one formal in-class observation no less frequently than once every three years, and three informal in-class observations conducted in accordance with Section 2.3(2)(b)(1) and 2.3(2)(b)(2) in all other years, and shall complete one review of practice every year. Teachers with proficient or exemplary designations may receive a formal in-class observation if an informal

observation or review of practice in a given year results in a concern about the teacher's practice. For non-classroom teachers, the above frequency of observations shall apply in the same ways, except that the observations need not be in-classroom (they shall instead be conducted in appropriate settings). All other teachers, including first and second year teachers and teachers who receive a performance evaluation designation of below standard or developing, will be evaluated according to the procedures in 2.3(2)(c) and 2.3(2)(d). All observations shall be followed with timely feedback. Examples of non-classroom observations or reviews of practice include but are not limited to: observations of data team meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers, reviews of lesson plans or other teaching artifacts.

Flexibilities to the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation Adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education on February 6, 2014

Section 2.10: Data Management Protocols

a. On or before September 15, 2014 and each year thereafter, professional development and evaluation committees established pursuant to 10-220a shall review and report to their board of education the user experience and efficiency of the district's data management systems/platforms being used by teachers and administrators to manage evaluation plans.

b. For implementation of local evaluation plans for the 2014-15 school year, and each year thereafter, data management systems/platforms to be used by teachers and administrators to manage evaluation plans shall be selected by boards of education with consideration given to the functional requirements/needs and efficiencies identified by professional development and evaluation committees.

c. For implementation of local evaluation plans for the 2014-15 school year, and each year thereafter, educator evaluation plans shall contain guidance on the entry of data into a district's data management system/platform being used to manage/administer the evaluation plan and on ways to reduce paperwork and documentation while maintaining plan integrity. Such guidance shall:

   1. Limit entry only to artifacts, information and data that is specifically identified in a teacher or administrator's evaluation plan as an indicator to be used for evaluating such educators, and to optional artifacts as mutually agreed upon by teacher/administrator and evaluator;

   2. Streamline educator evaluation data collection and reporting by teachers and administrators;

   3. Prohibit the SDE from accessing identifiable student data in the educator evaluation data management systems/platforms, except as needed to conduct the audits mandated by C.G.S. 10-151b(c) and 10-151i, and ensure that third-party organizations keep all identifiable student data confidential;

4. Prohibit the sharing or transference of individual teacher data from one district to another or to any other entity without the teacher or administrator's consent, as prohibited by law;
5. Limit the access of teacher or administrator data to only the primary evaluator, superintendent or his/her designee, and to other designated professionals directly involved with evaluation and professional development processes. Consistent with Connecticut General Statutes, this provision does not affect the SDE's data collection authority;
6. Include a process for logging the names of authorized individuals who access a teacher or administrator's evaluation information.

d. The SDE's technical assistance to school districts will be appropriate to the evaluation and support plan adopted by the district, whether or not the plan is the state model.

Appendix 2

CT State Board of Education-Adopted Revisions: Guidelines for Educator Evaluation May 7, 2014

Dispute-Resolution Process

(3) In accordance with the requirement in the 1999 Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development, in establishing or amending the local teacher evaluation plan, the local or regional board of education shall include a process for resolving disputes in cases where the evaluator and teacher cannot agree on goals/objectives, the evaluation period, feedback or the professional development plan. As an illustrative example of such a process (which serves as an option and not a requirement for districts), when such agreement cannot be reached, the issue in dispute may be referred for resolution to a subcommittee of the professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC). In this example, the superintendent and the respective collective bargaining unit for the district may each select one representative from the PDEC to constitute this subcommittee, as well as a neutral party as mutually agreed upon between the superintendent and the collective bargaining unit. In the event the designated committee does not reach a unanimous decision, the issue shall be considered by the superintendent whose decision shall be binding. This provision is to be utilized in accordance with the specified processes and parameters regarding goals/objectives, evaluation period, feedback, and professional development contained in this document entitled "Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation." Should the process established as required by the document entitled "Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation," dated June 2012 not result in resolution of a given issue, the determination regarding that issue shall be made by the superintendent. An example will be provided within the State model.

Rating System

2.1: 4-Level Matrix Rating System

(1) Annual summative evaluations provide each teacher with a summative rating aligned to one of four performance evaluation designators: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing and Below Standard.

(a) The performance levels shall be defined as follows:

- Exemplary – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- Proficient – Meeting indicators of performance
- Developing – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- Below standard – Not meeting indicators of performance

The term "performance" in the above shall mean "progress as defined by specified indicators." Such indicators shall be mutually agreed upon, as applicable. Such progress shall be demonstrated by evidence. The SDE will work with PEAC to identify best practices as well as issues regarding the implementation of the 4-Level Matrix Rating System for further discussion prior to the 2015-16 academic year.

CT State Board of Education-Adopted Revisions: Guidelines for Educator Evaluation

45% Student Growth Component

(c) One half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development used as evidence of whether goals/objectives are met shall not be determined by a single, isolated standardized test score, but shall be determined through the comparison of data across assessments administered over time, including the state test for those teaching tested grades and subjects or another standardized indicator for other grades and subjects where available. A state test can be used only if there are interim assessments that lead to that test, and such interim assessments shall be included in the overall score for those teaching tested grades and subjects. Those without an available standardized indicator will select, through mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute-resolution procedure as described in section 1.3, an additional non-standardized indicator.

a. For the 2014-15 academic year, the required use of state test data is suspended, pending federal approval, pursuant to PEAC's flexibility recommendation on January 29, 2014 and the State Board of Education's action on February 6, 2014.

b. Prior to the 2015-16 academic year, the SDE will work with PEAC to examine and evolve the system of standardized and non-standardized student learning indicators, including the use of interim assessments that lead to the state test to measure growth over time.

For the other half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development, there may be:

a. A maximum of one additional standardized indicator, if there is mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute resolution procedure as described in section 1.3.

b. A minimum of one non-standardized indicator.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS 2014-15

Name	Title	Organization Represented
Sarah Barzee	Chief Talent Officer	Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)
Joe Cirasuolo	Executive Director	CT Association of Public School Superintendents, Inc. (CAPSS)
Sheila Cohen	President	CT Education Association (CEA)
Paula Colen	Executive Director	EASTCONN (RESC)
Bruce Douglas	Executive Director	CREC (RESC)
V. Everett Lyons	Associate Executive Director	CT Association of Schools (CAS)
Shannon Marim n	Division Director	Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)
Gary Maynard	President	CT Federation of School Administrators (CFSA)
Patrice McCarthy	Deputy Executive Director	CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
Stephen McKeever	First Vice President AFT-CT	American Federation of Teachers-CT (AFT)
Karissa Niehoff	Executive Director	CT Association of Schools (CAS)
Catherine O'Callaghan	Chair of Education Department	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)
Melodie Peters	President of AFT-CT	American Federation of Teachers-CT (AFT)
Robert Rader	Executive Director	CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
Dianna Roberge-Wentzell	Interim Commissioner	Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)
Mark Waxenberg	Executive Director	CT Education Association (CEA)

Proposed Connecticut Guidance for a Professional Learning System

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CSDE

CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Connecticut Definition of Professional Learning

High-quality professional learning is a process that ensures all educators[1] have equitable access, throughout their career continuum, to relevant individual and collaborative opportunities to enhance their practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Introduction

Background

A major Connecticut educational reform statute, passed in 2012, redefines professional learning as intensive and sustained continuous improvement for educators that is aligned to standards, is conducted among educators, occurs frequently, and includes a repository of best practices for teaching methods developed by educators. The statute requires that professional learning programs reflect a comprehensive approach to increasing teacher and administrator effectiveness, focused on improving teaching methods and developing a shared collective responsibility for student growth (See Appendix A).

Student success depends on effective teaching and leadership. Connecticut's vision for professional learning is that each and every Connecticut educator engages in continuous learning every day to increase professional effectiveness, resulting in positive outcomes for each and every student. For Connecticut's students to graduate ready for college and careers, educators must engage in strategically-planned, well-supported, standards-based, continuous professional learning focused on student growth and development.

Values and Beliefs

The foundation of any effective system is built on core values and beliefs. Values and beliefs "endure over time. They supersede time, programs, strategies, and practice."[2] They drive the decisions designers make to develop and sustain an effective professional learning system. An effective professional learning system:

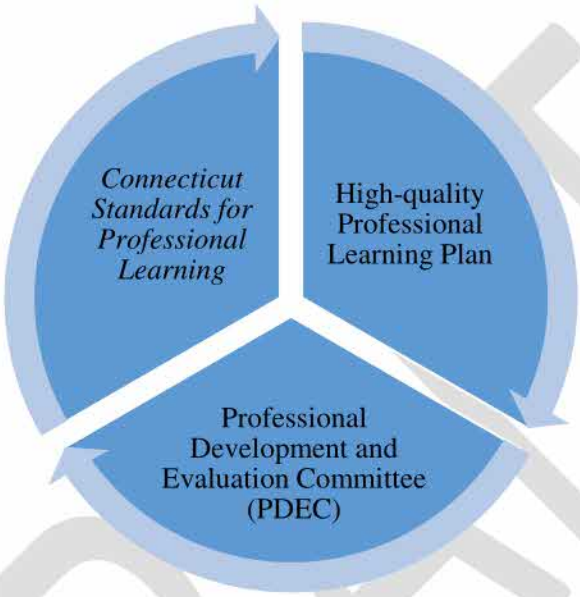
- is fundamental to both educator and student growth.
- supports the developmental process for educator growth in knowledge and skills, and addresses stages of change.
- provides each and every educator access to opportunities to engage in continuous, career-long learning to refine, improve and enhance practice.
- supports an on-going process, not an event, that results in changes to individuals first, then institutions.
- includes relevant job-embedded learning that requires dedicated and sustained time.
- supports individual educator, team, school, district and state improvement goals aligned to a vision for teaching and learning.
- promotes educator collaboration around relevant, meaningful goals that align to and support an overall shared district vision for teaching and learning.
- encourages all members of the learning community to build and cultivate collective responsibility, continuous improvement and shared leadership toward effective professional learning experiences.

[1] Must apply to all certified employees and can extend to all school and district staff.
[2] Hirsh, S., & Killion, J. (2007). *The Learning Educator: A New Era in Professional Learning*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.

Elements of a High-quality Professional Learning System

The three interdependent elements of Connecticut's high-quality professional learning system are: 1) the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*, 2) an effective Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC), and 3) a comprehensive professional learning plan (Figure 1). These elements must be continuously reviewed, refined, and adapted to support educator and student growth and development.

Figure 1: Key Elements of Connecticut's Professional Learning System



In order to achieve results for educators and students, professional learning must shift from common historical practices, which were measured by documented hours spent in professional development or continuing education units (CEUs), to sustained, authentic, job-embedded professional learning measured by evidence of impact on practice and student growth. Figure 2 summarizes the major research-supported shifts (Killion, 2012).

Figure 2: Shifts in Professional Learning

From	To
Driven by educator preference	Driven by student, educator, and systems data
Focused on generic instruction	Focused on depth of knowledge including cross-disciplinary and discipline-specific instruction and/or practice
Large group, formal, one-size-fits-all to build awareness	Informal, self-directed and collaborative learning to develop, refine and enhance practice
Occasional, episodic learning	Cycles of continuous improvement

Figure 3: Connecticut's Professional Learning System

This graphic demonstrates how a sustainable system for professional learning integrates three interdependent elements. High-quality professional learning systems are designed using a set of standards as the foundation, Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs) use those standards to define and expand upon a shared vision and share the responsibility for designing a comprehensive professional learning plan and the high-quality professional learning plan describes the opportunities for educators to engage in meaningful learning that improves and/or enhances practice.

High-quality professional learning is a process that ensures all educators have equitable access throughout their career continuum to relevant, individual and collaborative opportunities to enhance their practice so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.

Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning

The *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* were designed to support excellence in teaching and learning through high-quality professional learning for educators. More than three decades of research in the professional learning field served as the foundation of the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*. The research-base includes the *Standards for Professional Learning*[3] originally developed in 1995. Learning Forward convened a broadly representative stakeholder group to develop these standards to reflect successful practices and define high-quality professional learning.

The eight *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* are important to the design, implementation and sustainability of a professional learning system. They define the characteristics of a high-quality system of professional learning and can be used by Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs), district and/or school administrators, educators, and stakeholders to ensure high-quality professional learning

Learning Communities: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* occurs within learning communities committed to continuous growth, collective responsibility, family and community engagement and alignment of district and school vision and goals.

Leadership: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* requires and develops leadership capacity at all levels to advocate for and create systems for professional learning.

Resources: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* requires purposeful planning for the identification, use, allocation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of resources to support educator learning.

Data: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* requires the use of both quantitative and qualitative student, educator, and system data to plan, implement, monitor, and assess professional learning.

Learning Designs: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* integrates research on effective adult learning and uses flexible learning designs to achieve intended outcomes.

Implementation: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* applies change research and uses tools to identify and support the developmental stages of change and ensures the fidelity of implementation.

Outcomes: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* is aligned with district/school goals, relevant Connecticut standards, and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.

Equity: *Professional learning that enhances both educator practice and outcomes for each and every student* ensures that each member of the learning community has access to the resources and opportunities necessary for professional growth that result in meaningful contributions to its students, school(s) and district.

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Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC)

An effective PDEC is composed of certified teachers, administrators, and other appropriate school personnel including representatives selected by the respective bargaining units. Members of a PDEC collaboratively define a shared vision and share responsibility for the development, evaluation, and updating of a local comprehensive professional learning plan and participation in the development or adoption of the district educator evaluation and support program. The PDEC designs and regularly updates a comprehensive plan that clearly describes how professional learning is developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated within a district.

A district-level PDEC is required by statute, however, school-based PDECs may also exist. Those educators who sit on the PDEC have and/or gain a fundamental knowledge base about good practice that helps develop and implement their professional learning plan as aligned with the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning*. Members are expected to understand Connecticut's definition and standards for professional learning. Figure 4 describes what a district and school-based PDEC should know and be able to do when designing and implementing a professional learning plan.

Figure 4: Key Considerations for Forming a PDEC

The PDEC understands/has an awareness of…	In developing the plan, the PDEC…	In implementing the plan, the PDEC…
the district's strategic plan and the key needs and issues in the areas of student and educator growth, curriculum and instruction, and leadership at the school level.	analyzes and synthesizes key needs and issues that contribute to professional learning, educator and student growth, and district and and/or school development, inclusive of available resources (funding, people, time, technology and materials).	ensures that the comprehensive plan addresses needs and issues as identified at the district and school level.
how professional learning supports district and school level strategic planning in areas including, but not limited to, curricular change, new initiatives, instructional practices, content-specific knowledge and skills, and leadership growth for teachers and administrators.	aligns educator professional learning to student growth and development needs and district and school goals.	representatives, at the district and school level, facilitate discussion with educators focused on how the plan will support district and school goals.

[3] **Learning Forward. (2011).** Standards for Professional Learning. Oxford, OH: Author.

Figure 4: Key Considerations for Forming a PDEC, continued

The PDEC understands/has an awareness of…	In developing the plan, the PDEC…	In implementing the plan, the PDEC…
the areas in which, and the degree to which, the PDEC makes decisions regarding how resources – funding, people, time, technology and materials – are identified, accessed, used, and evaluated for professional learning.	identifies the available and appropriate resources that support what is outlined in the plan.	makes decisions regarding how resources – funding, people, time, technology and materials – are used so that professional learning that is planned can be implemented. helps educators access available/appropriate resources and evaluates the effectiveness of resources and their use.
the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* and how to align them with relevant Connecticut standards and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.	ensures alignment to the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning,* relevant Connecticut standards, and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth. develops avenues through which district and school staff will become familiar with the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* and how they align with educator standards and student growth standards.	representatives, at the district and school level, facilitate discussion with educators focused on how they will build their awareness of the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning,* relevant Connecticut standards, and other agreed-upon standards for educator practice and student growth.
the principles and developmental stages of change and how professional learning leads to building district capacity and sustainable change.	plans implementation of professional learning so as to support sustainable change that leads to educator and student success.	identifies and uses tools to support the professional learning needed to implement change and to monitor change efforts.
professional learning is a series of varied learning experiences, not single events or a one-size-fits-all approach to learning.	models, advocates for, and supports relevant job-embedded learning that enhances practices, facilitates skill development and builds capacity of educators throughout the district.	ensures that the resources and learning designs educators can choose to use are flexible and appropriate for helping them meet their individual and/or collective learning goals.

Figure 4: Key Considerations for Forming a PDEC, continued

The PDEC understands/has an awareness of…	In developing the plan, the PDEC…	In implementing the plan, the PDEC…
how adults learn.	ensures that the plan has the flexibility to enable educators to self-direct their learning and connect it to practice, so the context in and methods by which they learn to meet their learning styles and needs.	actively works with educators to learn how to develop, implement, and assess learning plans that connect district and school goals, student learning needs, and their individual and/or collective learning needs at the district and school level.
how to appropriately include all educators, individually and collectively, in planning professional learning that takes place on the district, school and individual level, and is highly self-directed, intensive, sustained and connected to their practice.	includes representative groups in the planning/development process, and collaborates with teachers and administrators at the district and school level throughout the planning process. discusses and determines what professional learning is planned at the district level as opposed to the school or individual level (e.g. general information awareness required by all, etc.), and how to help schools and individuals collaborate to appropriately plan professional learning.	ensures that district-wide professional learning that is planned for diverse groups of educators is appropriate for the learning and implementation objectives at the district and school level. ensures that planning includes/is done by participants, so as to best meet their learning needs at the school level.
what professional learning practices used in the district are successful, and why they are successful, based on qualitative and quantitative data. how monitoring and evaluation of professional learning are used to continuously review and refine practice.	uses needs assessments and qualitative and quantitative data throughout the stages of planning/designing, implementing, monitoring and assessing a high-quality professional learning plan. develops a simple method for monitoring professional learning processes and evaluating the impact of professional learning.	gathers data to monitor implementation and oversees the evaluation of the plan and shares that information with the appropriate audience.

A High-quality Professional Learning Plan

A comprehensive professional learning plan is the map that guides professional learning for all educators to enhance their practice and support student growth. It clearly describes how professional learning is developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated within a district and school.

A high-quality professional learning plan reflects the *Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning* and describes…

- the district vision for linking student, educator, and organizational growth and improvement;
- how professional learning is used to support district and school goals, educator growth and evaluation, curriculum development and implementation, and student growth and development;
- clear and specific steps for plan implementation;
- flexible learning designs that provide for self-directed, collaborative and guided learning to address variability of grade configurations, educator experience(s), and the specific demands of the curriculum and instructional practice;
- how all educators are appropriately included in developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating professional learning;
- how needs assessment and quantitative and qualitative data are used to develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate professional learning activities that support individual educator, team, school, and district goals and sustainable change;
- clear, simple methods for all educators to use to monitor and evaluate how professional learning is transferred to practice; and
- how decisions regarding resources – funding, people, time, technology and materials – are made to support professional learning.

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Appendix A
Connecticut General Statutes

C.G.S. 10-148a. Required Professional Development Programs

(a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2013, and each school year thereafter, each certified employee shall participate in a program of professional development. Each local and regional board of education shall make available, annually, at no cost to its certified employees, a program of professional development that is not fewer than eighteen hours in length, of which preponderance is in a small group or individual instructional setting. Such program of professional development shall

(1) be a comprehensive, sustained and intensive approach to improving teacher and administrator effectiveness in increasing student knowledge achievement,
(2) focus on refining and improving various effective teaching methods that are shared between and among educators,
(3) foster collective responsibility for improved student performance, and
(4) be comprised of professional learning that
    (A) is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards,
    (B) is conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by principals, coaches, mentors, distinguished educators, as described in section 10-145s, or other appropriate teachers,
    (C) occurs frequently on an individual basis or among groups of teachers in a job-embedded process of continuous improvement, and
    (D) includes a repository of best practices for teaching methods developed by educators within each school that is continuously available to such educators for comment and updating. Each program of professional development shall include professional development activities in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section.

C.G.S. 10-148a. Required Outcomes Planning for Professional Development

(b) Local and regional boards of education shall offer professional development activities to certified employees as part of the plan developed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220a or for any individual certified employee. Such professional development activities may be made available by a board of education directly, through a regional educational service center or cooperative arrangement with another board of education or through arrangements with any professional development provider approved by the Commissioner of Education. Such professional development activities shall(1) improve the integration of reading instruction, literacy and numeracy enhancement, and cultural awareness into instructional practice, (2) include strategies to improve English language learner instruction into instructional practice, (3) be determined by each board of education with the advice and assistance of the teachers employed by such board, including representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for such teachers pursuant to section 10-153b, and on and after July 1, 2012, in full consideration of priorities and needs related to student outcomes as determined by the State Board of Education,(4) use the results and findings of teacher and administrator performance evaluations, conducted pursuant to section 10-151b, to improve teacher and administrator practice and provide professional growth, and (5) include training in the implementation of student individualized education programs and the communication of individualized education program procedures to parents or guardians of students who require special education and related services for

certified employees with an endorsement in special education who hold a position requiring such an endorsement.

Training Required for Superintendents and Administrators

Professional development completed by superintendents of schools and administrators, as defined in section 10-144e, shall include at least fifteen hours of training in the evaluation and support of teachers under the teacher and administrator evaluation and support program, pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of section 10-151b, during each five-year period.

Scheduling

The time and location for the provision of such activities shall be in accordance with either an agreement between the board of education and the exclusive bargaining unit pursuant to section 10-153b or, in the absence of such agreement or to the extent such agreement does not provide for the time and location of all such activities, in accordance with a determination by the board of education.

C.G.S. 10-148a. Attestation to the CSDE

(c) Each local and regional board of education or supervisory agent of a nonpublic school approved by the State Board of Education shall attest to the Department of Education, in such form and at such time as the commissioner shall prescribe, that professional development activities under this section:

(1) Are planned in response to identified needs,
(2) are provided by qualified instructional personnel, as appropriate,
(3) have the requirements for participation in the activity shared with participants before the commencement of the activity,
(4) are evaluated in terms of its effectiveness and its contribution to the attainment of school or district-wide goals, and
(5) are documented in accordance with procedures established by the State Board of Education. In the event that the Department of Education notifies the local or regional board of education that the provisions of this subsection have not been met and that specific corrective action is necessary, the local or regional board of education shall take such corrective action immediately.

C.G.S. 10-148a. Audits by CSDE

(d) The Department of Education shall conduct audits of the professional development programs provided by local and regional boards of education. If the State Board of Education determines, based on such audit, that a local or regional board of education is not in compliance with any provision of this section, the State Board of Education may require the local or regional board of education to forfeit of the total sum which is paid to such board of education from the State Treasury an amount determined by the State Board of Education. The amount so forfeited shall be withheld from a grant payment, as determined by the Commissioner of Education, during the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which noncompliance is determined. The State Board of Education may waive such forfeiture if the State Board of Education determines that the failure of the local or regional board of education to comply with the provisions of this section was due to circumstances beyond its control.

C.G.S. 10-151b. Required District Professional Development and Evaluation Committee

(b) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, not later than September 1, 2013, each local and regional board of education shall adopt and implement a teacher evaluation and support program that is consistent with the guidelines for a model teacher evaluation and support program adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. Such teacher evaluation and support program shall be developed through mutual agreement between the local or regional board of education and the professional development and evaluation committee for the school district, established pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220a, as amended by this act. If a local or regional board of education is unable to develop a teacher evaluation and support program through mutual agreement with such professional development and evaluation committee, then such board of education and such professional development and evaluation committee shall consider the model teacher evaluation and support program adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and such board of education may adopt, through mutual agreement with such professional development and evaluation committee, such model teacher evaluation and support program. If a local or regional board of education and the professional development and evaluation committee are unable to mutually agree on the adoption of such model teacher evaluation and support program, then such board of education shall adopt and implement a teacher evaluation and support program developed by such board of education, provided such teacher evaluation and support program is consistent with the guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. Each local and regional board of education may commence implementation of the teacher evaluation and support program adopted pursuant to this subsection in accordance with a teacher evaluation and support program implementation plan adopted pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

C.G.S. 10-220a. Required District Professional Development and Evaluation Committee

(b) Not later than a date prescribed by the commissioner, each local and regional board of education shall establish a professional development and evaluation committee consisting of certified employees, and such other school personnel as the board deems appropriate, including representatives selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for such employees chosen pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-153. The duties of such committees shall include, but not be limited to, participation in the development or adoption of a teacher evaluation and support program for the district, pursuant to section 10-151b, and the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive local professional development plan for certified employees of the district. Such plan shall: (1) Be directly related to the educational goals prepared by the local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (b) of section **10-220**, (2) on and after July 1, 2011, be developed with full consideration of the priorities and needs related to student outcomes as determined by the State Board of Education, and (3) provide for the ongoing and systematic assessment and improvement of both teacher evaluation and professional development of the professional staff members of each such board, including personnel management and evaluation training or experience for administrators, shall be related to regular and special student needs and may include provisions concerning career incentives and parent involvement. The State Board of Education shall develop guidelines to assist local and regional boards of education in determining the objectives of the plans and in coordinating staff development activities with student needs and school programs.

C.G.S. 10-220a. In-Service training

(a) Each local or regional board of education shall provide an in-service training program for its teachers, administrators and pupil personnel who hold the initial educator, provisional educator or professional educator certificate. Such program shall provide such teachers, administrators and pupil personnel with information on (1) the nature and the relationship of drugs, as defined in subdivision (17) of section 21a-240, and alcohol to health and personality development, and procedures for discouraging their abuse, (2) health and mental health risk reduction education which includes, but need not be limited to, the prevention of risk-taking behavior by children and the relationship of such behavior to substance abuse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-infection and AIDS, as defined in section 19a-581, violence, teen dating violence, domestic violence, child abuse and youth suicide, (3) the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, including, but not limited to, children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder or learning disabilities, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special needs children in a regular classroom, including, but not limited to, implementation of student individualized education programs, (4) school violence prevention, conflict resolution, the prevention of and response to youth suicide and the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, as defined in subsection (a) of section 10-222d, except that those boards of education that implement any evidence-based model approach that is approved by the Department of Education and is consistent with subsection (d) of section 10-145a, sections 10-222d, 10-222g and 10-222h, subsection (g) of section 10-233c and sections 1 and 3 of public act 08-160, [FN1] shall not be required to provide in-service training on the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, (5) cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency lifesaving procedures, (6) computer and other information technology as applied to student learning and classroom instruction, communications and data management, (7) the teaching of the language arts, reading and reading readiness for teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, (8) second language acquisition in districts required to provide a program of bilingual education pursuant to section 10-17f, (9) the requirements and obligations of a mandated reporter, and (10) the teacher evaluation and support program adopted pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-151b. Each local and regional board of education may allow any paraprofessional or noncertified employee to participate, on a voluntary basis, in any in-service training program provided pursuant to this section. The State Board of Education, within available appropriations and utilizing available materials, shall assist and encourage local and regional boards of education to include: (A) Holocaust and genocide education and awareness; (B) the historical events surrounding the Great Famine in Ireland; (C) African-American history; (D) Puerto Rican history; (E) Native American history; (F) personal financial management; (G) domestic violence and teen dating violence; (H) mental health first aid training; and (I) topics approved by the state board upon the request of local or regional boards of education as part of in-service training programs pursuant to this subsection.

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Flexibilities to the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation
Adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education on February 6, 2014

Section 2.9: Flexibility Components

Local and regional school districts may choose to adopt one or more of the evaluation plan flexibility components described within Section 2.9, in mutual agreement with district's professional development and evaluation committee pursuant to 10-151b(b) and 10-220a(b), to enhance implementation. Any district that adopts flexibility components in accordance with this section in the 2013-14 school year shall, within 30 days of adoption of such revisions by its local or regional board of education, and no later than March 30, 2014, submit their plan revisions to the State Department of Education (SDE) for its review and approval. For the 2014-15 and all subsequent school years, the submission of district evaluation plans for SDE review and approval, including flexibility requests, shall take place no later than the annual deadline set by the SDE.

a. Each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator, will select 1 goal/objective for student growth. For each goal/objective, each teacher, through mutual agreement with his/her evaluator, will select multiple Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGD) and evidence of those IAGDs based on the range of criteria used by the district. For any teacher whose primary responsibility is not the direct instruction of students, the mutually agreed upon goal/objective and indicators shall be based on the assigned role of the teacher.

b. One half (or 22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development used as evidence of whether goal/objective is met shall be based on standardized indicators other than the state test (CMT, CAPT, or SBAC) for the 2014-15 academic year, pending federal approval. Other standardized indicators for other grades and subjects, where available, may be used. For the other half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development, there may be:
   1. A maximum of one additional standardized indicator other than the state test (CMT, CAPT or SBAC) for the 2014-15 academic year, pending federal approval, if there is mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute resolution procedure as described in 1.3.
   2. A minimum of one non-standardized indicator.

c. Teachers who receive and maintain an annual summative performance evaluation designation of proficient or exemplary (or the equivalent annual summative ratings in a pre-existing district evaluation plan) during the 2012-13 or any subsequent school year and who are not first or second year teachers shall be evaluated with a minimum of one formal in-class observation no less frequently than once every three years, and three informal in-class observations conducted in accordance with Section 2.3(2)(b)(1) and 2.3(2)(b)(2) in all other years, and shall complete one review of practice every year. Teachers with proficient or exemplary designations may receive a formal in-class observation if an informal observation or review of practice in a given year results in a concern about the teacher's practice. For non-classroom teachers, the above frequency of observations shall apply in the same ways, except that the observations need not be in-classroom (they shall instead be conducted in appropriate settings). All other teachers, including first and second year teachers and teachers who receive a performance evaluation designation of below standard or developing, will be evaluated according to the procedures in 2.3(2)(c) and 2.3(2)(d). All observations shall be followed with timely feedback. Examples of non-classroom observations or reviews of practice include but are not limited to: observations of data team meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers, reviews of lesson plans or other teaching artifacts.

Flexibilities to the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation
Adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education on February 6, 2014

Section 2.10: Data Management Protocols

a. On or before September 15, 2014 and each year thereafter, professional development and evaluation committees established pursuant to 10-220a shall review and report to their board of education the user experience and efficiency of the district's data management systems/platforms being used by teachers and administrators to manage evaluation plans.

b. For implementation of local evaluation plans for the 2014-15 school year, and each year thereafter, data management systems/platforms to be used by teachers and administrators to manage evaluation plans shall be selected by boards of education with consideration given to the functional requirements/needs and efficiencies identified by professional development and evaluation committees.

c. For implementation of local evaluation plans for the 2014-15 school year, and each year thereafter, educator evaluation plans shall contain guidance on the entry of data into a district's data management system/platform being used to manage/administer the evaluation plan and on ways to reduce paperwork and documentation while maintaining plan integrity. Such guidance shall:
    1. Limit entry only to artifacts, information and data that is specifically identified in a teacher or administrator's evaluation plan as an indicator to be used for evaluating such educators, and to optional artifacts as mutually agreed upon by teacher/administrator and evaluator;
    2. Streamline educator evaluation data collection and reporting by teachers and administrators;
    3. Prohibit the SDE from accessing identifiable student data in the educator evaluation data management systems/platforms, except as needed to conduct the audits mandated by C.G.S. 10-151b(c) and 10-151i, and ensure that third-party organizations keep all identifiable student data confidential;
    4. Prohibit the sharing or transference of individual teacher data from one district to another or to any other entity without the teacher or administrator's consent, as prohibited by law;
    5. Limit the access of teacher or administrator data to only the primary evaluator, superintendent or his/her designee, and to other designated professionals directly involved with evaluation and professional development processes. Consistent with Connecticut General Statutes, this provision does not affect the SDE's data collection authority;
    6. Include a process for logging the names of authorized individuals who access a teacher or administrator's evaluation information.

d. The SDE's technical assistance to school districts will be appropriate to the evaluation and support plan adopted by the district, whether or not the plan is the state model.

CT State Board of Education-Adopted Revisions: Guidelines for Educator Evaluation

May 7, 2014

Dispute-Resolution Process

(3) In accordance with the requirement in the 1999 Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development, in establishing or amending the local teacher evaluation plan, the local or regional board of education shall include a process for resolving disputes in cases where the evaluator and teacher cannot agree on goals/objectives, the evaluation period, feedback or the professional development plan. As an illustrative example of such a process (which serves as an option and not a requirement for districts), when such agreement cannot be reached, the issue in dispute may be referred for resolution to a subcommittee of the professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC). In this example, the superintendent and the respective collective bargaining unit for the district may each select one representative from the PDEC to constitute this subcommittee, as well as a neutral party as mutually agreed upon between the superintendent and the collective bargaining unit. In the event the designated committee does not reach a unanimous decision, the issue shall be considered by the superintendent whose decision shall be binding. This provision is to be utilized in accordance with the specified processes and parameters regarding goals/objectives, evaluation period, feedback, and professional development contained in this document entitled "Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation." Should the process established as required by the document entitled "Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation," dated June 2012 not result in resolution of a given issue, the determination regarding that issue shall be made by the superintendent. An example will be provided within the State model.

Rating System

2.1: 4-Level Matrix Rating System

(1) Annual summative evaluations provide each teacher with a summative rating aligned to one of four performance evaluation designators: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing and Below Standard.

(a) The performance levels shall be defined as follows:

- Exemplary – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- Proficient – Meeting indicators of performance
- Developing – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- Below standard – Not meeting indicators of performance

The term "performance" in the above shall mean "progress as defined by specified indicators." Such indicators shall be mutually agreed upon, as applicable. Such progress shall be demonstrated by evidence. The SDE will work with PEAC to identify best practices as well as issues regarding the implementation of the 4-Level Matrix Rating System for further discussion prior to the 2015-16 academic year.

CT State Board of Education-Adopted Revisions: Guidelines for Educator Evaluation

45% Student Growth Component

(c) One half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development used as evidence of whether goals/objectives are met shall not be determined by a single, isolated standardized test score, but shall be determined through the comparison of data across assessments administered over time, including the state test for those teaching tested grades and subjects or another standardized indicator for other grades and subjects where available. A state test can be used only if there are interim assessments that lead to that test, and such interim assessments shall be included in the overall score for those teaching tested grades and subjects. Those without an available standardized indicator will select, through mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute-resolution procedure as described in section 1.3, an additional non-standardized indicator.

a. For the 2014-15 academic year, the required use of state test data is suspended, pending federal approval, pursuant to PEAC's flexibility recommendation on January 29, 2014 and the State Board of Education's action on February 6, 2014.

b. Prior to the 2015-16 academic year, the SDE will work with PEAC to examine and evolve the system of standardized and non-standardized student learning indicators, including the use of interim assessments that lead to the state test to measure growth over time.

For the other half (22.5%) of the indicators of academic growth and development, there may be:

a. A maximum of one additional standardized indicator, if there is mutual agreement, subject to the local dispute resolution procedure as described in section 1.3.

b. A minimum of one non-standardized indicator.

An Evaluation of the Pilot Implementation of Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development

Submitted by

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January 1, 2014

Report on the Pilot Implementation of Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development

Executive Summary

Purpose

In June 2012, the Connecticut General Assembly passed legislation mandating that that State Board of Education, in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, develop guidelines for a model program to evaluate and support public school teachers and administrators. This legislation also directed the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education to study the pilot implementation of the state model and report findings to the State Board of Education and Education Committee to inform modifications to the model. Developed by the State Department of Education, the state model was entitled the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED), and was implemented in 10 pilot school districts/consortia, encompassing 14 districts in total. The purpose of our study was to examine the implementation and short-term outcomes of Connecticut's new educator evaluation model in these districts. Our broader aim was to provide feedback on SEED's pilot implementation so that the model could be improved and better support improvements to teachers' practice and students' learning.

Based on data collected in all 14 pilot districts, we find that SEED was implemented in the pilot sites with a relatively high degree of fidelity to the model. Moreover, most educators in the pilot sites supported the model in the abstract and found several aspects of SEED (e.g., post-observation conferences with evaluators) quite valuable. There is some evidence of changed practices on the part of teachers and administrators due to SEED. While SEED's components were generally implemented with fidelity, opportunities for professional growth through SEED were not fully realized. To a great extent, these challenges were due to the lack of clear and consistent communication to educators about SEED and inadequate opportunities for educators to construct a robust understanding of this new approach to evaluation. Educators attempted to understand the complexities of the technical and practical aspects of SEED. However, the tight implementation timeline in some cases encouraged compliance behaviors rather than full engagement with the model.

This emphasis on compliance is not uncommon during the initial stages of a major reform initiative as participants and implementers attempt to adapt to a new set of rules and routines. We expect that districts will begin to experience greater benefits of SEED as educators become accustomed to its components and adjust SEED to their own contexts. Our data suggest that, if sufficiently supported and properly implemented, SEED has the potential to improve teachers' practice and students' learning. Therefore,

we recommend that the SEED model be maintained but that the infrastructure to clarify and support its implementation be strengthened. Accordingly, we conclude by providing eight recommendations that we believe will enhance SEED's positive impact on districts, schools, teachers, and students.

Methods

Fourteen (14) public school districts (eight stand-alone districts and two consortia) were chosen by the State Department of Education (SDE) to serve as pilot sites. Between September 2012, and October 2013, Neag researchers from UConn's Center for Education Policy Analysis collected data in each of the pilot districts. We collected three rounds of interviews with between 200 and 500 individuals in each round; two rounds of surveys with teachers with over 500 respondents in each round; and one round of surveys with school administrators (n=22).

Within each district, researchers interviewed superintendents, assistant superintendents (where applicable), and a sample of principals, teachers, and other educators who are evaluated under the SEED framework. We also interviewed presidents of union locals, state-level union leaders, and Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) representatives who provided the training on the SEED model to educators in the pilot districts.

The 14 pilot districts were identified by the SDE from a larger group of districts that volunteered to take part in the pilot program. In each of the 14 districts, we selected a sample of schools and educators within those schools using a two-stage, stratified sampling technique. We selected a minimum of 20% of the schools at each level (high school, middle school, elementary school) based on characteristics that might influence policy implementation such as the student population served, leadership turnover, and initiatives or programs of study (e.g., dual language program, alternative education program). Thirty-seven schools were purposely sampled to reflect a wide range of school settings and grade levels. In the consortia, we collected data in all schools. In each school, we interviewed the principal and, in some cases, an assistant principal.

Educators (teachers and others who are evaluated with the same framework) within these same schools were randomly selected to obtain an interview sample representing teachers of a range of grade levels and subjects and non-teaching personnel with a range of assignments. We deliberately stratified our samples of educators by three types: core academic teachers, related arts educators, and student support personnel. We used the ratios across these categories present in each school to determine the number of interview participants in each category for that school. Random samples of educators were then drawn by researchers.

Findings

We gathered data related to SEED's implementation, educators' experiences with SEED, and initial outcomes of SEED.

Implementation

We found that all pilot districts implemented almost all aspects of the SEED model. Districts focused their efforts on two components of the SEED model in particular: the Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) component, worth 45% of a teacher's rating, and Instructional Practice, constituting 40% of a teacher's rating. Participants reported that they had received more observations and feedback than in prior years.

Specifically, we found:

- The number of baseline observations required by SEED (3 formal, 3 informal) proved challenging, but most districts were able to complete 2 formal and 2 informal observations:
    - 69% of teachers surveyed reported having two or more informal observations; 64% reported two or more formal observations
- Educators reported increased time on evaluation activities compared to prior (pre-SEED) years:
    - 50% of teachers reported that they had been observed more than in previous years
    - 74% of teachers reported spending more time on goal setting than under previous evaluation systems

We found that the following components of SEED were implemented with less fidelity to the model than the SLO or instructional practice components: parent/peer feedback, student feedback, and the development of professional learning opportunities connected to evaluation results. Moreover, SEED for school administrators was implemented with less fidelity and on a much more compressed timeline than was SEED for teachers. This seemed largely due to districts' emphasis on implementing SLOs and observation for teachers.

Experiences

We found that most educators in the pilot districts agreed with the SEED model in theory. Very few educators rejected SEED out of hand. Participants, especially teachers, raised concerns about the way in which the SEED pilot was implemented. Teachers were particularly concerned about lack of training and information on how to develop SLOs. Specialists were particularly vocal about the ways in which SEED did not address their positions. Principals raised objections to the number of formal and informal observations required by the model. District leaders raised few objections other than concerns about the rushed implementation of the model in the pilot year. On the whole, participants feel that SEED should be better supported through additional guidance on SLOs and increased professional development. This may help shift the perception of many educators in the pilot districts that SEED was a system emphasizing their evaluation rather than their development.

In addition, we found:

- 58% of teachers and 59% of administrators surveyed felt that their summative ratings under SEED were accurate
- 57% of teachers surveyed felt that their post-observation conferences under SEED were "valuable"
- Of those teachers who reported that they had spent more time in post-observations conferences under SEED than under prior systems, 69% felt that these meetings were valuable
- 55% of teachers surveyed reported that being observed under SEED was somewhat or very valuable
- 94% of administrators reported that observing teachers under SEED was somewhat or very valuable to them
- 68% of teachers surveyed found analyzing student data valuable

Educators raised concerns about whether their evaluators had sufficient time and resources to carry out SEED as the 2012-13 model prescribed. Other survey and interview data suggest that evaluators found time to do the evaluations, but that scaling back some requirements may be warranted. Specifically:

- While 51% of teachers felt their evaluators had the knowledge to evaluate them accurately, only 17% of teachers felt that their supervisor had the time and resources to implement SEED.

Outcomes

We also examined short-term outcomes of SEED. Given that 2012-13 was a pilot year and that many of the resources to support SEED were being developed as the model was implemented for the first time, we would not expect to see large positive outcomes. At this stage of implementation, it is reasonable to expect modest changes in practice.

Consistent with this expectation, teachers expressed mixed views on whether SLOs changed their practice, but were more positive about the influence of observations on their teaching. Administrators reported modest changes as a result of administrator SEED.

- 44% of teachers surveyed agreed that feedback from observations prompted them to change their practice
- 55% of administrators surveyed indicated that setting SLOs led teachers to make changes in their teaching practice
- 42% of teachers surveyed felt that with sufficient resources, such as time and staffing, SEED could improve teacher practice at their school
- 74% of administrators surveyed felt that with sufficient resources, such as time and staffing, SEED could improve teacher practice at their school

Variations

We found variations by school level, teachers' tenure status, and district. Elementary teachers and non-tenured teachers reported that they had received a higher number of observations than their secondary school and tenured counterparts. They also reported SEED to be more valuable and have greater potential benefits than did their secondary school and tenured counterparts. Districts with lower student performance and multiple initiatives underway reported less robust implementation and less favorable attitudes towards SEED's current or potential impact on practice.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, we recommend that the State Department of Education carry out the following:

1. **Provide additional opportunities for all educators to learn about SEED.** There is a need for additional professional learning opportunities for all educators with respect to SEED. Professional learning needs fall into two categories: one is better understanding and implementing the technical aspects of SEED (setting goals, conducting observations, and providing post-observation feedback) and the other is improved development of educators (by providing individualized and targeted professional development). We strongly recommend that both administrators *and* teachers receive this training, rather than relying on a train-the-trainer model as was the case in the pilot year of SEED.

2. **Build the skills of evaluators, in particular.** Teacher survey and interview data indicated substantial variability in the perceived skill level of evaluators. This variance occurred within and across districts, and even within schools. Such a finding points to the need for administrators to develop and refine their supervisory skills. We suggest there be processes for identifying evaluators in need of improvement and then offering specialized training to these individuals. The SDE, along with professional organizations and regional consortia, should provide professional development to evaluators in using the CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching, conducting formal and informal observations, and providing verbal and written feedback. These professional learning opportunities are critical to the success of any teacher evaluation reform.

3. **Increase the use of complementary observers.** Educators reported that SEED places significant time demands on school administrators. We recommend that districts consider including complementary observers within their teacher evaluation systems. Including complementary evaluators not only reduces the time demands on principals and assistant principals, but also enhances the professional role of teachers by providing additional leadership roles for teachers. Under the moniker of peer assistance and review, such systems have been adopted by several high-profile

districts in other states (e.g. Cincinnati, Montgomery County, MD) and have shown promising outcomes in terms of teacher performance and student learning. The SDE can help by sharing effective models with those in the field and providing the required training for complementary observers.

4. **Provide additional guidance on Student Learning Objectives and Indicators of Academic Growth and Development.** As SEED has begun in earnest, we recommend that the SDE continue to provide clear guidance on the identification of valid IAGD targets. The SMART goals heuristic is helpful although does not dictate what performance level or student growth target is both "attainable" and sufficiently challenging. Some teachers or administrators are selecting far too challenging targets while others are choosing far too easy. The setting of IAGD growth targets is in most cases inherently arbitrary. Should 100% of students score a 70% on an exam or should 70% of students score at 100%? If half the students fall below a certain performance level at the beginning of the year, what percentage should reasonably be expected to meet it by the end of the year? Further, what is meant by growth differs based on the measures available (e.g., contrast pre and post measures from a vertically-scaled assessment with static measures of performance on a locally developed test). There are checks and balances built into the system, such as the mid-year check-ins, that are intended to provide at least one opportunity to adjust growth goals. However, the selection of IAGD targets is an area that deserves close attention as the SEED model evolves.

5. **Clarify and contextualize SEED to district and school personnel.** Teachers in pilot districts expressed trepidation over the number and magnitude of new reform initiatives they faced, and viewed teacher evaluation as adding "one more thing" to their already busy agenda. It would be helpful if educational leaders and policy makers demonstrated how educator evaluation interfaces with the implementation of other major initiatives such as the Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessments. Moreover, make clear to districts any flexibility they have with regard to implementing SEED or the Core Requirements. Administrators are interpreting SEED with more rigidity than the model actually requires.

6. **Disseminate promising practices.** We recommend a coordinated effort by SDE and/or regional district consortia to identify and disseminate "promising practices" relative to SEED and educator evaluation. Connecticut educators represent an extraordinarily rich source of ingenuity and talent and should be actively engaged in the continuous improvement of evaluation as they adapt the model to their own district contexts and explore new processes. In some settings we found evidence of schools using SEED to promote deep conversations about teaching and learning. For example, one school piloted the use of video cameras to facilitate the evaluation of teachers. Teachers reported that this approach reduced their anxiety to "perform" in front a live observer and facilitated conversations with their evaluator by helping

them understand the evaluator's feedback.

7. **Provide additional assistance to low-performing districts to support SEED's implementation.** We believe that the state should provide additional assistance to low-performing districts to support the implementation of SEED. This recommendation is supported by our finding that lower-performing districts with multiple initiatives underway encountered particular challenges in implementing SEED. Providing additional support and assistance to these districts may help them integrate SEED with other initiatives and increase the chance that the reform spurs positive change in their schools and classrooms.

8. **Continue to track SEED's implementation and effects.** We recommend that the state continue to gather data from educators at regular intervals to inform the continuous improvement of the model. In addition, we recommend tracking the model's utility in rating the annual performance of educators and administrators. Specifically, we recommend that the relationship between SEED and student achievement be examined.

Introduction

In June 2012, the Connecticut General Assembly passed legislation mandating that the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) be piloted in the 2012-13 school year. The Neag School of Education was directed to study the enactment of SEED or the Core Requirements in the pilot school districts and report findings to the State Board of Education and Education Committee to inform future implementation of SEED. The purpose of our study was to examine the implementation and short-term outcomes of Connecticut's new educator evaluation model in the 10 pilot school districts/consortia (14 districts in total). Our broader aim was to provide feedback on SEED's pilot implementation so that the model could be improved and better support improvements to teachers' practice and students' learning.

Between fall, 2012, and fall, 2013, we collected quantitative and qualitative data in all 14 pilot districts. Data addressed SEED's implementation; educators' experiences with SEED; and key outcomes of SEED's pilot year.

Based on these data, we find that SEED was implemented in the pilot sites with a relatively high degree of fidelity to the model. Moreover, most educators in the pilot sites supported the model in the abstract and found several aspects of SEED (e.g., post-observation conferences with evaluators) quite valuable. There is some evidence of changed practices on the part of teachers and administrators due to SEED. While SEED's components were generally implemented with fidelity, opportunities for professional growth through SEED were not fully realized. To a great extent, these challenges were due to the lack of clear and consistent communication to educators about SEED and inadequate opportunities for educators to construct a robust understanding of this new approach to evaluation. Educators attempted to understand the complexities of the technical and practical aspects of SEED. However, the tight implementation timeline in some cases encouraged compliance behaviors rather than full engagement with the model.

This emphasis on compliance is not uncommon during the initial stages of a major reform initiative as participants and implementers adapt to a new set of rules and routines. We expect that districts will begin to experience greater benefits of SEED as educators become accustomed to its components and adapt SEED to their own contexts. Our data suggest that, if sufficiently supported, SEED has good potential to improve teachers' practice and students' learning.

The report is organized as follows. Section II presents the methods employed for this study. Section III presents the findings and is organized into three sub-sections: one on implementation, one on educators' experiences with SEED, and the final section devoted to outcomes of SEED for its pilot year. We conclude with section IV, which presents recommendations based on our analyses of the data. This report represents

the final deliverable as requested by Public Act No. 12-116. During our year of data collection and analysis, oral presentations were made to the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council on February 4, 2013 and July 10, 2013. These interim reports were designed to provide state policy makers with timely feedback on the first two phases of the evaluation cycle.

Methods

Our study followed a mixed methods research design. Between September 2012 and October 2013, we collected qualitative and quantitative data describing the implementation of SEED. We examined three sets of research questions related to policy implementation, educator experiences, and policy outcomes:

SEED Policy Implementation

1. How was SEED enacted in each pilot site? Was there fidelity to the State Model?
2. Did SEED create opportunities for professional growth for teachers and administrators? To what extent were these differentiated across individuals or subgroups?
3. What variations occurred? What explains these variations?

Educator Experiences with SEED

4. How did educators in pilot sites experience SEED?
5. What variations occurred? What explains these variations?

SEED Policy Outcomes

6. To what extent did educators report changing their practices as a result of the SEED?
7. To what extent was there variation in evaluation ratings within schools and districts at the conclusion of the SEED pilot year?
8. What variations occurred? What explains these variations?

Sample

District Sample

Fourteen public school districts (eight stand-alone districts and two multi-district consortia) were chosen by the State Department of Education (SDE) to serve as pilot sites. Participating districts represent a range of settings from across the state (see Tables 1 and 2 for district characteristics). CSDE selected the 14 pilot districts from a larger group of districts that volunteered to take part in the pilot program. These 14 districts employed 3,406.5 full time equivalent (FTE) general education teachers in 2010-2011, which was nine percent of the FTE general education positions in the state. These districts were responsible for educating 52,401 students that same year, which is also nine percent of the state's enrollment.

Table 1. Student and Teacher Demographics for Pilot Districts

District	# of Schools	# of Students	% FRPL	% Special Ed	% ELL	# FTE Gen Ed Teachers	Mean Gen Ed Salary
Bethany	1	491	4.5%	12.5%	< 1.0%	37.9	$54,271
Branford	5	3,363	18.8%	13.4%	3.8%	244.3	$67,956
Bridgeport	32	20,087	98.8%	12.4%	13.0%	1,133.3	$64,787
CEFS							
Columbia	1	539	10.9%	7.9%	< 1.0%	41.8	$66,383
Eastford	1	178	9.6%	12.8%	-	13.9	$58,244
Franklin	1	222	13.1%	10.9%	-	15.5	$62,929
Sterling	1	482	32.0%	10.5%	-	32.0	$54,472
CREC	12	4,241	43.1%	10.5%	2.2%	323.5	$65,349
Litchfield/ Region 6							
Litchfield	3	1,169	9.4%	10.0%	< 1.0%	85.9	$67,578
Region 6	4	1,042	12.1%	11.0%	1.2%	78.8	$65,110
Norwalk	19	11,050	43.2%	10.1%	12.3%	711.2	$80,660
Waterford	5	2,800	12.4%	11.2%	1.2%	192.6	$74,198
Windham	6	3,124	75.5%	17.4%	26.7%	221.3	$61,825
Windsor	7	3,613	28.1%	12.5%	2.7%	274.5	$61,827
State	*1.017*	*570,494*	*34.4%*	*11.6%*	*5.5%*	*35,977.4*	*$67,878*

Data from the State Department of Education, 2010-2011

Table 2. Student Achievement in Pilot Districts

District	% Students At Goal in Grade 3 CMT - Reading	% Students At Goal in Grade 3 CMT - Writing	% Students At Goal in Grade 3 CMT - Math
Bethany	74.6%	66.2%	66.2%
Branford	66.7%	62.6%	74.6%
Bridgeport	22.5%	29.7%	27.5%
CEFS			
Columbia	64.9%	65.5%	72.4%
Eastford	-	-	-
Franklin	-	-	-
Sterling	52.9%	60.8%	62.7%
CREC	70.9%	65.1%	62.0%
Litchfield/ Region 6			
Litchfield	64.6%	67.4%	68.7%
Region 6	65.4%	50.0%	61.7%
Norwalk	51.9%	56.4%	62.5%
Waterford	70.9%	77.9%	70.0%
Windham	36.6%	34.0%	35.9%
Windsor	46.8%	43.7%	52.8%
State	*58.4%*	*61.1%*	*63.3%*

Data from the State Department of Education, 2010-2011

School Sample

In each of the pilot districts, we purposively selected a sample of schools in which to conduct focus groups and interviews. We selected a minimum of 20% of the schools at each level (high school, middle school, elementary school) based on characteristics that might influence policy implementation, such as the student population served, leadership turnover, and initiatives or programs of study (e.g., dual language program, alternative education program). In small districts with only one school at each level, we included all of that district's schools in the sample. In the consortia sites, we included schools from each district. In total, 41 schools participated in the focus groups and interviews for this study, representing 42% of the schools in the pilot districts.

All schools in the pilot districts were invited to participate in the two surveys; further detail is provided below.

Interview and Focus Group Sample

Superintendents from each pilot district and, in some cases, other central office personnel, participated in interviews.

We selected educators within each sample school to participate in interviews and focus groups. We included all principals and, in some schools, also an assistant principal or Dean of Students, from each school in our sample. In total, 37 school leaders participated in the study (see Tables 3-5 for interview and focus group participants by district/consortium for each round of data collection).

In addition to school leaders, we sampled educators who are evaluated under the teacher portion of SEED. For this group, we selected participants to represent a range of grade levels, subjects, and roles within the school. We deliberately included other personnel, such as school psychologists and speech pathologists, who are evaluated under SEED. We randomly selected teachers and specialists to represent 20% of each school's faculty. We weighted these random samples to reflect the proportions of core academic teachers (i.e. teachers of mathematics, science, English Language Arts, and social sciences), related arts teachers (e.g., arts, physical education, world languages), and specialists (e.g., special education teacher, school counselor) present in the school. Samples were drawn by researchers; school or district leaders were not involved in sample selection (see Tables 3-5 for interview and focus group samples by phase of data collection).

Table 3. Interview and Focus Group Sample in Phase 1 by Pilot District/Consortium

	Number of Interview/Focus Group Participants in Phase 1					
District/Consortium	Schools*	District Leaders	School Leaders	Teachers	Specialists	*Total*
Bethany	1	0	2	10	2	*15*
Branford	2	2	0	11	3	*18*
Bridgeport	7	1	7	73	9	*97*
CEFS[1]	4	4	5	41	3	*57*
CREC[2]	6	1	6	31	2	*46*
Litchfield/Region 6	4	2	5	13	8	*32*
Norwalk	3	1	3	36	5	*48*
Waterford	2	2	3	27	3	*37*
Windham	4	2	4	26	23	*59*
Windsor	2	2	2	28	9	*43*
Total	*35*	*17*	*37*	*296*	*67*	*452*

*Schools in target sample; [1] Columbia-Eastford-Franklin-Sterling; [2] Capitol Region Education Council

Table 4. Interview and Focus Group Sample in Phase 2 by Pilot District/Consortium

	Number of Interview/Focus Group Participants in Phase 2					
District/Consortium	Schools*	District Leaders	School Leaders	Teachers	Specialists	*Total*
Bethany	1	0	2	6	0	*8*
Branford	3	0	0	10	2	*12*
Bridgeport	3	2	1	25	8	*36*
CEFS[1]	4	2	3	34	0	*39*
CREC[2]	5	1	4	29	2	*36*
Litchfield/Region 6	5	0	3	19	2	*24*
Norwalk	1	2	0	1	0	*3*
Waterford	0	2	0	0	0	*2*
Windham	4	2	4	31	11	*48*
Windsor	1	0	1	0	0	*1*
Total	*27*	*11*	*18*	*155*	*25*	*209*

*Schools in target sample; [1] Columbia-Eastford-Franklin-Sterling; [2] Capitol Region Education Council

Table 5. Interview and Focus Group Sample in Phase 3 by Pilot District/Consortium

	Number of Interview/Focus Group Participants in Phase 3					
District/Consortium	Schools*	District Leaders	School Leaders	Teachers	Specialists	*Total*
Bethany	1		2	4	2	*8*
Branford	3	2		10	1	*13*
Bridgeport	6		1	42	15	*58*
CEFS[1]	4	2	1	29		*32*
CREC[2]	6	1		34	1	*36*
Litchfield/Region 6	3	2	3	19	6	*30*
Norwalk	5	2	3	56	2	*63*
Waterford	3	1	2	29	3	*35*
Windham	4	2	5	24	15	*46*
Windsor	2	2	7	22	5	*36*
Total	*37*	*14*	*24*	*269*	*50*	*357*

*Schools in target sample; [1] Columbia-Eastford-Franklin-Sterling; [2] Capitol Region Education Council

We also interviewed union presidents in all but one pilot district and state-level union representatives from CEA and AFT-Connecticut (n=16). Lastly, we interviewed trainers from the Regional Educational Support Councils (RESCs) involved with SEED trainings and roll-out. These participants provided additional information about the context of SEED design and implementation and provided a source for triangulation of data provided by district and school leaders and teachers.

Survey Samples

We invited all educators within the sample schools to participate in surveys during winter/spring, 2012, and again in fall, 2013. Between 17% and 81% of teachers within each sample school responded to the first survey, yielding a total number of 684 participants; between 13% and 53% of teachers within the sample schools responded to the second survey, yielding 533 participants[1] (see Tables 6-7 for survey samples and response rates and Table 8 for characteristics of teachers in survey samples).

[1] It was important to provide anonymity to educators so they could feel comfortable being honest in their survey responses. Therefore we did not ask participants to identify themselves on the surveys and cannot determine what percentage of educators responded to both surveys.

Table 6. Survey Sample and Response Rates for First Survey

District/Consortium	Schools*	Sample		School Population**		District Population***	
	n	n	%	n	%	n	%
Bethany	1	16	2%	67	24%	67	24%
CEFS	3	69	10%	120	58%	130	53%
CREC	6	142	21%	175	81%	516	28%
Litchfield/Region 6	5	80	12%	177	45%	209	38%
Norwalk	3	58	9%	342	17%	892	7%
Waterford	3	84	12%	160	53%	244	34%
Windham	3	138	20%	217	64%	302	46%
Windsor	1	97	14%	288	34%	387	25%
Total	*25*	*684*	*100%*	*1,546*	*44%*	*2,747*	*25%*

*Bridgeport did not participate in the survey dissemination
**Percentage of target sample
***Percentage of entire district/consortia; not adjusted for reduced sample of schools

Table 7. Survey Sample and Response Rates for Second Survey

District/Consortium	Schools*	Sample		School Population**		District Population***	
	n	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Branford	3	68	13%	215	32%	309	22%
Bridgeport	4	91	17%	373	24%	1,607	6%
CEFS	2	16	3%	66	24%	71	23%
CREC	5	92	17%	175	53%	516	18%
Litchfield/Region 6	6	34	6%	177	19%	209	16%
Norwalk	6	47	9%	342	14%	892	5%
Waterford	5	59	11%	160	37%	244	24%
Windham	6	90	17%	217	41%	302	30%
Windsor	1	36	7%	288	13%	387	9%
Total	*38*	*533*	*100%*	*2,067*	*26%*	*4,596*	*12%*

*Bethany, Franklin, and Sterling did not participate in the second survey
**Percentage of target sample
***Percentage of entire district/consortia; not adjusted for reduced sample of schools

Of the 683 teachers who responded to the first survey, 25% (n=173) were not tenured, 56% (n=383) were tenured, and 19% (n=127) declined to indicate tenure status. Twenty-five percent (n=167) taught at the elementary school level, 15% (n=101) taught at the middle school level, and 39% (n=263) taught at the high school level; 13% (n=92) declined to indicate grade level. There were similar patterns of representation in the sample for the second survey. Of the 533 teachers who responded to the second survey, 15% (n=82) were not tenured, 67% (n=356) were tenured, and 18% (n=95) declined to indicate their tenure status. A third (33%, n=178) of respondents teach at the

elementary school level, 19% (n=101) teacher at the middle school level, and 27% (n=143) teach at the high school level; 21% (n=111) declined to indicate their grade level.

Table 8. Characteristics of Teachers in Survey Samples

	Mid-Year Survey		End of Year Survey	
	n	%	*n*	%
Experience Teaching				
1-4 years	202	30%	46	9%
5-10 years	164	24%	100	19%
11-15 years	83	12%	94	18%
16-20 years	41	6%	80	15%
> 20 years	55	8%	125	24%
Declined to Answer	138	20%	88	17%
Highest Degree				
Bachelor's	5	1%	20	4%
Masters of Education	317	46%	256	48%
Other Masters	198	29%	159	30%
Doctorate	20	3%	11	3%
Declined to Answer	143	21%	93	17%
Race/Ethnicity				
Black/African	17	3%	16	3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	12	2%	8	2%
Hispanic/Latino	18	3%	25	5%
Native American	3	< 1%	2	< 1%
White	457	67%	369	69%
Declined to Answer	176	24%	118	22%
Gender				
Female	431	63%	336	63%
Male	49	7%	76	14%
Declined to Answer	203	30%	121	23%

We also administered one survey to school administrators in fall, 2013. Twenty-two administrators from eight districts and 14 schools completed the survey. The majority of respondents were principals (55%), with 23% identifying as assistant principals and the remaining 23% declining to indicate. Fifty percent of respondents reported having fewer than 5 years of experience as an administrator.

Table 9. Respondent Demographics for Administrator Survey (n=22)

	n	*%*
Role		
Principal	12	55%
Assistant Principal	5	23%
Declined to Indicate	5	23%
Years of Experience		
1 – 4 Years	11	50%
5 – 10 Years	5	23%
11 – 15 Years	2	9%
16 – 20 Years	0	0%
More than 20 Years	0	0%
Declined to Indicate	2	10%
Years at Current School		
1 – 4 Years	6	27%
5 – 10 Years	4	18%
11 – 15 Years	5	23%
16 – 20 Years	1	5%
More than 20 Years	2	9%
Declined to Indicate	2	9%

Data Collection

We collected data in four phases.

Phase 1: Between October and December 2012, we interviewed superintendents (and other district leaders, in some cases), principals, district union presidents and state-level union representatives. We also conducted focus groups with teachers and student support personnel in sample schools.

Phase 2: Between January and mid-April 2013, we conducted a second round of interviews and focus groups with principals, teachers, and student support personnel. We also administered surveys to teachers and student support personnel in the sample schools.

Phase 3: In May and June 2013, we conducted a final round of interviews and focus groups with superintendents, principals, teachers, and student support personnel. Follow-up interviews with union personnel were also conducted.

Phase 4: In September 2013, we administered a second survey to teachers and student support personnel.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using standard quantitative and qualitative analytic techniques. For survey analysis, we computed descriptive statistics and performed t-tests to discern differences between groups. For interview and focus group data, we completed thematic summaries for many interviews and completed cross-case analyses of the data.

Limitations

As with all research, this study has limitations. The main weakness of this study's design is its reliance on self-reported data obtained through interviews and surveys. We attempted to address this weakness in the design through triangulation of data sources and findings. Specifically, we gathered data on similar topics from multiple stakeholders (e.g. teachers and principals), through varied data collection instruments (i.e. interview and survey), and at multiple points during SEED's implementation. Through these varied forms of data, we attempted to reduce the bias that can arise through self-report.

Note on Terminology

Throughout this report we use the general term "teachers" to refer to those individuals evaluated under SEED's teacher portion. Thus, "specialists" such as school psychologists are included under the umbrella term of "teacher." When the data indicated differences between classroom teachers and specialists, we note that by explicitly referring to the experiences of "specialists."

Findings on the Implementation of SEED

Consistent with our charge, we examined the implementation of SEED within the 14 pilot districts. In this section, we discuss our findings related to the implementation of SEED for teachers and school administrators. We present data that responds to the following questions:

1. How was SEED enacted in each pilot site? Was there fidelity to the State Model?
2. Did SEED create opportunities for professional growth for teachers and administrators? To what extent were these differentiated across individuals or subgroups?
3. What variations occurred? What explains these variations?

In general, we found that schools and districts in the pilot program implemented all of the components of the SEED model. However, in many cases districts did not fully implement each component of the model or implemented components in ways that did not capitalize on SEED's potential to improve teachers' or leaders' practices. This finding is consistent with research on the first year of other new initiatives in education or other sectors.[2] In addition, many schools focused on basic compliance with the SEED policy rather than using SEED to drive improvements in educators' practices. This focus on compliance is to be expected given the pilot nature of the implementation in 2012-13. Districts' timeline for implementing SEED was fast and the development of resources to support SEED sometimes lagged implementation in pilot districts. We further found that schools with the greatest challenges (i.e., very low student achievement and multiple reform initiatives) seemed to have the most difficulties in using the model to drive improvements in practice.

In the sections below, we first discuss the fidelity of implementation of various components of SEED, including observations, post-observation conferences, professional growth opportunities, and the administrator-evaluation portion of SEED. We then turn to variations in implementation.

Fidelity to SEED

Assessing fidelity of implementation is important because it can help surface areas of the model that are particularly challenging, unclear, or working well. Fidelity data are also helpful as a backdrop when judging the short-term outcomes of the model. Our

[2] See, for example, the Concerns-Based Adoption Model, which posits a predictable series of behavior among individuals faced with significant organizational change (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987). A cogent summary can be found on the National Academy of Sciences website at http://www.nas.edu/rise/backg4a.htm.

purpose was not to "catch" districts not adhering to the model but rather to assess the efficacy of the model among pilots and to inform our own work as evaluators.

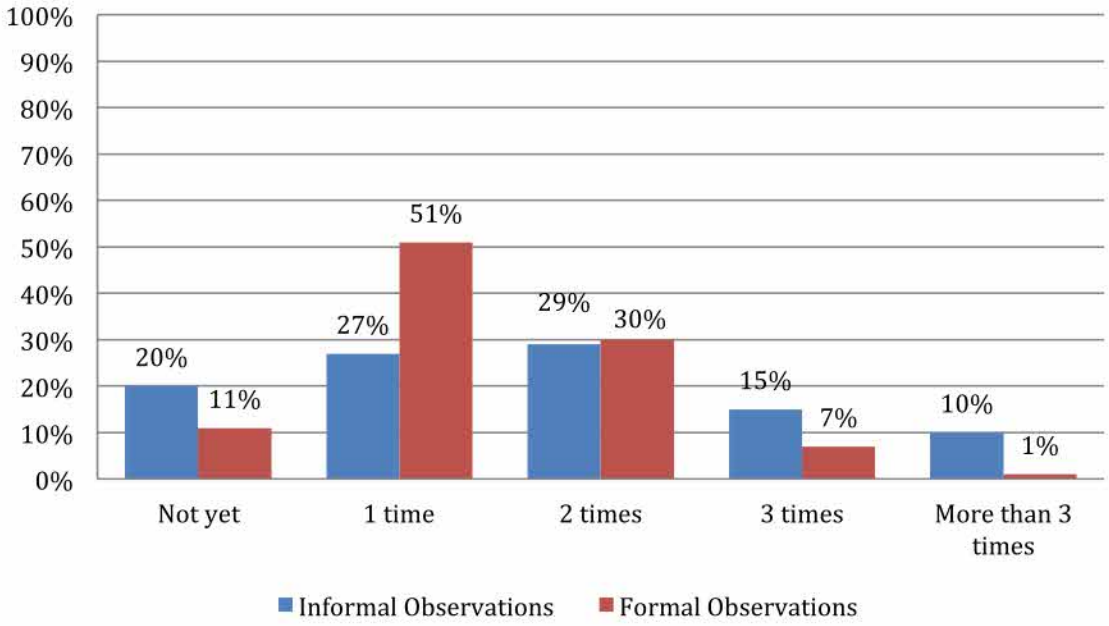
SEED requires that teachers be assessed based on the degree to which they attain their Student Learning Objectives (SLOs); their performance on three formal and three informal observations; parent feedback; and whole-school measures of student learning or student feedback. We assessed the extent to which SEED was implemented with fidelity by gathering data on the degree to which the following components of the model were enacted: Student Learning Objective (goal) setting, classroom observations, and conferences between educators and their evaluators, including the mid-year and summative conference. We further ask whether professional growth opportunities were made available to teachers in connection with SEED and whether they were assessed based on parent feedback and whole-school measures of student learning or student feedback. At the conclusion of this section, we discuss the fidelity of implementation of SEED's school administrator portion.

Observations

A major component of SEED is classroom observations, guided by a rubric specifying different gradations of quality in instructional practice. SEED prescribed three formal and three informal observations for all teachers in the pilot districts. We found that principals encountered substantial challenges to completing the prescribed number of observations. Overall, we found that while a sizeable portion of the teachers reported that they had received the prescribed three observations in each category, the majority reported they had received fewer.

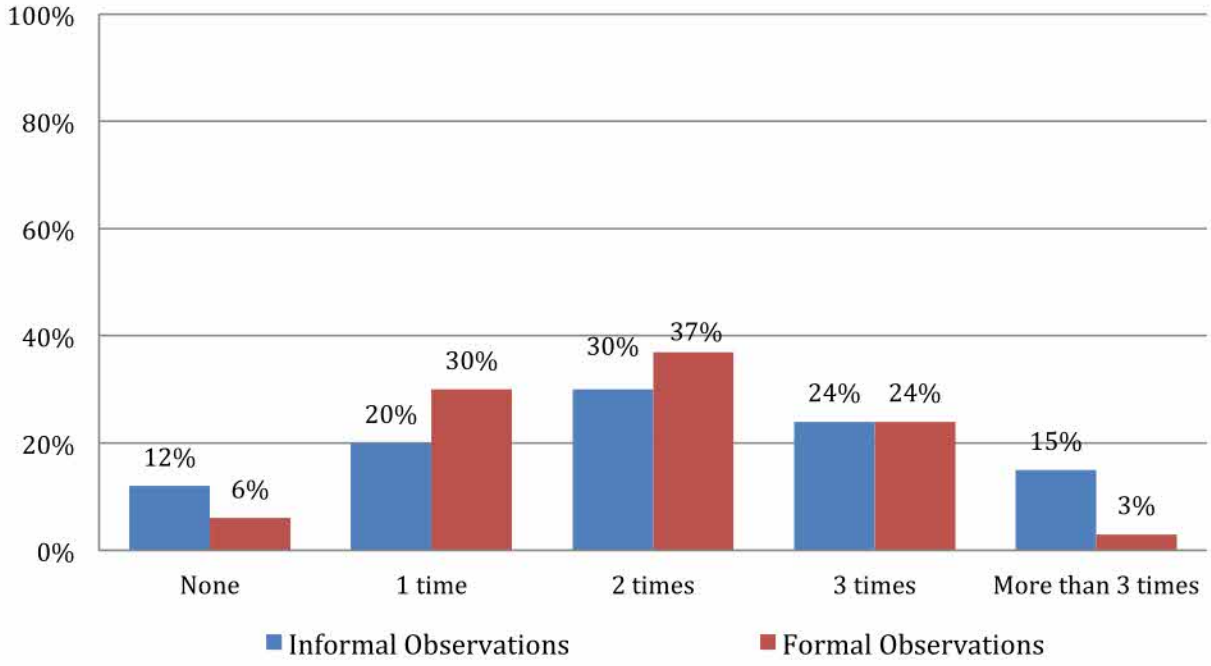
In surveys administered between February and April, 2013, 25% of teachers reported that they had been informally observed at least three times and 8% reported that they had been formally observed three or more times (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Number of Informal and Formal Observations (Spring 2013 Survey, *n*=684)



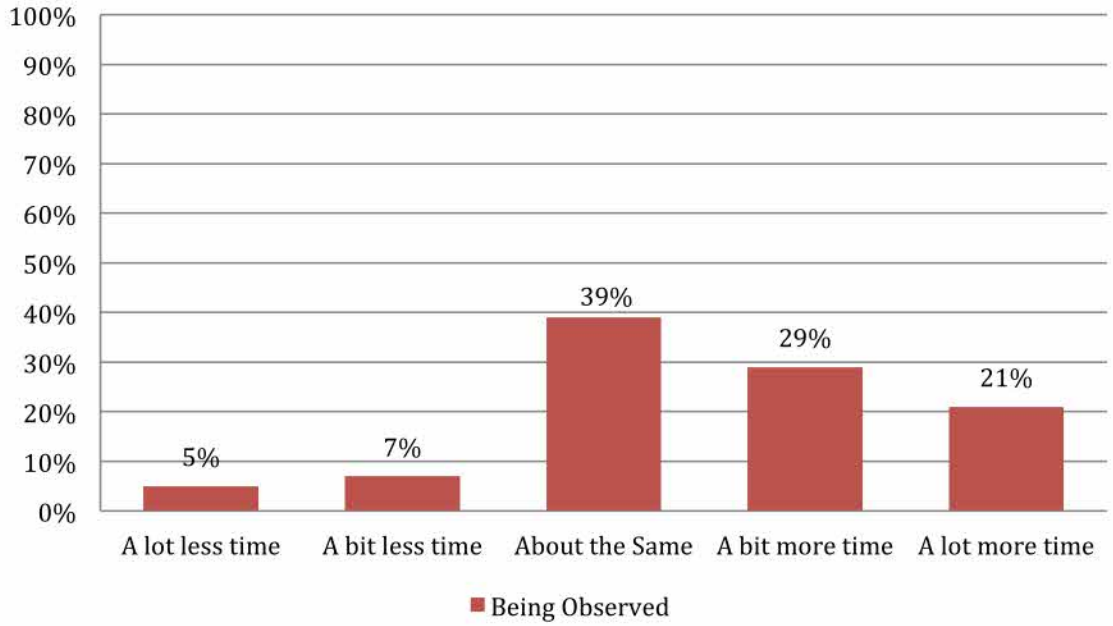
As would be expected, surveys administered in September 2013 demonstrated a higher number of observations completed. Thirty-nine percent of teachers reported that they had been observed informally at least three times with 27% reporting that they had been observed formally this often (Figure 2). The fact that 69% of teachers reported that they had received two or more informal observations and 64% reported that they had received two or more formal observations suggests that the requirement of two observations in each category (i.e., four observations in total) appears more feasible in a baseline year than the three of each observation mandated by the 2012-13 version of SEED.

Figure 2. Number of Informal and Formal Observations (Fall 2013 survey, *n*=533)



In interviews conducted in winter and spring, 2013, principals reported that they were doing more observations than in previous years. A considerable number of teachers reported that they received more observations under SEED than under their district's prior evaluation system. When surveyed, 21% of teachers reported that they spent a lot more time being observed this year (under SEED), compared to the prior year (under the prior evaluation system); another 29% reported that they spent a bit more time being observed in 2012-13 (fall survey, 2013). Thus, 50% of teachers surveyed reported being observed more under SEED than under their district's previous system (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Time Spent Being Observed Compared to Pre-SEED (Fall survey 2013, *n*=533)



School Administrators' Views

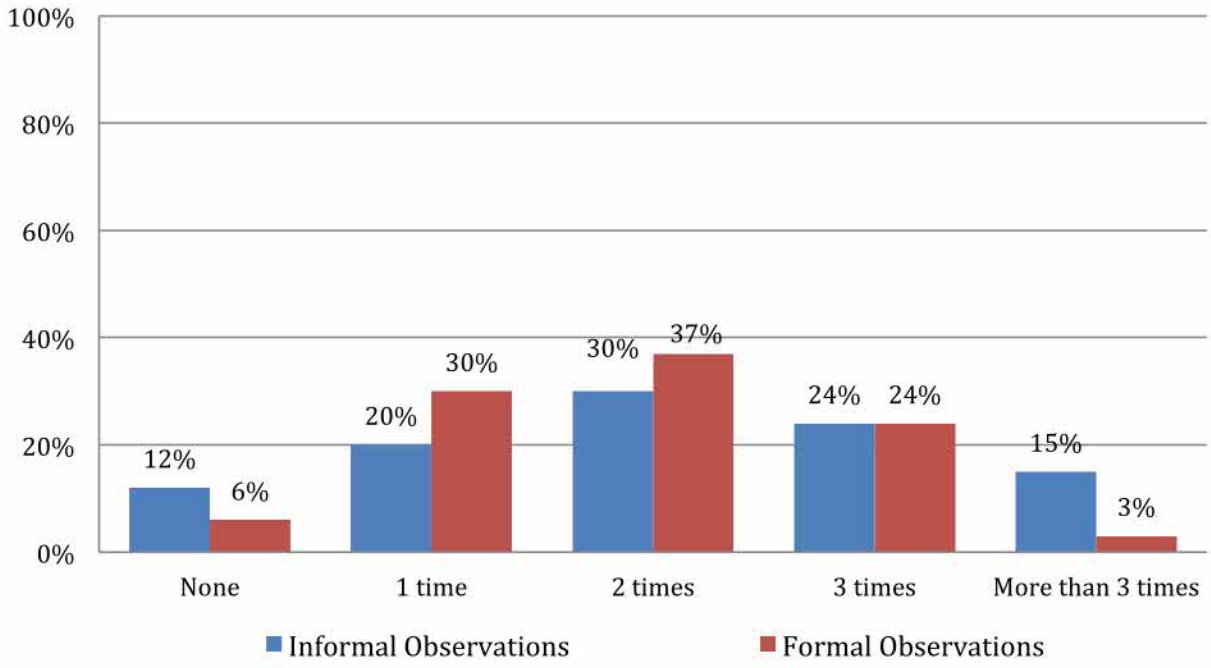
In fall 2013, we surveyed school administrators regarding the implementation of SEED for teachers. The sample size was relatively low (*n*=22), so we caution readers against putting too much faith in the exact estimates presented here. However, all statistics reported here are consistent with our qualitative findings, which increases our confidence in the validity of the survey findings despite the small sample size.

Administrators reported that evaluation loads ranged widely, from one elementary school assistant principal responsible for evaluating six teachers to another evaluator with a load of 56 teachers. The average evaluation load reported by surveyed administrators was 25 teachers, which was situated within a 95% confidence interval of between 19 to 31 teachers. A small subset of the administrators we surveyed (16%) were solely responsible for all teacher evaluations within their schools; approximately half (53%) of the administrators reported two or three evaluators in their schools and a third (32%) reported four or five evaluators within their schools. As discussed below, at least three schools used complementary observers to reduce administrators' evaluation loads.

Turning to number of observations reported, 27% of administrators indicated that they completed three or more formal observations per teacher and 39% indicated that they completed three or more informal observations per teacher (see Figure 4). These findings align with teacher reports. Approximately a third of administrators reported approaching the required number of observations expected in SEED, with 37% reporting

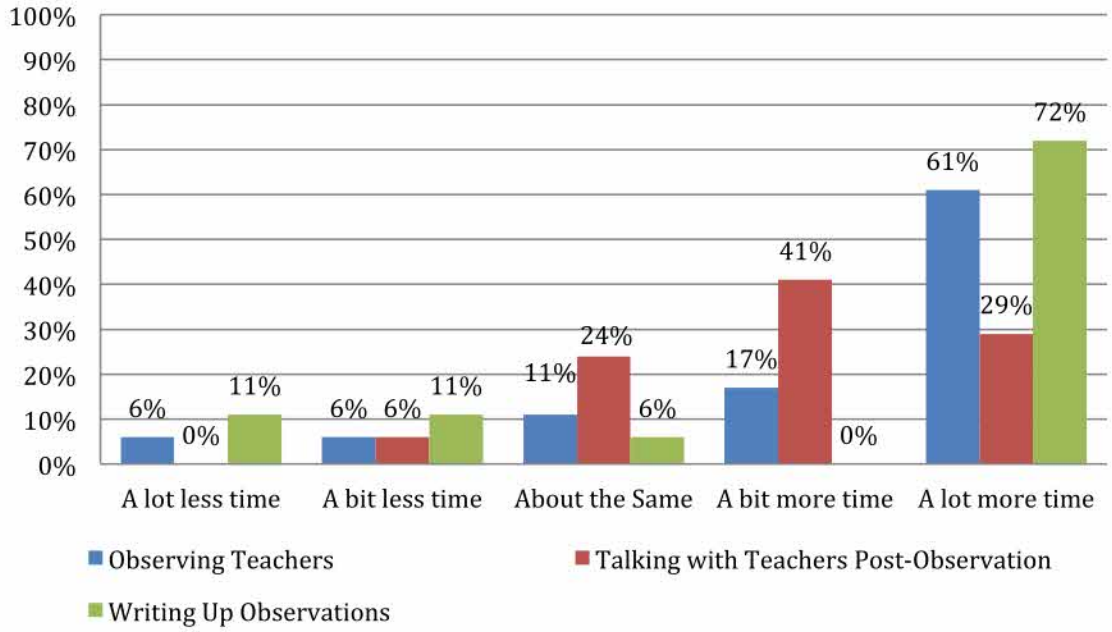
two formal observations and 30% reporting two informal observations; again, these findings align with teacher reports.

Figure 4. Distribution of Observations Reported by Administrators (*n*=22)



Consistent with these statistics, administrators reported spending considerably more time on observations than under previous evaluation systems. Seventy-eight percent of administrators surveyed reported that they had spent more time observing teachers under SEED than under their previous evaluation systems (Figure 5). Moreover, 72% of respondents indicated that they spent a lot more time writing up observations than they had done previously.

Figure 5. Administrator Time on Observation Tasks (*n*=22)



In interviews, almost all principals reported struggling to complete the required number of observations. Principals in many pilot sites stated that they devoted substantial time on a near-daily basis attending to observations and the corresponding pre- and post-observation conferences, and documenting the process. In response to principal feedback, three districts officially reduced the number of observations that they required principals to perform. Principals with larger evaluation loads were especially challenged in their efforts to complete observations. This was compounded in schools where principals were coordinating multiple initiatives in addition to SEED.

Consistent with these reports, at the end of the school year, teachers and leaders reported an increased frequency of observations as leaders attempted to complete the prescribed number of observations. Some teachers reported receiving two to three observations in the last 3-4 weeks of school. Asked in late May if he had completed the required number of observations, one principal said, "not as many as I'd like. It's a one-man show here." Another elementary principal responded: "for the most part."

Some districts brought in additional observers to help principals complete them. Administrators in several schools, located in Bridgeport, CREC, and Windham, reported using complementary evaluators in addition to evaluators in traditional school leadership roles. The sites in CREC and Windham used master teachers as peer observers and the Bridgeport site used central office administrators, coaches, and lead teachers as complementary evaluators.

Windham also drew on district-level administrators, particularly in schools with few administrators. One principal said this had ancillary benefits: it "saved me time and

helped me calibrate" and argued, "I like the idea of the complementary evaluators--it works."

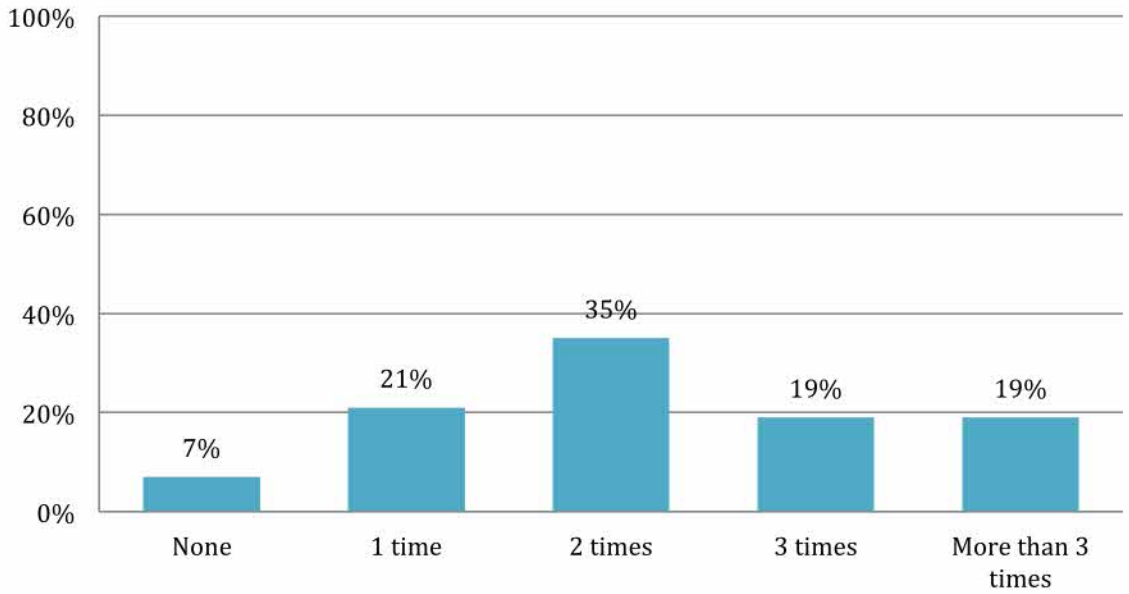
Several elementary principals reported that they had completed the prescribed number of observations but that this had greatly increased their workload. They reported that they were working 7-day weeks to complete their observations, whereas in previous years they could complete their work in 5-6 days per week.

On the whole, these data suggest that the prescribed three formal and three informal observations are hard to enact in a baseline year where every educator is evaluated. Two of each type of observation (four total) seems more attainable. Requiring a minimum of two types of each observation would encourage administrators to conduct regular observations while also protecting time so that they can maximize the value of each observation. The Core Requirements also allow for differentiation on the number of observations based on teacher experience, prior ratings, and needs and goals. SEED also affords administrators some discretion on this front.

Feedback and Conversations related to Observations

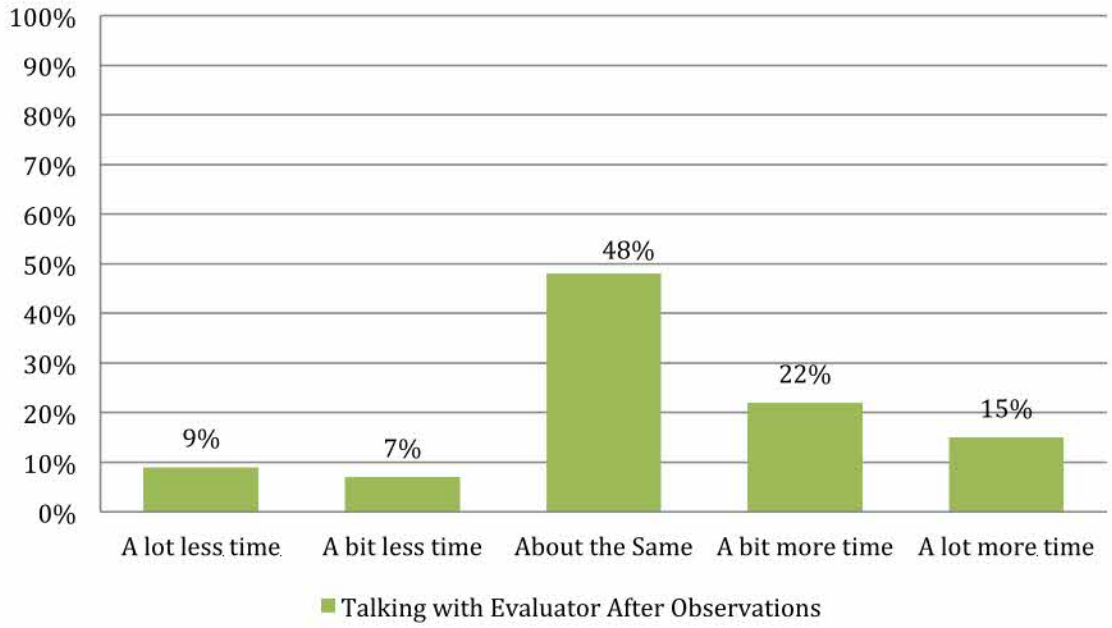
In our view, the most powerful aspect of the SEED model is its potential to improve practice through evidence-based conversations between leaders and teachers about teachers' practice. Seventy-three percent of teachers surveyed reported that they had had two or more post-observation feedback sessions (Figure 6). Seven percent said that they had no such sessions.

Figure 6. Frequency of Post-Observation Conferences (fall survey 2013, *n*=533)



More than a third (37%) of teachers surveyed in fall 2013 reported that they spent more time in post-observation conferences than they had in previous evaluation systems (see Figure 7). The plurality (48%) reported that the time spent in this activity was similar to that in the past.

Figure 7: Time Spent In Post-Observation Conferences (Fall Survey 2013, *n*=533)



As noted above, 70% of administrators reported spending more time in post-observation conferences with teachers than in years prior to SEED's implementation. The discrepancy between teachers and administrators regarding whether they had spent more time in post-observation conferences likely reflects the different experiences of these different educators. In prior years, tenured teachers were not evaluated annually. Under SEED, administrators needed to observe and conference with all teachers, which would generally result in an increase in overall time spent in conferences compared to prior years. Teachers may have interpreted this question to mean *compared to the years in which they underwent observation*; the time spent in post-observation conferences, at an individual level, might thus be higher for a lower proportion of teachers than administrators.

Although conferences were generally occurring and a sizeable minority of teachers and administrators spent more time in conferences than under previous evaluation systems, interviews with principals and teachers suggested that such meetings could be more substantive and meaningful. This comes as little surprise, given that this was a pilot year in which administrators were getting used to the system and focused on executing its parts. For example, principals reported that they had prioritized conducting observations over completing post-observation conferences. They said that sometimes they were unable to hold these meetings or, if they met with teachers, to make these

meetings as robust as they would have wanted. Moreover, teachers were asked if they were receiving and using feedback in a variety of ways.

- Overall, almost half (43%) of the teachers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they were receiving and using feedback under SEED (spring survey, 2013)
- Significantly fewer tenured teachers reported receiving and using feedback than non-tenured teachers, with $t(359) = 6.16$, $p < .001$. Only 35% of tenured teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they were receiving and using feedback via SEED, compared with 60% of non-tenured teachers (spring survey, 2013)

The difference between tenured and non-tenured teachers' responses was often an artifact of school leaders prioritizing observations and post-observation conferences with non-tenured teachers. Leaders reported that they felt that non-tenured teachers needed more assistance and feedback.

Our interviews with teachers and leaders suggested that debriefing conversations were often late and relatively brief (about 15-25 minutes long). Some debrief "conversations" were conducted through *My Learning Plan* or via email. In one school, no debrief conversations were reported. In others, the quality of debriefs varied across multiple evaluators within the same school.

Principals reported that they had made adaptations to SEED regarding the post-observation conference. Said one high school principal: "it's easy to get in [to classes]. The hard piece is to schedule the pre and post conference." The principal further explained that his strategy for post-observation conferences had become to "mostly catch teachers," "bump into them." Some principals stopped doing conferences with veterans whose observations indicated they were doing well and chose to spend their time instead with struggling veterans and more junior teachers with more areas to improve. Some principals held summative meetings in a group with teachers. One principal observed that it has been "a scheduling nightmare to get it all done." Another principal wished that specific (and single) domains within the rubric could be targeted during observations with early career teachers, thus affording the opportunity to achieve greater depth in one area of improvement rather than spread feedback over a wide array of domains, potentially diluting its impact. It is worth noting that several principals who were new to their building reported using the pre- and post-conferences as a way to get to know their faculty.

Mid-year Check-ins

We also gathered data specifically focused on mid-year check-ins. All districts enacted mid-year check-ins in the context of SEED. In the fall 2013 survey, the vast majority--86%--of teachers indicated that they had had a mid-year conference. However, 14% of teachers reported that they had not had these meetings, and interview data revealed that some mid-year check-ins happened quite late, in March or April.

Regarding the substance of mid-year check-ins, teachers reported that mid-year check-ins were generally brief discussions that did not delve deeply into teachers' instructional practice. According to teachers, most mid-year check-ins lasted 15-20 minutes. Many teachers were not aware that they could change their SLOs if revisions were justified and agreed to by their evaluator. Teachers in only four schools out of the entire sample reported that they had altered their goals in these meetings.

All principals interviewed or surveyed reported that they had held mid-year check-ins. When asked what constrained these opportunities, principals noted the high number of observations, pre-conferences, and post-conferences required by SEED. Principals reported that they had conducted some mid-year check-ins over e-mail because of the sheer number of meetings they needed to hold.

Summative Conferences

In our final round of data collection we asked teachers and school leaders about summative conferences. In the fall 2013 survey, 89% of teachers reported that they had had a summative conference with their evaluator for the previous school year, while 11% indicated that they had not had this meeting. A small percentage--4% of teachers (*n*=21)--indicated that they had had neither a mid-year conference nor a summative conference. These teachers many have been evaluated under their district's former evaluation system. Some principals reported that they were using their district's pre-existing evaluation systems for teachers in need of assistance. They and their supervisors feared that because SEED was in pilot status, any results based on the pilot year of SEED would not withstand legal scrutiny.

Moreover, in fall 2013 surveys, 90% of administrators indicated that they conducted summative conferences with all teachers assigned to them, but 10% indicated that they did not. About two thirds (63%) of administrators began holding summative conferences in May; 74% of administrators held summative conferences in June. A subset of administrators (16%) did not hold summative conferences before the 2012-13 school year ended; 11% held them over the summer and another 5% held them in September after the new school year began.

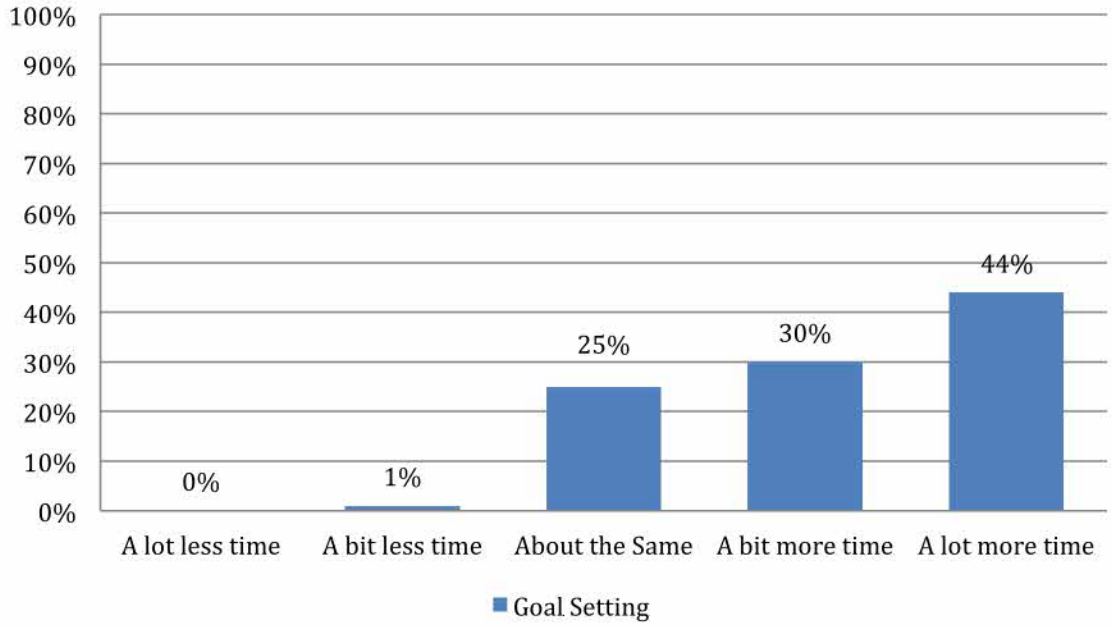
Goal Setting

Through all three rounds of our data collection, participants reported that goal setting [establishing Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs)] consumed a substantial portion of their time. These goal-setting activities caused considerable stress for educators in the fall, with many reporting that they received insufficient guidance in how to write appropriate SLOs and IAGDs. By spring 2013, teachers reported less anxiety about this component of SEED.

Most teachers reported spending more time setting goals for themselves as part of the SEED process than they did under previous evaluation systems. Almost half (44%) of teachers surveyed in fall 2013, reported that they spent "a lot more time" on goal

setting than in previous years (see Figure 8). In all, 74% of teachers reported that they spent more time on these activities than in the past and essentially no teachers reported spending less time.

Figure 8. Time Spent on Goal Setting (Fall 2013 survey, *n*=533)



According to SEED, goals must be "rigorous" and "attainable." The majority of teachers (59%) reported that their SLOs were both rigorous and attainable. Moreover, less than half of the 44% of teachers who reported that they spent "a lot" more time on goal setting in 2012-13 reported that time spent on goal setting was very valuable. These findings may be due to the fact that teachers and specialists reported that they received minimal training or information about SLOs as they developed them and thus spent much of the fall trying to figure out the process. As a result, many teachers and specialists reported a lack of clarity or confusion about SLOs. Key confusions included the following:

- What makes for a strong SLO? What does a strong SLO look like across different subject areas and grades? What is "ambitious but attainable"?
- What are standardized and non-standardized measures in different subject areas and grades?
- What percentage of students should Student Learning Objectives/Indicators of Academic Growth and Development cover?
- What constitutes a good professional practice goal?
- In middle and high schools, should teachers have SLOs and IAGDs for each class they teach, overarching goals for all classes, or target a subset of their classes?
- When is it appropriate to change SLOs and IAGDs before the end of the school year?

In the first round of data collection, teachers and specialists reported having great difficulty understanding what constituted an acceptable SLO. In some cases, teachers or specialists worked together to craft an SLO. In a number of cases, they employed different strategies to complete this task but did not engage in the goal-setting process as the model envisions. For example, the lack of clarity on SLOs frustrated teachers such that one reported saying to her administrator: "just tell me what to write." This sentiment of compliance was echoed across multiple focus groups in the first round of data collection. Teachers at another school shared that they copied the state model SLO and changed the numbers to fit their classroom situation. Several groups of teachers reported finding colleagues who understood SLOs and asking these colleagues to write their SLOs. Finally, several groups of teachers reported that a trainer "basically wrote all our SLOs."

Many educators reported struggling in particular to find good assessments on which to base IAGDs. This was complicated by the move towards implementing Common Core State Standards and accompanying assessments in 2012-13. For example, a good number of teachers reported not having sufficient formative assessments in place and, as a result, some teachers did not give a pre-test. Other schools started using new assessments mid-year and teachers developed SLOs and IAGDs based on assessments that they had not yet seen. We anticipate these problems will decline as districts develop assessments and the state provides much more guidance on goal setting. However, it is clear that SEED requires relatively sophisticated assessment literacy and it is unclear whether educators possess this knowledge or that districts have plans or the capacity to help educators develop it.

During the last round of data collection, participants reported that Student Learning Objectives remained somewhat ambiguous even at the end of the pilot year. An interim principal who had not been present in the school when SLOs were set in the fall observed that teachers "were confused, goals were arbitrary, some were too ambitious." He added that teachers were used to aiming high with few consequences if they came up short. Of the overly ambitious goals, he said, "We tried to change some of these mid-year."

Another elementary principal suggested that there were systematic differences in rigor of SLOs within her school. She observed that teachers of the tested grades were less likely to achieve their goals than teachers of K-2 in her school. In her opinion, this was because the stakes were higher in the upper grades and goals depended on students having mastered skills prior to their grade. In the upper grades, "there is a longer history of learning or not learning," she stated. Another factor was the evaluator. She had overseen SLO creation for grades 3-5 but her assistant had managed K-2. "In grades 3-5 some teachers put 100% for their goals and I let them do that whereas in K-2 the assistant principal said she advised against that." With the extremely high goal of 100% of students reaching a benchmark, many teachers in grades 3-5 failed to achieve their goals.

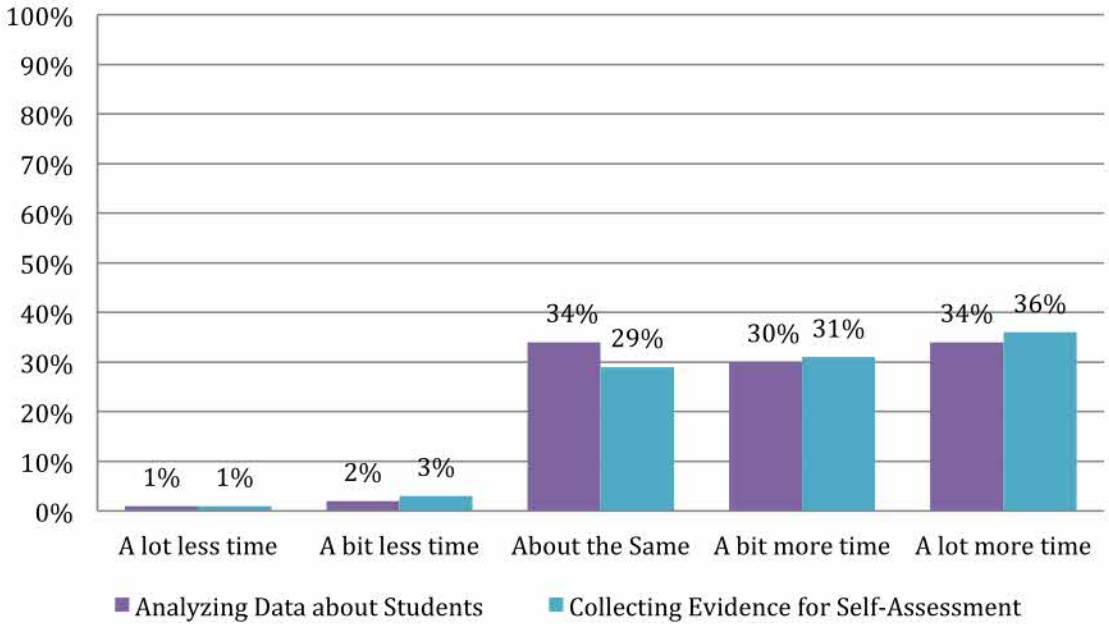
In some instances, SLOs were implemented in ways that were directly contrary to the SEED model. For example, a very small minority of teachers was forced to adopt SLOs/IAGDs established by principals. Other teachers were told they could not change their goals at the mid-year conference. Other teachers reported that their IAGDs did not measure growth, since there was no pre-test. Lastly, some teachers reported that they were using school wide measures for their SLOs/IAGDs. Teachers and principals were uncertain about when this was appropriate and when it was not (e.g., an art teacher measured on ELA CAPT; a music teacher with a CMT writing goal; a math teacher with a school wide ELA goal).

We believe the confusion with respect to goal setting were in part a result of the rushed implementation of the pilot and the lack of proper guidance that ensued. In addition, and not surprisingly, there appears to be a relationship between skill level of administrators and quality of the process.

Data Use

SEED has the potential to increase educators' use of student data. Educators are asked to set and monitor goals based on student data. Given that a substantial portion of their evaluation is based on whether or not their students achieve the goals they set, educators are likely to pay close attention to their students' performance throughout the year. Consistent with this assumption, we found that teachers reported a substantial increase in their analysis of data about their students. Specifically, 64% of teachers surveyed in fall 2013, reported that they spent more time analyzing student data in 2012-13 than in previous years. Two-thirds of teachers surveyed (67%) reported spending more time gathering data to assess their own progress than in previous years (Figure 9). It appears that SEED is spurring teachers to spend more time gathering and examining data. SEED has increased teachers' consideration of and use of student data, key precursors to instructional change. This increased data use is clearly a positive effect of SEED and one worth building upon in future years of the system. In particular, it will be important to assess and support the quality of this additional time invested in gathering and analyzing student data.

Figure 9: Teachers' Data Use Within SEED (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)



Professional Learning Opportunities

According to the SEED model, teachers' summative conferences should culminate with a rating and recommendations for professional learning to address weaknesses identified through the evaluation process. Very few participants reported the presence of professional learning opportunities linked to evaluation outcomes. Almost no teachers reported that they had received specific recommendations of professional growth opportunities in such debrief situations. Almost all teachers reported that leaders did not make suggestions of professional development that they should pursue given their progress as indicated by classroom observations and student data. This was true even in schools that implemented SEED relatively robustly.

Although this is a key part of the theory of action undergirding SEED, pilot districts were not able to develop individualized professional development for implementation during the pilot year. In some cases, this was due to the fact that professional development was orchestrated at the district level. District leaders reported that there were few resources to devote to this component of SEED. In other cases, it appeared that the focus on other aspects of SEED (observations, designing the SLOs) overshadowed the development of professional learning opportunities that could be targeted to individual teachers' needs. Districts focused on carrying out the other aspects of SEED, namely the goal setting and monitoring and the classroom observation element, and the professional learning component generally received very little attention.

We see this lack of attention to the last portion of SEED—professional learning opportunities--as predictable given that this was the pilot year of the program and

districts and schools put a great deal of effort into implementing all aspects on the prescribed timeline. We view the professional learning component of SEED as having great potential to alter practice, however, and believe this aspect of the model should be closely examined and supported in future years.

Additional Measures

SEED also calls for teachers to be assessed based on parent feedback and whole-school measures of student learning or student feedback. We found that districts generally did not allocate resources towards developing instruments with which to gather feedback from parents or students. Districts cobbled together measures of parent feedback. Most districts opted to include school-wide measures of student learning instead of student feedback. Again, we found that these components of SEED were overshadowed by districts' emphases on SLOs and observation. We believe these components of SEED are vitally important and should be strengthened in future years.

School Administrator Evaluation

Overall, we found that districts had implemented school administrator evaluation in 2012-13. However, because of the emphasis on teacher evaluation, school administrators reported limited experience with administrator evaluation. One assistant superintendent said that administrator evaluation had gone "not as well as I would have liked. Teacher evaluation was the priority."

Although all districts implemented the components of administrator evaluation, they began to implement the SEED administrator evaluation quite late (i.e., December-January). Some principals received more observation and feedback from their evaluators than others. Veteran principals and assistant principals reported that they had not interacted much with this evaluation system during their pilot. "I didn't pay attention to it, to tell you the truth," said one high school assistant principal.

In fall 2013, we surveyed school administrators on their experiences with SEED's administrator evaluation. Almost half of the administrators surveyed (47%) agreed or strongly agreed that they received feedback about how to improve their leadership practice. A smaller subset (36%) indicated that their evaluator(s) had the time and resources to evaluate them accurately (see Table 10).

Table 10. Administrator Perceptions of SEED (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=22)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
I received feedback from my evaluator(s) about how to improve my leadership practice.	18%	0%	35%	29%	18%
My evaluator(s) had the time and resources to evaluate me accurately according to the SEED model.	18%	18%	29%	24%	12%

Administrator evaluation was implemented in a limited fashion for a variety of reasons. These included a lack of professional development and considerable time and energy focused on teacher evaluation. Principals asked for additional training, citing that they had had only two overviews of the administrator evaluation. Although the majority of districts implemented SEED for administrators, they did so on a compressed timeline. Mid-year conferences in some districts were held in May.

For example, one district had no mid-year check-ins for principals. Principals generally reported being observed once or twice, but some were observed doing things that were not central to their work as instructional leaders. They reported that they did not get feedback based on these observations.

Although administrator evaluation was implemented lightly, participants reported some benefits from it. One assistant superintendent commented that, "we've really had substantive conversations [about administrator evaluation] due to SEED's pressure." She further noted that principals were "receptive to ratings" from SEED and "harder on themselves than we [district administrators] are."

Variations in Implementation

Given that implementation tends to vary by setting and participant, it was important for us to examine whether this was the case in SEED's enactment. We found variation in implementation at several levels. First, we found variation in implementation over time, with stronger implementation later in the pilot year. Second, we found variation by site, with stronger implementation at the elementary level and in districts with leaders who supported the SEED model and had prioritized evaluation in recent years. Third, we found stronger implementation with non-tenured teachers as compared to tenured teachers. Finally, we found weaker implementation in districts facing challenges, such as low performance and multiple concurrent initiatives, than in districts where educators did not have to divide their attention as much.

Variation Over Time

As of our first round of data collection, in October-January, 2012, we found that SEED had been implemented only partially. Due to the hurried roll-out of SEED and substantial work involved with setting SLOs and IAGDs, districts had implemented only portions of the SEED model as of late 2012. With a few exceptions, most districts delayed the launch of SEED for administrators until December or later. Moreover, many administrators did not begin to conduct classroom observations under SEED until November-December. This stems from lack of time. Not only were administrators spending substantial time in goal setting with teachers, they reported that they were also required to pass a *Teachscape* reliability examination prior to observing teachers. Administrators reported that preparing for and completing this examination took more than a day's time, which administrators found challenging to capture. Indeed, in the fall of 2012, 45% of the principals interviewed expressed strong concerns about the *Teachscape* assessment, noting the amount of time required to prepare and take the test, the absence of feedback from the results, and low quality videos.

In fall 2012, participants also expressed strong concerns about the lack of communication and opportunities to learn about SEED. Almost all classroom teachers and specialists we interviewed reported that they lacked clarity about key aspects of SEED. Participants, particularly teachers, reported in the first round of data collection (fall, 2012) that they had not received enough training regarding SEED's components and, in particular, SLOs. Classroom teachers in many districts reported that they had received only two training sessions of between one and two hours each. Additionally, teachers in several districts reported that training was delayed, trainers were not able to answer their questions, or training was not conducive to teacher learning because it relied too much on lecture format and offered little or no follow-up. Classroom teachers and specialists indicated that the great majority of training they received was provided by their principal. Principals reported receiving more training than teachers, in some cases attending three or four-day training sessions in the summer or early fall. Newly hired principals, however, sometimes missed this training, putting them at an initial disadvantage in understanding the model and implementing it with fidelity.

Teacher and specialist participants reported that they were provided with few opportunities to develop a deep understanding of SEED. Teachers and specialists reported that principals often clarified or communicated about SEED via e-mail. Principals did not meet one-on-one with some teachers and specialists to set goals, choosing to handle this process by holding group sessions instead. In some cases, teachers perceived group goal setting as positive, for they felt it fostered collaboration. In other cases, teachers perceived this as negative; they felt it forced uniformity of goals when their diverse classrooms warranted more varied SLOs and IAGDs. Most teachers and specialists reported that they wanted more coaching on what SEED demanded of them and how to create an SLO.

In the second and third rounds of data collection, participants reported increased clarity and decreased stress related to SEED. This appeared to be due, in part, to improved communication from districts and the state, but also to greater familiarity with the SEED policy and procedures, as well as decreased emphasis on SEED in some sites after the initial goal setting phase in the fall. Participants also developed a better understanding of the SEED model through the process of implementing it. Anecdotal evidence from pilot districts suggests that their second year of SEED implementation (2012-13) is proceeding more smoothly than the pilot year.

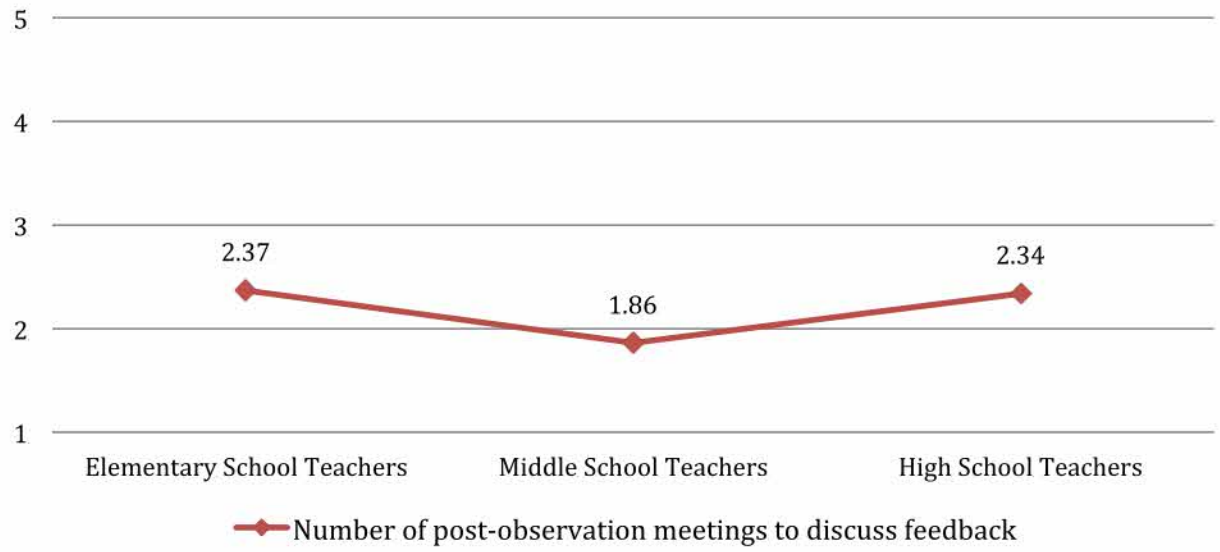
Variations across Grade Levels

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test whether teachers at different grade levels reported similar experiences with SEED implementation. There were no significant differences in the number of formal or informal observations during the SEED pilot year across grade levels, F (2, 415) = .95, p = .388, and F (2, 409) = .38, p = .682, respectively. Teachers also did not report any statistically significant differences in the extent to which observations and feedback occurred more frequently under SEED than in previous years, F (2, 418) = 2.40, p = .092.

Teachers reported significant differences across grade levels in the number of meetings to discuss feedback about their observations, F (2, 413) = 7.21, p = .001 (see Figure 10). Tukey's post-hoc comparisons indicate that middle school teachers (M=1.86, 95% CI [1.62, 2.10]) reported significantly fewer meetings to discuss feedback about their observations than elementary school teachers (M=2.37, 95% CI [2.20, 2.54], p = .001) and high school teachers (M=2.34, 95% CI [2.16, 2.53], p = .004) (Figure 10).[3] The difference between elementary school teachers' responses and high school teachers' responses was not statistically significant at $p < .05$.

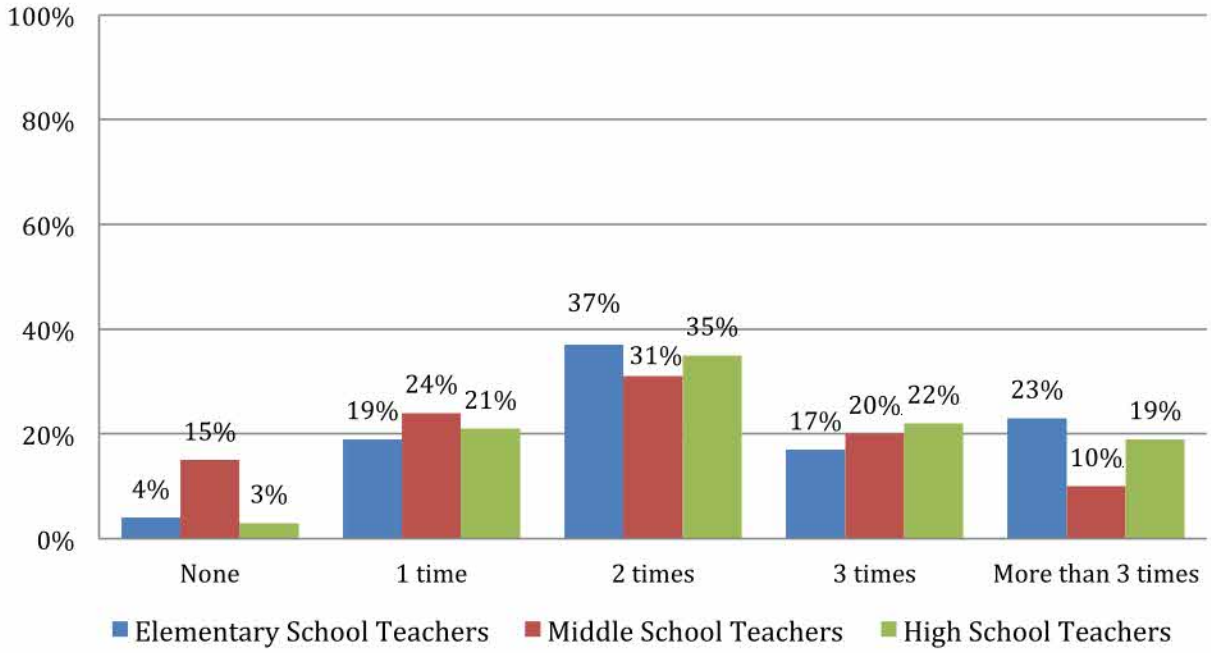
[3] Mean scores fall on a Likert-type scale where 1=Strongly Disagreed and 5=Strongly Agreed.

Figure 10. Means Plot for Number of Post-Observation Meetings across Grade Levels (n=533)



Forty percent of elementary school teachers and 41% of high school teachers reported three or more meetings with their evaluator to discuss feedback from observations; only 30% of middle school teachers reported meeting the number of meetings recommended in SEED (see Figure 11). Another 37% of elementary school teachers reported two post-observation meetings, 35% of high school teachers reported two post-observation meetings, and 30% of middle school teachers reported two post-observation meetings. This indicates a 15 to 16 percentage point difference in the teachers close to or fully receiving the number of recommended post-observation meetings to discuss feedback.

Figure 11. Distribution of Meetings to Discuss Observations by Grade Level (*n*=533)



Of the 67 teachers who indicated that they did not have a mid-year conference, almost half (45%, *n*=30) taught elementary grades (vs. 33% of the sample), 24% (*n*=16) taught middle grades (vs. 19% of the sample), 18% (*n*=12) taught high school (vs. 27% of the sample), and 13% (*n*=9) declined to indicate grade level. The difference across groups is approaching significant, with χ^2 (2, 418) = 5.49, p = .064. Teachers without a summative conference were evenly distributed across grade levels, with 28% (*n*=15) teaching elementary grades, 28% (*n*=15) teaching middle grades, and 30% (*n*=16) teaching high school; 15% (*n*=8) declined to indicate a grade level. There is no significant association between grade level and having a summative conference, with χ^2 (2, 421) = 2.76, p = .252.

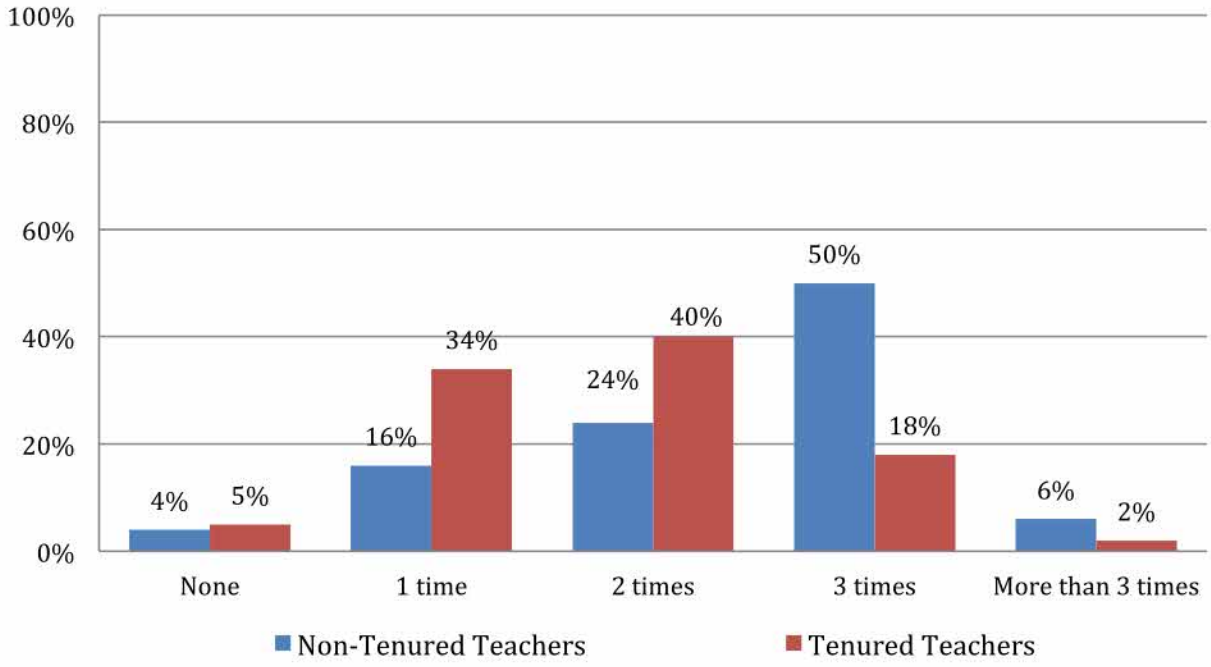
Variations by Tenure Status

Independent-samples *t* tests were used to test whether there were differences in teacher experiences with SEED implementation across tenure status. There were no significant differences between non-tenured and tenured teachers in the number of informal observations or the number of post-observation meetings to discuss feedback.

Non-tenured teachers were more likely than tenured teachers to report that observations and feedback occurred more frequently under SEED than in previous years, with t (131.63)=2.37, p = .019. Non-tenured teachers also reported significantly more formal observations than tenured teachers, with t (432) = 5.71, p < .001. Fifty-six percent of non-tenured teachers reported having three or more formal observations, as

recommended by SEED policy; in contrast, only 20% of tenured teachers reported three or more formal observations (see Figure 13). As noted above, this is due at least in part to a conscious decision by administrators to manage their evaluation load by observing non-tenured teachers more than tenured teachers.

Figure 13. Distribution of Formal Observations by Tenure Status (*n*=533)



Of the 67 teachers who indicated that they did not have a mid-year conference, 75% (*n*=50) were tenured (vs. 67% of the sample), 16% (*n*=11) were not tenured (vs. 15% of the sample), and 9% (*n*=6) declined to indicate tenure status. Similarly, of the 54 teachers who indicated that they did not have a summative conference to discuss their summative rating, 72% (*n*=39) were tenured, 17% (*n*=9) were not tenured, and 11% (*n*=6) declined to indicate tenure status.

Variations by District

Wide variations by district also were apparent. Although we caution readers against drawing firm conclusions on these statistics because of the small sample size for some districts, there were significant differences in the number of observations teachers in different districts reported receiving. For example, the percentage of teachers reporting that they had received three or more formal observations ranged from 8% in one district to 71% in another. Similarly, the proportion of teachers reporting fewer than two observations ranged from 7% in one setting to 60% in another. In general, lower-performing districts with multiple initiatives underway experienced more difficulty in implementing SEED with fidelity. In these districts, teachers were more likely than in

higher-performing districts to report not having a mid-year conference or summative conference.

In large part, these implementation challenges were connected to the large number of concurrent reform initiatives occurring in these districts. These other initiatives demanded leaders' and teachers' time, thus reducing a key resource necessary for implementing SEED.

Closing Remarks

On the whole, districts and schools implemented SEED with a relatively high degree of fidelity. They invested particular energy in implementing the goal setting and observation components of SEED. We further found that schools with the greatest challenges (i.e., very low student achievement and multiple reform initiatives) seemed to have the most difficulties in using the model to drive improvements in practice. Overall, implementation proceeded much as we would expect during the pilot phase of any new major initiative.

Findings on Educator Experiences

In addition to implementation, a second area of interest to the state was how educators in the 14 districts experienced the pilot implementation of SEED. Thus, we gathered data on teachers' and leaders' views of and experiences with this reform. This section presents data in response to research questions investigating these areas. Specifically, we present findings in response to the following questions:

EDUCATOR EXPERIENCES WITH SEED:

1. How did educators in pilot sites experience SEED?
2. What variations occurred? What explains these variations?

Introduction

Over the course of the year and three rounds of data collection, educators expressed a variety of perspectives on SEED. Teachers raised concerns in the first round of data collection, which were to be expected as they learned about and implemented a new initiative at a relatively fast pace, but over time teachers expressed relatively more acceptance and less anxiety. Ultimately, educators in the pilot districts expressed a positive or neutral view of SEED. Because of the rigors of learning and implementing a new system, most educators viewed SEED as a system focused mainly on their evaluation as opposed to their development. Given the pilot status of the initiative, this is not surprising.

In the following sections, we present educators' general views of SEED, as reflected in interviews and surveys. We then discuss their attitudes toward components of SEED, including observations, the instructional practice rubric, post-observation conferences, and goal setting (i.e., SLOs and IAGDs). We present data on variations in educators' attitudes and then turn to administrators' attitudes towards the administrator version of SEED.

General Views of SEED

Participants holding a range of roles expressed a positive or neutral view of the SEED model. Very few participants rejected the entire model out of hand, even if they critiqued parts of the policy or expressed frustration with how it was implemented during the pilot year.

Teachers' Views

Teachers[4] reported considerable anxiety and confusion regarding SEED in the first round

[4] Recall that we use the term "teacher" to encompass all personnel evaluated under the teacher version of SEED. Specialists are highlighted by name when their views diverged from those of classroom teachers.

of data collection. Over time, these sentiments diminished, although they did not completely disappear. In fact, many teachers have consistently voiced support for the ideas behind SEED. Teachers in particular appreciate the fact that SEED promises to increase the frequency of classroom observations by school leaders and strengthen the feedback they receive regarding their instruction. They believe the focus on student performance growth, rather than mastery, is a positive element of SEED as is the opportunity to adjust their goals mid-year. Teachers reported that the fact that administrators are also evaluated is a strong point of the model. Many school leaders in pilot districts emphasized to teachers that their own evaluations depended upon the performance of their teachers, and teachers appreciated this fact.

A considerable number of teachers felt that SEED has good potential. Forty-two percent of teachers surveyed in fall 2013 felt that with sufficient resources, such as time and staffing, they would be able to use SEED to improve teacher practice at their school. One-third of teachers (34%) were neutral on this question. Sixty-one percent of teachers reported that they understood how they were evaluated and 78% of teachers indicated that they felt comfortable being evaluated by their supervisor in SEED's pilot year.

Most principals reported that teacher feedback on SEED has been positive or neutral. According to surveys from fall 2013, 90% of administrators agreed or strongly agreed that teachers understood how they were evaluated under SEED and 85% agreed or strongly agreed that teachers were comfortable being evaluated by their evaluator. Principals indicated that some teachers have expressed appreciation for how SLOs have focused their attention on the progress of all students. Many complain that the forms used during the pilot year were cumbersome. In a very small number of schools principals reported that most teachers had a negative experience with SEED. One principal explained that in his building, "some [teachers] hate it" because SEED "started out so roughly…it put a bad taste in people's mouth at the beginning."

School Administrators' Views

Overall, principals in pilot districts support the SEED model and embrace its focus on instruction and its function as a lever for professional growth. Many administrators note that SEED's approach to evaluation, with its inclusion of classroom observations and goal setting, is not substantially different from what they had done in the past. They welcomed SEED's focus on student performance.

A number of administrators expressed concern, however, about performance labels (e.g., "proficient") being a distraction to the more nuanced and detailed feedback from an evaluation. They further argued that the labels may be in conflict with the notion of support and, at the extreme, threaten to de-professionalize teaching. Their greatest concern, foreshadowed in the prior section, is the large quantity of their time that SEED demands.

Principals reported that the pilot version of SEED increased their workload substantially. One principal, for example, said she was less available for non-evaluation matters than in previous years. Another principal observed that she had less time to think, plan, and innovate as a leader. Several principals reported that the amount of required paperwork reduced their time in the classrooms, holding one-on-one conferences, or participating in team meetings, thus diminishing their instructional leadership activities. Principals added that they did more work, in some cases much more, after school and at home than in previous years. One principal spoke for many by saying, "The volume of this system is overwhelming. It took a huge chunk away from other duties." Said another principal, SEED "got in my way…it's cumbersome, it slowed me down in completing evaluation." One principal kept track of the hours he spent on SEED and found that, on average, he devoted more than 60% of each day to evaluation, which he felt compromised his ability to focus on developing the school's faculty as a whole.

Principals in low-performing districts reported particular challenges in implementing SEED. One principal explained that having several initiatives happening all at once "puts everything in flux." This further limited the time principals in such settings could devote to SEED.

In some ways, the reported increase in principals' workload is a positive finding, as one goal of SEED was to increase principals' attention to and work on instructional leadership. As discussed below, it is clear that SEED caused administrators to spend more time in classrooms observing teachers. This is a benefit of SEED that should be cultivated. From another perspective, this finding is cause for concern; if principals feel overwhelmed, the quality of their work—whether in the area of instructional leadership or outside it--may suffer. It is clear that SEED changes administrators' jobs, sometimes substantially. The state and districts should help school administrators manage their workloads in ways that promote school and, ultimately, student success.

Principals also outlined several ways in which SEED was beneficial to their leadership. Specifically, most principals identified the rubric and summative meetings as particularly positive aspects of SEED. These are discussed in more detail below. A few principals reported that SEED's administrator evaluation piece was positive. In general, principals called for more professional development and time to learn how to use SEED in ways that maximize its benefits. As one principal said, "SEED has a lot of plusses. Make sure everyone has time to learn it and use it."

District Administrators

The majority of district leaders reported that SEED had been a positive experience for educators in their district and were cautiously optimistic about the new model. Despite "angst" over goal setting, one district leader said, "SEED has been largely positive." She added, "we haven't heard a ton" of feedback from teachers regarding the rubric or summative meetings.

In contrast, another district leader reported that there was a great deal of tension (particularly around goal setting) and low morale in his district that teachers have attributed in part to the SEED pilot. Multiple district leaders reported that educators in their district had negative experiences with *My Learning Plan*. One district leader reported that teachers found that "*My Learning Plan* is a pain," even though they supported SEED more broadly.

One district leader identified the next level of work for SEED within her district: "Everyone is stuck on the data thing. People still aren't seeing the link between practice and data. This is the bow we need to tie for them. We need to make that connection. They are scared of the SLOs because they are used to observation" and thus find it less intimidating.

Summary

Overall, participants reported that they viewed SEED favorably. They generally agreed that educators should be assessed in part based on growth in student learning and that observations should also contribute to their evaluations. On the whole, participants, whether teachers or leaders, reported that SEED is similar to their prior evaluation systems. The main similarities lie in SEED's emphasis on observation and teacher-created goals. The main differences are in (1) the more explicit instructional standards, embedded in the rubric, (2) an increased number of observations, (3) the use of student learning objectives, and (4) the summative, numerically-based rating.

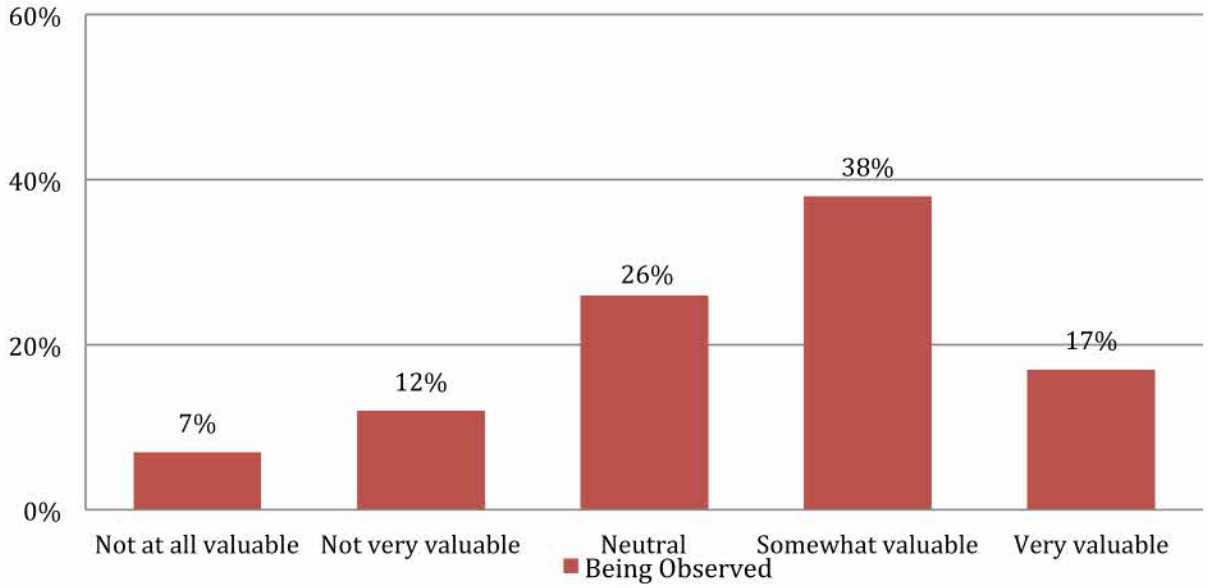
Despite their familiarity with its components, educators felt that SEED is complex. Teachers were more unified in this perspective than principals or district leaders, who had received more training on the model. In most focus groups, teachers reported that SEED was "overwhelming" or that they felt "overwhelmed" by the new system, especially in the first round of data collection (fall, 2012). For example, teachers and principals report that establishing SLOs was very time-consuming. Principals and assistant principals often had to educate teachers about how to write SLOs through the goal-setting process.

Educators reported that the time between trainings and action on tasks (e.g., SLO development) was very short. Timelines were reported to be rigid, despite delays in training and the finalization of forms. In some cases, educators reported that teachers and specialists received training on a component of SEED and were expected to implement the component immediately. The vast majority of participants, from district officials to teachers to trainers, reported that the pace of implementation was too rushed to maximize SEED's benefits.

Observations

Participants reported that the observation component of SEED is generally similar to what they had experienced under previous evaluation systems. The main differences were an increased number of required observations, the use of a standardized rubric to guide observations, and the resulting summative rating. At the conclusion of the pilot year, 55% of teachers surveyed reported that being observed under SEED was somewhat or very valuable (Figure 14).

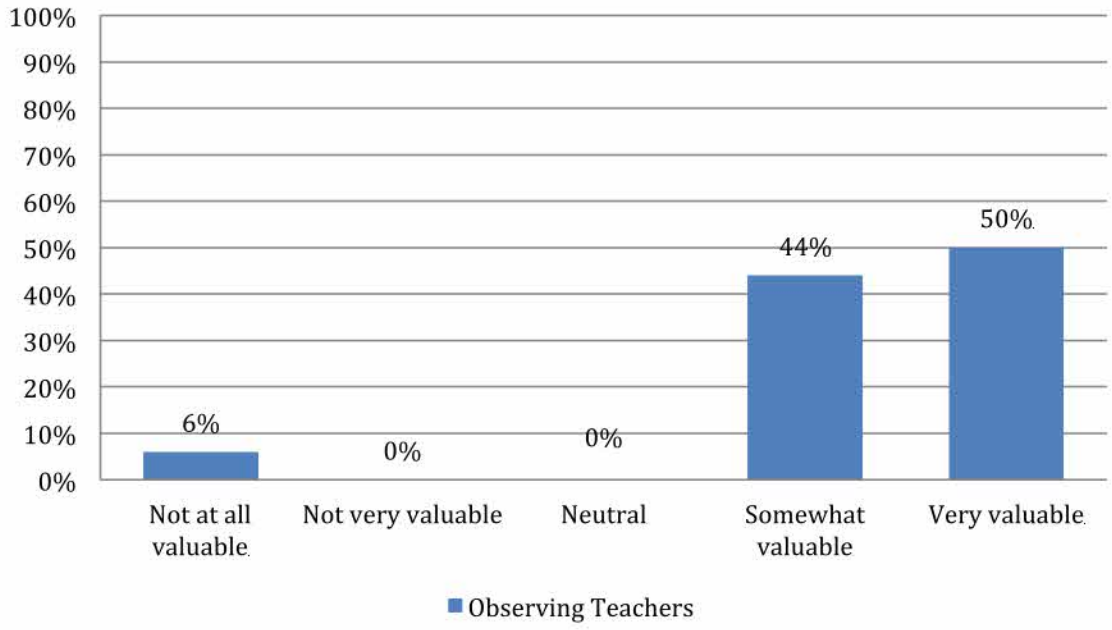
Figure 14. Teachers' Reported Value of Time Spent Being Observed Under SEED (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)



When we examine the responses of teachers who reported being observed more than in prior years, we find that a slightly larger percentage--58%--found observations valuable. In interviews, teachers echoed this sentiment, with a majority of teachers saying that they found the experience of being observed helpful to them. In particular, they were grateful for feedback on their instruction.

School administrators reported observations were quite valuable to them. Although all administrators reported that they struggled to complete the required observations, the overwhelming majority--94%-- of administrators reported that observing teachers under SEED was somewhat or very valuable to them (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Administrators' Reported Value of Time Spent Observing Teachers Under SEED (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=22)



Rubric

SEED requires that teachers be evaluated using a rubric with multiple performance categories. This is a marked departure from prior practice in most Connecticut districts. On average, teachers expressed neutral or positive views of the observation rubric. A third of teachers (34%) agreed or strongly agreed that the observation rubric accurately describes a continuum of teacher quality and 32% of teachers were neutral on this question (Table 11).

Table 11. Frequencies for responses to "The observation rubric accurately describes a continuum of teaching quality" (Fall 2013 Survey)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
Teachers (*n*=533)	16%	19%	32%	28%	6%
School Administrators (*n*=22)	5%	11%	16%	42%	26%

Administrators' views of the rubric were more positive than those of teachers. Two-thirds (68%) of administrators surveyed indicated that they believed that the observation rubric accurately described a continuum of teaching quality. In interviews, principals reported that the rubric helped them make evaluation meaningful. In the past, principals reported that observations were, in the words of one principal, "very, very

subjective." She added that, in her view, *Teachscape* taught administrators how to conduct more objective observations.

Another benefit of the new observations cited by school leaders is that the rubric encouraged a "common language." Under SEED, good instruction "seems more clear" to teachers and administrators, said one principal. "This was really helpful," she said. "I am sorry I got it in the last year of my tenure (career)." The rubric "takes pressure off me. Numbers don't lie. It's helped me to have those harder conversations… I like to make people happy…and it's helped me to be direct and make hard decisions."

School leaders commented that the rubric lacked specifics in some domains (e.g., 3A) and raised questions about its applicability in certain situations, for example, with specialists. As would be expected, administrators also reported that it took them a considerable amount of time to become familiar with the rubric and how to match evidence to different domains. Some administrators also struggled with the large amount of information generated by the many indicators included in the rubric. They said they needed to streamline the information for each teacher in order to make feedback useful, rather than overwhelming.

Leaders of many schools further reported that teachers generally responded positively to the rubric. They observed that many teachers had to recalibrate their views of their own performance. Said one district leader, "teachers have had to come to terms with lower scores," with some teachers struggling with the sentiment that "I used to be 'proficient' and now I'm 'developing.'" District and school leaders reported that teachers had responded neutrally or positively to the rubric.

Conferences

Multiple data sources suggest that post-observation conferences were one of the most valuable aspects of SEED in the pilot year. Overall, 57% of teachers surveyed found talking with evaluator to be a valuable experience (Figure 16). As we will discuss in detail below, teachers who spent more time in post-observation conferences under SEED compared to prior evaluation systems found it to be of even greater value. Specifically, 69% of teachers who spent more time during SEED debriefing with evaluators after observations found this to be somewhat or very valuable.

Similarly, school administrators reported that post-observation conferences were valuable. The vast majority (94%) of administrators reported that such meetings were valuable or very valuable. Fifty percent of respondents indicated that these conferences were very valuable. As might be expected, a lower percentage (45%) reported that writing up observations was somewhat or very valuable.

Figure 16. Value of Time Spent In Post-Observation Under SEED (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)

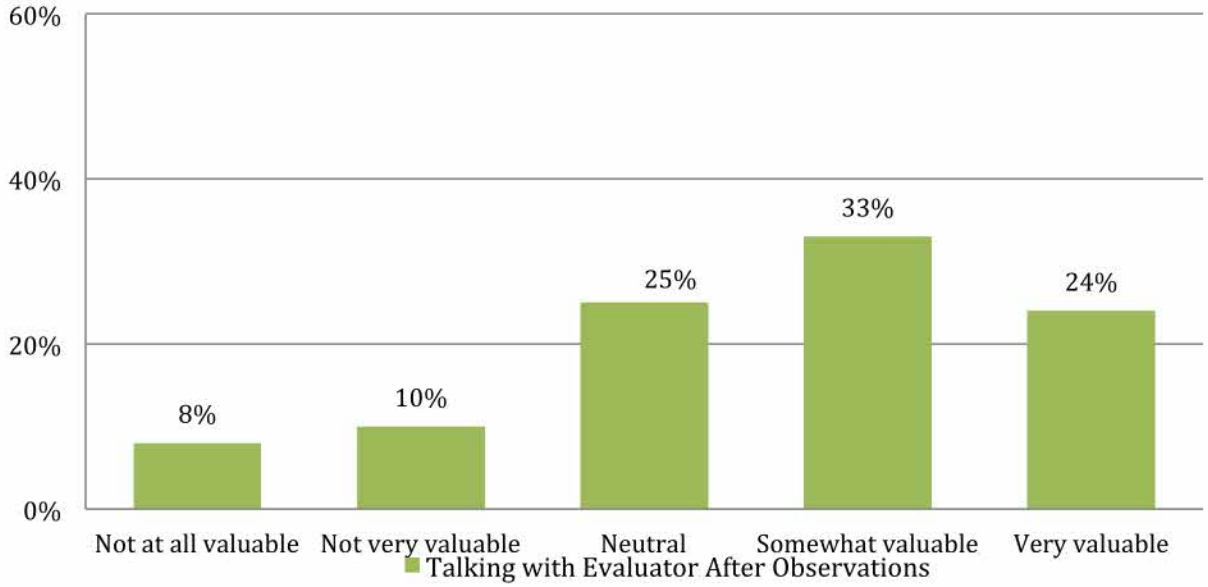
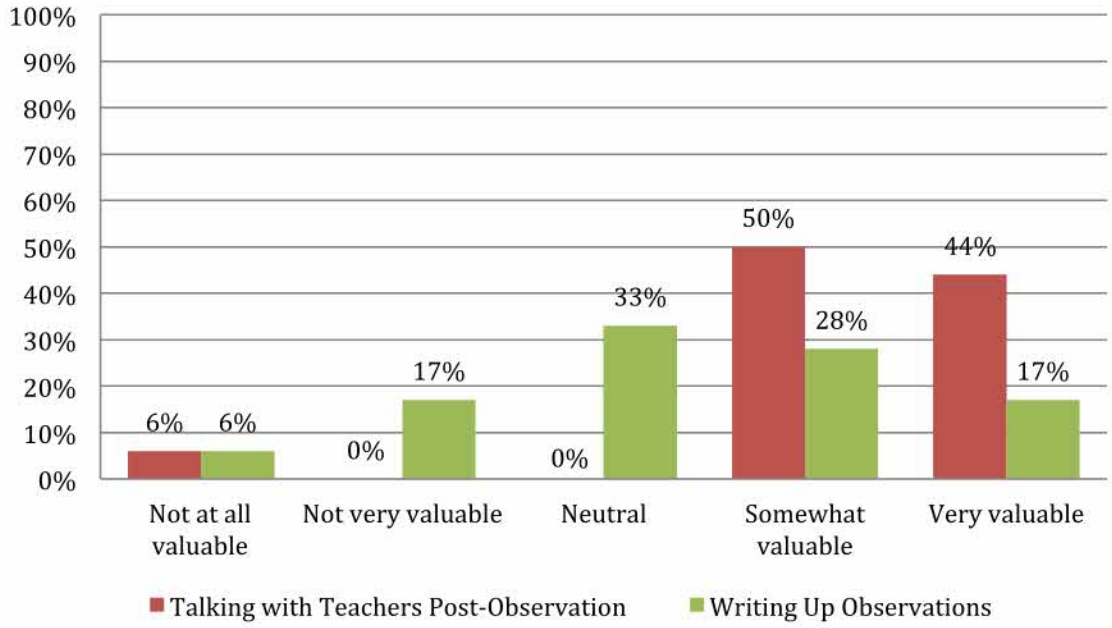
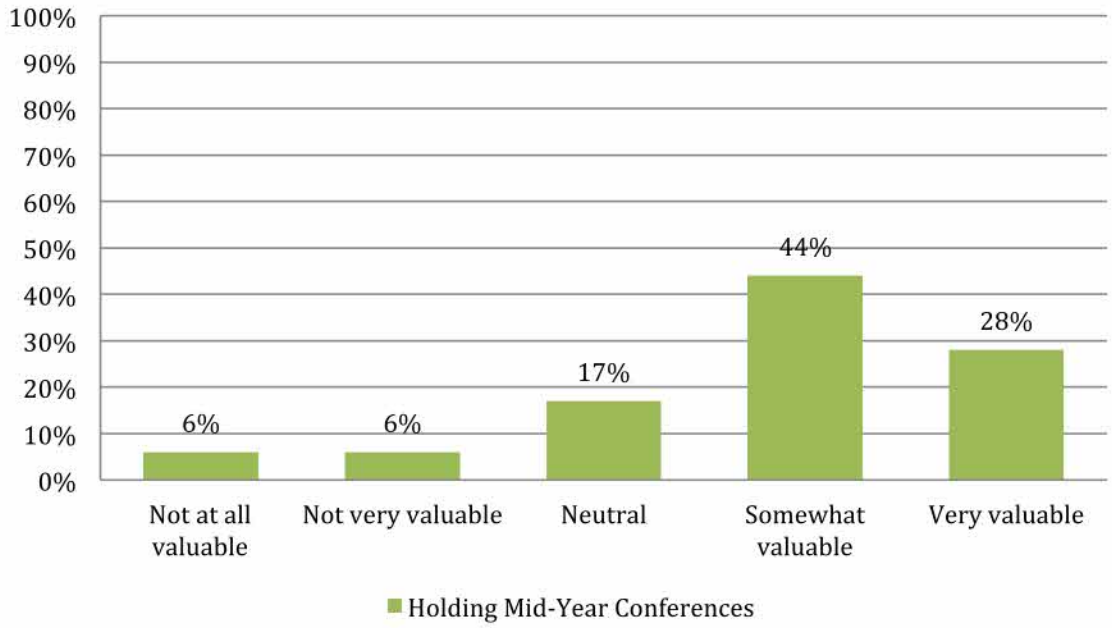


Figure 17. Administrators' Reported Value of Time Spent in Teacher Post-Observation Tasks Under SEED (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=22)



As noted in prior sections, teachers reported that mid-year conferences were brief and perfunctory and did not result in much learning. However, administrators felt these conferences were valuable. Seventy-two percent of administrators reported that the mid-year conferences they held were somewhat or very valuable, perhaps because they gained information from teachers about their practice during these sessions (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Value of Administrator Time on Mid-Year Conferences (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=22)



Summative Conferences

On the whole, a majority of teachers reported that their summative rating was accurate. More than half (58%) agreed or strongly agreed that their summative rating for the pilot year was accurate (see Table 12). Seventeen percent disagreed or strongly disagreed, with one-quarter expressing a neutral position. The administrator survey also included this item. When asked whether they felt teachers' summative ratings were accurate, 47% agreed, one-quarter were neutral and the balance disagreed or strongly disagreed (Table 13).

Table 12. Frequencies for Teachers' Perceptions of the Validity of SEED Measures (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
I feel that my summative rating from 2012-2013 is accurate.	7%	10%	25%	44%	14%

Table 13. Frequencies for Administrators' Perceptions of the Validity of Teacher SEED Measures (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=22)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
Teachers' summative ratings from 2012-13 are accurate.	10.5%	15.8%	26.3%	47.4%	0.0%

Teachers found summative conferences to be neutral to valuable. Forty-three percent of teachers reported that such meetings were somewhat or very valuable, while 32% of teachers were neutral on this question.

In contrast to this, survey data revealed that the great majority--89%--of administrators found the summative meetings to be somewhat or very valuable (fall 2013 survey). In interviews, principals reported that summative conferences were equally or more productive than in the past. The fact that the rating was, in one principal's words, "all based on data" reduced the frequency of arguments with teachers over summative results according to principals. Most principals reported that the summative ratings generally supported their assumptions about teacher performance.

One principal said that the fact that the summative *My Learning Plan* document showed all evidence from throughout the year helped make summative conferences data-driven. She said that under SEED the summative conference "was a very, very good conversation. It was much more productive, focused than in years past" since the conversation was focused on the evidence rather than based on broad reflective questions. Another principal felt that summative conferences "went very, very well." While she felt that *My Learning Plan* was burdensome in other respects, she felt that it added value to the summative conference: "Summative is the easiest piece of all," because, "*My Learning Plan* compiles everything."

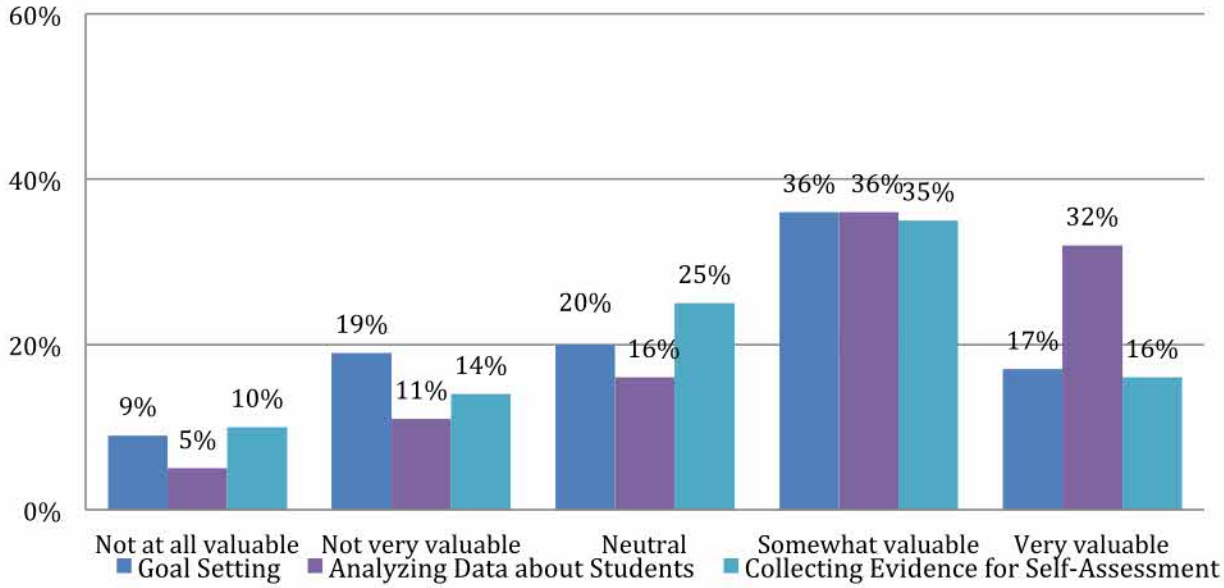
Goal Setting

In the early months of SEED's implementation, goal setting was a source of confusion and anxiety for many teachers and some school administrators. In our first round of interviews, teachers, in particular, reported feeling great strain about SLOs and IAGDs. At the conclusion of the pilot year, teachers reported much less stress about goal setting. Survey data indicated that goal setting, in general, and the analysis of student data, in particular, were ultimately valued by teachers in pilot sites.

On the whole, 39% of teachers surveyed in fall 2013 reported that SLOs were useful to them as professionals. Twenty-nine percent of teachers were neutral on this question.

Overall, teachers were more sanguine about the processes involved in goal setting. Teachers reported finding goal setting, the time spent analyzing data about their students, and collecting evidence for their self-assessment valuable, on average (see Figure 19). Fifty-three percent of teachers reported that goal setting was somewhat or very valuable in the fall 2013 survey. More than two-thirds of participants (68%) indicated that analyzing student data was somewhat or very valuable and 51% reported that collecting evidence for self-assessment was similarly valuable.

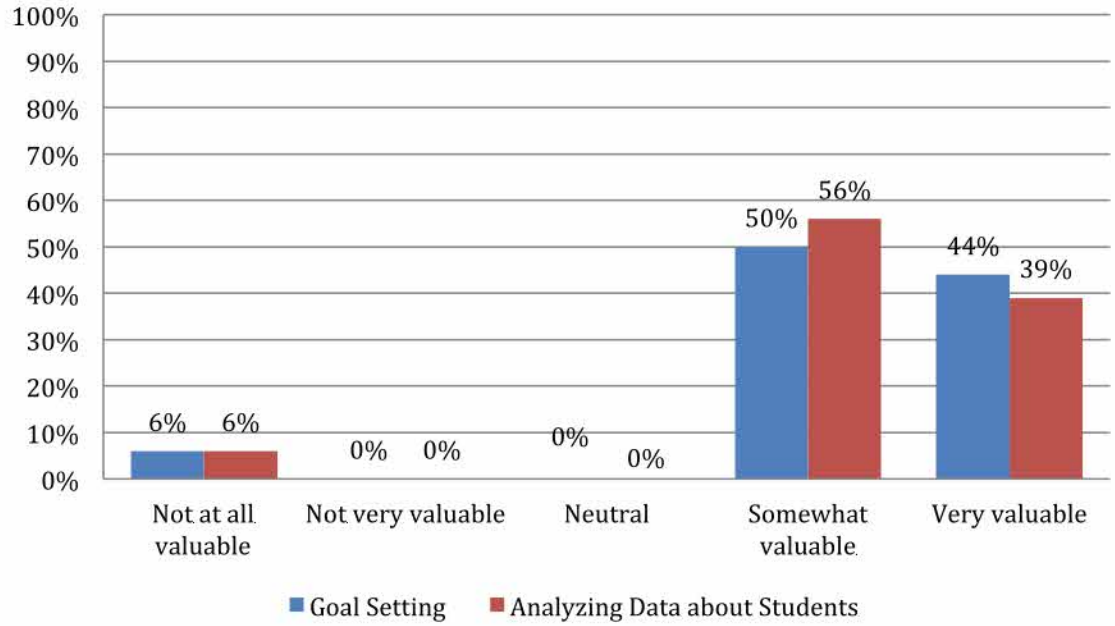
Figure 19. Value of Time Spent on Improvement-Related Tasks (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)



Moreover, teachers who spent more time analyzing data about their students found that time to be valuable. As depicted in Figure X below, 67% of teachers who spent more time during SEED analyzing data about their students found this to be somewhat or very valuable.

Administrators reported that they found goal setting and having teachers analyze data about their students within SEED to be valuable. As shown below (Figure 20), 94% of administrators surveyed reported that the goal-setting process was somewhat or very valuable and 95% responded in this manner about that the data analysis process.

Figure 20. Value of Administrator Time on Goal Setting Tasks (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=22)



Relative Value of Activities

To gain a sense of SEED's potential effects when implemented as the model intends, we examined the responses of teachers who reported that they had spent more time on various evaluation tasks than under prior evaluation systems.

When we examine only those teachers who indicated that they spent more time on various teacher evaluation and development tasks, we find that a modest to large percentage of teachers indicated that this additional time on SEED-related tasks was somewhat or very valuable (see Figures 21 & 22). Two activities in particular were valuable to a large proportion of teachers: 69% of teachers who spent more time during SEED talking with evaluators after observations found this to be somewhat or very valuable and 67% of teachers who spent more time during SEED analyzing data about their students found this to be somewhat or very valuable. Moreover, among teachers who reported being observed more than under previous evaluation systems, 58% reported that being observed was valuable. Of teachers who reported spending more time on goal setting, 52% found it valuable or very valuable. Fifty-one percent of teachers who spent more time gathering data about their students for self-assessment found this process valuable.

Figure 21. Value of Additional Time Spent on Teacher Evaluation (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)

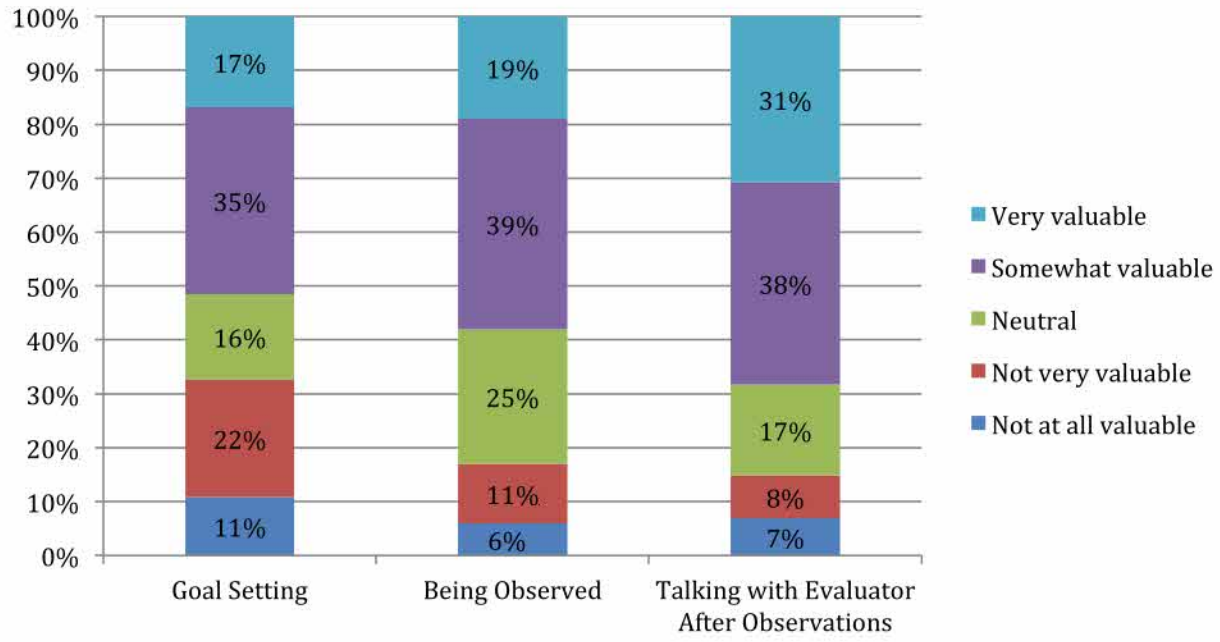
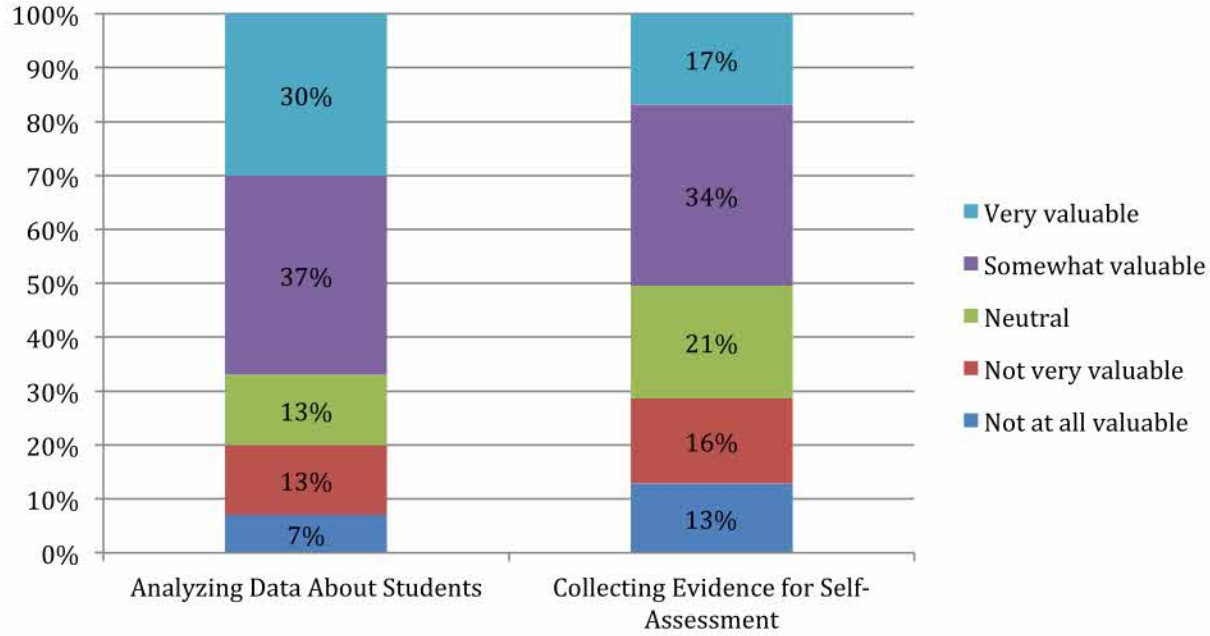


Figure 22. Value of Additional Time Spent Using Data (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)



Overall, administrators reported that the time they spent on most SEED tasks was somewhat valuable (see Table 14). These tasks include setting goals with teachers, analyzing student data with teachers, conducting mid-year conferences, observing teachers, talking with teachers about their practice after observations, discussing teachers' performance with them during summative meetings, and constructing professional development plans. Administrators, on the whole, found the time they spent writing up observations and generating summative ratings to be neither valuable nor not valuable.

Table 14. Distribution of Time Spent on Evaluation and Development Tasks (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=18)

		95% CI	
	*Mean**	Lower	Upper
Goal Setting with Teachers	4.00	3.60	4.40
Analyzing Student Data with Teachers	3.88	3.52	4.24
Holding Mid-Year Conferences	3.88	3.48	4.28
Observing Teachers	4.18	3.61	4.75
Talking about Teacher Practice with Teachers After Observations	3.94	3.51	4.37
Writing Up Observations	4.06	3.34	4.78
Generating Teachers' Summative Ratings	4.38	3.84	4.91
Discussing Teachers' Performance with Them in Summative Meetings	3.82	3.49	4.16
Constructing Professional Development Plans	3.65	3.32	3.97

* On a scale where: 1 = A lot less time than last year; 2 = A bit less time than last year; 3 = About the same amount of time as last year; 4 = A bit more time than last year; 5 = A lot more time than last year.

These findings suggest that when implemented with fidelity, SEED's evaluation activities --post-observation debriefs and data analysis, in particular—are valued by teachers.

Variations

On the whole, we found significant differences in teachers' experiences by tenure status, school level, and district.

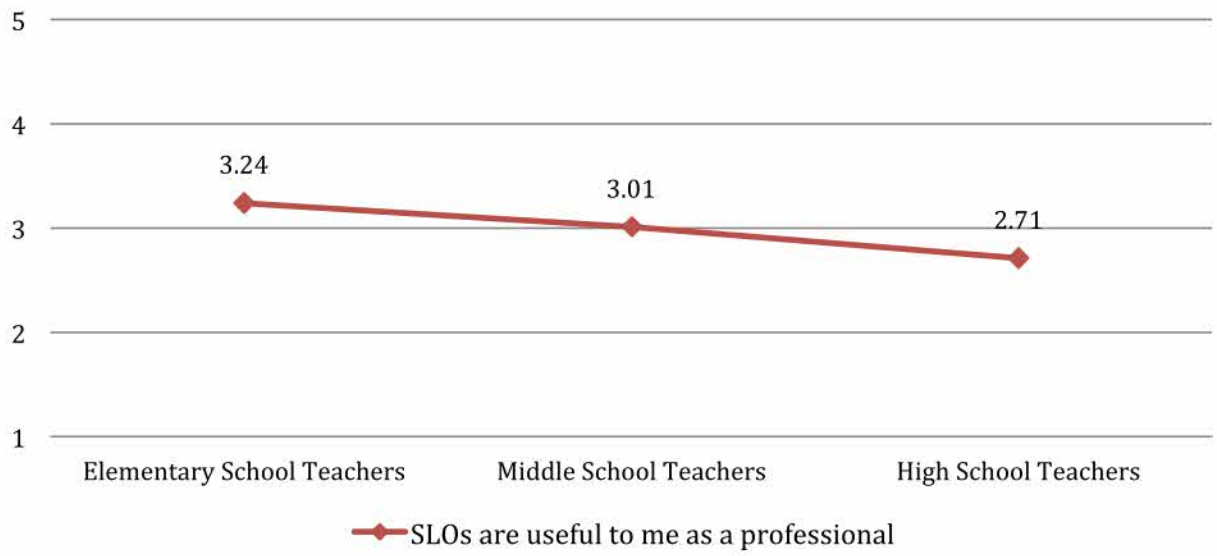
Variations by Grade Level

In surveys, we found differences in teacher experiences by grade level. Elementary teachers reported more positive views on SEED's components than did their middle school or high school counterparts. Across the three types of schools, teachers reported significant differences in the extent to which Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) were useful to them as professionals, F (2, 418) = 10.46, $p < .001$, and the extent to which feedback from classroom observations was useful to them as professionals, F (2, 416) = 8.70, $p < .001$ (see Figures 23 & 24). These findings are consistent with a long line of research suggesting that reforms take root more easily in

elementary schools than their secondary counterparts. Moreover, secondary schools' larger size and departmental structure may present particular challenges to the implementation of teacher evaluation systems.

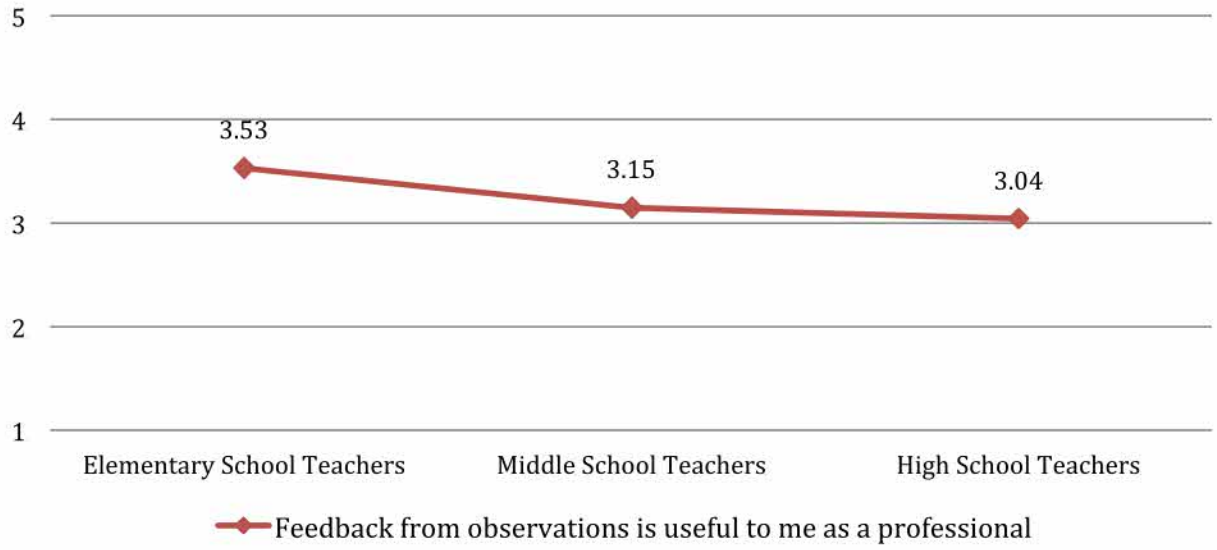
Dunnett's T3 post-hoc comparisons of the three grade levels indicate that elementary school teachers (M=3.24, 95% CI [3.10, 3.39]) found SLOs to be significantly more useful than high school teachers (M=2.71, 95% CI [2.52, 2.89]), $p < .001$. Comparisons between middle school teachers (M=3.01, 95% CI [2.80, 3.22]) and teachers at the other two grade levels were not significant at $p < .05$.

Figure 23. Means Plot for Usefulness of SLOs across Grade Levels (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)



Post-hoc comparisons also indicate that elementary school teachers (M=3.53, 95% CI [3.39, 3.68]) found feedback from classroom observations to be significantly more useful than middle school teachers (M=3.15, 95% CI [2.91, 3.39]), $p = .022$, and high school teachers (M=3.04, 95% CI [2.84, 3.24]), $p < .001$. Middle school teachers and high school teachers did not indicate significant differences in responses at $p < .05$.

Figure 24. Means Plot for Usefulness of Feedback from Observations across Grade Levels (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)

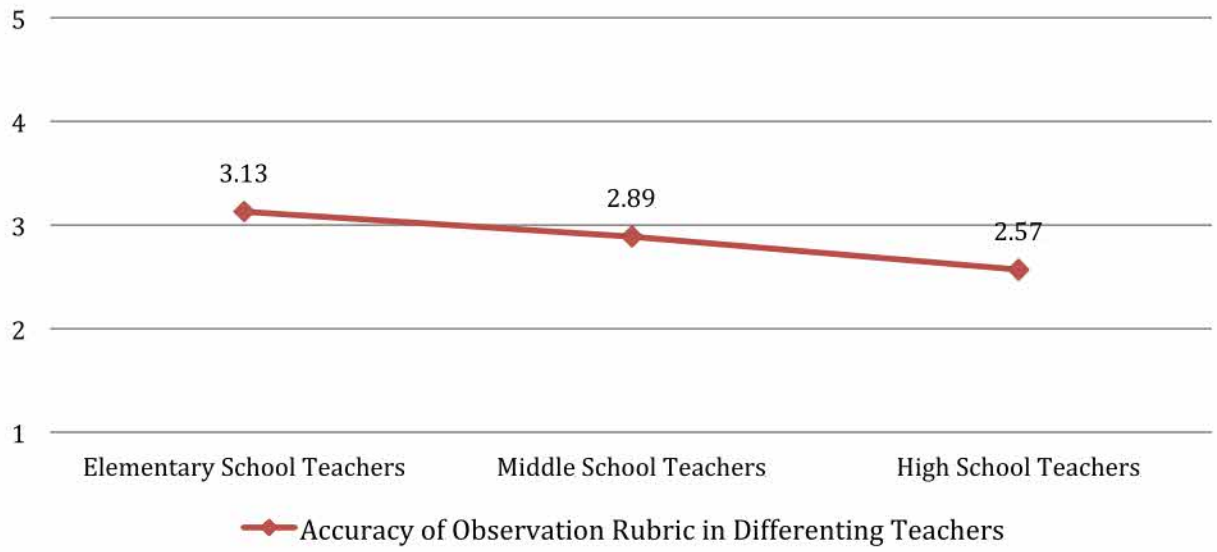


Moreover, a one-way ANOVA tested whether there were significant differences in teacher perceptions of the validity of SEED measures across grade levels. There were no differences in the extent to which teachers indicated that they feel their summative ratings from 2012-13 were accurate, $F(2, 408) = .01$, $p = .990$.

Teachers reported significant differences in the extent to which they believed that the observation protocol accurately describes a continuum of teaching quality, $F(2, 408) = 9.58$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 25). Tukey's post-hoc comparisons indicate that elementary school teachers (M=3.13, 95% CI [2.97, 3.29]) agree significantly more with this statement than high school teachers (M=2.57, 95% CI [2.37, 2.77]), $p < .001$. The difference between middle school teachers (M=2.89, 95% CI [2.67, 3.11]) and high school teachers is statistically significant at the .10 level ($p = .078$); the difference between elementary school teachers and middle school teachers is not significant at $p < .05$.

One-way ANOVAs indicate that there were significant differences across grade levels in the extent to which teachers valued the time spent on goal setting, being observed, talking about their practice with their principal/evaluator after observations, analyzing data about their students, collecting evidence to support self-assessment of professional growth, receiving summative ratings, and discussing summative ratings. In each of these teacher evaluation and development tasks, elementary school teachers reported valuing the task significantly more than high school teachers; middle school teachers also valued time spent on goal setting, analyzing data about their students, and collecting evidence to support self-assessment of professional growth significantly more than high school teachers. There were no significant differences between elementary school teachers and middle school teachers in the extent to which they valued time spent on any of these activities.

Figure 25. Means Plot for Teacher Perceptions of SEED Rubric Validity across Grade Levels (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=533)



Differences across Tenure Status

Independent-samples *t* tests indicate that there was no difference between non-tenured and tenured teachers in the extent to which they believed the observation rubric accurately describes a continuum of teaching quality, t (429) = 1.42, p = .156, or the extent to which they felt their summative rating from 2012-13 was accurate, t (424) = .92, p = .360.

Non-tenured teachers found, overall, that their time spent on SEED activities was more valuable than tenured teachers, with the exception of the time spent on analyzing data, for which there was no significant difference. The average non-tenured teacher found goal setting, being observed, talking about their practice with the principal/evaluator after being observed, collecting evidence to support self-assessment of professional growth, and discussing their summative rating to be "somewhat valuable," whereas tenured teachers gave these activities a neutral mean score. This may be due to the fact, discussed in prior sections as well as below, that non-tenured teachers received a larger "dose" of SEED; specifically, they received more observations and more conferences, on average.

Moreover, on the spring survey, tenured teachers reported significantly less confidence in their evaluator's ability to evaluate them fairly than non-tenured teachers, with $t(548) = 4.66$, $p < .001$. Only 21% of tenured teachers agreed that their evaluator had sufficient knowledge, time, and resources to implement SEED, compared to 39% of non-tenured teachers. This may be due to the fact that principals observed non-tenured teachers more than tenured teachers, on average. For example, as of spring 2013, the majority of tenured teachers (73%) reported that they had been formally observed once or not at all, compared to only 43% of non-tenured teachers – the majority of whom had been formally observed twice or more.

Variations by District

Overall, we saw differences in how teachers viewed SEED across different districts. There were significant differences across districts in many indicators of teacher experiences, including how well teachers understood how they were evaluated under SEED [$F(8, 466) = 3.13$, $p = .002$], the extent to which they believe the observation rubric describes a continuum of teaching quality [$F(8, 439) = 5.49$, $p < .001$], the value of talking about their practice with their evaluator after being observed [$F(8, 452) = 3.52$, p = .001], and the extent to which teachers felt that their summative ratings from 2012-13 were accurate [$F(8, 434) = 2.95$, $p = .003$]. There was one pilot site with particularly higher mean ratings of teacher experiences and a few sites with particularly lower mean ratings across these four indicators, suggesting that there is a consistent effect related to district context.

Specialists raise strong concerns about SEED

At each stage of SEED implementation, specialists raised strong concerns about SEED. Most specialists, including psychologists, interventionists, instructional coaches, music teachers, and social workers, felt that the instructional practice rubric did not capture many aspects of their work. Moreover, many specialists reported crafting SLOs based on a small group of students and sometimes even one student. They raised questions about whether they should be assessed based on the progress of such a small number of students. Specialists were also confused about how to draft SLOs, and they spent a great deal of time trying to write them. These educators were especially interested in receiving examples of SLOs. Overall, specialists expressed a strong desire that SEED be differentiated to meet their needs as educators whose positions are structured quite differently from those of teachers of core subjects.

Administrator SEED

On the whole, school administrators reported varied responses on SEED's accuracy as a tool to measure administrator performance, but generally viewed their SEED ratings as accurate. On average, the administrators in our sample neither agreed nor disagreed that SEED accurately measures the performance of administrators (M=3.34, 95% CI [2.64, 4.07]), that the indicators of school leadership quality included in SEED capture what effective administrators do (M=2.76, 95% CI[2.17, 3.36]), or that their summative ratings from 2012-13 are accurate (M=3.29, 95% CI[2.83, 3.76]). However, there was a range of responses to these survey items. Specifically, 30% of administrators surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that SEED accurately measures administrator performance; 35% of respondents were neutral on this question; and 36% of respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed (see Table 15). Forty-seven percent of respondents indicated that SEED's indicators capture what effective administrators do, while just 18% disagreed/strongly disagreed on this item. In contrast to these fairly evenly distributed responses, 59% of administrators reported agreeing or strongly agreeing that their final SEED rating was accurate.

Table 15. Frequencies for Administrators' Perceptions of the Validity of SEED Measures (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=22)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
I believe SEED accurately measures the performance of administrators.	24%	12%	35%	24%	6%
The indicators of school leadership quality included in SEED capture what effective administrators do.	6%	12%	35%	41%	6%
I feel that my summative rating from 2012-2013 is accurate.	24%	0%	18%	35%	24%

We asked school administrators additional questions about their views on SEED for administrators. On average, administrators responded on four indicators that they believed SEED would influence practice neutrally: the administrators we surveyed neither agreed nor disagreed, on the whole, that they received appropriate levels of support based on their summative ratings, that they received appropriate levels of recognition based on their summative ratings, that they felt more pressure to have students make academic progress while using SEED, or that the SEED model is going to help administrators improve their leadership practice (see Table 16).

Table 16. Distribution of Administrator Outcomes of SEED Implementation (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=22)

			95% C.I.	
	N	*Mean*	Lower	Upper
I feel that I have received appropriate levels of support based on my summative rating.	17	3.47	2.84	4.10
I feel that I have received appropriate levels of recognition based on my summative rating.	17	3.29	2.67	3.92
I have felt more pressure to have students make academic progress since we began using SEED.	17	2.94	2.30	3.58
The SEED model is going to help administrators improve their leadership practice.	17	3.29	2.67	3.92

Closing Remarks

On the whole, we found that participants holding a range of roles expressed a positive or neutral view of the SEED model. Very few participants rejected the entire model out of hand. Teachers and school leaders found observations, post-observation conferences, and analyzing student data to be valuable aspects of SEED. The state and districts should build upon these early positive results, bolstering these aspects of SEED while responding to educators' criticisms of other components of the model.

Findings on SEED Implementation Outcomes

Consistent with our charge, we examined the first-year implementation of SEED within the 14 pilot districts. In this section, we discuss our findings related to the preliminary outcomes of the SEED pilots for teachers and school administrators. Outcomes from a pilot model should be interpreted with due caution. A pilot program is intended to test a model and is not typically implemented with complete fidelity. The results of evaluations of pilot programs are meant to inform the system, rather than to permit summative conclusions about the program. We present data that respond to the following questions:

OUTCOMES OF SEED

1. To what extent did educators report changing their practices as a result of the SEED?
2. To what extent was there variation in evaluation ratings within schools and districts at the conclusion of the SEED pilot year?
3. What variations occurred? What explains these variations?

In general, we found that some teachers and leaders reported changed practice as a result of SEED. Elementary school and non-tenured teachers were significantly more likely to report that SEED had resulted in changes to their practice or had the potential to do so in the future. School administrators reported mixed views on the extent to which SEED had changed their practice or would do so in the future. Summative performance ratings indicate the majority of teachers were rated as *proficient* (73%) or *exemplary* (23%), with a much smaller percentage rated as *below standard* (<1%) or *developing* (4%). Some variation in these figures occurred across districts, with the majority of variation existing between the top two rating categories.

In the sections below, we first discuss educators' views on whether teachers and leaders changed their practices as a result of participating in SEED. We then discuss variations in reported changes to practice. We then turn to summative ratings, presenting aggregate ratings distributions and their variations. We conclude with a summary.

Changes in Teacher Practice

One of the main goals of SEED is to improve teachers' and school leaders' practice. In fact, this goal is enshrined in initiative's title: the System for Educator Evaluation and Development. At the conclusion of the pilot year, participants reported modest changes to teacher practice as a result of SEED.

Teachers' Views on SEED's Effects on Their Practice

Teachers expressed mixed views on whether SLOs changed their practice, but were more positive about the influence of observations on their teaching.

As shown in Table 17, 36% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that setting SLOs led them to make changes in their teaching practice while 39% disagreed or strongly disagreed. On the

same item, 55% of administrators agreed or strongly agreed that SLOs led teachers to change their practice.

Related to goal setting, 34% of teachers reported that they covered less content in 2012-13 in order to focus on their content and skills embedded in their SLOs. Twenty-eight percent were neutral on this question and 38% disagreed/strongly disagreed with this statement. Twenty-six percent of teachers reported that they felt more accountable for student performance because of SEED, whereas 48% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Table 17. Teacher Views on SEED (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=480)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
Setting SLOs led me to make changes in my teaching practice.	12%	27%	26%	32%	4%
Feedback from classroom observations was useful to me as a professional.	10%	12%	23%	47%	8%
Feedback from classroom observations led me to make changes in my teaching practice.	10%	15%	31%	37%	7%
Changes in my practice as a result of SEED were positive.	10%	14%	41%	31%	4%
I felt more accountable for growth in my students' learning under SEED than I did in previous years.	21%	27%	27%	21%	5%
I covered less content than usual when teaching in order to focus on the content embedded in my student performance goals.	9%	29%	28%	23%	11%

Compared to their views on SLOs, teachers were more positive about the effects of observation on their practice. Almost half of teachers surveyed (44%) agreed or strongly agreed that feedback from observations prompted them to change their practice while 25% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This may be related to the fact that a relatively large percentage (55%) reported that feedback from observations were useful to them as professionals, while 23% disagreed that this was the case.

Of course, a teacher's practice can change for the better or the worse. When asked whether the changes brought about by SEED were positive, 35% of teachers surveyed agreed/strongly agreed, while 41% were neutral on this question, and 24% disagreed/strongly disagreed.

In interviews, teachers expressed similarly mixed views on SEED's impact on their instruction. Some reported focusing disproportionately on the content and skills embedded in their SLOs, as reflected in the survey findings reported above. Some of these teachers felt this was a good thing, as their SLOs reflected the most important content and skills for their students to master. Others felt this constrained their teaching and made it more difficult for them to address other content and skills with sufficient depth. Some teachers felt that the rubric helped focus their teaching, giving them structure to evaluate their own instruction. Others, particularly specialists, felt that the rubric was unrealistic given their students' needs and skills. On the whole, teachers reported that SEED had caused them to change their practices slightly.

Looking to the future, teachers expressed some optimism that they would receive support based on their evaluation ratings, and somewhat less faith that they would receive recognition based on these outcomes (Table 18). Almost half (43%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they would receive appropriate levels of support based on their summative rating, while 33% were neutral on this question and almost a quarter disagreed/strongly disagreed with it. Less than a third (29%) agreed/strongly agreed that they would be appropriately recognized for their rating; this lower number could be due to the fact that it was a pilot year or that only teachers who received relatively high ratings felt they would be recognized.

Table 18. Teacher Views on Outcomes of SEED Implementation (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=480)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
I feel that I will receive appropriate levels of support based on my summative rating.	10%	14%	33%	35%	8%
I feel that I will receive appropriate levels of recognition based on my summative rating.	14%	21%	36%	24%	5%
With sufficient resources, such as time and staffing, we would be able to use SEED to improve teacher practice at this school.	11%	13%	34%	37%	5%

On one of the most important items, 42% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that with sufficient resources school staff could use SEED to improve teacher practice at their school. This item probes teachers' optimism about SEED's impact in their setting. One third of teachers were neutral on this question, and 24% of teachers surveyed disagreed/strongly disagreed. Below, we explore these differences in more detail.

Administrator Views on SEED's Effects on Teacher Practice

Leaders' views on whether SEED changed teacher practice were similarly varied.

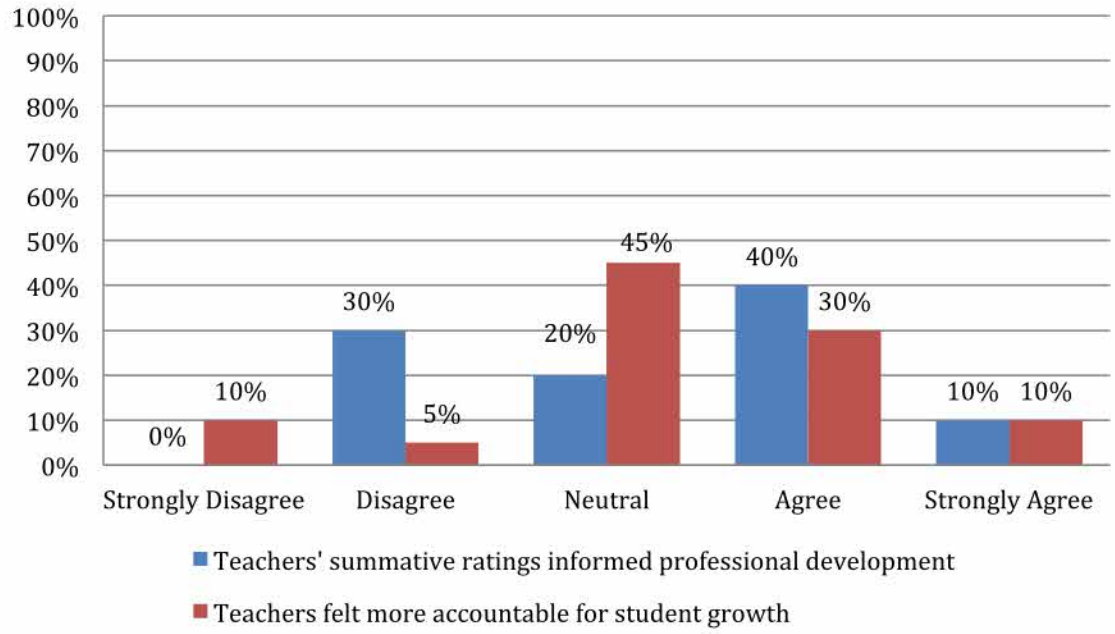
On average, administrators rated five indicators that they believed SEED would influence practice neutrally, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with each item (see Table 19).

Table 19. Distribution of Administrator Perceptions of SEED Outcomes (Fall 2013 Survey)

			95% C.I.	
	n	*Mean*	Lower	Upper
Teachers' summative ratings have been used to inform individual-level professional development.	20	3.11	2.68	3.54
Teachers felt more accountable for growth in their students' learning under SEED than they did prior to SEED.	20	3.06	2.61	3.50
Teachers at this school changed what they were teaching students in order to align with the specific goals for their evaluation.	19	3.00	2.56	3.44
Teachers focused heavily on the content embedded in their student performance goals.	20	3.28	2.92	3.64
Setting SLOs led teachers to make changes in their teaching practice.	20	3.17	2.71	3.62

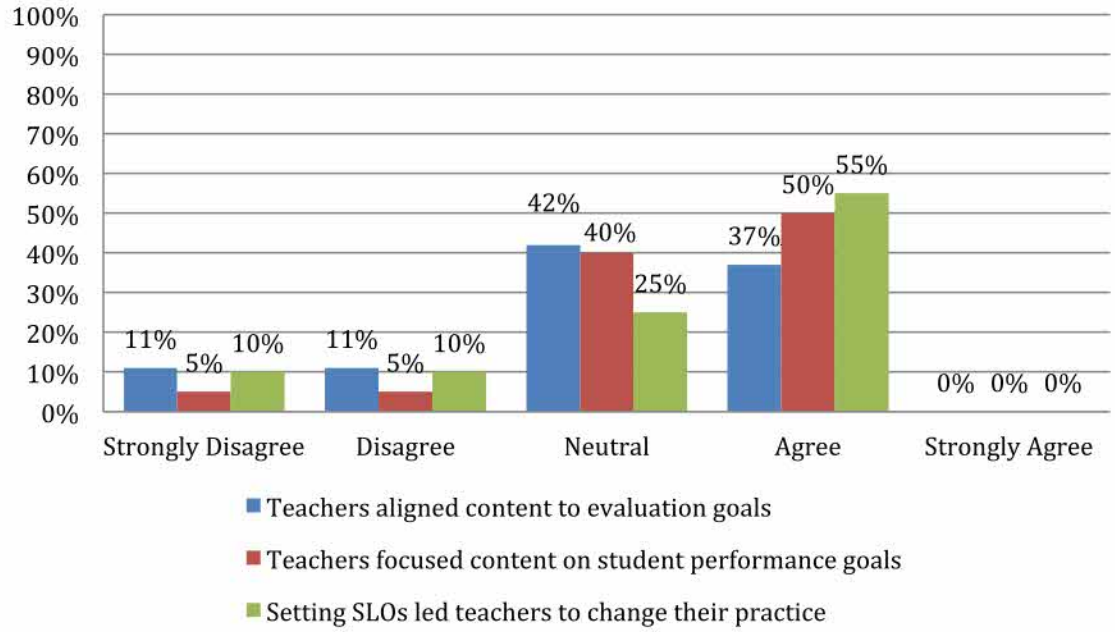
However, a substantial subset of administrators reported changes that they attribute to SEED (see Figures 26 and 27). Half (50%) of the administrators surveyed indicated that teachers' summative ratings have been used to inform individual-level professional development and 40% indicated that SEED caused teachers to feel more accountable for growth in student learning.

Figure 26. Administrator Views on the Effects of SEED on Professional Development and Accountability (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=19)



Many administrators also reported that teachers altered their instruction and/or curricular content to fit their evaluation goals under SEED (Figures 26 and 27). A little more than one-third (37%) of administrators indicated that teachers at their schools changed what they were teaching students in order to align with the specific goals for their evaluation. Half (50%) indicated that teachers focused heavily on the content embedded in their student performance goals and 55% indicated that setting SLOs led teachers to make changes in their teaching practice.

Figure 27. Administrator Views on the Effects of SEED on Teachers' Instructional Practice



School leaders also weighed in on SEED's potential to improve teacher practice. The majority (53%) agreed or strongly agreed that the SEED model will help teachers improve their practice (Table 20). Almost three-quarters (74%) agreed or strongly agreed that SEED could improve teachers' practice with sufficient resources (Table 20). Although we caution readers due to the small sample size of principal respondents, recall that 42% responded similarly to the same item on the teacher survey.

Table 20. Administrator Views on the Effect of SEED on Teacher Practice (Fall 2013 Survey, *n*=19)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
The SEED model will help teachers improve their practice.	5%	21%	21%	42%	11%
With sufficient resources, such as time and staffing, we can use SEED to improve teacher practice at this school.	11%	5%	11%	53%	21%

Interviews corroborated these survey findings. Some principals reported that they observed changes in teachers' practices due to SEED. Two principals in different districts reported that SEED's instructional practice rubric had helped facilitate communication between school leaders and teachers. One principal added that he felt that SEED had helped teachers to know better how to analyze and use data.

A principal in a struggling school reported that SEED had had an impact on the lower performing teachers in his school. He reported: "at a basic level, some people for the first time saw the correlation between student performance and instruction." Similarly, another principal perceived a high degree of focus and ownership of student achievement by the teachers. To support this assertion, she cited the fact that DRA scores in the school demonstrated growth across the board unlike any previous year.

Several principals reported that teachers learned how to better use data within the context of evaluation. One principal reported that teachers paid "heightened attention" to their data. Another principal reported that teachers started to understand SLOs and the importance of having goals, assessments, and data that are aligned. Some teachers in his school didn't have data matched to their SLOs. At the end of the first year, the principal reported that teachers realized they needed better data. Another principal reported that teachers were accustomed to using data because their school had been a SIG school. However, under the School Improvement Grant, a school wide data facilitator had "owned" and tracked the data. In contrast, he recounted, SEED had shifted ownership of the data to individual teachers.

Other leaders reported that they felt that SEED had not changed instruction. Teachers, they reported, were not using data or assessments differently or improving their instruction. In some cases, principals reported that this was because teachers had been meeting in grade level teams and looking at data prior to SEED. They believed that SEED did not diverge substantially from prior practice. In other cases, principals reported that SEED's late start and insufficient training meant that it had little influence on the practice of teachers. This was amplified in districts with multiple other initiatives underway or in schools with administrator turnover.

Most district leaders expressed optimism that SEED would lead to changes in teachers' practice. "Ultimately it will change teaching," said one leader. She added, "practice hasn't changed yet but I think it will. They have a heightened awareness of the components of good instruction. Their awareness is there," and change, she predicted, would follow.

Changes in Leaders' Practices

On average, administrators rated four indicators that they believed SEED would influence practice neutrally: the administrators we surveyed neither agreed nor disagreed, on the whole, that they received appropriate levels of support based on their summative ratings, that they received appropriate levels of recognition based on their summative ratings, that they felt more pressure to have students make academic progress while using SEED, or that the SEED model is going to help administrators improve their leadership practice (see Table 21).

Table 21. Administrator Views on the Outcomes of SEED Implementation: Mean Scores (Fall 2013 Survey)

			95% C.I.	
	n	*Mean*	Lower	Upper
I feel that I have received appropriate levels of support based on my summative rating.	17	3.47	2.84	4.10
I feel that I have received appropriate levels of recognition based on my summative rating.	17	3.29	2.67	3.92
I have felt more pressure to have students make academic progress since we began using SEED.	17	2.94	2.30	3.58
The SEED model is going to help administrators improve their leadership practice.	17	3.29	2.67	3.92

Put another way, school leaders were divided on whether they thought SEED could improve their practice. Thirty percent of school leaders agreed or strongly agreed that SEED is going to help administrators become better leaders, while 41% were neutral on this question and 30% disagreed/strongly disagreed (Table 22). Administrators' divided responses could be related to their perception that their evaluators have the knowledge but not the time or resources to evaluate them accurately. While 71% of school administrators felt their evaluators possessed this knowledge, only 36% thought their evaluators had the time and resources to carry out evaluation as SEED prescribes (Table 22).

Table 22. Administrator Views on the Outcomes of SEED Implementation: Frequency Scores (Fall 2013 Survey)

	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
The SEED model is going to help administrators improve their leadership practice.	18%	12%	41%	24%	6%
My evaluator(s) had the knowledge to evaluate me accurately according to the SEED model.	18%	0%	12%	47%	24%
My evaluator(s) had the time and resources to evaluate me accurately according to the SEED model.	18%	18%	29%	24%	12%

In interviews, school leaders reported slight changes in their practice as a result of participating in SEED. One principal reported that SEED helped her focus her progress monitoring with teachers, enabling her to ask teachers about individuals or target groups. Another principal reported that observations made him more aware of the range of practices in his building. He said his "eyes were opened" to how his teachers think. SEED has made him "a better observer" and opened up many more conversations with teachers about instruction, data, and students.

District administrators also reported that SEED had been somewhat beneficial to them. One assistant superintendent said that SEED "helped me to become clearer about what principals should look for in the classroom...I've learned a lot."

Variations

Consistent with findings presented in the previous sections on implementation and educator experiences, we found significant differences in teachers' views. On average, teachers in elementary schools and non-tenured teachers expressed more positive views on SEED's current and potential effects on their practice based on their participation in SEED's pilot year.

Differences across Grades in Teachers' Views

Teachers reported significant differences across grade levels in the extent to which they felt they would receive appropriate levels of recognition based on their summative ratings, $F(2,409) = 4.79$, $p = .009$ (see Figure 28), and the extent to which they believe that with sufficient resources, such as time and staffing, they would be able to use SEED to improve teacher practice at their schools, $F(2, 411) = 4.35$, $p = .014$ (see Figure 29).

Tukey's post-hoc comparisons indicate that elementary school teachers (M=3.03, 95% CI [2.88, 3.18]) believed they would receive appropriate levels of recognition based on their summative ratings more than did high school teachers (M=2.65, 95% CI [2.46, 2.86]), $p = .007$. The differences between middle school teachers (M=2.80, 95% CI [2.57, 3.03]) and teachers at elementary school and high school levels were not significant at $p < .05$.

Elementary school teachers (M=3.25, 95% CI [3.09, 3.40]) also believed that with sufficient resources, such as time and staffing, they would be able to use SEED to improve teacher practice at their school more than high school teachers did (M=2.92, 95% CI [2.73, 3.10]), $p = .018$. The difference between middle school teachers (M=3.23, 95% CI [3.02, 3.44]) and high school teachers was nearly statistically significant, with $p = .063$. The difference between elementary school teachers and middle school teachers was not significant at $p < .05$.

Figure 28. Means Plot for Teacher Beliefs about Receiving Recognition across Grade Levels

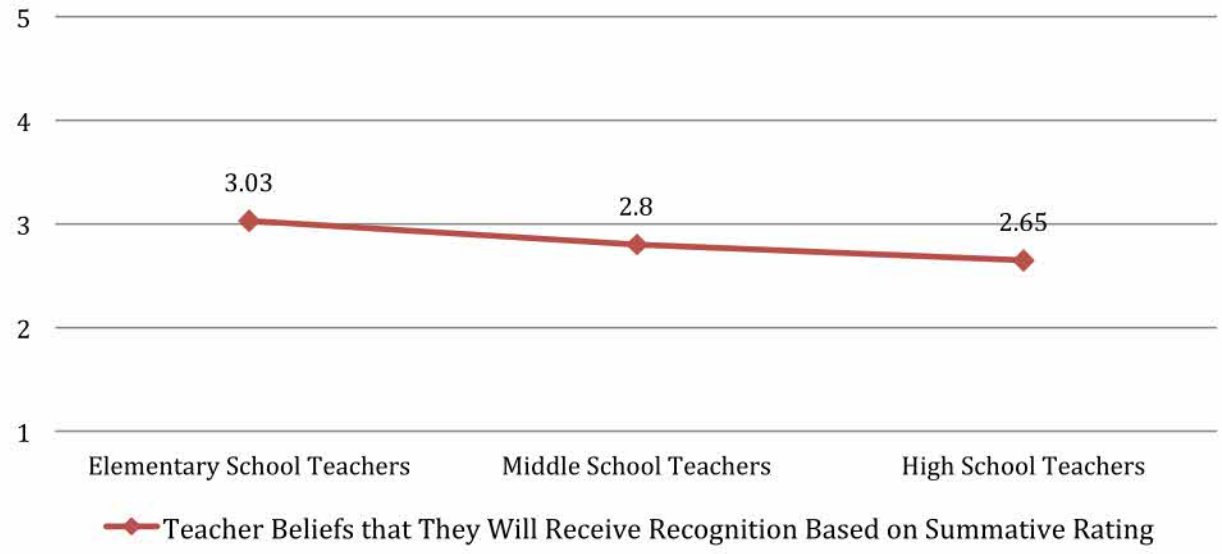
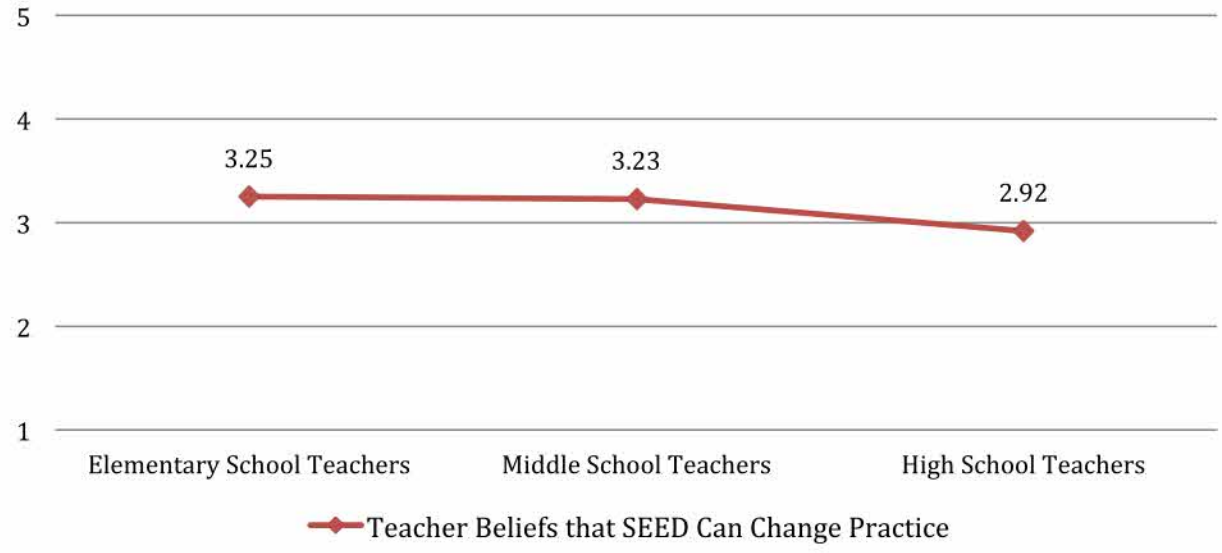


Figure 29. Means Plot for Teacher Beliefs that SEED Can Change Practice across Grade Levels



One-way ANOVAs indicated no significant differences across grade levels in the extent to which teachers felt they would receive appropriate levels of support based on their summative ratings, F (2, 411) = 1.17, p = .141; felt more accountable for growth in their students' learning under SEED than in previous years, F (2, 417) = 2.82, p = .061; or covered less content than usual in order to focus on the content embedded in their student performance goals, F (2, 414) = .14, p = .871.

Differences across Tenure Status

Non-tenured teachers indicated more positive beliefs about SEED's ability to influence practice for all indicators except for the extent to which they covered less content than usual in order to focus on the content embedded in their student performance goals (see Table 23).

Table 23. Differences in SEED Implementation Outcomes by Tenure Status

	Non-Tenured				Tenured							
	n	*Mean*	95% CI		*n*	*Mean*	95% CI		*df*	*t*	*p*	*r*
I feel that I will receive appropriate levels of support based on my summative rating.	80	3.44	3.23	3.65	349	3.08	2.97	3.20	427	2.62	.009	.13
I feel that I will receive appropriate levels of recognition based on my summative rating.	78	3.10	2.89	3.32	349	2.78	2.66	2.90	425	2.37	.018	.11
I felt more accountable for growth in my students' learning under SEED than I did in previous years.	80	2.91	2.67	3.16	356	2.53	2.41	2.65	121	2.79	.006	.25
I covered less content than usual when teaching in order to focus on the content embedded in my student performance goals. (REVERSED survey item)	81	3.07	2.84	3.31	351	3.02	2.89	3.14	430	0.40	.690	.02
With sufficient resources, such as time and staffing, we would be able to use SEED to improve teacher practice at this school.	80	3.45	3.26	3.64	349	3.05	2.94	3.17	427	3.05	.002	.15

Differences by District

Similar to our findings for implementation and experience, we again found variations in participants' views on whether SEED had changed educator practice or had the potential to do so in the future. Mean teacher response varied significantly by district on whether they felt more accountable for student learning growth under SEED; covered less content under SEED than in previous years; and felt they would receive appropriate support or recognition based on their summative evaluation rating. District-level means also varied significantly on whether,

with appropriate resources, SEED would help schools improve teacher practice. On the whole, districts that worked on linking evaluation with professional development in recent years recorded higher means on these items than did their counterparts with less experience in this area.

Ratings

Per SEED, each educator receives a summative, annual performance rating based on scores on the Teacher Practice Related Indicators and Student Outcomes Related Indicators. District aggregate evaluation ratings are reported to the Commissioner of Education by June 30 of each year. Summative teacher evaluation ratings from participating pilot districts are presented in Table 24. Due to incomplete or missing results, administrator ratings were not available. We caution readers against over-interpreting these data, as they represent scores from SEED's pilot year. Two of the fourteen pilot districts did not submit evaluation ratings. One of the participating districts was able to report ratings for only approximately 60% of its teachers. We did not have access to disaggregated data, such as by school, by school level (e.g., high school), by teacher tenure status or subject area.

On average, less than 1% of teachers were rated as *below standard* and 4% were rated as *developing* in the pilot districts.[5] Nearly three-quarters (73%) were rated *proficient* and 23% were rated as *exemplary*. Three-quarters (9 of 12) of the districts reported no teachers rated as *below standard.* There was some variation in aggregate ratings across districts, with small districts subject to greater fluctuation. Excluding one anomalous district (District A), the percentage of teachers rated *proficient* ranged between 56% and 92%. Figure 30 presents the numerical data via line plots, and indicates a general pattern of most teachers (96%) being rated *proficient* or *exemplary,* with the most variability across districts occurring between these two categories.

[5] These two figures may underestimate actual numbers because, for legal purposes, pilot districts tended to use prior evaluation systems for those teachers previously performing well below standard. It is unclear from our data how many, if any, teachers were excluded from these pilot ratings.

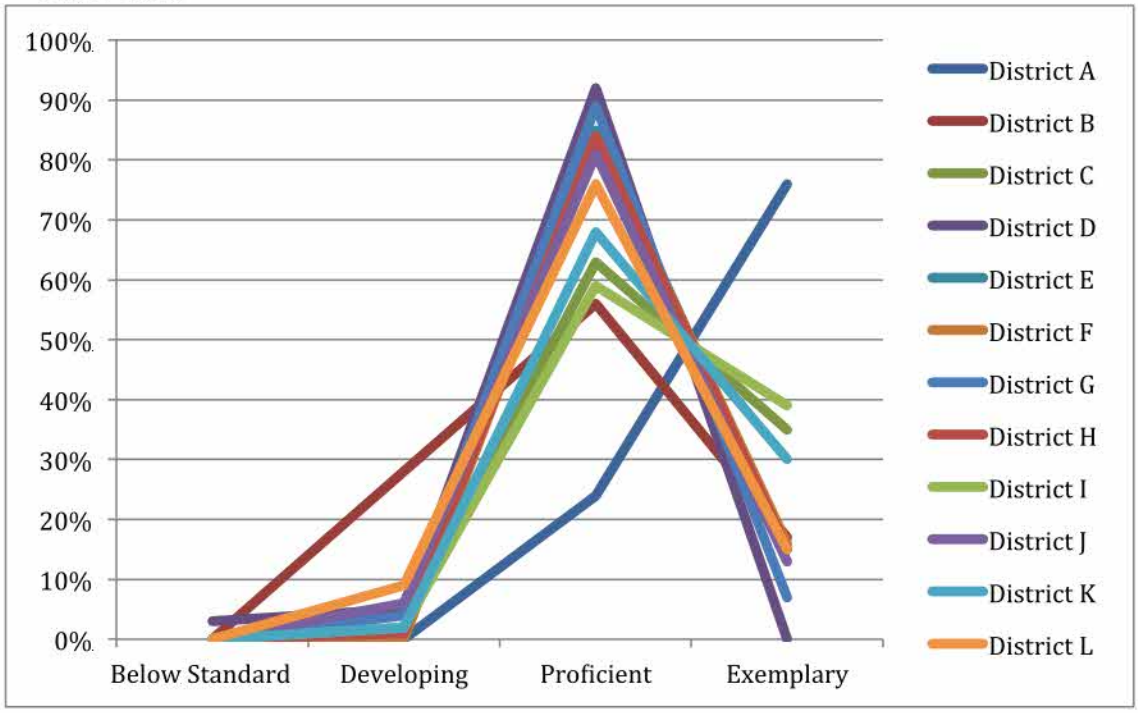
Table 24. Summary of Teacher Evaluation Ratings in SEED Pilot Districts, 2012-2013

	Below Standard	*Developing*	*Proficient*	*Exemplary*
District A	0%	0%	24%	76%
District B	0%	28%	56%	17%
District C	0%	2%	63%	35%
District D	3%	5%	92%	0%
District E	0%	0%	85%	15%
District F	0%	0%	84%	16%
District G	0%	4%	89%	7%
District H	0%	1%	84%	15%
District I	0%	2%	59%	39%
District J	0%	6%	81%	13%
District K	<1%	2%	68%	30%
District L	<1%	9%	76%	15%
Overall	*<1%*	*4%*	*73%*	*23%*

Notes:

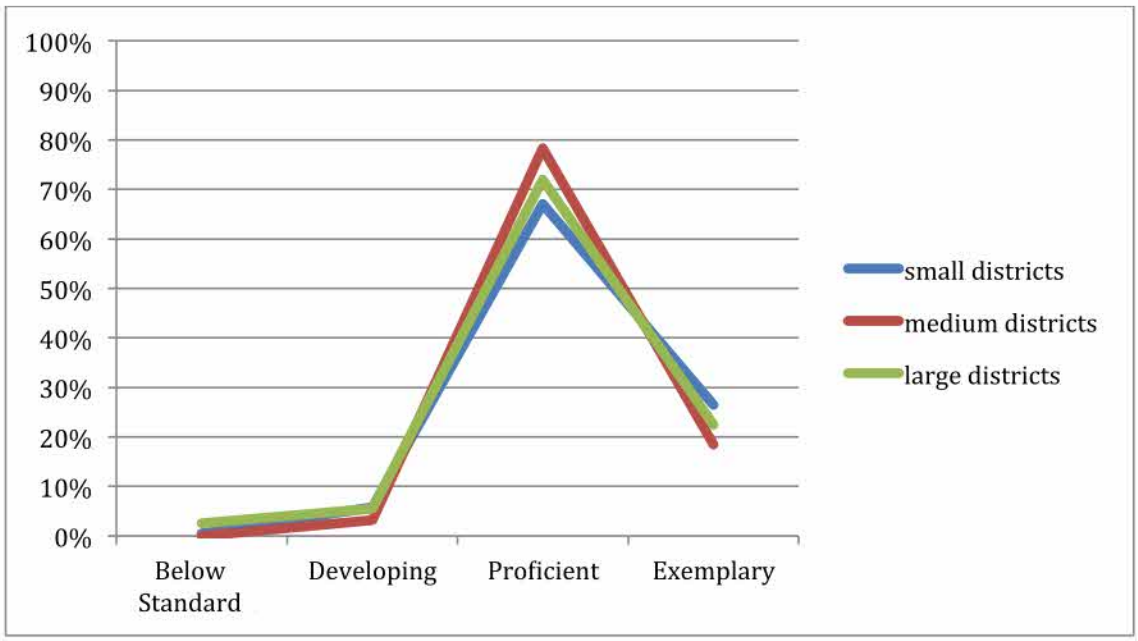
1. Incomplete evaluations (i.e., evaluations where one or more component rating was reported as "0" or "NULL" or left blank) are excluded from these data. In District I, almost 40% of the records supplied were excluded due to incomplete evaluation data.
2. These data represent final ratings as submitted by the districts. With the exception of incomplete evaluations referenced above, no additional verification of these final ratings was performed.
3. Due to rounding, row totals may not sum to 100%.

Figure 30. Line Plots of Aggregate Teacher Evaluation Ratings in SEED Pilot Districts, 2012-2013



Finally, we classified Districts A through L by size under the categories small, medium, and large. Small districts evaluated up to 100 teachers, medium districts evaluated between 101 and 250 teachers, and large districts evaluated more than 250 teachers. As Figure 31 shows, there was no discernible relationship between size of district and summative ratings among these twelve pilot districts. This finding is far from generalizable, however, given the small sample size.

Figure 31. Line Plots of Average Teacher Evaluation Ratings By District Size in SEED Pilot Districts, 2012-2013



The aggregate results above are consistent with survey and interview data, where district and school leaders reported that the majority of teachers were rated proficient. Principals reported that in most cases they were not surprised by teachers' final ratings. In instances when they were surprised, specialists whom the principals viewed as highly skilled had set high goals based on a very small sample size and were not able to meet their goals.

Principals reported that teachers generally were not dismayed by their ratings. Again, teachers who set extremely high goals that they were not able to achieve were the exception to this rule.

Most leaders reported that SEED ratings aligned with their implicit sense of teachers' performance. However, more teachers were rated "proficient" or "developing" than prior evaluation outcomes would suggest. Principals reported that the implementation of SEED had caused both teachers and principals to recalibrate their understandings of the meaning of as one principal recounted, "good, proficient, and effective." This calibration required teachers to come to terms with lower ratings than they had received in the past. That being said, one superintendent predicted that "a lot of people will score proficient because it's a pilot, slow roll out and people are gun shy [about rating teachers low]."

In some cases principals reported that SEED ratings conformed to his sense of teachers' performance in the area of classroom management but were lower than he had expected in the area of instruction. This principal reported that the standards for 'exemplary' were higher than he was accustomed to. Several other principals reported that the SEED rubric enabled them to rate low-performing teachers accurately whereas their prior evaluation system failed to anchor their evidence to an external standard (the rubric) and, as a result, they felt less justified in assigning a low but accurate rating.

What will result from the ratings? Leaders mentioned that they plan to differentiate professional development in the coming year. SEED ratings will also be used to identify who is going to be a complementary evaluator or be placed in a "quasi-leadership" position. District leaders in one district said that these teacher leadership positions are necessary for "our high flyers, for retaining these people. We need something different for our high flyers." Lastly, district leaders reported that they will use ratings to identify teachers whose performance should be more closely monitored in the coming year.

We offer one final note on how the pilot ratings data interface with time demands of conducting observations, and how they can be used by administrators for planning purposes. SEED guidelines require teachers rated as *below standard* or *developing* to receive three formal and up to five informal observations per year. The vast majority of teachers who scored *proficient* or *exemplary* should receive a combination of three formal in-class observations/reviews of practice (of which one must be a formal in-class observation). First and second-year teachers should receive three formal and three informal observations. The percentages will change across rating categories from year to year, and from school to school, but administrators can use prior year's ratings data to roughly estimate the evaluation schedule for the following year.

Closing Remarks

In summary, there is some evidence that teachers and administrators reported changed practice as a result of SEED. Elementary school and non-tenured teachers were statistically more likely to report that SEED had resulted in changes to their practice or had the potential to do so in the future. School administrators reported mixed views on the extent to which SEED had changed their practice or would do so in the future. Across pilot districts, 73% of teachers were rated as *proficient* and about one-quarter were considered *exemplary*. Less than one percent fell into the *below standard* category and about 4% were identified as *developing*. There was some variation in the ratings across districts.

Recommendations

We gathered extensive data from multiple stakeholders at three stages in the implementation of SEED's pilot program. Based on analyses of these data, we recommend that the State Department of Education carry out the following:

1. **Provide additional opportunities for all educators to learn about SEED.** There is a need for additional professional learning opportunities for all educators with respect to SEED. Professional learning needs fall into two categories: one is better understanding and implementing the technical aspects of SEED (setting goals, conducting observations, and providing post-observation feedback) and the other is improved development of educators (by providing individualized and targeted professional development). We strongly recommend that both administrators *and* teachers receive this training, rather than relying on a train-the-trainer model as was the case in the pilot year of SEED.

2. **Build the skills of evaluators, in particular.** Teacher survey and interview data indicated substantial variability in the perceived skill level of evaluators. This variance occurred within and across districts, and even within schools. Such a finding points to the need for administrators to develop and refine their supervisory skills. We suggest there be processes for identifying evaluators in need of improvement and then offering specialized training to these individuals. The SDE, along with professional organizations and regional consortia, should provide professional development to evaluators in using the CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching, conducting formal and informal observations, and providing verbal and written feedback. These professional learning opportunities are critical to the success of any teacher evaluation reform.

3. **Increase the use of complementary observers.** Educators reported that SEED places significant time demands on school administrators. We recommend that districts consider including complementary observers within their teacher evaluation systems. Including complementary evaluators not only reduces the time demands on principals and assistant principals, but also enhances the professional role of teachers by providing additional leadership roles for teachers. Under the moniker of peer assistance and review, such systems have been adopted by several high-profile districts in other states (e.g. Cincinnati, Montgomery County, MD) and have shown promising outcomes in terms of teacher performance and student learning. The SDE can help by sharing effective models with those in the field and providing the required training for complementary observers.

4. **Provide additional guidance on Student Learning Objectives and Indicators of Academic Growth and Development.** As SEED has begun in earnest, we recommend that the SDE continue to provide clear guidance on the identification of valid IAGD targets. The SMART goals heuristic is helpful although does not dictate what performance level or student growth target is both "attainable" and sufficiently challenging. Some teachers or administrators are selecting far too challenging targets while others are choosing far too

easy. The setting of IAGD growth targets is in most cases inherently arbitrary. Should 100% of students score a 70% on an exam or should 70% of students score at 100%? If half the students fall below a certain performance level at the beginning of the year, what percentage should reasonably be expected to meet it by the end of the year? Further, what is meant by growth differs based on the measures available (e.g., contrast pre and post measures from a vertically-scaled assessment with static measures of performance on a locally developed test). There are checks and balances built into the system, such as the mid-year check-ins, that are intended to provide at least one opportunity to adjust growth goals. However, the selection of IAGD targets is an area that deserves close attention as the SEED model evolves.

5. **Clarify and contextualize SEED to district and school personnel.** Teachers in pilot districts expressed trepidation over the number and magnitude of new reform initiatives they faced, and viewed teacher evaluation as adding "one more thing" to their already busy agenda. It would be helpful if educational leaders and policy makers demonstrated how educator evaluation interfaces with the implementation of other major initiatives such as the Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessments. Moreover, make clear to districts any flexibility they have with regard to implementing SEED or the Core Requirements. Administrators are interpreting SEED with more rigidity than the model actually requires.

6. **Disseminate promising practices.** We recommend a coordinated effort by SDE and/or regional district consortia to identify and disseminate "promising practices" relative to SEED and educator evaluation. Connecticut educators represent an extraordinarily rich source of ingenuity and talent and should be actively engaged in the continuous improvement of evaluation as they adapt the model to their own district contexts and explore new processes. In some settings we found evidence of schools using SEED to promote deep conversations about teaching and learning. For example, one school piloted the use of video cameras to facilitate the evaluation of teachers. Teachers reported that this approach reduced their anxiety to "perform" in front a live observer and facilitated conversations with their evaluator by helping them understand the evaluator's feedback.

7. **Provide additional assistance to low-performing districts to support SEED's implementation.** We believe that the state should provide additional assistance to low-performing districts to support the implementation of SEED. This recommendation is supported by our finding that lower-performing districts with multiple initiatives underway encountered particular challenges in implementing SEED. Providing additional support and assistance to these districts may help them integrate SEED with other initiatives and increase the chance that the reform spurs positive change in their schools and classrooms.

8. **Continue to track SEED's implementation and effects.** We recommend that the state continue to gather data from educators at regular intervals to inform the continuous improvement of the model. In addition, we recommend tracking the model's utility in rating

the annual performance of educators and administrators. Specifically, we recommend that the relationship between SEED and student achievement be examined.