

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Differentiated Accountability Proposal
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I: Executive Summary

PDE has historically used the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to differentiate among schools and school districts that need foundation level supports, field-based assistance, or more intensive targeted supports. However, the AYP labels can overlook the details of *why* a school is not making AYP. Is it due to one or many targets? What targets are being missed? Further, the AYP classifications also fail to show how much improvement is being made over time at the individual student level in each school.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) proposes a differentiated accountability model that distinguishes among schools who fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) because of one or two specified targets and schools which fail to make AYP because of more than two specified targets. PDE proposes using the *Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS)* to distinguish which schools are successfully moving students towards proficiency and which schools are struggling and may need more intervention. According to this differentiation, Pennsylvania schools would receive new labels and have different requirements regarding Supplemental Education Services (SES) and Public School Choice (PSC). More importantly, PDE would be able to identify schools that are improving, those that need targeted supports with certain subgroups and those that are in need of more intensive interventions. Accordingly, Pennsylvania would target key interventions aligned with the needs of the schools so that resources are directly aligned to schools' needs.

The proposed differentiation model expands the use of the *PVAAS*, which is already used in all 501 school districts in the Commonwealth, as an additional indicator of performance. The *PVAAS* grew out of a recommendation in 2002 by the Pennsylvania League of Urban Schools (PLUS), that the State Board of Education adopt a value-added approach to measure student progress. The model selected for value-added analysis within Pennsylvania was the Educational Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS™) model. This model is now known as the *Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS)*.

While the state assessment, the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), tells schools and PDE where student learning is on a specific day – the *PVAAS* shows whether schools are headed in the right direction with student learning for all students, both proficient and non-proficient. A snapshot of achievement data alone does not tell the whole story about student learning; however, achievement data combined with progress data yields a more comprehensive view of learning in districts and schools.

Beginning in 2002, Pennsylvania partnered with SAS, Inc. to provide initial value-added reporting to 31 pilot districts across the Commonwealth. During the initial pilot phases between 2002 and 2005, 100 districts received value-added reporting. In school year 2005-2006, all 501 districts across the Commonwealth received limited reporting, via a secure web-based system, for grades 4 and 6. In August 2007, all 501 school districts

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across the Commonwealth received web-based reporting through the *PVAAS* for grades 4 through 8 in reading and mathematics.

The *PVAAS* provides an additional type of data that offers an objective and precise way to measure student progress and the value schools and districts add to students' educational experiences. Pennsylvania is one of only three states providing this information to all school districts.

By measuring student growth, and holding schools accountable for the educational progress of children, PDE will be furthering the spirit of the "No Child Left Behind" initiative. If schools are to meet the AYP targets they must monitor and be recognized for growing students towards these targets. Many schools that do not make AYP are working to educate students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The hurdles these schools face to accelerate the achievement of these students is immense. Because the *PVAAS* controls for students' initial level of achievement, it does not permit educators to make excuses for low achievement of students in schools with these subgroups. The *PVAAS* data lets educators and schools see if they are growing students in spite of these demographic variables, replicate effective curricular and instructional practices and assist PDE in determining where to better focus its interventions and supports. Distinguishing among schools that are making gains in student achievement, despite doing poorly in the past, will also allow these schools to take pride in their accomplishments.

Assurances that Pennsylvania has met eligibility criteria set by the US Department of Education (USDOE):

- Pennsylvania received approval of its 2006-2007 Accountability Workbook on July 7, 2007. To view the letter please go to <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/letters/acpa6.html>
- Pennsylvania's state standards and assessment system were also approved on August 28, 2007. The appropriate letter can be viewed at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbfinalassess/pa4.html>
- The Title I Program in Pennsylvania was monitored by the USDOE in March of 2008. While a formal report regarding the outcome of the visit has not yet been received by the PDE, the exit conference conducted by the USDE team indicated there would be no serious or significant findings.
- The PA Department of Education assures that it has a Highly Qualified Teacher Plan approved by the US Department of Education. Pennsylvania's HQT plan, submitted September 28, 2006 and supplemented December 1, 2006 with additional attachments, was approved on December 14, 2006 by the US Department of Education. The appropriate letter can be found in Appendix A.
- PDE provides to the public a clear and understandable description of its AYP calculations in several places including the Accountability Workbook which is located at http://www.pde.state.pa.us/nclb/lib/nclb/Accountability_Workbook_revised_2007.doc

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In addition, the state has a website, <http://www.paayp.com/index.jsp>, which provides information about AYP and data on each school and district in Pennsylvania.

Priority Criteria:

Currently 1,781 Pennsylvania schools receive Title I assistance. Of them, 1,168 receive targeted assistance and 613 receive school wide Title I assistance. While only 15% of the 1,781 (267 schools) are in some form of school improvement or corrective action, 36% of the schools in Pennsylvania's poorest communities (those receiving school wide assistance) are in school improvement or corrective action. These schools - our poorest performing and most economically disadvantaged- are serving 74.1% of our Title I students. PDE's proposed differentiated accountability model will allow Pennsylvania to restructure our interventions so that communities with the fewest resources are receiving the most assistance.

Educating the Public about Differentiation:

For several years, Pennsylvania used its "School Profiles" to keep citizens informed about its schools. These profiles, which were available at www.paprofiles.org, provided information about many subjects, including student achievement. When NCLB was enacted, the profiles were adjusted (e.g., the addition of data disaggregated by subgroup) to ensure consistency between state and federal reporting requirements. The General Assembly responded by passing House Bill 204, which is referred to as the State and School Report Card Bill (Act No. 153 of 2002, signed into law on December 9, 2002). This new law essentially incorporates the reporting requirements of the NCLB into the Pennsylvania School Code of 1949 (School Code), expressly delineating the responsibilities of the State, as well as those of each local education agency (LEA), charter school, cyber charter school, intermediate unit and area vocational technical school. It effectively transforms the school, LEA and state "profiles" into "report cards" and is more "user-friendly" since state and federal requirements now appear in one section of the School Code. Report card information as well as state and local report cards can now be found at www.paayp.com. Additionally, Pennsylvania produces report cards which are posted on the www.paayp.com website.

If the US Department of Education accepts this proposal, PDE will strategically incorporate the new differentiated model into its current assessments and reporting of assessments. PDE will need to accurately communicate to parents, community leaders, and schools this new way of distinguishing progress among schools. We believe that this new model will be embraced, since school districts around the state have requested that evaluation take into account a value-added approach.

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10 Core Principles of the USDOE Differentiated Accountability Pilot:

Pennsylvania's proposed differentiated accountability model fully embraces the 10 core principles behind the Federal Differentiated Accountability Pilot.

CP 1: Determinations consistent with state's Consolidated Accountability Workbook

- Under Pennsylvania's proposed differentiation model, AYP will continue to be measured for Pennsylvania public schools according to the No Child Left Behind statute and related regulations. Pennsylvania would differentiate schools within the current AYP designations by (1) considering whether schools missed two or fewer specified targets and (2) analyzing the progress made by schools using data on student growth.

CP 2: Transparent information about AYP calculations

- AYP determinations are transparent and easy to understand under the new model.

CP 3: Title 1 schools continue to be identified for improvement as required by NCLB

- Under Pennsylvania's proposed differentiation model, Title 1 schools would continue to be identified for improvement. The only differentiation would be that schools failing to meet two or fewer targets and that demonstrate that their students are making progress using the PVAAS growth data, would receive more flexibility in offering supplemental education services (SES) and public school choice (PSC), since student progress is evident and occurring at a rate that allows for schools to reach full student proficiency by 2014.

CP 4: Method of differentiation

- The growth metrics provided to districts from the PVAAS are based on a solid statistical analysis foundation. SAS, Inc., the company that provides the PVAAS data to PDE and its schools, has a history of statewide implementation of a growth model in Tennessee and Ohio.

CP 5: Transitioning to a differentiated accountability model

- Schools would continue to receive interventions as needed under the proposed differentiation model. The model would simply assist PDE in better identifying where interventions are needed.

CP 6: Transparency of differentiation and interventions

- The proposed differentiation model includes the use of the PVAAS, which will further allow interventions and consequences to be data driven. PDE provides research proven tools and resources to all schools, targeting those schools that need the most intensive interventions and supports.

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CP 7: Intervention timeline

- Generally, interventions to schools will continue to increase in intensity according to the level of student proficiency achieved by the school.

CP 8: Types of interventions

- Interventions that will be used in the differentiation model have been developed using research and best practices and are educationally sound.

CP 9: Public school choice and supplemental educational services

- The proposed model has the potential to result in an increased number of students participating in SES and PSC if a school consistently fails to advance its students.

CP 10: Significant and comprehensive interventions for consistently lowest-performing schools

- Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action II – Year 2 and beyond that show overall growth as demonstrated by the *PVAAS* and have done at least one of the following will NOT be required to offer SES or PSC to eligible students within the building if they are already offering an effective tutoring program:
 - replaced all or most of their school staff, including the principal
 - entered into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company, with a demonstrated record of effectiveness to operate the school
 - state takeover
 - any other major restructuring of the school governance arrangement

In these cases, the PDE views Title I schools at this level as new schools (maintaining the corrective action status) and will give them the opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of their reform efforts.)

PDE assures that it will cooperate in a USED OE evaluation of the differentiated accountability model, including providing data to show how student achievement has differed prior to and after the implementation of the differentiated accountability pilot.

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II: Differentiation Model

Below is a detailed description of the new labels and changes with the requirements for supplemental education services (SES) and public school choice (PSC) that PDE is proposing in its differentiation model. How the proposed model directly relates to each of the core principles, in detail, is explained in section III of this document.

The model below uses the *Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS)* to measure growth in student achievement. Those schools that Pennsylvania does not have growth data for would not qualify for the “School Improving- Growth” and “School Improving II- Growth labels.” Schools without growth data would qualify for either the “Targeted” or “Intensive” categories of “School Improvement I” or “School Improvement II,” depending on the amount of performance targets they failed to make, and would therefore still benefit from differentiation. Pennsylvania will have growth data for grade 11 in the fall of 2008.

PVAAS Reporting:

The *PVAAS* provides two types of information, value-added/growth data on cohorts of students and student level projection to proficiency data. The value-added, or growth analysis analyzes available data from previous years (looking back) to help schools to evaluate the gain cohorts of students have made in a school year. The *PVAAS* helps schools answer the question: Did a cohort of students in school make a year’s worth of growth after a year of schooling? This is the measure Pennsylvania is proposing to use in the differentiated accountability model.

The ratings on the *PVAAS* School Reports are color coded to assist with quick recognition of the rating. (See Appendix B) There are four possible color codes that a school can receive. Green indicates an estimated gain at or above growth standard. Students in this cohort have made at least one year of growth. All schools can achieve this rating. Yellow indicates an estimated gain below the growth standard, but by less than one standard error. Students in this cohort have grown less than the growth standard. Light red is the estimated gain below growth standard by more than one, but less than two standard errors. Students in this cohort have fallen behind their peers. Red is the estimated gain well below growth standard by more than two standard errors. Students have made little progress. These color designations of the growth descriptors depend on the statistical confidence regarding the estimated gains that are calculated for a cohort of students as described above. In this differentiated model schools achieving a green would be recognized as exhibiting a high level of statistical confidence in achieving at least one year of growth with a cohort of students in reading or mathematics. Schools achieving any other growth rating than green would not qualify for the School Improvement- Growth and Corrective Action- Growth labels within the proposed differentiation model.

New Labels

(A chart summarizing the new labels and related requirements follows the narrative below)

Warning: Applied to schools that fail to make AYP in one school year either because of one or more proficiency targets or one of the other non-academic targets. This label carries with it no consequences under NCLB or the State Accountability workbook, but interventions are available to schools identified with this label. This is not a new label. (Schools failing to make targets in different content areas in consecutive years will remain in Warning for more than one year and will not advance to the next level of improvement or be subject to consequences.)

School Improving I--Growth: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for two consecutive years because of missing two or fewer specified targets in the same content area and showing at least one year of growth in the content area during each of the two years. Growth will be measured by the *Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS)*. If the school misses targets in participation rate, graduation rate or attendance, the following criteria will be applied:

- **Participation Rate:** If the school fails to make the 95% rate in any subgroup, and the percentage rate of participation is lower than 90%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Graduation Rate:** If the school fails to make the graduation rate requirement of 80% and the graduation rate is lower than 75 %, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Attendance Rate:** If the school fails to make the attendance rate requirement of 90% and the attendance rate is less than 85%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.

All schools labeled as School Improving I—Growth will be required to assess data, determine root causes, identify solutions and develop a school improvement plan to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as School Improving I—Growth will NOT be required to offer Supplemental Education Services (SES) or Public School Choice (PSC) to students enrolled in the school and will NOT be required to set aside funds for transportation costs for SES and PSC. Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development, unless the building can demonstrate that sufficient funds are available and targeted to professional development activities outlined within the building's school improvement plan.

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School Improvement I—Targeted: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for two consecutive years because of missing two or fewer targets in the same content area and not showing at least one year of growth in the content area. Growth will be measured by the *Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS)*. If the school misses targets in participation rate, graduation rate or attendance, the following criteria will be applied:

- **Participation Rate:** If the school fails to make the 95% rate in any subgroup, and the percentage rate of participation is lower than 90%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Graduation Rate:** If the school fails to make the graduation rate requirement of 80% and the graduation rate is lower than 75 %, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Attendance Rate:** If the school fails to make the attendance rate requirement of 90% and the attendance rate is less than 85%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.

All schools labeled as School Improvement I—Targeted will be required to assess data, determine root causes, identify solutions and develop a school improvement plan to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as School Improvement I—Targeted will be required to offer SES and/ or PSC to all eligible students enrolled in the school within the subgroups not making the specified targets and the district will be required to set aside funds for transportation costs for SES and/ or PSC (up to 20%). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development, unless the building can demonstrate that sufficient funds are available and targeted to professional development activities outlined within the building's school improvement plan. The Local Education Agency (LEA) may be an SES provider regardless of the school district's AYP status.

School Improvement I—Intensive: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for two consecutive years because of missing 3 or more targets in the same content area.

All schools labeled as School Improvement I—Intensive will be required to assess data, determine root causes, identify solutions and develop a school improvement plan to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as School Improvement I—Intensive will be required to offer SES and/or PSC to all eligible students enrolled in the school and the district will be required

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to set aside funds for transportation costs for SES and/ or PSC (up to 20%). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development and target those resources to professional development activities outlined within the building's school improvement plan. The LEA may be an SES provider regardless of the school district's AYP status.

School Improving II--Growth: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for three consecutive years because of missing two or fewer targets in the same content area and showing at least one year of growth in the content area during each of the three years. Growth will be measured by the *Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS)*. If any of the targets missed by the school is participation rate, graduation rate or attendance, the following criteria will be applied:

- **Participation Rate:** If the school fails to make the 95% rate in any subgroup, and the percentage rate of participation is lower than 90%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Graduation Rate:** If the school fails to make the graduation rate requirement of 80% and the graduation rate is lower than 75 %, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth. New schools
- **Attendance Rate:** If the school fails to make the attendance rate requirement of 90% and the attendance rate is less than 85%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.

All schools labeled as School Improving II—Growth will be required to assess data, review implementation of SI plan, update plans as necessary to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as School Improving II—Growth will be required to only offer SES and/ or PSC to all eligible students enrolled within the subgroups not making the performance targets and the district will be required to set aside funds for transportation costs for SES and/ or PSC (up to 20%). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development, unless the building can demonstrate that sufficient funds are available and targeted to professional development activities outlined within the building's school improvement plan. The LEA may be the SES provider regardless of the school district's AYP status.

School Improvement II—Targeted: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for three consecutive years because of missing two or fewer targets in the same content area and not showing at least one year of growth in the content area during each of the three years. Growth will be measured by the *Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS)*.

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If any of the targets missed by the school is participation rate, graduation rate or attendance, the following criteria will be applied:

- **Participation Rate:** If the school fails to make the 95% rate in any subgroup, and the percentage rate of participation is lower than 90%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Graduation Rate:** If the school fails to make the graduation rate requirement of 80% and the graduation rate is lower than 75 %, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth. New schools
- **Attendance Rate:** If the school fails to make the attendance rate requirement of 90% and the attendance rate is less than 85%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.

All schools labeled as School Improving II—Targeted will be required to assess data, review implementation of SI plan, update plans as necessary to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as School Improvement II—Targeted will be required to offer SES and/ or PSC to all students, regardless of eligibility, enrolled in the school within the subgroups not making the performance targets and the district will be required to set aside funds for transportation costs for SES and/ or PSC (up to 20%). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development, unless the building can demonstrate that sufficient funds are available and targeted to professional development activities outlined within the building's school improvement plan. The LEA may be an SES provider.

School Improvement II—Intensive: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for three consecutive years because of missing 3 or more targets in the same content area.

All schools labeled as School Improving II—Intensive will be required to assess data, review implementation of SI plan, update plans as necessary to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as School Improvement II—Intensive will be required to offer SES and/ or PSC to all students enrolled in the school within the building and the district will be required to set aside funds for School Choice and SES (up to 20%). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development and target those resources to professional development

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activities outlined within the building's school improvement plan. The LEA may be an SES provider regardless of the district's AYP status.

Corrective Action I—Targeted: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for four consecutive years because of missing two or fewer targets in the same content area. If any of the targets missed by the school is participation rate, graduation rate or attendance, the following criteria will be applied:

- **Participation Rate:** If the school fails to make the 95% rate in any subgroup, and the percentage rate of participation is lower than 90%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Graduation Rate:** If the school fails to make the graduation rate requirement of 80% and the graduation rate is lower than 75 %, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth. New schools
- **Attendance Rate:** If the school fails to make the attendance rate requirement of 90% and the attendance rate is less than 85%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.

All schools labeled as Corrective Action I—Targeted will be required to assess data, determine root causes, identify solutions and develop a corrective action plan to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools will be required to take at least one of the corrective actions outlined within NCLB ensuring that the action(s) addresses one or more of the root causes identified. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action I—Targeted will be required to offer SES AND PSC to all eligible students enrolled in the school within the subgroups not making the performance targets and the district will be required to set aside funds for transportation costs for SES and PSC (up to 20%) Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development and target those resources to professional development activities outlined within the building's corrective action plan.

Corrective Action I—Intensive: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for four consecutive years because of missing 3 or more targets in the same content area.

All schools labeled as Corrective Action I—Intensive will be required to assess data, determine root causes, identify solutions and develop a corrective action plan to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools will be required to take at least one of the corrective actions outlined within NCLB, ensuring that the action(s) addresses one or more of the root causes identified. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's

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status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action I—Intensive will be required to offer SES AND PSC to all students enrolled within the building within the subgroups not making the performance targets and the district will be required to set aside funds for SES and PSC (up to 20%). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development and target those resources to professional development activities outlined within the building's corrective action plan.

Corrective Action II—Targeted: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for five consecutive years because of missing two or fewer performance targets in the same content area. If any of the targets missed by the school is participation rate, graduation rate or attendance, the following criteria will be applied:

- **Participation Rate:** If the school fails to make the 95% rate in any subgroup, and the percentage rate of participation is lower than 90%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Graduation Rate:** If the school fails to make the graduation rate requirement of 80% and the graduation rate is lower than 75 %, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.
- **Attendance Rate:** If the school fails to make the attendance rate requirement of 90% and the attendance rate is less than 85%, the school cannot be labeled as School Improving I—Growth.

All schools labeled as Corrective Action II—Targeted will be required to assess data, review implementation of corrective action plan, update plans as necessary to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet performance targets. Title I schools will be required to continue with at least one of the corrective actions outlined within NCLB ensuring that the action(s) addresses one or more of the root causes identified. Additionally, Title I schools must develop a corrective action plan that will take effect in the following school year if the school again fails to make AYP.** Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems.

Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action II—Targeted will be required to offer SES AND PSC to all eligible students enrolled in the school and the district will be required to set aside funds for transportation costs for School Choice (up to 20%). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development and target those resources to professional development activities outlined within the building's corrective action plan.

**Title I schools developing corrective action plans must ensure that one or more of the following alternate governance actions are taken:

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1. Reopening as a charter school;
2. Replacing all or most of the school staff relevant to the school's failure to make AYP;
3. Contracting with a private educational entity to operate the school;
4. Turning the school's operation over to the state;
5. Any other major restructuring of the school's governance.

Corrective Action II—Intensive: Applied to schools failing to make AYP for five consecutive years because of missing 3 or more performance targets in the same content area.

All schools labeled as Corrective Action II—Intensive will be required to assess data, review implementation of corrective action plan, update plans as necessary to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet performance targets. Title I schools will be required to continue with at least one of the corrective actions outlined within NCLB, ensuring that the action(s) addresses one or more of the root causes identified. Additionally, Title I schools must develop a corrective action plan that will take effect in the following school year if the school again fails to make AYP.** Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action II—Intensive will be required to offer SES AND PSC to all students enrolled in the school building, regardless of eligibility, and the district will be required to set aside funds for School Choice and SES (up to 20%). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development and target those resources to professional development activities outlined within the building's corrective action plan.

**Title I schools developing corrective action plans must ensure that one or more of the following alternate governance actions are taken:

6. Reopening as a charter school;
7. Replacing all or most of the school staff relevant to the school's failure to make AYP;
8. Contracting with a private educational entity to operate the school;
9. Turning the school's operation over to the state;
10. Any other major restructuring of the school's governance.

Corrective Action II (Year 2 and beyond): Applied to schools failing to make AYP for six consecutive years or more in the same content area.

Non Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action II Year 2 will be required to continue implementing the corrective action plan developed in previous years. Title I schools will be required to implement the corrective action plan developed in the previous year. If

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schools continue to miss AYP targets, they will be tracked with labels indicating their years in CA II (i.e. CA II (Year 2), CA II (Year 3) (CA II (Year 4)) and will continually assess data, review implementation of the corrective action plan, update the plan as necessary to address the needs of the school and the subgroups failing to meet targets. Title I schools with this label will be required to notify parents of students enrolled in the school of the building's status and the measures to be taken to address the problems. (Title I schools' notifications must include all components as outlined in NCLB.)

Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action II—Year 2 and beyond that show overall growth as demonstrated by the PVAAS will NOT be required to offer School Choice and will NOT be required to offer SES to eligible students within the building if they are already offering an effective tutoring program. The PDE views Title I schools at this level as new (restructured) schools and will give them the opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of their reform efforts. Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development and target those resources to professional development activities outlined within the building's corrective action plan.

Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action II—Year 2 and beyond and NOT showing overall growth as demonstrated by the PVAAS will be required to offer SES AND PSC to all students enrolled in the school, and the district will be required to set aside funds for School Choice and SES (up to 20). Title I schools with this label will be required to set aside 10% of their Title I building-level funds for professional development and target those resources to professional development activities outlined within the building's corrective action plan.

NOTE: The label assigned to a building will be determined by the number of targets missed in the most recent assessment year. For example, a school misses 2 targets but shows growth in the 1st year and then misses 3 targets but shows growth in year 2 would be identified as School Improvement I—Intensive because it missed 3 or more targets in year 2.

Old Label	New Label	Required Actions
Warning	Warning	None
School Improvement I	School Improving I—Growth	School Improvement (SI) Planning Process Parent Notification (Title I Only) 10% of Funds for Professional Development (PD), unless other sufficient funds targeted to PD (Title I Only)
	School Improvement I—	SI Planning Process Parent Notification (Title I Only)

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	Targeted	SES and/ or PSC to eligible students w/in subgroups (Title I Only)* Funds Set Aside for SES and/ or PSC Costs (Title I Only)* 10% of Funds for PD unless other sufficient funds targeted to PD (Title I Only)
	School Improvement I—Intensive	SI Planning Process Parent Notification (Title I Only) SES and/ or PSC to all eligible students enrolled in school (Title I Only)* Funds Set Aside for SES and/ or PSC Costs (Title I Only)* 10% of Funds for PD (Title I Only)
School Improvement II	School Improving II—Growth	SI Plan Implementation Process Parent Notification (Title I Only) SES and/ or PSC to those eligible students in subgroup (Title I Only)* Funds Set Aside for SES and/ or PSC (Title I Only)* 10% of funds for PD unless other sufficient funds targeted to PD (Title I Only)
	School Improvement II—Targeted	SI Plan Implementation Process Parent Notification (Title I Only) SES and/or PSC to all students within subgroup (Title I Only)* Funds Set Aside for SES and/ or PSC (Title I Only)* 10% of funds for PD unless other sufficient funds targeted to PD (Title I Only)
	School Improvement II—Intensive	SI Plan Implementation Process Parent Notification (Title I Only) SES and/or PSC to all students enrolled (Title I Only)* Funds Set Aside for SES and/ or PSC (Title I Only)* 10% of Funds for PD (Title I Only)
Corrective Action I	Corrective Action I—Targeted	CA Planning Process (One or more CAs for Title I) Parent Notification (Title I Only) SES AND PSC to eligible students within subgroup (Title I Only)*

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		Funds Set Aside for SES and/ or PSC (Title I Only)* 10% of Funds for PD (TI Only)
	Corrective Action I—Intensive	CA Planning Process (One or more CA for Title I) Parent Notification (Title I Only) SES AND PSC to all students enrolled in subgroup (Title I Only) Funds Set Aside for SES and PSC (Title I Only) 10% of Funds for PD (Title I Only)
Corrective Action II	Corrective Action II—Targeted	CA Plan Implementation Process (Continue with CA for Title I) Parent Notification (Title I Only) SES AND PSC to all eligible students in school (Title I Only)* Funds Set Aside for SES and PSC (Title I Only)* 10% of Funds for PD (TI Only)
	Corrective Action II—Intensive	CA Plan Implementation Process (Continue with CA for TI) Parent Notification (Title I Only) SES AND PSC to all students enrolled (Title I Only)* Funds Set Aside for SES and PSC (Title I Only)* 10% of Funds for PD (Title I Only)
Corrective Action II (Year 2) and beyond)	Corrective Action II (Year 2) and beyond)	See details in above narrative titled “New Labels” on pp. 13-14.

* Local Education Agency (LEA) may be a provider regardless of a district’s AYP status.

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III: Core Principles

a. CP 1: AYP Determinations consistent with state's Consolidated Accountability Workbook

Pennsylvania's accountability system will include every public school and local educational agency (LEA), with a goal of 100% of all students, schools, and LEAs reaching proficiency by 2013-2014. This system will build upon Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code, which is the site of the State Board of Education's regulations governing academic standards and assessments, which became final in 1999. *See 22 Pa. Code § 4.1 et seq.* The stated purposes of Chapter 4 are to establish rigorous academic standards and assessments to facilitate the improvement of student achievement, and to provide parents and communities a measure by which school performance can be determined. 22 Pa. Code § 4.2. PDE assures it will abide by the provisions described in its Accountability Workbook regarding annual Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations and Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs).

The chart below shows the number of Pennsylvania schools and school districts that qualified for each of the AYP determinations in the 2006-07 school year.

AYP Status Level	Number of Schools 2006-07	Number of Districts 2006-07
<i>Achieved Adequate Yearly Progress</i>		
Meeting Adequate Yearly Progress	2300	452
Making progress	102	8
<i>Did Not Achieve Adequate Yearly Progress</i>		
In need of improvement:		
Warning	379	18
School Improvement I	81	0
School Improvement II	53	2
Corrective Action I	44	12
Corrective Action II - First Year	66	4
Corrective Action II - Second Year	19	1
Corrective Action II - Third Year	10	0
Corrective Action II - Fourth Year	28	0
Corrective Action II - Fifth Year	19	3
Schools with <10 students tested in Math or Reading	3	0

b. CP 2: Transparent Information about AYP Calculations

The PDE provides to the public a clear and understandable description of its AYP calculations in several places including the Accountability Workbook which is located at http://www.pde.state.pa.us/nclb/lib/nclb/Accountability_Workbook_revised_2007.doc and the <http://www.paayp.com/index.jsp> website that provides information about AYP and data on each school and district in Pennsylvania.

All public school students are included in NCLB accountability regardless of program or type of public education entity, except for those students excused due to medical emergency. A medical emergency is defined as a recent emergency that renders a student incapable of physically or emotionally participating in the assessment. When students have been placed in educational settings other than their attendance area by their home school and/or LEA, their scores will be attributed for purposes of reporting and accountability to their home school or district.

All students in the Commonwealth are required to participate in the state assessments, with the exception of those granted a religious exemption under state law. However, these students do count towards the participation rate for determining AYP. The assessments are accommodated for students with special needs, and these accommodations are currently being reviewed and expanded to ensure the most valid possible assessment for every student.

There is currently a Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) designed for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities whose IEP specifies that the PSSA is not appropriate. The department is also exploring the possibility of an alternative assessment for English Language Learners who have recently arrived in the country. In 2005, PDE developed a side by side Spanish language Math test for ELL students. Moreover, the accountability system properly includes mobile students. Schools, LEAs and educational entities are accountable for mobile students in the same manner as they are for other students. The “full academic year” criteria are applied to all students. In Pennsylvania, it is not uncommon for students to move from one school to another within the same district during an academic year. In these instances, the school in which the student is enrolled at the time of the assessment bears responsibility for test administration; however, the district, rather than the school, will be accountable for the student’s performance. Pennsylvania has implemented an Informational Management System which will allow longitudinal student tracking through the assignment of unique student secure IDs. This system will be in place for the 2007-08 testing year.

Calculation of AYP

Consistent with NCLB’s objective of ensuring that every child becomes proficient in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014, Pennsylvania has established annual measurable objectives to assess the AYP of every public school and LEA within the State. These

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objectives require that all students reach 100% proficiency by 2014. As indicated in Section 2.3 of PDE's NCLB Accountability Workbook, procedures have been developed to ensure that Pennsylvania properly accounts for its mobile students and that the requirement of a 95% participation rate is met. The annual measurable objectives and the requirement of a 95% participation rate apply to public schools and LEAs and all student subgroups therein. A school or LEA will be designated as in year 1 of School Improvement if, for the second consecutive year in a given subject, the school, LEA, or a subgroup therein fails to meet AYP criteria.

Pennsylvania will combine data across grades in individual schools within each subject area and subgroup, as permitted by Section 200.20(d)(2) of the federal regulations governing implementation of NCLB. In determining whether AYP criteria have been met, the accountability system will compare the target with whichever is higher of the most current year's data and the average of that year with the previous year. The system will also determine whether each educational unit, and each subgroup therein, has met the criteria for participation, and whether each educational unit has met the graduation and attendance criteria.

The Pennsylvania accountability system includes all of the federally required student subgroups:

- All Students
- Students with Individual Education Plans
- English Language Learners (Limited English Proficient students)
- Economically Disadvantaged Students (Determinations of status as "economically disadvantaged" are based upon free and reduced breakfast and lunch information).
- Major racial / ethnic subgroups:
 - White (Non-Hispanic)
 - Black / African American (Non- Hispanic))
 - Latino / Hispanic
 - Asian or Pacific Islander
 - Native American or Alaskan Native
 - Multiracial

Achieving AYP

NCLB requires that every child become proficient in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014, and that all students make continuous and substantial progress. Pennsylvania's accountability system utilizes both the percent of students proficient in reading or mathematics method and the 10% reduction in non-proficient student method, as outlined in the legislation, effective with our determination of AYP status for the 2002-2003 school year. Pennsylvania believes it is crucial that progress be measured in a way that is sensitive to academic growth all along the achievement scale. As a result, schools and districts can achieve AYP through an additional safe harbor by meeting their Pennsylvania Performance Index (PPI) targets. PPI is a continuous improvement

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measure that detects, acknowledges, encourages, and rewards changes across the full range and continuum of academic achievement – not limited solely to achievement of the proficient level.

District Level

A district/LEA enters Improvement status when it does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area for the following grade spans: Elementary (3-5), Middle (6-8), and High School (9-12). In other words, a grade span meets the threshold for a subject if every measurable group/subgroup meets its threshold, and a district will not enter school improvement if, for each subject, at least one of the three grade spans meets its overall threshold. The additional academic indicators at the district level are graduation rate and attendance rate. A district/LEA enters Improvement status if it fails to meet the additional academic indicators for two consecutive years. This process allows for better targeting of assistance to struggling districts while providing a modest reduction in the number of districts not meeting AYP.

AYP Status Confidence Intervals

Pennsylvania will apply confidence intervals to control for volatility due to sampling error in calculating current year performance and Safe Harbor. For current year performance, we will use the standard error of the difference and then using a simple z-test to see if the observed difference falls outside of the 95% confidence interval. This approach is illustrated as follows¹:

- The hypothesis tested in this case is, “the observed proportion is equal or larger than the target (population) proportion.”
- The formula for the z-test is:
$$z = \frac{p - \pi}{\sqrt{\pi(1 - \pi)/n}}$$

Where π is the population proportion proficient (or in this case, the statewide target for proficiency) and p is the proportion proficient in the school or district.

The value of z is then compared with the critical value of z to determine if the observed difference is statistically significant. Testing this difference at the .05 probability, the value of z is compared with z_{crit} of -1.645^2 and if the observed z is equal to or greater than -1.645 , we can conclude that the observed proportion has achieved the AYP threshold.

¹ For purposes of this procedure, an approximate standard error calculation will be used. Obviously, if the sample is small, the exact method should be used.

² This value of z_{crit} is for a one-tailed test, which we argue is the appropriate test for these analyses.

Safe Harbor Confidence Intervals

For safe harbor we use the standard error of the difference in proportions. The same general rationale described above governing the use of the standard error prescribes the use of this alternative formula. In this case the controlled error rate is .75.

The approach for applying confidence intervals to safe harbor is as follows. P1 is the first observation; P2 is the target given the first observation ($P2 = .9*P1 + 10\%$), i.e., the reduction of the non-proficient students by 10%. The formula for calculating the standard error then is $SE = \sqrt{P1*(100-P1)/n + P2*(100-P2)/n}$.

For example, school X enrolled 550 students in Year 1 and had 20% of its students performing in Reading at Proficient and Advanced and in Year 2 enrolled 580 students and had 23% of its students performing at Proficient and Advanced in Reading. Using the formula above ($P2 = .9*P1 + 10\%$), $P2 = .9*20 + 10 = 28$.

To calculate the standard error of this difference, we take the square root of $((20*80)/550) + ((28 * 72)/580)$. This equals the square root of $(2.91 + 3.48)$, or 2.53. We then must adjust the error rate by the appropriate z-score or .68. We take 2.53 and multiply it by .68 (= 1.72). We add 1.72 to 23 (24.72) and compare this value to the target ($P2 = 28$). Since 24.72 is less than the target (28), we can say with confidence that the AYP relative growth criterion has not been met by school X.

Note that this process would be applied to all measurable subgroups and for Reading and Mathematics separately.

The PDE documents that all schools and school districts receive AYP determinations by posting all data on the public website, www.paayp.com. The links to the state report card and each district and school report card are also provided there.

c. CP 3: Title 1 Schools continue to be identified for improvement as required by NCLB

The PDE will continue to identify Title 1 and all schools needing improvement as required by NCLB. See the Pennsylvania State Report Card at http://www.paayp.com/report_cards/PA/RC07M.PDF

d. CP 4: Method of Differentiation

As described above under “Section II: Differentiation Model,” PDE has laid out specific criteria for the proposed new labels for each school at each level of improvement. We also explain how a school would transition between each label. The use of the PVAAS data will allow PDE to accurately identify which schools are making progress towards

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achieving student proficiency in math and reading. The method that the PDE proposes does not limit its applicability to any specific student group. Moreover, the model does not advantage or disadvantage any student group in the manner in which they advance in the school improvement/corrective action timeline.

Appendix B includes a chart of the 416 schools in Pennsylvania that missed two or fewer targets and their related growth of students according to the *PVAAS* data from 2006-2007. The schools listed that do not have growth data available to them will have growth data available to them based on the 2007-2008 school year in fall of this year and could potentially qualify for the new “Growth” and “Targeted” labels proposed in the differentiation model.

Once PDE is able to calculate the performance targets missed for each school and the corresponding growth data for the 2007-2008 school year, the new labels will be applied to each school according to whether or not they achieved a full year’s growth in reading and/or math achievement. Until then, PDE is unable to calculate the actual impact of the proposed differentiated accommodated model.

The PAAYP.com website demonstrates the PDE’s ability/capacity to enter, sort, retrieve, and analyze large numbers of records and will be able to include the additional indicators described in this proposal.

The PDE anticipates reporting the new designations using the same reporting tool described in *Educating the Public about Differentiation*, within the Executive Summary of this proposal. There will, however, be additional new codes created that will correspond to the new AYP designations.

Quality of PVAAS Metric

Pennsylvania’s Value-Added Assessment System (*PVAAS*) reporting is provided by SAS, Inc. (SAS). SAS is the world’s largest privately held prepackaged software company. SAS’ customers include 96 of the top 100 Fortune Global 500[®] companies, as well as numerous educational entities across the country. SAS currently provides data analysis and reporting in several programs to Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (*PVAAS*), (501 Districts since 2002); Educational Assistance Program/Tutoring (EAP), (175 Districts in school year 2006-2007); and Supplemental Education Services (SES). SAS’ core business is data integration, storage and analytics within a comprehensive and secure enterprise level system. Their reporting supports a systematic evaluation of policy and programs to ensure that education dollars are spent wisely. Their statistical methodology has been reviewed by individuals/groups such as Harville, Stroup and the RAND Corporation.

The quality of the growth metrics provided to districts from *PVAAS* are based on a solid statistical analysis foundation. SAS has had a history of statewide implementation of a

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growth model in Tennessee and Ohio. The *PVAAS* methodology uses existing assessment data, no additional testing needed. *PVAAS* provides growth reporting at district, school and grade levels in reading and mathematics. *PVAAS* reporting is provided to all Pennsylvania school districts.

Uniquely, the *PVAAS* methodology uses all available data on all students. This is important because missing test scores is common in high mobility districts – students miss school and as a result miss testing days. *PVAAS* does NOT “throw out” students who have fractured records as other value-added models do. This would typically be those students that are most mobile, which are often the economically disadvantaged students. The *PVAAS* statistical methodology actually uses these types of records, so schools get true growth reporting on all of the students they serve.

While there is a relationship between achievement and socio-economic status and race, the *PVAAS* methodology does not control for demographics as there is no relationship between socio-economic status and growth; or race and growth. As a result this takes away the argument and excuses that students from these subgroups cannot achieve significant gains.³ This is the most powerful concept of the value-added reporting.

How the *PVAAS* growth reports are developed/key concepts in the statistical methodology:

There are 4 key concepts in understanding how the *PVAAS* growth measures are yielded for districts and schools. These 4 concepts are the need to measure gain/growth, setting a standard for growth, the comparison of scores to yield a measure of growth and the power of using multiple measures to yield a growth metric.

First, Measuring gain/growth, a core concept with *PVAAS*, is measured by the difference in performance in consecutive years – note this simple idea becomes more complicated when we require that the performances in consecutive years be comparable. Second, when setting a standard measure for growth the example of a length/height growth standard is very appropriate – a child is considered meeting the minimal expectation for growth if he or she maintains or improves his or her position in the population distribution of length/height as he or she grows from year to year. Academically, a cohort of students meets the Growth Standard in *PVAAS* if he/she maintains his/her position in the statewide data base of scores as the cohort moves from grade to grade.

The third issue is the issue of comparison of scores. The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, the PSSA, does not yield scaled scores that are comparable since their

³ See McCaffrey, D., Lockwood, J. R., Koretz, D. M., & Hamilton, L. S. (2003). *Models for value-added modeling of teacher effects*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation; Ross, S.M., Wang, L.W., Sanders, W.L., Wright S.P. & Stringfield, S. (1999b). *Two-and three-year achievement results on the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System for restructuring schools in Memphis*. TN: University of Memphis.

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means and standard deviations change each year. Hence *PVAAS* includes a conversion to NCE scores all using the 2006 means and standard deviations which put scores from any year on the same scale and therefore comparable. This in turn can be used to assess growth. The final key concept for yielding a measure of growth is the use of all longitudinal data, the power of *PVAAS*. If gain is measured as the difference in performances, then it is critical that the performance measure reflect the true level of understanding and competency of a cohort. The single snapshot in time that the PSSA provides is not sufficient to this purpose. *PVAAS* uses all the data (both math and reading) for the cohort and all students in the statewide data base to estimate the true level of understanding and competence of the cohort. This allows the gain estimate to be more reliable and accurate than a single score.

e. CP 5: Transitioning to a Differentiated Accountability Model

Title I schools currently in any phase of improvement or corrective action will be required to continue to provide school choice SES and PSC to those students wishing to continue their participation in the programs until the school exits improvement or corrective action.

- Notification to those participating in PSC and SES PSC is required at the beginning of each school year to determine if they still wish for their children to participate in the program(s).
- Costs of transporting students continuing to exercise the PSC option must be paid by the district—until the 20% set aside maximum has been reached.
- SES must be provided to students still wishing to participate up to the state per pupil amount as required by NCLB until the 20% set aside maximum has been reached.

Non-Title I schools in any phase of improvement or corrective action currently do NOT have to offer school choice or SES and will not be required to under the differentiated accountability proposal.

Beginning in 08-09 new labels will be assigned to these transitional schools (as well as newly identified schools) and the consequences and interventions going forward will be differentiated depending on the cause of identification.

Going forward from 08-09, students offered School Choice must continue to be permitted to attend the school of their choice until their home school exits improvement or corrective action. The district must continue to pay the costs for transportation as well.

Going forward from 08-09, students will be eligible for SES according to the differentiated consequences as outlined. Students offered SES in any given year will be entitled to the services for one additional year, if assistance is still necessary, even if the building is no longer required to offer it because of a change in status

f. CP 6: Transparency of Differentiation and Interventions

As described in “Section II: Differentiation model,” PDE’s method for differentiation is based on several sources of data including achievement on the PSSA in reading and mathematics, the number of AYP targets met, and the PVAAS overall growth in reading and math. Pennsylvania schools have already begun to be familiar with the PVAAS data and will be able to adopt this differentiation model more easily because of this.

The PDE will report results for the state, and all districts and schools through the www.paayp.com website, as described on p. 3.

g. CP 7: Intervention Timeline

Pennsylvania’s research-proven model of interventions is based on three tiers: Foundation Assistance, Field-Based Assistance and Targeted Assistance. Pennsylvania and its partners have developed tools, resources, supports and programs to assist schools and districts in making decisions and research-proven changes in the educational environment to positively impact student achievement (see Appendix C).

Because the capacity needed to provide support to 501 school districts and over 100 charter schools is beyond what the PDE alone can provide, many partners have worked closely with the PDE in the development of the research-proven tools and resources, as well as in delivering the training and content to the LEAs and schools. These partners include 29 Intermediate Units, 3 regionally-based Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Networks (PaTTAN), the Center for Data Driven Reform in Education, the Center for Schools and Communities, the Title I State Parent Advisory Committee, the Parent Information Resource Center and the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center.

PDE’s differentiated accountability model would allow PDE to better identify what targets are appropriate for each school. A school that continues to not make AYP for a particular subgroup or content area would have to show that they are making growth. If they are not, they would progress to the next level of differentiation and could receive more targeted services. They also may be required to offer SES and PSC to more students. However, if the school is showing growth, despite the failure to achieve AYP, then the school could continue offering the interventions that it is achieving with. More intensive interventions could then be focused on those schools that need the assistance.

Description of Each Level of Intervention:

Foundation Assistance: (Tier 1):

It is at this level of support where schools and districts can receive support and assistance for educational issues that are newly identified or even forecast so they can be addressed

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early, before negatively impacting student achievement. The Foundation Assistance available to all school districts and charter schools is best categorized into three areas: 1) Intermediate Unit Capacity Building; 2) Programs, Initiatives and Tools; 3) Professional Development Opportunities.

The supports provided at the “Foundation” level are available for all schools and districts and help ensure that the reform strategies used are standards-based and effective. These would include the voluntary model curriculum, Classrooms for the Future, and the Accountability Block Grant. Supports are also often used for newly identified or forecasted educational issues that can be prevented before negatively impacting student achievement. These programs include Foundation level resources are also used by schools and districts to assist in identifying issues through the use of data-driven analysis. Such programs include: Getting Results! (School Improvement Plan protocol), 4Sight Benchmark Assessments. While these programs are available to all schools, the use of the funds for schools in School Improvement and Corrective Action become more intensive and directed to the specific needs of the schools.

Field Based Assistance (Tier 2):

The Field-Based Assistance (Tier 2) level of supports in the SSOS provides more targeted, focused support to schools identified by the PSSA as School Improvement I or School Improvement II. A generalization of this level of support is that all of the supports provided at the Foundation Assistance level are administered in a more intensive and directive manner.

The programs and resources available under the Field-Based levels are designed specifically for the schools in School Improvement and local education agencies (LEAs) in District Improvement. The intensity of the supports becomes more significant as the level of School Improvement/Corrective Action increases. For example, in the area of Field-Based Assistance, IU Capacity Building Support provides schools identified for school improvement or corrective action with intensive assistance from Intermediate Units (IUs) and their staff to determine how to use funds to support necessary school improvement efforts targeted to schools needs. IU Curriculum Coordinators work with schools to review data, determine root causes and identify solutions.

Targeted Assistance (Tier 3):

Targeted assistance provides customized and direct support to those schools that need it the most. PDE has several innovative programs that are part of this level of assistance, including the Distinguished Educator Initiative and the Distinguished School Leaders Program, which are described below.

- ***Distinguished Educator Initiative (DE)***: The PDE has developed the DE program to recruit, train and assign experienced educators to struggling schools and districts in planning and implementing effective school reform efforts. Depending on the needs of the schools and districts to which they are assigned, DEs may serve as coaches or

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mentors for administrators, assist in the development of prescriptive solutions to student achievement problems and provide budget and financial assistance. DEs are assigned to schools for a minimum of a year and work one-on-one with school personnel as an integral participant in reform efforts.

- **Distinguished School Leaders Program (DSL)**: The DSL program provides schools with experienced special educators to work directly with them if their IEP subgroup is the focus of school improvement efforts. These DSLs work out of the regional PaTTAN offices and are available to their assigned schools at any time. They work along side of the DEs as well, so that reform efforts are coordinated and complimentary.

A full description of the programs offered at each level of intervention can be seen in Appendix C.

PDE's proposed differentiated accountability plan builds on these research-based programs already offered in the Commonwealth. The new labels assigned to schools would identify whether a school falls under School Improvement or Corrective Action and therefore, the level of intervention for each of these sections would be available to these schools and school districts. The new labels, because they account for growth, would allow PDE to further assist schools in targeting the supports and resources. The new differentiation model also incorporates the concept that significant growth over time and therefore to target the necessary supports to continue such growth.

Please see the above description of how PDE focuses interventions according to the level of NCLB classification for improvement.

Teacher Quality

Pennsylvania has a long and rich tradition of preparing high quality teachers for the Commonwealth's schools as well as for schools throughout the nation. Pennsylvania is one of the top five states in producing future teachers, certifying over 13,000 new teachers each year. Since 1988, Pennsylvania has required that all teacher candidates pass rigorous tests of basic skills, general knowledge, professional knowledge, and subject matter knowledge. Pennsylvania also requires that every new teacher participate in an induction program conducted by their school districts and that all teachers obtain six college credits or the equivalent hours of professional education every five years. Additionally, all Pennsylvania teachers are required to achieve at least three years of satisfactory teaching experience and complete 24 post-baccalaureate credits within the first six years of teaching to obtain Pennsylvania's second level certificate and continue teaching.

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Thereafter, Pennsylvania teachers are annually evaluated on teaching performance, including demonstrated knowledge of subject matter content. As a result of the Commonwealth's long-standing commitment to teacher quality, Pennsylvania is well on its way of reaching NCLB's HQT goal. In March 2006, PDE submitted updated data to the United States Department of Education in its *Consolidated State Performance Report* (CSPR) regarding highly qualified teachers in Pennsylvania. This data demonstrates that in 2004-05, 97.7% of all core academic classes in Pennsylvania were taught by HQTs.

While the CSPR data demonstrates that nearly all Pennsylvania teachers meet the requirements of HQT, there are particular groups of teachers that continue to face greater difficulty meeting HQT requirements. These include: middle school teachers who are certified in elementary education rather than in a specific middle or secondary content area; Special Education, ESL and Alternative Education teachers who provide direct instruction to special needs students, often in self-contained classrooms; teachers working under emergency permits; and teachers in high poverty schools. Many of the teachers having difficulty meeting HQT requirements fall within more than one of these groups. Pennsylvania continues to develop and implement focused strategies to address the challenges facing these teachers in attaining HQT status. The CSPR data also demonstrates that secondary students enrolled in high poverty schools are more likely than their peers to be taught by a teacher that is not highly qualified.

As such, Pennsylvania plans to target teachers in these schools for assistance in becoming highly qualified

Accountability Block Grant

PDE also allows school districts to apply for the Accountability Block Grant (ABG). The ABG supports districts in providing financial, or other incentives, to highly qualified, tenured teachers to work in the most academically challenged schools in a district or to recruit certificated math, science, language arts and English Language Learners (ELL) teachers to work in the most academically challenged schools in a district. This grant may also support incentives for mentoring or professional development activities of teachers with a record of increasing student achievement when working with teachers in struggling schools.

A district that opts to use ABG allocation to encourage highly qualified teachers to work in their struggling schools should create a plan that is comprehensive and provides true incentives for teachers to seek the new placement. For instance, a district's plan could include a structured program that provides teachers with a "transfer bonus" for agreeing to the placement. Additional incentives could include reductions in housing allowances, school loan repayments, payments into 403B retirement plans or bonuses for achieving National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. Innovative plans for teacher incentives are encouraged.

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A district that chooses to provide financial incentives to aid in the recruitment of certificated math, science, language arts and English Language Learners teachers to work in the most academically challenged schools within a district could include, but not limited to, the following strategies in their comprehensive plan:

- *Innovative Recruitment Strategies.* Innovative recruitment strategies could include marketing and developing networks with universities known for certifying teachers in their area of need (particularly universities with which a district may not have had a former connection); advertising and networking in job markets with a significant number of teacher applicants and/or upgrading marketing tools and advertising approaches that “sell” the district and its schools.
- *Financial Incentives for New Teachers.* Similar to the incentives offered to highly qualified tenured teachers, incentives for recruiting certificated teachers could include “signing” and completion bonuses; repayment of school loans; reductions in mortgages; housing allowances and/or payment for tests related to certification. Districts could include a schedule that ties financial incentives to remaining at a particular school for an agreed upon number of years.
- *Partnerships.* Both universities and businesses can be key in helping a district recruit certificated teachers for struggling schools, particularly in ensuring that the effort becomes sustainable.
- *Possible Options.* Districts may wish to develop an incentive program for highly qualified, high-performing teachers to be mentors for newly hired teachers in low performing schools. Another way to tap into the highly qualified and high-performing teachers is to provide an incentive to be a leader in professional development activities for staff of low performing, struggling schools.

Although evidence suggests that providing teachers with financial incentives will help districts to recruit and retain high-quality certificated teachers for their most academically challenged schools, they are not a substitute for addressing all the components that support the maintenance and growth of quality teaching. PDE recommends that districts implement incentive strategies in the context of their strategic plan and address the issues surrounding teaching conditions: quality school leadership; access to professional learning opportunities for teachers; artful use of infrastructure (e.g., strategic scheduling, collaboration on daily lessons); availability of research-based learning materials and programs and community and parent engagement around students’ health and social needs.

PDE is also proposing legislation for teacher and administrator

(vi) “Incentives for the most effective highly qualified teachers and principals to work in a school identified for improvement or corrective action.”

(vii) “Incentives for the adoption of performance contracts by superintendents, assistant superintendents and principals.”

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The proposed differentiated accountability model would assist PDE in determining where teachers are successful in “growing” students and where teachers may need more interventions.

PDE’s HQT Plan, (see Appendix D), describes the steps that PDE is taking to achieve 100% HQT in all of Pennsylvania’s schools. The Plan explains the programs targeted at those schools that have difficulty attracting and maintaining their level of HQTs. These programs include innovative strategies to advance teacher preparation, professional development for teachers and alternative pathways to becoming a Highly Qualified Teacher.

Also, the incentives described above would also serve to assist schools in need of HQT target resources to improve their teacher quality.

h. CP 8: Types of Interventions

PDE’s interventions, described under “CP 7: Intervention Timeline,” and in detail in Appendix C, were all developed by PDE and their partners using research on best-practices for school supports. A detailed rationale for each of the 30+ interventions is beyond the scope of this proposal. However, PDE believes that two newly implemented programs generally targeted to those schools needing the most assistance, the Distinguished Educator Initiative (DE) and the Distinguished School Leaders Program (DSL), have potential for influencing improvement effectively. The DE program recruits, trains and assigns experienced educators to struggling schools and districts in planning and implementing effective school reform efforts. A recent presentation by Dr. Judith Zaenglein and Dr. Steven A. Melnick, from Pennsylvania State University, on November 7, 2007, entitled “DE Evaluation Report” noted that “the DEs are making a difference in the districts, especially in the area of use of data to inform the instructional process.” Out of the Pennsylvania schools that have participated in the DE program, 2 out of 7 met AYP after the first year in the program and 7 out of 11 made AYP after the second year of the program. The program was also recognized in the September 13, 2006 issue of *Education Week*. PDE recently began the DSL program which will provide schools with experienced special educators to work directly with schools where their IEP subgroup is the focus of school improvement efforts.

Targeting of Federal Title I SI Funds (1003 (a) and 1003 (g))

The PDE sets aside 4% of its Title I allocation each year to provide funds to Title I schools in improvement and corrective action. These funds are targeted to Title I schools based on the schools’ status in the school improvement/corrective action continuum.

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In the 2007-08 year, the PDE allocated a base allocation of \$40,000 to each Title I school in any level of improvement or corrective action from the 1003 (a) set aside. These funds were awarded to each Title I school to support the improvement efforts outlined within each schools' improvement plan. Additionally, from the 1003 (a) set aside, another \$58,000 was awarded to those Title I schools in corrective action. These funds were targeted to these buildings to increase the level of resources available for improvement efforts and corrective actions.

In the 2008-09 school year, the PDE will allocate 1003(a) funds in a similar manner—providing base level funds to all and targeting additional resources to those schools with greater needs.

In the 2007-08 school year, PDE was also awarded funds under 1003 (g) for the first time. These funds (approximately \$5 million) were awarded to all Title I schools in Corrective Action II, year two and higher. A minimum of \$50,000 was awarded to each building as required by NCLB. These funds were allocated to schools with the requirement that they be used to support the approve improvement plan and that 1) staff in the buildings attend professional development activities provided by the PDE; 2) staff review and revise the existing improvement plan using data available; and 3) the Distinguished Educators (if applicable) assigned to the building (s) be included in the professional development activities and plan review/revision process.

In 2008-09, PDE will allocate 1003(g) funds in a similar manner, providing the minimum of \$50,000 to all eligible schools. In 2008-09, because PDE will be receiving a substantially larger grant (approximately \$20 million), funds will be targeted to a larger pool of Title I schools. PDE will target funds to Title I schools in the School Improvement I—Intensive and School Improvement II—Intensive categories as well as corrective action schools.

i. CP 9: Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services

The requirements for schools to offer SES and PSC to students are described in detail under each label within “Section II: Differential Model.”

The PDE's proposed differentiated model will increase parent awareness of SES and PSC and SES and may ultimately increase the number of students served since the scope of potential participants will be widened to include all students in the student group(s) meeting the new criteria instead of only those who meet the former poverty criteria.

j. CP 10: Significant and Comprehensive Interventions for Consistently Lowest Performing Schools

Within the proposed differentiated accountability model, Title I schools labeled as Corrective Action II – Year 2 and beyond that show overall growth, as demonstrated by the PVAAS, and have done at least one of the following will NOT be required to offer SES or PSC to eligible students within the building:

- replaced all or most of their school staff, including the principal
- entered into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company, with a demonstrated record of effectiveness to operate the school
- state takeover
- any other major restructuring of the school governance arrangement

In these cases, the PDE views Title I schools at this level as new schools (maintaining the corrective action status) and will give them the opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of their reform efforts. The appropriate interventions, as described above in “CP 7: Intervention Timeline” will be

Pennsylvania has consistently ensured comprehensive interventions for the lowest performing schools. In May of 2000, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed the Education Empowerment Act (EEA)⁴, where struggling school districts with a history of low test performance or a history of financial distress were identified and placed on the *education empowerment list*. (See Appendix D for a full report on EEA)

School districts on the Economic Empowerment Act list have access to additional supports from the State, including Empowerment funds. In addition to these Empowerment funds, each Empowerment District receives additional funding from such sources as the Accountability Block Grant (ABG) and the Educational Assistance Program (EAP), among other state and federal funding, which are described below.

Accountability Block Grant (ABG):

The ABG provides Pennsylvania school districts with financial assistance to implement effective educational practices and initiatives to improve student achievement. With funding from the grant, districts must implement research or evidence-based improvement strategies that meet the specific learning needs of their students. Two important aspects for districts to consider are:

- furthering the strategic plan of the district through opportunities provided by this grant and

⁴ 24 P.S. 17-1701-B *et seq.*

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- achieving improved performance results by students through initiatives directly linked to the grant.

School districts use ABG funds to attain or maintain academic performance targets by establishing, maintaining or expanding one or more of the fourteen programs associated with the grant. The table below demonstrates additional (above Empowerment funds) funding and expenditures of empowerment districts for the 2006 -07 school year under the Accountability Block Grant.

ACCOUNTABILITY BLOCK GRANT		
School District	Amount of Grant	Purpose of Expenditures
Chester Upland	\$2,275,824	Full-Day Kindergarten programs that align with the state's current academic standards Pre-Kindergarten programs that align with the state's current academic standards Performance of Subgroups-programs to improve the academic performance of subgroups identified under NCLB
Duquesne City	\$287,653	Full-Day Kindergarten programs that align with the state's current academic standards
Harrisburg City	\$2,241,340	Pre-Kindergarten programs that align with the state's current academic standards, Pre-Kindergarten, Community Partner Information Full-Day Kindergarten programs that align with the state's current academic standards
Pittsburgh	\$5,509,304	Pre-Kindergarten programs that align with the state's current academic standards
Philadelphia City	\$50,508,134	Full-Day Kindergarten programs that align with the state's current academic standards

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Reading	\$4,426,514	Pre-Kindergarten programs that align with the state’s current academic standards Full-Day Kindergarten programs that align with the state’s current academic standards K-3 Class Size Reduction in which one certified teacher is assigned for every 17 students Programs to build strong Science & Applied Knowledges (Technology) Skills Literacy & Math Coaching to improve reading and mathematics instruction
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The scope and range of the use of these funds has increased over the years, with each district expanding or maintaining current programs as listed above and, in some cases, adding new areas of focus.

Educational Assistance Program (EAP):

In 2005-06 the program received \$66 million in funding and expanded support for tutoring in 175 school districts and Career and Technical Centers. The program was continued at the \$66 million funding level in 2006-07. The table below indicates the empowerment district, the amount of each district’s grant and the purpose of the expenditures.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM		
School District	Amount of Grant	Purpose of Expenditures
Chester Upland	\$992,715	Tutoring of students scoring below proficient on PSSA
Duquesne City	\$138,148	Tutoring of students scoring below proficient on PSSA
Harrisburg City	\$1,111,688	Tutoring of students scoring below proficient on PSSA
Philadelphia City	\$25,953,211	Tutoring of students scoring below proficient on PSSA
Pittsburgh	\$3,412,030	Tutoring of students scoring below proficient on PSSA
Reading	\$1,968,343	Tutoring of students scoring below proficient on PSSA

Please see “CP 7: Intervention Timeline” and Appendix C to see how PDE increases the supports over time to schools and school districts.

IV. Evaluation Plan

The PDE will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of its Differentiated Accountability Pilot Program. The evaluation plan will focus on a thorough analysis of the impact that the new criteria has on school AYP status across the State. In addition the plan includes a analysis of district documents that provide data to the state with respect to school level consequences and interventions implemented in response to the new designations. These document include but are not limited to the district's Title 1 Application, the strategic plan, the School Improvement Plans, "Getting Results!", the district's proposal for use of State School Improvement Grants., etc. The evaluation plan includes collecting and analyzing the following qualitative and quantitative data:

- Crosstabulation of school AYP status showing old and new designations;
- Frequency distributions and plots of old and new AYP designations;
- SES enrollment and numbers of PSC applications for the past two years;
- Tracking of AYP status for schools and relevant student groups across years;
- Documenting school improvement activities implemented in response to the new designations
- Documenting instructional and other interventions that result for the new designations.
- Analyzing the impact on the number/percentage of students achieving their growth targets over time

V Conclusion

NCLB requires that "adequate yearly progress shall be defined by the State in a manner that "... results in continuous and substantial progress for all." Pennsylvania believes that a growth measure like the PVAAS metric to measure and document progress is consistent with this requirement and philosophy as a means to differentiate accountability and interventions/supports for schools in Pennsylvania. By measuring the growth of cohorts of students, the efforts of the teachers and administrators who strive to reach proficiency for their students are recognized. Acceptance of this proposal not only validates this recognition but also communicates a strong message to educational professionals that growth coupled with status measures is critical for ensuring the success of all of Pennsylvania's students. The Pennsylvania Department of Education believes that its strong history of commitment, both fiscally and philosophically, to the use of growth measures as a tool for school improvement establishes Pennsylvania as a leading recipient for this differentiated accountability grant opportunity