STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ESEA Waiver Request from New Jersey

November 14, 2011
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New Jersey Department of Education
Trenton, NJ 08625

OMB Number: Approval pending
Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is pending. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 336 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester: Christopher D. Cerf Acting Commissioner New Jersey Department of Education	Requester's Mailing Address: 100 River View Plaza PO Box 500 Trenton, NJ 08625-0500
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Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Christopher D. Cerf	Telephone: (609) 292-1722
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:  X_____	Date: November 14, 2011
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of the ESEA Flexibility.	

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1	Notice to LEAs	219
2	Comments on request received from LEAs (if applicable)	222
3	Notice and information provided to the public regarding the request	338
4	Evidence that the State has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with the State's standards adoption process	354
5	Memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs) certifying that meeting the State's standards corresponds to being college- and career-ready without the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level (if applicable)	n/a
6	State's Race to the Top Assessment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (if applicable)	356
7	Evidence that the SEA has submitted high-quality assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review, or a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review (if applicable)	n/a
8	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 (if applicable).	n/a
9	Table 2: Reward, Priority, and Focus Schools	383
10	A copy of any guidelines that the SEA has already developed and adopted for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems (if applicable).	n/a
11	Evidence that the SEA has adopted one or more guidelines of local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	n/a

WAIVERS

By submitting this flexibility request, the SEA requests flexibility through waivers of the ten ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested; a chart appended to the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions* enumerates each specific provision of which the SEA requests a waiver, which the SEA incorporates into its request by reference.

☒ 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, 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.

☒ 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.

☒ 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.

☒ 10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g)(4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State's Priority Schools.

Optional Flexibility:

An SEA should check the box below only if it chooses to request a waiver of the following requirements:

☒ 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.

ASSURANCES

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that:

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

☒ 2. It will adopt 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 new college- and career-ready standards, no later than the 2013–2014 school year. (Principle 1)

☒ 3. It will develop and 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). (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 report to the public its lists of Reward Schools, Priority Schools, and Focus Schools at the time the SEA is approved to implement the flexibility, and annually thereafter, it will publicly recognize its Reward Schools. (Principle 2)

☒ 8. It will report annually to the public and each LEA will annually report to its SEA and to the public, beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year, on the aggregate distribution of teachers and principals by performance level, including the percentage of teachers and principals by performance level at the State, LEA, and school level, and by school poverty quartile within the State and LEA. (Principle 3)

☒ 9. Prior to submitting this request, it provided student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs, or it will do so no later the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)

☒ 10. 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)

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

☒ 12. 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).

☒ 13. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the State 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).

☒ 14. 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 this request.

If the SEA selects Option A or B in section 3.A of its request, indicating that it has not yet developed and adopted all guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, it must also assure that:

☒ 15. It will submit to the Department for peer review and approval a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year. (Principle 3)

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.

Although the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has had only a matter of weeks to solicit input from the public and other stakeholders on this specific waiver application, for more than two years, the Department has sought wide-ranging feedback on a variety of issues that are central to this request.

In June 2010, the New Jersey State Board of Education (NJSBOE) adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). As part of the adoption process, the NJDOE and the NJSBOE held two public comment opportunities. In addition, the NJDOE solicited comment from educators across the State by email. After adoption, the NJDOE held over 300 meetings with educators and other district/school staff to discuss the new standards and provide support for their implementation.

In order to develop a new teacher evaluation system, the New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Task Force (EETF), a nine-member task force charged with studying and developing recommendations to guide the creation of a fair and transparent system of educator evaluations, met 12 times between November 2010 and March 2011 and solicited input from educators and experts from across the State. Once the Task Force issued its report in March 2011, Acting Commissioner Chris Cerf and the NJDOE staff met with educators across the State to discuss the findings.

Using the recommendations of this Task Force, this year, the NJDOE is conducting a voluntary pilot in 11 districts and School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools to help develop the teacher evaluation system before statewide rollout. Numerous feedback mechanisms have been put in place, including a statewide evaluation pilot advisory committee (EPAC) made up of a broad array of stakeholders, and local advisory committees in each of the districts and SIG schools. This input from educators will be crucial as we learn about the successes and challenges of implementing a new teacher evaluation system.

The NJDOE took an aggressive approach to engage and obtain input from teachers and their representatives to inform the development of this waiver application itself. Between October 11 and October 24, the NJDOE posted the guidance documents from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) on the NJDOE website and solicited feedback from teachers and the general public in each area of the application before developing the initial plan. In order to reach as many teachers as possible, we sent out links through the following channels:

1. Both the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) affiliates in New Jersey, asking for their assistance to pass the link to their members;

2. Media;
3. Education partner lists including a number of teachers, parents, and administrators;
4. Broad stakeholder lists including educators, partners, advocacy organizations, and miscellaneous contacts; and
5. Associations for superintendents, school board members, principals, and parent associations.

This outreach netted 41 comments from stakeholders across the State, including teachers. These comments helped to inform the initial draft.

In addition, the NJDOE leadership held face-to-face meetings with representatives from both the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), the statewide organization that represents NEA teachers in New Jersey, as well as the New Jersey AFT affiliate. In each of these meetings, the NJDOE discussed the federal guidance and the opportunities presented in the waiver. The NJEA submitted written suggestions around the three principles, and after the meeting followed up with additional written suggestions.

To foster a continuous dialogue between stakeholders and the NJDOE, we repeated this outreach process after the development of the initial request. On November 3, the NJDOE released an 11-page draft outline to share initial details of its waiver application. From November 3 through November 9, the NJDOE repeated the outreach to solicit feedback from educators and other community members through its website. During that time, the NJDOE received 192 comments on its draft outline.

The NJDOE again solicited input from the NJEA and AFT groups on the outline, and the NJEA again submitted written suggestions.

Through this process, recommendations from the NJEA, AFT leadership, and from teachers across the State complemented initial thinking by the Department and helped to prioritize certain aspects of the plan. This includes, but is not limited to, the components listed below.

- Focus on curricular and instructional supports for all schools, and as a main intervention in Focus and Priority Schools. Specific feedback complemented NJDOE planning in the application, including:
  - The development of optional model curriculum for K-12 ELA and Math tied to the CCSS;
  - Better articulation of K-16 alignment with specific input of higher education leaders;
  - Improved data for teachers on specific proficiencies through the development of model assessments;
  - Additional on-the-ground support to teachers in turning the CCSS from a plan in Trenton to one that will have an impact in every classroom; and
  - Ensuring high-quality instructional support for teachers and capacity building within LEAs, through our Regional Achievement Centers (RACs).

- Awards and recognitions. The direction of our plan for Reward Schools was informed from these groups, including:
  - Using an Annual Effective Practices Conference to share best practices and allow struggling schools to connect with Reward Schools that are achieving in areas where they

are currently struggling;
- o Providing financial incentives that will be spent through the collaboration of the school principal, teachers, and parent representative;
- o Providing scholarships for teachers to obtain National Board Certification; and
- o Developing a larger focus on celebrating successes through planned events and statewide press releases.

After developing a draft outline of this waiver application, the NJDOE solicited additional feedback from teachers and met again with representatives from the NJEA. Through this additional round of feedback, the NJDOE made substantive changes to its proposal including, but not limited to, the following:

- · Non-categorized schools. Though the original draft plan did not include such a requirement, input from these groups encouraged the NJDOE to include a requirement that non-categorized schools discuss the new performance reports publicly and develop written annual improvement targets to address areas of deficiency that will be reviewed by their Boards of Education.
- · Teacher evaluation pilot. This September, the NJDOE initiated a teacher evaluation pilot in 11 districts across the State, in order to collaboratively develop a new statewide teacher evaluation system with educators and to learn from the successes and challenges in implementing the system. As part of this pilot, the NJDOE is on track to develop Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) by next September for each student and teacher in 4th through 8th grade ELA and math across the State through our longitudinal data system, NJSMART (NJ Standards Measurement and Resource for Teaching). While this year only 11 districts are participating in the pilot, next year all districts will roll out the new evaluation system. Based on input from teachers and others, however, we will only require districts to implement the new evaluation system in a subset of their schools in the 2012-13 school year. We will continue to view next year as a year of refinement, collaboration, and learning, and in that sense are treating this expansion as a second year of the pilot, in order to prepare for statewide rollout to all schools in the 2013-14 school year. The ultimate contours of the pilot's second year will be finalized in the months to come as more information is collected from the pilot's first year and the NJDOE receives additional recommendations from its advisory committees and other stakeholders.

2. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited 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.

In addition to feedback requested from the general public outlined above both before and after developing an initial draft request, the NJDOE met with a number of stakeholders in person to discuss the waiver. This list includes, but is not limited to:

1. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) advisory group, consisting of statewide associations; NJSBOE, NEA and AFT union representatives, charter school lead persons, superintendents, assistant/associate superintendents, directors/supervisors, Federal Program Administrators, principal, non public representatives, substance abuse coordinators, parent representatives, and

higher education representatives. This group includes 17 representatives of Title III/English Language Learners (ELL) programs from districts across New Jersey, in addition to Special Education representatives;

2. Special education advisory group, consisting of 22 statewide special education representatives. This group gave targeted feedback on the impacts on Special Education students;
3. Governor's Education Transformation Task Force (ETTF), consisting of eight members including school administrators and other education stakeholders across the State;
4. Professional associations including the AFT, NJEA, New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA), New Jersey Association of School Business Officials (NJASBO), New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers (NJCPT), New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA); and
5. County curriculum coordinators across the State.

In addition, we solicited feedback from the following organizations by email. This outreach is in addition to the representatives of teachers and groups listed above, which already include representatives of the Special Education and ELL communities.

1. Educator Effectiveness Task Force, consisting of nine members;
2. New Jersey county teachers of the year;
3. Garden State Coalition of Schools (an umbrella organization for a wide array of education stakeholders);
4. Higher education representatives;
5. Civil rights groups and community leaders from high-need communities, including a specific outreach to over 50 leaders from urban cities and civil rights groups across New Jersey;
6. Business organizations; and
7. Parent email lists containing over 18,000 e-mail addresses.

The NJDOE has developed an extensive outreach plan to communities to discuss the implementation of this waiver plan. This outreach plan will focus both on educators and community members, especially in our highest-need communities where the majority of Focus and Priority Schools exist. The outreach plan will include educators of Special Education and ELL students as specific stakeholders. Among others, the plan will include:

- Extensive outreach over the next 9 months about the new RACs – their roles, delivery plans, and supports and interventions for struggling schools;
- Continued support and training on the implementation of the CCSS. Beyond the rollout of model curriculum and assessments for educators, the NJDOE will conduct training and supports across the State that will include a unique focus on implementation for special education and ELL teachers;
- Outreach and training for districts and educators on the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system, including targeted supports for special education and ELL teachers; and
- Public forums with educators and community members, especially from high-need communities, to discuss the development of our new school performance reports to ensure that they provide

parents and other stakeholders with meaningful information about student performance.

In general, the same basic components developed above with teachers were also supported by representatives of LEAs and other stakeholders, including parents. Additional components from these groups built into the original plan include:

· On-the-ground support.

o District staff noted that in previous interventions, the NJDOE would often not provide enough support during implementation. Our focus of RACs as on-the-ground, sustained support to develop and implement turnaround plans in Priority and Focus Schools was developed in part to address this concern;

· Increasing the amount of data available to schools and districts.

o Local staff and educators asked for the development of new, unitary school performance reports that include additional data on school performance, and supported the requirement that school boards discuss these findings publicly; and

· Differentiation.

o Overall, the NJDOE received significant support for the general direction of the waiver application, including the move away from the one-size-fits-all approach to labeling schools as failing and the associated interventions under NCLB. Stakeholders consistently supported and helped to develop the method of focusing on the lowest-performing schools in the State, creating additional flexibility for higher-performing schools, and the range of interventions available to Focus and Priority Schools.

These groups also helped to influence a number of changes in the final draft. Among others, these include:

· Principal evaluation pilot. Through recommendations from the NJ Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), as well as on-the-ground school leaders, the NJDOE outlined plans for a principal evaluation pilot, similar to that currently being conducted for teachers.

· Extended learning time. The Department received many comments from parents and LEA staff on the elimination of the 20 percent set aside for supplemental education services (SES) and choice related transportation. Though it was not addressed in the draft outline, the NJDOE provided additional guidance in the waiver application on the use of Title I funds to make clear that under the new accountability system, RACs would work with LEAs to spend funds in a number of possible ways to extend learning time, as deemed necessary. These options could include, among others, tutoring, Saturday school, or extending the length of the school day.

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

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 central goal of the NJDOE is to ensure that all children, regardless of life circumstances, graduate from high school ready for college and career. Currently, New Jersey is far from accomplishing this mission.

While in the aggregate New Jersey's students perform at nation-leading levels, the State has a number of troubling deficiencies. On the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exam, New Jersey ranked 50 out of 51 States (including DC) in the size of the achievement gap between low and high-income students in 8th grade reading. Tens of thousands of children attend schools where only a minority of students meets basic levels of proficiency in reading and math. Across the State, over 40 percent of third graders are not reading on grade level. And perhaps most alarmingly, a distressingly high percentage of those who do graduate from high school are unprepared for success: nearly 90 percent of students entering some of New Jersey's community colleges require remediation.

The State of New Jersey has a comprehensive strategy for solving these challenges. It begins with an unwavering commitment to the highest expectations for all students and a single-minded, measureable goal of ensuring all students leave high school with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed throughout life which for us means truly prepared for college and career. While the NJDOE celebrates its successes, the Department also must honestly acknowledge the massive improvements that must be achieved to meet its ambitious goals. The NJDOE intends to close the achievement gap so student performance is no longer a function of demographics while simultaneously pushing New Jersey's highest performing students to compete with and exceed the accomplishments of their excelling peers in other States and across the globe.

To execute these goals, the NJDOE has undertaken a series of drastic organizational and philosophical changes designed to increase its capacity to implement its new vision for accountability and bring about fundamental change in the most troubled schools. Organizationally, the NJDOE has restructured around four building blocks of reform—levers that the Department believes are key to substantial and lasting improvement. They include Academics (standards, assessments, curriculum, and instruction), Talent (educator effectiveness), Performance (targets, measurement, and accountability), and Innovation (high-quality, nontraditional methods of delivering K-12 schooling). Each building block has its own division, and each division is led by an experienced executive with expert staff (See Appendix 1 for new

organizational charts).

Among other things, these divisions will lead critical statewide reform initiatives, such as implementing CCSS and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments to ensure the State transitions to more rigorous standards and assessments and, installing a statewide framework for teacher and principal evaluations that supports educators and improves policies related to recruitment, training, development, tenure, and compensation are improved.

The NJDOE is also completely reorganizing how we engage with and intervene in schools and districts. Most significantly, the prior NJDOE organization was oriented around disparate programs. The NJDOE's new system of seven field-based Regional Achievement Centers (RACs) will be charged with driving improvement in New Jersey's lowest-performing schools. These offices will be led by master educators who bear specific accountability for student achievement gains in their regions and for executing coherent plans that will marshal NJDOE resources to accomplish those goals (See Appendix 2 for a job description of Regional Achievement Directors, the staff members that will lead these teams). The RAC teams will be deeply knowledgeable in the eight "turnaround principles" that are defined in this waiver application and widely known to be central to school improvement, including, for example, implementing high-quality curriculum, improving leadership and instruction, and expanding the analysis and use of data. The RACs will be instrumental in the NJDOE's execution of its interventions; they will leverage their own expertise and State and local resources to reach explicit performance targets in specific schools and districts, and they will be held accountable for achieving results.

The NJDOE is also changing what it means to be a State department of education. The NJDOE is de-emphasizing its traditional role as a compliance monitor and transitioning into a performance-based organization and high-quality service provider. Through a survey conducted of the State's district superintendents, the NJDOE learned that those on the ground saw little value coming from the Department's central office when it comes to what matters most: improving student learning. The State was adept at sending directives and requiring reports but did little to actually help educators advance academic achievement.

The NJDOE is making this transition in a number of ways. A gubernatorial task force (Governor's Education Transformation Task Force) is reviewing all State education regulations and laws to identify provisions that place unnecessary burdens on educators. The Task Force's final recommendations will be made to the Governor by the end of 2011 and result in a streamlined set of regulations focused not on inputs but, rather, on the most important output: student learning.

The NJDOE has also chosen a new way to engage with schools and districts. Rather than a scattershot approach of limited, piecemeal programs aimed across the entire State, the Department will focus its scarce resources on those schools in a perpetual State of underperformance and those with the most troubling achievement gaps. Undergirding this reprioritization is a critically important shift in the State's philosophy. For a nearly 20 years, New Jersey has sought to improve low-performing schools by primarily working through LEAs. The State has taken over several districts, embedded State monitors in others, and created complex systems for assessing LEA capacity. These tactics alone have not transformed our most persistently under-achieving schools.

The State has made a conscious decision to alter its tack. We believe that though district-level interventions have value, the unit of change must be the school. As such, most of our new activities associated with our most troubled schools will be directed at the level of the school. That is, instead of investing more resources toward school boards and central bureaucracies, we will focus on teachers and principals and the students they serve. Along these lines, the NJDOE will also spend more time recognizing and learning from our highest performing schools, including finding ways to give them greater autonomy as they continue to excel.

In total, then, the guiding philosophy is simple: create statewide conditions for success; reduce the burdens on successful educators and schools; and provide high-impact support where needs are the greatest.

It is within this context that the NJDOE submits its application for a waiver from many of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act's (ESEA) current provisions. It is the Department's firm belief that a new accountability system is an essential component of the State of New Jersey's larger efforts to prepare all students for college and career. A streamlined, coherent, unified system for assessing school and district performance and triggering differentiated supports and interventions aligned to the eight turnaround principles, will serve as the foundation for the NJDOE's work. With more and better information and the flexibility to carefully tailor programs and activities to school needs, the Department will be able to make the most of its new organizational structure and resources and new approach to engaging schools and districts.

This begins by overhauling the two overlapping and often contradictory accountability systems for New Jersey schools. At the federal level, the ESEA - in the current form of the NCLB - focuses on schools and districts, as evaluated by absolute student performance on State exams. At the State level, New Jersey's Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) evaluates districts in five areas, with student performance comprising only one of them. Though both systems have virtues, both are also deeply flawed. Each has its own independent weaknesses, and the interaction between the two causes a whole host of problems.

Unfortunately, QSAC does not advance our efforts to drive college- and career-readiness. It prioritizes inputs instead of outputs, placing a premium on districts' submission of reports and faithful compliance to rules instead of the improvement of student learning. QSAC also forces a district to consider many of its activities in isolation, requiring separate reviews for personnel, finance, and governance, when all of this work should be viewed as part of a seamless fabric intended to help students learn. Finally, QSAC generates limited and often unreliable information. In most cases the data gleaned from QSAC does little to help the State facilitate gains in academic achievement, and in entirely too many cases, high-performing districts are found to be deficient while low-performing districts receive high scores.

The NCLB's limitations are also numerous and widely known. It fails to give schools credit for making progress with students. It over-identifies schools and districts as underperforming. It treats a school struggling with a single subgroup the same as a school that is comprehensively failing its student body. It requires an inflexible set of interventions that are inappropriate for many targeted schools. Finally, its

supports and sanctions have not led to the improvements our students need.

New Jersey is building a new unified accountability system that will streamline QSAC and modify NCLB.[1] It will enable the NJDOE to measure and report on metrics that truly reflect schools' and districts' success in preparing students for college and career; it will allow us to categorize schools more fairly and develop supports and interventions carefully aligned to their needs; and it will enable the State to focus its scarce resources on those schools in a persistent State of underperformance and those where at-risk subgroups are lagging far behind. (see Appendix 5 for copy of prototype Performance Report)

New Jersey is well positioned and prepared to take full advantage of the opportunity presented by this waiver request. The State's new set of performance reports will be the heart of the NJDOE's new accountability system. The NJDOE is producing a thorough collection of data across a wide range of areas for each district and each school. The information provided will not only give parents and the public a full accounting of each school's current performance, it will also indicate how each school is contributing to the State's ultimate goal: preparing all students for success in college and career. Key metrics, such as early childhood literacy, chronic absenteeism, 8th grade reading and math proficiency, growth scores on State assessments, AP passing rates, ACT and SAT scores, and high school graduation rates will paint a full and accurate picture of school and district performance with a display of statewide ranking and comparison to peer schools. And State technology will enable educators to analyze data at the student level so they can develop meaningful interventions.

These reports will also enable the NJDOE to fairly and transparently categorize schools so schools receive the support and/or recognition they deserve and need. Consistent with this application's guidance, New Jersey will focus its attention on its most persistently underperforming schools (Priority), those with troubling achievement gaps (Focus), and those achieving remarkable results (reward).

Following directly from these categorizations (and school performance reports more broadly) will be the most important element of the State's new approach: powerful interventions. The NJDOE, finally armed with clear, robust information on each school's strengths and weaknesses, will be able to offer interventions designed to remediate problem areas, whether they relate to poor curriculum, inadequate instructional leadership, insufficient data use, or something else. These supports are completely aligned with this application's "turnaround principles."

As described in the "Differentiated Recognitions, Interventions and Supports" section of 2.A.i, the NJDOE has extensive authority under federal and State law to bring about major change in school and district behavior. The NJDOE can, among other things, reassign teaching staff, redirect spending to ensure funds are spent effectively and efficiently, alter curriculum and programs, charter new schools, and, where all else fails, close chronically failing schools. Though the NJDOE expects to work collaboratively with schools and districts and expects that such collaboration will lead to substantial

[1] Since QSAC was enacted by statute, only legislative action can replace it. However, as described more fully in Section A.1 of the Appendix, NJDOE has taken steps to streamline QSAC through regulatory changes and Focus it on student achievement. So, when NJDOE refers to creation of a "unified accountability system" throughout this waiver application, it means the creation of a system with a single goal: improving student achievement so that all of New Jersey's students graduate prepared for college and career.

improvement, where a school or district refuses to collaborate with the NJDOE, the Commissioner of Education has more than ample authority to compel action to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education.

The major structural and philosophical changes already taking place at the NJDOE will enable this new accountability system to succeed. The Department is well aware that no matter how informative are the State's new performance reports or compelling the State's plans for intervention, little of value would ultimately be accomplished if the NJDOE maintained both its old approach to working with schools and districts and its old organization and staffing. The NJDOE's new commitment to the highest student expectations and school autonomy will empower educators. Its embrace of four key reform strategies will focus attention on the activities that matter most. Its focus on a targeted list of struggling schools will enable the State to best use its limited resources and bring about true change. Its new RACs will ensure expert educators are applying effective interventions to schools in need of improvement.

In total, then, this waiver application is an essential component of a set of integrated strategies for drastically improving student performance and closing the achievement gap. New Jersey is committing to setting college- and career-ready standards; developing an accountability system that accurately assesses performance and triggers supports and interventions; pursuing key reforms in policy and practice that support improvement efforts; and altering what it means to be a State department of education by creating high-impact supports and developing the internal capacity to drive change.

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	**Option B**
☒ 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)	☐ 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.

Introduction

By adopting the CCSS, the NJSBOE took a crucial step toward the ambitious goal of preparing all students for college and career regardless of their life circumstances. The transition to full implementation of the standards across districts and schools, allowing all New Jersey students full access to CCSS-aligned learning content, requires the NJDOE to take a stronger leadership role in helping districts and schools understand the instructional changes necessary to implement these more rigorous standards. To that end, the NJDOE is prepared to engage State and national experts in the development or adoption of a model curriculum, aligned with CCSS and Universal Design for Learning ("UDL:" precisely-defined constructs, accessible non-biased items, simple clear instructions, maximum readability and legibility), that all New Jersey districts can use to guide their implementation of the standards in order to prepare all students for college and career.

The development or adoption of the model curriculum will be led by the Chief Academic Officer working closely with the Directors of Special Education, ELLs, Mathematics and Reading/Language Arts. Curriculum development teams comprised of statewide curriculum experts as well as experts in special education and ELLs will be brought together by DOE leads and, working in content area and grade-band teams (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, HS), they will review national-level work being done on instructional materials to inform the development of the model curriculum version 1.0. This first version of the model curriculum aligned to both CCSS and UDL developed for implementation during the 2012-2013 school year will include five six-week units including CCSS- and UDL-aligned student learning objectives (SLOs), recommendations for scaffolding SLOs to meet the needs of Students With Disabilities (SWDs), ELLs and/or low-achieving students, as well as end-of-unit assessments aligned to UDL principles and designed to separately assess each unit SLO in order to better inform the improvement and differentiation of instruction.

Model curriculum 2.0 will be improved using feedback collected during the implementation of version 1.0 and will include: model lessons, model formative assessments, web- based professional development, recommended instructional resources and other supports to be implemented in 2013-2014. The platform housing this work will be continually improved so that all aspects of this work can be continually "added to, improved, and grow increasingly responsive to the teachers, administrators, parents and students of New Jersey.

Priority and Focus Schools will be fully supported by the NJDOE's new RACs in virtually all aspects of CCSS implementation. These field-based offices will be staffed with experts in instruction, literacy, mathematics, special education, ELLs, data use, school leadership, assessment development, and much more. These teams will work regularly and closely with all Priority and Focus Schools and the LEAs with identified Priority and Focus Schools, ensuring that, on a daily basis, schools are teaching to these new, more challenging standards; that instruction is sufficiently rigorous; and that educators have access to aligned curriculum, instructional supports and the professional development they need.

State Standards vs. CCSS

An initial analysis of the alignment between the State's current content standards and the CCSS revealed that all content areas and grade levels require revision. In order for districts and schools to begin to understand the major shifts in teaching and learning required to fully implement the CCSS, the NJDOE held information sessions with over 300 groups including teachers, administrators, superintendents, parents and board members. Feedback from these sessions revealed broad support for the NJDOE taking a leadership role in engaging both State and national experts to develop and/or adopt a "model" CCSS-aligned curriculum, assessment, and intervention system that would be made

available to all districts as they transition to implementing CCSS.

Model Curriculum

The NJDOE will seek out national experts and possible partnerships across States to assist in the adoption or development of a CCSS- and UDL-aligned model curriculum while forming a state-wide coalition of curriculum, special education, and ELL experts, including members of the State's institutions of higher education, to guide and inform the work. The NJDOE intends to develop or adopt a comprehensive model curriculum that includes defined, and UDL-aligned, student learning objectives divided into units of study, recommendations for scaffolding unit SLOs to meet the needs of students with disabilities (SWD)s, ELLs and low-achieving students, and quality UDL-aligned end-of-unit assessments. The scaffolded SLOs will be published within each unit allowing general and special education teachers to view the same document while planning to fully support students with disabilities and ELs. End-of-unit assessments will allow teacher teams the opportunity to review common data to inform and differentiate instruction to better meet the needs of all students. Implementation feedback from the 2012-2013 school year will inform improvements to the model curriculum. Other additions planned for 2013-2014 will include model lessons, formative assessments, a bank of CCSS-aligned assessment items, and a list of quality instructional resources.

Model lessons will be continually added to the curriculum system through a quality review process allowing teachers throughout the State to submit videos for review. Videos judged to be of high quality through the review process will be posted within the appropriate unit, and the teacher, school and district names will be included in order to recognize their contribution to the State model curriculum.

The NJDOE expects to publish model reading/language arts K-12 and mathematics K-12 curriculum for implementation in schools and districts in the Fall of 2012. This curriculum system will form a quality foundation for achievement, including the effective differentiation of learning through the use of model and teacher-developed formative assessments and thereby meet the needs of all students including SWDs and ELLs.

ELLs will also be supported through the adoption of WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) ELP (English Language Programs) standards, which will be aligned to CCSS for ELA and Math in 2012. This alignment will ensure the connections between content and language standards fully support ELLs in accessing the CCSS on the same schedule as all students.

Professional Development (see attached timeline)

The development of model curriculum, assessments, and interventions cannot drive the instructional changes necessary to improve student achievement without quality on-going professional development. Therefore, the NJDOE, working with national- and state-level experts, will provide professional development sessions designed to prepare and continually support teachers and principals in fully implementing the CCSS.

Professional development designed to support the implementation of CCSS- and UDL-aligned model

curriculum for 2012-2013 will be delivered by NJDOE curriculum experts and by the RACs (trained by NJDOE staff). RACs will center their support on Priority and Focus Schools as well as the LEAs with identified Priority and Focus Schools. These trainings will include all staff in Priority and Focus Schools as well as 2-4 leads from the districts. Other districts will be asked to send 2-4 leads in each content area to be trained by NJDOE curriculum/special education/ELL experts and prepared for training teachers in their district. These trainings will also be open to the LEAs with identified Priority and Focus Schools. In order to best meet teacher needs sessions will focus on five key areas:

1) The development of the year-long plan aligned to CCSS (1 session in June);
2) An in depth review of CCSS- and UDL-aligned unit SLOs, scaffolded SLOs and the unit assessment (6 sessions held throughout the year);
3) Effective lesson design and instructional strategies for scaffolding learning, particularly for struggling students (e.g. ELLs and special education) as they progress towards the mastery of CCSS (6 sessions held throughout the year);
4) The design and use of effective formative assessments, in order to prepare and empower teachers to use data to better meet the individual needs of the students in their classroom (2 sessions); and,
5) Finally, in order to support teacher collaboration for implementing the CCSS and continuously improving instruction through the sharing of best practices, professional development on effective protocols for analyzing and using multiple data sources will be offered to teacher teams (2 sessions).

All sessions will include significant follow-up using on-line surveys in order to effectively address the questions and challenges teachers will have as they work to implement these new standards and strategies in their classrooms. The success of these sessions will be measured by on-going teacher surveys, unit assessment data, and State summative assessments.

In addition, an RFP will be developed in February 2012 in order to deliver enhanced professional development supports on CCSS implementation that more effectively leverage technology for the 2013-2014 school year. This professional development offering will be part of an entire Instructional Management System that will include the newest version of the model curriculum with model lessons, model formative assessments, recommended instructional supports as well as professional development opportunities focused on both teacher content needs and pedagogy.

Instructional Leadership

Principals must receive quality professional development on the implementation of the CCSS if they are to truly lead the continuous improvement of teaching and learning in their schools. In order to effectively support principals in developing the necessary instructional leadership skills, the NJDOE will work with the NJPSA to deliver this professional development during the 2012-2013 school year.

The professional development sessions, including follow-up sessions will be presented in a variety of formats to meet the needs of principals throughout the State. Sessions will focus on three key areas:

1) Collecting classroom data to verify that educators are teaching the CCSS at the appropriate level of rigor and using strategies that meet the needs of all students;
2) Collecting and analyzing assessment data to drive the work of teacher teams and individual teachers in using data to improve and differentiate instruction; and
3) Forming teacher teams that become responsible for the continuous improvement of instruction and student achievement through the effective use of classroom observation and assessment data.

The NJDOE and NJPSA will make these sessions as productive as possible by offering sessions to groups of principals who supervise similar grade levels; the instructional materials used will also be relevant to those grade levels. All sessions will include follow-up activities using both small groups and web-based tools in order to effectively address the questions and challenges principals have as they work to monitor and improve the implementation of the CCSS in their schools. The success of these sessions will be measured.

In addition, the NJDOE will include principal professional development as part of the RFP seeking to better leverage technology to support continuous learning for principals as well as teachers in connection to implementing the CCSS.

Instructional Supports

The NJDOE will develop a data collection and reporting system for schools and districts to list and rate the resources they are using. The aim of doing so is to fully support districts and schools in the process of selecting the highest quality instructional resources, materials, programs and technology-based supports designed by external vendors to meet the needs of all students, including, ELLs, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students. Ratings will be driven by a quality rating system designed by the NJDOE with input from State experts. This information will be disseminated throughout the State in order to inform all districts as they decide which instructional materials or programs best meet the needs of their students.

High School

The ultimate goal of the CCSS is that all students, regardless of birth circumstances, will graduate college- and career-ready. To that end, the NJDOE is taking a number of actions to better connect secondary and post-secondary institutions and measure whether K-12 students are on track to graduate from high school prepared to do college-level work.

First, all high school core content area courses will include well defined CCSS-aligned model curriculum (including formative and end-of-course assessments), developed in collaboration with State institutions of higher education in order to ensure course designs meet the rigorous expectations of college. Second, high school course and assessment rigor will be evaluated through an NJDOE data system that connects student grades in high school courses and assessments to AP scores, grades in dual enrollment courses, SAT and ACT scores, achievement on college entrance assessments, as well as acceptance into post-secondary institutions, and remedial courses.

This data will be used to continually inform improvements in high school course design and assessment rigor. The development of more rigorous high school courses not only prepares students for post-secondary experiences without remediation but also allows more students greater access to accelerated learning opportunities including AP and dual-enrollment courses. The NJDOE will create a system for tracking the opportunities available for students to take AP, dual enrollment or other career-oriented courses in each school and district. This data will be used to ensure there is an equitable distribution of these opportunities in each district and school.

Transition of State Summative Assessments

The alignment of the current State assessments to CCSS is a strong motivator for teachers and principals to fully implement the CCSS; at the same time teachers and principals need to know that this is a transition process rather than an abrupt change. As a first step in this transition the NJDOE has reviewed all current State assessment items to determine the alignment of each item to New Jersey State Standards and CCSS. This information will be used to increase the number of items aligned to both sets of standards while decreasing items aligned to only New Jersey standards.

In addition, as a governing State in PARCC, the NJDOE will be working with other States and Achieve to inform this transition process between now and 2014-2015 when it is expected that PARCC assessments will be completed and ready for full implementation. The NJDOE will continue working with national-, district- and school-level experts to evaluate and improve the rigor of the State developed model curriculum assessments. The Department believes these model unit assessments, available for district- and school-level review and use, as well as a bank of CCSS-aligned assessment items, will help teachers, principals, parents and students better understand and meet the more rigorous expectations of the CCSS.

The final part of the transition process is a full NJDOE review of the State's current high school assessment regime. Data suggests the State's existing comprehensive exit exam lacks sufficient rigor and may need to be replaced. Too many high school graduates who pass the test require remediation when they enter college. Moreover, the NJDOE is considering adopting a slate of challenging end-of-course and end-of-year exams in advance of 2014. Both these strategies will help prepare the State in the near term for the transition to PARCC's more rigorous assessments in the years to come.

Connections with Higher Education

The NJDOE will fully engage institutions of higher education (IHEs) in the process of CCSS implementation to not only improve the rigor of high school courses and assessments, ensuring that our students are college- and career-ready, but also to impact the quality of teacher and principal preparation programs.

As a result of the recent report issued by the College- and Career-Ready Task Force the NJDOE will work with both 2- and 4-year IHEs to review the rigor of end-of-course (EOC) high school assessments in order to develop a system for determining students are college ready as a result of passing these assessments in lieu of using current college readiness indicators such as the Accuplacer.

In addition, the NJDOE will provide the State's IHEs with data linking the graduates of their teacher and principal preparation programs to student achievement data from the classrooms and schools in which their graduates work. This data system linking student performance and class rosters will be completed and available to all schools in the Fall of 2012. This data will drive the dialogue necessary between IHEs and the NJDOE regarding both current expectations for entry into teacher and principal preparation programs as well as the skills and knowledge students needs to be fully prepared for college and career.

This will be a joint project between the NJDOE's Division of Academics and Division of Talent. The former will lead the State's CCSS and assessment work, while the latter has an office dedicated solely to improving educator preparation programs. This cross-functional collaboration will be a key factor in the long-term success of CCSS implementation and our larger efforts to greatly expand college- and career-readiness.

For a complete implementation plan for NJDOE's transition to the CCSS, see Appendix 3.

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)

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.

I. Introduction

The core goal of the NJDOE is to ensure that all children, regardless of life circumstances, graduate from high school ready for college and career. Currently, the Department is far from accomplishing this mission.

While in the aggregate New Jersey's students perform at nation-leading levels, the State has a number of troubling deficiencies. On the 2011 NAEP exam, New Jersey ranked 50 out of 51 States (including DC) in the size of the achievement gap between low and high-income students in 8th grade reading. Tens of thousands of children attend schools where only a minority of students meets basic levels of proficiency in reading and math. Across the State, over 40 percent of third graders are not reading on grade level. And perhaps most alarmingly, a distressingly high percentage of those who do graduate from high school are unprepared for success: nearly 90 percent of students entering some of New Jersey's community colleges require remediation.

New Jersey has a comprehensive strategy for solving these challenges. It begins with an unwavering commitment to the highest expectations for all students and a single-minded, measureable goal of ensuring all students leave high school with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed throughout life which, for us, means truly prepared for college and career. While the NJDOE celebrates its successes, the Department must also honestly acknowledge the massive improvements that must be achieved to meet our ambitious goals. The NJDOE intends to close the achievement gap so student performance is no longer a function of demographics while simultaneously pushing New Jersey's highest performing students to compete with and exceed the accomplishments of their excelling peers in other States and across the globe.

In this context, New Jersey has undertaken an aggressive reform strategy to ensure the State invests in the activities that have the greatest impact on student performance, districts and schools have the information and tools to constantly improve, and that cut the bureaucratic red tape preventing schools and districts from being able to innovate and drive student achievement.

The NJDOE took its first step toward this end during the spring of 2011, shortly after Acting Commissioner Chris Cerf joined the Department. The NJDOE conducted a survey of the nearly 600 district superintendents across the State to learn how successful the NJDOE had been historically in

supporting district work and, more generally, advancing student achievement. The results were eye-opening and discouraging: the superintendents responded clearly that the NJDOE was not an engine for change and improvement in the State. Moreover, respondents said that many of the Department's district-level activities were uncoordinated, that the NJDOE was overly focused on compliance (inputs) rather than performance (outputs), and that its work to improve instruction was particularly lacking.

As a result, Acting Commissioner Cerf reorganized the NJDOE to ensure it was designed to meet its primary obligation of supporting student achievement. The new NJDOE is built on four building blocks:

> **Academics**: Ensuring all schools adhere to challenging content standards, administer rigorous assessments specifically tied to college and career readiness, and have access to high-quality curricula and instructional supports;
>
> **Performance:** Overseeing a unified academic accountability system that accurately measures school and district performance and triggers high-impact, tailored interventions and supports;
>
> **Talent**: Ensuring that all New Jersey educators are effective by improving policies and practices related to recruitment, preparation, evaluation, compensation, development, retention, and recognition; and
>
> **Innovation**: Identifying, recruiting, incubating, and supporting diverse, high-quality delivery systems for K-12 education, especially in our persistently lowest-performing school communities.

In October, the Department took the second step in its reorganization by creating seven field-based RACs staffed by master educators and designed to provide comprehensive support to our persistently lowest-achieving schools. The RACs will be instrumental in the Department's execution of its interventions, working closely with the Department's senior leaders to ensure that statewide initiatives are implemented, school and district performance targets are established and met, and high-impact supports are developed and delivered. RACs will be fully functional by the Fall of 2012 to help lead the state's work with schools and districts.

While the Department worked to ensure it was structured to better support schools and districts, it was simultaneously pursuing a wide array of activities aligned with its four building blocks and designed to drastically increase college- and career-readiness. This waiver application—and the new accountability system it will enable—is an essential component of the NJDOE's comprehensive strategy for improving student learning and closing the achievement gap across the State.

As outlined in Section 1 of this application, the State adopted the CCSS and joined the PARCC consortium to ensure the NJDOE aligns its understanding of what K-12 students should know and be able to do with the rigorous expectations of higher education and the workplace. Through the development of model curricula, formative assessments, instructional supports, leadership development activities, and much more, the NJDOE is working to ensure all districts and schools are prepared for the transition to CCSS and PARCC and, as a result, that all students are college- and career ready upon graduation from high school.

As a supporting initiative, the NJDOE also convened a College- and Career-Ready Task Force bringing together K-12, higher education, and business leaders to build consensus among all relevant stakeholders about what knowledge and skills students need when they leave secondary education. This task force is informing the state's work on high school assessments, educator preparation programs, and more.

As outlined in Section 3, the NJDOE has also taken major steps to ensure every classroom is led by an outstanding teacher. In late 2010, the Governor signed an executive order convening the New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Task Force, which was charged with building a framework for educator evaluations. Its work led to the launch of an eleven-district teacher evaluation pilot during the 2011-12 school year. All participating districts (and the state's SIG schools), are building evaluation systems that are based equally on student performance and teacher practice and that lead to meaningful professional development for classroom teachers.

With concrete plans in place to ensure the NJDOE has high-quality standards, assessments, and instructional supports, and effective teachers are leading our classrooms, it is time to have a nation-leading accountability system to ensure the NJDOE is accurately measuring our performance, making progress with all students, and delivering meaningful interventions. Below, the NJDOE offers a plan for building and implementing this next-generation accountability system, which the Department thinks is essential to advance our work. This ESEA Waiver will facilitate and enable this critical effort.

II. Current Status of Accountability in New Jersey

There are currently two overlapping and often contradictory accountability systems for New Jersey schools. At the federal level, the ESEA - in the current form of the NCLB Act - focuses on schools and districts, as evaluated by absolute student performance on State exams. At the State level, New Jersey's QSAC triennially evaluates districts in five areas with student performance comprising only one of them. Though both systems have virtues, both are also deeply flawed. Each has its own independent weaknesses, and the interaction between the two causes a host of problems.

Unfortunately, QSAC does not advance efforts to drive college- and career-readiness. It prioritizes inputs instead of outputs, placing a premium on districts' submission of reports and faithful compliance to rules instead of the improvement of student learning. QSAC also forces a district to consider many of its activities in isolation, requiring separate reviews for personnel, finance, and governance, when all of this work should be viewed as part of a seamless fabric intended to help students learn. Finally, QSAC generates limited and often unreliable information. In most cases the data gleaned from QSAC does little to help the State facilitate gains in academic achievement, and in entirely too many cases, high-performing districts are said to have deficiencies and tragically low-performing districts receive high scores.

NCLB's limitations are also numerous and widely known. It fails to give schools credit for making progress with students. It over-identifies schools and districts as underperforming. It treats a school struggling with a single subgroup the same as a school that is comprehensively failing its student body. It requires an inflexible set of interventions that are inappropriate for many targeted schools. Finally, its supports and sanctions haven't led to the improvements our students need.

Earlier this year, the Governor issued an executive order establishing New Jersey's Education Transformation Task Force, which was charged with making recommendations on how best to craft a rigorous, transparent, trustworthy accountability system while also freeing the State's educators to innovate and drive achievement. In September, the task force released an interim report focused on the deficiencies of QSAC and NCLB and the myriad regulations that burden our educators, schools, and districts. (See Appendix 4 for the interim report). The task force recommended excising a wide range of unnecessary regulations from New Jersey's codebook and creating a unified accountability system that focuses on what matters most – student achievement. Those recommendations drive the NJDOE's approach to educational accountability, autonomy, and support, and they provide the foundation for this waiver request.

The NJDOE is now building a unified accountability system to modify many aspects of QSAC and NCLB. To fully implement that system and realize its many benefits, New Jersey needs flexibility from many of ESEA's rules. The new system will enable the NJDOE to measure and report on metrics that truly reflect schools' and districts' success in preparing students for college and career; it will allow the Department to categorize schools more fairly and develop supports and interventions carefully tailored to their needs; and it will enable the NJDOE to focus its scarce resources on those schools in a persistent State of underperformance and those where at-risk subgroups are lagging far behind. Finally, it will also allow the Department to better hold districts and schools accountable for results.

As part of this waiver, the NJDOE is able to set rigorous and achievable targets for each school and subgroup. The process to set these targets takes into account individual school and subgroup starting points, and focuses on constant, yearly growth. Those subgroups that are farthest behind require the largest gains each year. This is a significant change from NCLB, where all students were held to the unrealistic expectation of 100% proficiency by 2014.

Despite this difference, the NJDOE maintains its belief that every child in New Jersey, regardless of birth circumstance, can achieve at high levels. By focusing on customized growth at the subgroup level, New Jersey has set an ambitious goal that will help all schools constantly improve. The NJDOE believes that the plan in this application will ensure that every student entering Kindergarten in the 2012-13 school year, regardless of circumstance, will graduate from high school ready for college and career

III. Performance Reports

The heart of New Jersey's new accountability system is the data-rich school- and district-level performance report that provides clear, meaningful information on student performance and college- and career-readiness. It will provide numerous measures, targets, attainment and growth metrics, composite rankings, and peer-to-peer comparisons to assist schools and stakeholders to fully understand performance and customize supports and interventions.

New Jersey chose its draft metrics by studying the work of leading states, such as, Florida and Massachusetts, and top school systems, such as Montgomery County, Maryland. A draft performance report is attached to this application (See Appendix 5). It includes not only traditional information, such

as grades 3 – 8 reading and math scores and high school graduation rates, but also includes measures that give a clear indication of college- and career-readiness, such as AP and SAT scores. The draft performance report also allows observers to compare each school's or district's performance to a group of peers with similar demographics. Finally, the report enables educators and parents to see, at a glance, whether and to what degree each school is meeting its performance targets, including narrowing achievement gaps.

The "School Score Card" will serve as a summary report of the many metrics in the Performance Report. For a high school, four performance areas will be presented, each with a subsection in the performance report: Academic Achievement, College and Career Readiness, Graduation Rate and Post-Secondary Outcomes, and Progress toward Closing Achievement Gaps. As shown in the score card, each area will summarize the percentage of the performance targets met, how the school's performance compares to schools that are educating a similar student population, and how the school compares to the State as a whole. For example, in this school score card, the school met 50% of its Academic Achievement Targets. Meeting 50% of the targets places this school in the 82nd percentile statewide, but only in the 17th percentile when compared to its peer school group.

School Score Card

Performance Indicators	Statewide Ranking	Peer School Ranking	% Performance Targets Met
Academic Achievement	82%	17%	50%
College/Career Readiness	82%	78%	25%
Graduation/Post Secondary	95%	10%	25%
Closing Achievement Gaps	65%	5%	33%
Improvement Status:	***Focus***		
Rationale:	***Achievement Gaps***		
Change since last year:	*Improvement*	*No change*	*Decline*

As noted in the score card above, as part of the School Performance Report, each school's designation (Priority, Focus, etc.) under this waiver application will be published. In this example, this school has been labeled as a Focus School because it has among the largest, within-school achievement gaps across the state.

Additionally, as shown in the next table demonstrating results for Language Arts Literacy, the school's overall and subgroup performance targets will be displayed as part of the Academic Achievement subsection of the performance report. As described below in this application, New Jersey has selected Option A in the determination of Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs). Thus, for each subgroup in each school the following metrics will be displayed for both Language Arts Literacy and Math: the current pass rate, the target that the school was required to meet, and whether the target was met or exceeded, was not met, or was within the range of the standard error of the measurements.

Performance Targets - Language Arts Literacy**			
This table presents the annual proficiency targets, as measured by the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), established for this school under New Jersey's Elementary and Secondary Act Waiver.			
Subgroup	***2010-2011 Pass Rate***	***2010-2011 Target***	***Met Target***
Schoolwide	64.6%	65.0%	**YES**
White	78.0%	73.0%	**YES**
Black	81.0%	76.0%	**YES**
Hispanic	65.0%	74.2%	**NO**
American Indian	72.0%	78.0%	**NO**
Asian	93.0%	92.0%	**YES**
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	**N/A**
Two or More Races	58.0%	74.0%	**NO**
With Disabilities	60.0%	68.0%	**NO**
Limited English Proficiency	70.0%	67.0%	**YES**
Economically Disadvantaged	69.0%	73.4%	**NO**

For non-Priority and non-Focus Schools, each school will develop a local school board approved school improvement plan that addresses the school and/or subgroup missed performance targets, as described above, in addition to the other metrics presented in the performance report. Guidelines for such plans will be provided by the NJDOE at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. This work will be a joint product of the Divisions of Academics and Performance and the Department's RACs (described more fully in Section 2.F below).

In addition to Academic Achievement, the performance report will contain indicators of how well a school is doing to prepare its students for college and career. Five College- and Career-Readiness Indicators are shown in this mock-up: SAT participation rates, SAT scores, AP Participation rates, AP score outcomes, and the percentage of Career and Technical Students who pass an industry exam. For each indicator, the school's performance is present, next to the performance of its peer schools, and the overall performance of the state. The final column indicates whether the school met each particular performance target. In this example, the school met only one target – the Percent of Students Taking the SAT – and thus in the total line of the table below is shown to have met only 25% of the performance targets in College and Career Readiness. This percentage – 25% - is also reported in the School Score Card above.

College and Career Readiness*				
College and Career Readiness Indicators	School	Peer Schools	Statewide Target	Met Target
Percent of Students Taking SAT	71%	78%	70%	YES
Percent of Students Scoring Above SAT Composite Benchmark of 1550	45%	60%	65%	NO
Percent of Students Taking at Least One AP Test	7%	9%	22%	NO
Percent of AP Tests with scores greater than 3	29%	35%	40%	NO
% of Career and Technical Students Passing an Industry Exam or Certification	65%	56%	N/A	N/A
Total	152			25%

In the "Graduation and Post-Secondary Enrollment" subsection of the performance report, four indicators will be displayed: the school's graduation rate, the graduation rate via passing the state's standard high school exam, the rate of remediation required by the graduates of the school in institutions of higher education in New Jersey, and the percent of students who are enrolled in post-secondary institutions within 6 or 18 months of high school graduation.

Graduation and Post-Secondary Enrollment*				
Graduation and Post-Secondary Performance Indicators	School	Peer Schools	Statewide Targets	Met Target
Total Graduation Rate	82.0%	88.0%	90.0%	NO
Graduation via HSPA	74.3%	72.0%	85.0%	NO
Remediation Rate in NJ Post-Secondary	10.0%	15.0%	N/A	N/A
Enrolled in Post-Secondary within 6 months	35.0%	47.0%	48.0%	NO
Enrolled in Post-Secondary within 18 months	53.0%	50.0%	55.0%	YES
Total	244.3			25%

Within each subsection, additional tables of data – beyond the summary report for the subsection – will be displayed. This table for example presents the graduation rate for each subgroup in the school, the comparison to the school's peers and also the statewide average. Additionally, New Jersey will describe its graduates' pathways to graduation including passing the statewide assessment, graduating by demonstrating mastery in our alternative assessments and being exempt from passing our statewide assessments. And this data will be further disaggregated into the traditional ESEA subgroups.

Graduation Rate by Subgroup			
This table presents the percentage of students who graduated within four years of entering ninth grade, according to the 4-year, adjusted cohort graduation rate.			
Subgroup	***School***	***Peer Schools***	***State Average***
White	92.0	89.0	92.0
Black	87.0	84.0	86.0
Hispanic	78.0	80.0	82.0
American Indian	87.0	67.0	88.0
Asian	93.0	92.0	94.0
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	92.0
Two or More Races	89.0	88.0	92.0
Male	89.0	90.0	92.0
Female	91.0	88.0	93.0
Students With Disabilities	38.4	25.1	2.7
Limited English Proficiency	7.1	4.5	2.7
Economically Disadvantaged	16.5	15.9	1.7

Finally, of particular concern to New Jersey, as well as other states, is the closing of the achievement gap both statewide and at individual schools. Thus, New Jersey will include a subsection in the performance report with "Closing Within School Gaps" indicators. For high schools, the gap will be measured between the scale score points earned by the student at the 25th percentile and the student's score at the 75th percentile.

Closing Within School Gaps*				
Closing Within School Gaps Indicators	School	Peer Schools	Statewide Targets	Met Target
Bottom 25th Percentile v. 75th Percentile HSPA LAL Scale Score	55	60	35	**NO**
Bottom 25th Percentile v. 75th Percentile HSPA Math Scale Score	60	55	40	**NO**
Total	210			33%

*The table above displays the difference in scale score points between the student at the 25th percentile and the student at the 75th percentile (the interquartile range) in each content area of the New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA).

Beginning in January 2012, a workgroup of educators, parents, stakeholders, and school board members will be convened to finalize the set of metrics, their various weights in a composite scoring system, and the formulation of appropriate peer school criteria. A series of public meetings and focus groups will be

convened to pilot the reports to ensure they are robust, clear, fair, and useful to the broadest set of stakeholders. Led by the NJDOE's Chief Performance Officer, this work will conclude by the end of the 2011-2012 school year; the finalized performance report will be introduced for the 2012-13 school year. The performance reports will be published on the same timeframe that the School Report Cards and will be ready for public release in the early winter of 2013. However, schools and districts will have assessment data available to them, as they have in years past, directly from the Assessment vendor and the Office of Title I that will enable them to begin their school-level analyses prior to the beginning of the school year. All schools will receive state-level academic proficiency data, including AMO data, during the summer of any school year in order to inform the development of their School Improvement Plan. The complete School Performance Report including AP, SAT, Graduation rates and Growth data, with School-to-School comparisons, is available to all schools in February. Schools are expected to use this information to inform the mid-year review and adjustment of the SIP. In addition, these performance reports will inform the development of the SIP for the following school year.

Unlike many other school and district report card systems, New Jersey's will go beyond assessing school and district performance. The NJDOE will help educators and parents understand and enhance the achievement of every student by developing additional student-level metrics and analytical tools within New Jersey's statewide, student-level longitudinal data system. These tools will include an Early Warning Report, College and Career Report, and a Successful Post-Secondary Student Profile. As each of these reports becomes available, NJDOE will follow its established procedures of providing WebEx training to assist districts and schools in utilizing and interpreting the results of the reports.

Early Warning Report

A series of performance metrics will be designed to function as an Early Warning System (EWS) that will identify students who are at-risk of failing to achieve college- and/or career-readiness. These metrics will begin in first grade and continue through twelfth grade. An example of one measure to be reported annually throughout a student's school career will be his or her attendance rate; special attention will be directed toward those who are chronically absent, a powerful indicator of future challenges.

In third grade, when State testing begins, student-level proficiency will be added as a metric, and carried forward into fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and eleventh grades. In fourth grade, student-level growth scores ("SGPs," which measure how much growth a student made relative to his or her academic peers) will be added as a metric, and carried forward into fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade.

In high school, a record of course credits earned will be added. Additionally, suspensions and expulsions will also be noted. Each metric in the EWS will be "drill down-ready," meaning that with one click, an educator will be able to obtain a roster of students in a particular category, such as students in fourth grade demonstrating partial proficiency, low growth, and chronic absenteeism. This powerful report will be ready for Statewide deployment at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

College and Career Report

The College and Career Report will also be available at a student level to provide educators with performance metrics that demonstrate college-readiness such as PSAT, SAT, ACT and AP test scores. Additionally, a student's transcript data –including courses taken and grades earned – will be provided by the NJDOE and can be cross-referenced with end-of-course assessments such as Algebra I, in addition to third-party assessments, such as AP tests. Furthermore, a student's participation and success in Industry or Credential Exams, as part of his/her Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, will also be included. This report will also be ready for statewide deployment by the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year and will be enhanced as additional metrics become available, such as new end-of-course exams.

Successful Post-Secondary Student Profile

The NJDOE will construct a Successful Post-Secondary Student Profile for each high school using real outcome data, similar to the work done by Montgomery County, Maryland in the formation of their "Seven Keys." Beginning in the fall of 2011, data from the National Student Clearinghouse will be joined with the longitudinal data in New Jersey's statewide, student-level data system to build a profile of a typical 2011 high school graduate enrolled in post-secondary education within four months of graduating high school.

The profile will include State assessment scores, SAT scores, AP scores, and twelfth grade attendance data. As the 2011 high school graduate cohort ages through college, the profile will be updated to reflect those students who remain continuously enrolled in college. In 2015, it will then be possible to construct a profile at a high school level of those students who successfully completed post-secondary education. These profiles can be used by high schools to set their own specific goals for proficiency levels in all tested grade levels, SAT scores, and attendance trends.

Taken together, through the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) reports, the performance reports, and accountability outcomes, educators and stakeholders will have a wealth of information available to them regarding the performance of their schools. This information will be provided in a way where comparisons to other schools and the State can be drawn. Thus, specific areas of strength and weakness can be identified and targeted for improvement. While the NJDOE will establish statewide performance targets, schools and districts can also establish their own, such as being in the top quartile of their peer school comparison group on any particular indicator. Thus, this type of reporting invites continuous engagement of educators and stakeholders in the reflection and feedback processes so critical to school improvement.

The district's student level reports will be available to educators to use in a school level continuous improvement discussion with parents. The Performance reports will be available to parents and the community. These student level reports will rely on data available in a student's personal data file at their student's school. This Performance Report will include information advising parents how to access the information for their students by requesting this information from their school.

IV. Differentiated Recognitions, Interventions and Supports

Categories

New Jersey's new unified accountability system will identify schools using the criteria in the four categories defined below. These categories are triggers for the NJDOE's differentiated recognition, intervention, and support system:

Priority Schools
Priority schools are the lowest performing schools across the State with regard to absolute achievement or graduation outcomes and those that are persistently low achieving. The NJDOE will structure intense, mandatory interventions and supports (in alignment with the application's "turnaround principles") that match each school's particular needs.

Focus Schools
Focus schools are those in which particular subgroups have extremely low achievement levels or lag far behind their peers. The NJDOE will identify targeted interventions and supports that are specific to the school's needs (e.g. instructional leadership) and the subgroups in question, such as ELLs or students with disabilities.

Reward Schools
The NJDOE will recognize, celebrate, and reward schools with high overall and subgroup achievement levels and those that are demonstrating great progress.

All Other Schools
The NJDOE will provide detailed, specific data to illustrate the strengths and areas in need of improvement for all schools so that progress in each area and in every subgroup can be tracked and used to inform school improvement activities and to illustrate the performance targets met or not met.

The methodologies for identifying each category of school, for determining appropriate interventions and supports, and the criteria for monitoring progress can be found below in the subsections of Principle 2.

Interventions

The structural and philosophical changes made to the NJDOE over the last year (described above) will enable the State to assist schools and districts to an extent far exceeding the Department's previous capacity. The NJDOE will make available to all schools a wide array of support, but the most troubled schools—those falling into Priority and Focus status—will receive extensive attention.

The Department's new RACs will play a critical role. Teams from these offices will visit and assess every Priority and Focus school and, in conjunction with the NJDOE's central office, district and school leaders, educators, and families, develop a comprehensive individualized school improvement plan for each school keyed to the interventions described below.

In years past, the State has exercised less authority than it might have when it comes to requiring districts to take bold action in their persistently underperforming schools. Today's NJDOE, however, will use the

full leverage granted it under Title I and various provisions of State law to ensure districts faithfully implement improvement plans for Priority and Focus Schools.

For all districts receiving Title I money with one or more Priority or Focus Schools, the individualized school improvement plan for each Priority and Focus School must be incorporated into the district's Local Educational Agency Plan ("LEAP") submitted to the NJDOE every August pursuant to the ESEA. *See* 20 U.S.C. § 6312. Before Title I monies can flow to a district, the NJDOE must approve the district's LEAP.

If a district's LEAP fails to incorporate, either in whole or in part, the individualized school improvement plan for each of the district's Priority and Focus Schools, the NJDOE will reject the LEAP and withhold all Title I funds from the district until it comes into compliance with this waiver application. A district will be considered in compliance only when:

1) The District's LEAP fully incorporates each individualized school improvement plan for each of the district's Priority and Focus Schools; and
2) District leadership has executed a Statement of Assurances committing the district to implementing its LEAP. A sample Statement of Assurances is attached to this waiver application as Appendix 6.

For districts not receiving Title I money with one or more Priority or Focus Schools, the NJDOE will work collaboratively with district leaders to implement each individualized school improvement plan. However, if any such district refuses to implement a plan, either in whole or in part, the NJDOE will make use of its far-reaching statutory and regulatory powers under State law to compel action. The NJDOE is empowered, among other things, to:

1) Ensure that "all educational expenditures in the district will be spent effectively and efficiently in order to enable students to achieve the core curriculum content standards" (N.J.S.A. § 18A:7F-60);
2) "Take any affirmative action as is necessary to ensure the effective and efficient expenditure of funds by school districts" (N.J.S.A. § 18A:7F-60);
3) "Direct [] the restructuring of curriculum or programs" (N.J.S.A. § 18A:7F-6(b));
4) "Direct [] staff retraining or reassignment" (N.J.S.A. § 18A:7F-6(b)); and
5) "Redirect [] expenditures" (N.J.S.A. § 18A:7F-6(b)); and "Review[] the terms of future collective bargaining agreements" (N.J.S.A. § 18A:7F-6(b)). The NJDOE also has unique authority to authorize charter schools, set requirements for educator certification and licensure, and, where all else fails, close persistently failing schools.

Interventions and Supports for Priority Schools

The NJDOE is now poised to support and intervene in meaningful, lasting ways in both Priority and Focus Schools. The Department will identify at least 5 percent of Title I schools as Priority Schools. With guidance and support from the Department's senior leadership, the NJDOE's RACs will take the lead on developing and implementing customized interventions based on the needs of each school. Each intervention category aligns with the "turnaround principles" outlined in this waiver's guidance

documents.

Quality School Reviews (QSRs) will be used to differentiate interventions in order to meet the needs of each school. Intensive interventions have been developed to address:

School Climate and Culture: Establishing school environments that support the social, emotional and health needs of all students

School Leadership: Ensuring that the principal has the ability to lead the turnaround effort

Standards Aligned Curriculum, Assessment and Intervention System: Ensuring teachers have the foundational documents and instructional materials needed to teach to the rigorous college and career ready standards that have been adopted

Instruction: Ensuring teachers utilize research-based effective instruction to meet the needs of all students

Use of Time: Redesigning time to better meet student needs and increase teacher collaboration focused on improving teaching and learning

Use of Data: Ensuring school-wide use of data focused on improving teaching and learning

Staffing Practices: Developing the skills to better recruit, retain and develop effective teachers

Family and Community Engagement: Increasing academically focused family and community engagement

Priority School interventions will be closely monitored and continued for a three-year period providing schools the time needed to implement required changes and demonstrate improvement in student achievement. Priority Schools that fail to implement the required interventions or fail to demonstrate required improvement in student academic achievement may become subject to state-ordered closure or other action.

Interventions and Supports for Focus Schools.

The NJDOE will identify at least 10 percent of Title I schools as Focus Schools. These schools will be selected from Title I schools that are not categorized as Priority Schools and will be identified based upon within-school achievement gaps and low performance among particular subgroups. Any non-Title I school that would otherwise meet the same criteria will also be designated as a Focus School. The Department's RACs will work with LEAs to develop and implement customized improvement plans for Focus Schools, targeted specifically at the identified achievement gaps, and aligned to the federal turnaround principles listed above. These improvement plans will likely include specific interventions and supports for students with disabilities and ELLs as their subgroup performance has been traditionally lower than others.

Recognitions and Rewards for Reward Schools.

The NJDOE will identify Reward Schools based on high proficiency levels or high levels of growth, including progress toward closing achievement gaps. This will allow for a range of schools from across

the State to attain Reward status, regardless of their absolute starting point. The Department will provide financial incentives to Reward schools to be used with input from the school community, and will work with partner organizations to help these schools share best practices with educators across the state.

Non-categorized Schools.

The NJDOE will develop school performance reports and school and subgroup performance targets for all schools in the state, regardless of whether they fall into one of the three categories above. For all non-categorized schools, LEAs will be required to hold public meetings to review their performance reports and other data, share their plans for addressing identified need areas, and align Title I resources to support the plan.. Non-categorized schools will have flexibility in the interventions they use to address achievement gaps and other performance challenges and will be invited to attend regional trainings and professional development sessions offered for Focus and Priority schools by the RACs. Through these optional capacity-building opportunities and through supports provided to all schools through the Department's website, non-categorized schools will be able to benefit from the supports offered to Focus and Priority schools.

Additional assistance and monitoring will be implemented for a subset of particularly at-risk non-categorized schools (namely those with large, persistent achievement gaps). Regional Achievement Directors will be required to review and approve future school improvement plans and offer technical assistance based on successful strategies implemented in similar schools.

The accountability system described above is a critical component to NJDOE's efforts to identify, differentiate, and support all schools, enabling all students, regardless of background, the opportunity to graduate college- and career-ready.

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

Option A	**Option B**
☒ The SEA only includes student achievement 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 and 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.

Insert text for Option B here.

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)

Performance Targets (formerly Annual Measurable Objectives)

The NJDOE is more fully integrating its expectations for specific school-level and sub-group improvement in student achievement outcomes into a coherent performance and accountability framework. Instead of terming these metrics "AMOs", the NJDOE has re-titled them Performance Targets.

The NJDOE will calculate state-, district-, school- and subgroup-level performance targets, determine whether schools achieved each target, and report the results each year in the New Jersey School Performance Report. Schools, districts, and staff from the NJDOE's RACs will use this data to inform their school-specific strategies for improvement.

The waiver application requires states to select a method for establishing these performance targets. Option A is defined as setting the targets in annual equal increments so that within six years the percentage of non-proficient students in the 'all students' group and in each subgroup is reduced by half.

For example, if the 'all students' group is currently demonstrating a proficiency rate of 40 percent, the methodology would take the 60 percent point gap between 100 percent proficiency and the current rate (100 – 40 = 60) and then divide the gap in half to determine the target for the sixth year – a gain of 30 percentage points (60 / 2 = 30).

Then, the 30-percentage point gain is divided into six equal increments (30/6 = 5) so that annual targets can be set. Thus, the school in this example begins this process with a rate of 40 percent and is then expected to move to proficiency rates of 45 percent, 50 percent, 55 percent, 60 percent, 65 percent, and finally 70 percent in each of the following years of the six-year period.

As illustrated in the table below, the process for defining the six-year goal for the percentage of proficient students in each content area across the State was conducted in the following manner:

1. Determine the percentage of students who were not proficient in the 2010–2011 school year (Column 1 below);
2. Divide that percentage by 2 (Column 2);
3. Subtract the number in Column 2 from 100 percent. This resulting percentage is the SEA's goal for the 2016–2017 school year (Column 3; and
4. Establish annual incremental performance targets by dividing the number in Column 2 by six (Column 4).

PROCESS: DETERMINING SIX-YEAR GOALS

Process Steps			1	2	3	4
Level	Subject	2010-11 Percent Proficient	2010-11 Percent Partially Proficient	Partially Proficient divided by 2	2017 Percent Proficient Goal	Annual Equal increments
State	L	71.7	28.3	14.2	85.9	2.4
State	M	78.1	21.9	11.0	89.1	1.8

The NJDOE repeated the process described above for each subgroup of students in the State to identify the SEA's goal for the 2016–2017 school year for each subgroup, ensuring that the State's six-year goals reduce by half the percentage of students in each subgroup who are not proficient. Also, subgroups of students who are further behind are expected to make greater rates of annual progress (as demonstrated by the differences in the expected annual increments). The NJDOE established performance targets for the content areas of language arts literacy and math; as such, the assessment results for grades 3-8 and 11 are aggregated.

The table below, "State Level Performance Targets" details these performance targets for each content area and subgroup.

STATE LEVEL PERFORMANCE TARGETS

KEY	T	Total	B	African American	O	Two or more races
`	SE	Students with Disabilities	H	Hispanic		
	EC	Economically Disadvantaged	A	Asian/Pacific Islander	LEP	Limited English Prof.
	W	White	N	Native American		

Level	Subject	subpop	2011 Partially Proficient	2011 Partially Proficient divided by 2	Current 2010-2011 Percent Proficient	Equal Annual Increments	2012 P% TARGET	2013 P% TARGET	2014 P% TARGET	2015 P% TARGET	2016 P% TARGET	2017 P% TARGET
State	L	T	28.3	14.2	71.7	2.4	74.1	76.4	78.8	81.1	83.5	85.9
State	L	SE	59.3	29.7	40.7	4.9	45.6	50.6	55.5	60.5	65.4	70.4
State	L	EC	48.3	24.2	51.7	4.0	55.7	59.8	63.8	67.8	71.8	75.9
State	L	LEP	71.3	35.7	28.7	5.9	34.6	40.6	46.5	52.5	58.4	64.4
State	L	A	13.9	7.0	86.1	1.2	87.3	88.4	89.6	90.7	91.9	93.1
State	L	B	48.6	24.3	51.4	4.1	55.5	59.5	63.6	67.6	71.7	75.7
State	L	H	44.1	22.1	55.9	3.7	59.6	63.3	66.9	70.6	74.3	78.0
State	L	N	32.4	16.2	67.6	2.7	70.3	73.0	75.7	78.4	81.1	83.8
State	L	W	19.6	9.8	80.4	1.6	82.0	83.7	85.3	86.9	88.6	90.2
State	L	O	31.1	15.6	68.9	2.6	71.5	74.1	76.7	79.3	81.9	84.5

State	M	T	21.9	11.0	78.1	1.8	79.9	81.8	83.6	85.4	87.2	89.1
State	M	SE	50.9	25.5	49.1	4.2	53.3	57.6	61.8	66.1	70.3	74.6
State	M	EC	37.6	18.8	62.4	3.1	65.5	68.7	71.8	74.9	78.1	81.2
State	M	LEP	54.2	27.1	45.8	4.5	50.3	54.8	59.4	63.9	68.4	72.9
State	M	A	6.9	3.5	93.1	0.6	93.7	94.3	94.8	95.4	96.0	96.6
State	M	B	43.6	21.8	56.4	3.6	60.0	63.7	67.3	70.9	74.6	78.2
State	M	H	33.2	16.6	66.8	2.8	69.6	72.3	75.1	77.9	80.6	83.4
State	M	N	26.4	13.2	73.6	2.2	75.8	78.0	80.2	82.4	84.6	86.8
State	M	W	14.4	7.2	85.6	1.2	86.8	88.0	89.2	90.4	91.6	92.8
State	M	O	25.8	12.9	74.2	2.2	76.4	78.5	80.7	82.8	85.0	87.1

New Jersey will apply the performance targets to the State, each LEA, school and subgroup annually, utilizing a minimum "N" size of 30 for all students and for each subgroup.

District-Level

The NJDOE will repeat the process described above for each subgroup of students in the district to identify the district's performance targets for the 2016–2017 school year for each subgroup, ensuring that the six-year goals reduce by half the percentage of students in each subgroup who are not proficient and that subgroups of students who are further behind are expected to make greater rates of annual progress.

School-Level

The NJDOE will repeat the process described above for each subgroup of students in the school to identify the school's performance targets for the 2016–2017 school year for each subgroup, ensuring that the six-year goals reduce by half the percentage of students in each subgroup who are not proficient and that subgroups of students who are further behind are expected to make greater rates of annual progress.

Interpreting Performance Targets

As mentioned above, the NJDOE will publish each school's and district's performance targets and whether they were met on an annual basis as part of the School Performance Report. As part of a system of accountability and performance metrics, these performance targets will help schools, districts, and community stakeholders more fully understand the performance of their school by identifying both strengths and areas for improvement.

However, New Jersey's diversity of schools in terms of size, the number of subgroups present in any given school building, and ultimately the relatively small number of students in any particular subgroup

present a unique challenge in interpreting performance targets. The NJDOE also determined that for the highest performing schools and subgroups, this will likely present unreasonable increments as the performance targets approach 100 percent proficiency with the result of identifying schools at the absolute top of the performance level as failing to meet their performance targets. The NJDOE therefore established that schools and subgroups could meet expectations by either reaching their individually determined performance targets or a proficiency rate of 90 percent. This rate will be increased to 95 percent in 2015. In this way, the absolute proficiency will always be higher than any target established (no target is higher than 90 percent next year, and no target is higher than 95percent in 2015). The Performance Targets calculated will require schools that are currently further behind in student achievement to make greater rates of progress in order to reach their goals.

2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

2.C.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as Reward Schools.

The NJDOE has long recognized Title I Schools of Excellence and National Blue Ribbon Schools across the state. This waiver application offers an opportunity to further recognize excellent schools by formally designating a set of schools as Reward Schools. As found in the key attached to Table 2 below, the waiver application specifies that NJDOE designate two sub-categories within the Reward category. They are schools that are "Reward-High Performing", denoted as required in Table 2 as Category A, and "Reward-High Progress", denoted as required in Table 2 as Category B.

These two sub-categories of Reward schools allow the NJDOE to recognize two separate but very important types of success. The first type of school demonstrates remarkable success for all of its students and for each subgroup. These schools are deemed to be Reward-High Performing (Table 2: Category A) because they have met measures of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for all of their students and subgroups during the 2010-2011 school year, have a school-wide proficiency rate above 90 percent (that is, 90 percent of the school's students met or exceeded State standards as measured by our statewide assessments), and, at the high school level, have a graduation rate above 90 percent.

To ensure that a high school-wide proficiency rate for such schools does not mask low subgroup performance, we also require Reward-High Performing schools to have high performance in each subgroup. Specifically, we require that each subgroup in a Reward-High Performing school rank in the top 10 percent of performance, relative to that subgroup's performance across the state. To ensure that any subgroup deficiencies are pervasive enough to warrant a school being ineligible for reward status, The NJDOE has included only subgroups with more than 30 students, that represent at least 5 percent of its school's student enrollment, and whose student growth percentile (described more fully below) is below 65 (failing to reach the NJDOE's marker for "high growth").

The second type of Reward School is called Reward-High Progress (Table 2: Category B). These schools – while perhaps not meeting AYP benchmarks – are set apart from other schools because they are demonstrating a remarkable rate of progress. The NJDOE will measure the "trajectory" of a school by utilizing the SGP methodology. SGP calculates a school's growth by using the median growth score of a school's student population. This number, which ranges from 1 to 99, is centered on a statewide median of 50. The NJDOE has determined that schools with an SGP score of 65 or higher is demonstrating high growth and will designate these schools as Reward-High Progress.

In creating the list of Reward Schools (Categories A and B), the NJDOE employed the following specific methodology:

Step 1: The NJDOE categorized all Title I schools that met the following criteria as Reward-High Performing (Table 2: Category A):

1) A school that met AYP benchmarks for all students and subgroups during the 2010-2011 year;

2) Achieved an "all students" proficiency rate above 90 percent;
3) At the high school level, achieved a graduation rate of above 90 percent, and
4) Achieved a proficiency rate in the top 10 percent of performance with respect to each eligible subgroup. This is a relative measure that determines whether each subgroup in a Reward-High Performing school ranks in the top 10 percent of performance, relative to that subgroup's performance across the state. As mentioned above, the NJDOE has included only subgroups with more than 30 students, that represent at least 5 percent of its school's student enrollment, and whose student growth percentile is below 65 (failing to reach the NJDOE's marker for "high growth").

Step 2: The NJDOE categorized all remaining Title I schools that obtained a median student growth percentile (SGP) of 65 or higher as Reward-High Progress (Table 2: Category B).

Step 3: To continue the commitment toward the establishment of a single, unified system of accountability, recognitions, and interventions, the NJDOE also classified all non-Title I schools that otherwise met the conditions in steps #1 or #2 as Reward Schools of the respective type.

The Reward School list in Table 2 is based on the last three years (2008-2009, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011) of State assessments data, median student growth percentiles derived from the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 assessments, and 2010-2011 graduation rates based on New Jersey's four-year adjusted cohort model required by 34 C.F.R. §200.19.

New Jersey aims to avoid one-year aberrations from unduly influencing the results when we formally categorize schools as Reward in the future. Therefore the NJDOE plans to incorporate additional years of State assessments, SGP and graduation rate data as it becomes available (i.e., calculating SGP from the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 assessments). This will allow the Department to more accurately determine which schools are consistently most effective in advancing student learning. SGP scores based on the 2010 and 2011 test administrations are expected to be available no later than December 2011, at which point they will be incorporated into an updated list of Reward Schools.

New Jersey will ensure *all* schools are recognized for their high achievement and progress. Per ESEA Flexibility Guidelines, New Jersey is committed to recognizing Reward Schools that are not only high-performing in the aggregate but those that are also closing the achievement gap between subgroups. To that end, schools that are already classified as a Focus School are not included in the universe of schools eligible to be identified as Reward Schools.

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.

The NJDOE will implement several rewards and recognitions for its highest-performing and high-progress schools. The decision on how to use any monetary rewards the school receives from the State will be made by the district and school based on feedback from stakeholders, including teachers and district leaders. To acknowledge the State's Reward Schools, the Department will use Title I, Part A funds under the provision of *ESEA* §1117(c)(2)(A) and other Title I, Part A funds that may be available for reallocation such as excess carryover funds up to a maximum of $1 million.

The State will define a new category of schools as "New Jersey Schools of Excellence." This designation will be noted on the school performance report, as well as on the NJDOE website. Additional recognitions may include:

1. Plaque identifying the school as a "New Jersey School of Excellence" presented to each school and district at a State Board of Education meeting;
2. Statewide press releases;
3. Selected schools/districts/students asked to present at a workshop at the NJDOE's Annual Effective Practices Conference;
4. Governor and/or Commissioner visit;
5. Students and staff attend a special rally/celebration held in Trenton for all "New Jersey Schools of Excellence" at the War Memorial; and/or
6. Scholarships for teachers to obtain National Board Certification.

In addition to these non-monetary recognitions, Title I-funded schools that have sustained achievement and have demonstrated high progress will receive monetary awards, using Title I funds. School principals, in consultation with school representatives, including at least two teachers and two parents, will have discretion over how to use these funds within their schools.

Up to ten Title I Schools that are designated "Reward-High Performing" will receive a monetary reward of up to $100,000 each based on school enrollment size and poverty factors. The recognized schools that receives a monetary reward for sustained achievement must:

1. Have a poverty rate of at least 35 percent over the three-year period;
2. Have received a Title I allocation and operate a Title I program;
3. Meet the criteria of a Reward School as articulated in 2.C.i, Category A; and
4. Enroll students without a selective admissions process.

Up to ten Title I Schools that are designated "Reward-High Progress" will also receive a monetary reward of up to $100,000 each based on school enrollment size and poverty factors. The recognized schools that receives a monetary reward for high progress must have:

1. A poverty rate of at least 35 percent over the three-year period;
2. Received a Title I allocation and operate a Title I program;

3. Meet the criteria of a Reward School as articulated in 2.C.i, Category B; and
4. Enroll students without a selective admissions process.

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.

In addition to identifying Reward schools as specified above in Section 2.C.i., this waiver application calls upon the NJDOE to categorize at least 5 percent of the Title I schools across the State as Priority Schools. Priority Schools are schools that demonstrate very low levels of success, either in their school-wide student proficiency rates or in their overall graduation rates. This category of schools will require sustained, systemic interventions, and supports as described below.

The key to Table 2 below describes three sub-categories of Priority Schools. The first sub-category includes Title I schools across the State with the lowest absolute levels of proficiency as measured on the State assessments (Table 2: Category C). In other words, when ranked by the percent of the students who passed the test school-wide, these schools' percentage of students passing the test was among the lowest across the state. In creating this category, however, the NJDOE also took into account whether, despite the low levels of school-wide student achievement, the school was demonstrating progress. Thus, schools that would have otherwise been categorized as Priority Schools were removed if they were demonstrating high growth, as measured by the SGP methodology, described above in 2.C.i. Because the calculation of SGP is not possible at the high school level, a high school was removed from this category if its average yearly increase in their proficiency rate was greater than 5 percentage points as measured on New Jersey's High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA).

A second sub-category of Priority Schools is high schools among the lowest performing schools in the State (as described in the preceding paragraph) that *also* have a low, school-wide graduation rate (Table 2: Category D). The waiver application specifies that all such high schools with a graduation rate below 60 percent be included in this category. The graduation rate is calculated based on New Jersey's four-year adjusted cohort model required by 34 C.F.R. §200.19. After examining New Jersey's graduation rate across all Title I High Schools in the state, the Department determined that a graduation rate of 60 percent was too low a threshold. Adhering to the 60 percent graduation rate threshold would have under-identified struggling high schools with persistently high dropout rates and low retention rates. Thus, based on an analysis of the data, the NJDOE has included any high school with a graduation rate below 75 percent in this sub-category.

A third sub-category of Priority Schools includes those previously identified as a Tier 1 or Tier 2 school under the federal School Improvement Grant program (Table 2: Category E).

Taken together, the total number of schools in Priority status must be equal to at least 5 percent of Title I schools statewide. As there are 1,444 such Title I schools statewide, the NJDOE has identified **72** Title I schools (and 2 non-Title I schools) as Priority utilizing the following methodology:

Step 1: The NJDOE began by classifying the 19 schools previously identified as Tier 1 and Tier 2 SIG schools as Priority Schools (Table 2: Category E).

Step 2: The NJDOE removed from further consideration any school with a median SGP of 65 or higher, or any high school with average *yearly* increases in proficiency rates greater than 5 percentage points on New Jersey's High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA).

Step 3: Next, the NJDOE rank-ordered all remaining Title I schools by their school-wide proficiency rates on the appropriate State assessments and selected the lowest-performing 53 schools as Priority schools. This group of schools formed the basis for the second and third sub-categories of Priority Schools (Table 2: Categories C and D).

Step 4: From this set of 53 schools, the NJDOE classified high schools with graduation rates below 75 percent as Category D schools, and all remaining schools as Category C schools.

Step 5: In order to create a unified system of accountability, recognitions, and interventions, the NJDOE added any non-Title I school ranking below the highest ranked Title I school that meets the above criteria to their appropriate Priority School category.

The Priority School list in Table 2 is based on the past three years (2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011) of State assessments data, graduation rates, median SGPs based on the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 assessments, and, for high schools, increases in proficiency rates over time. As New Jersey has heretofore relied on the National Center of Education Statistics' "leaver" graduation rate, our metric relies only on the 2011 gradation cohort. Similarly, SGPs based on the most recent test administrations (2009-2010 and 2010-2011) are currently being computed and not yet available.

New Jersey aims to avoid one-year aberrations from unduly influencing our results, and therefore plan to incorporate additional years of this data as it becomes available. An additional year of cohort graduation rate data, for instance, will allow the State to track improvements in college-readiness over time, while additional years of SGP data will allow us to determine which schools are consistently most effective in advancing student learning. SGPs based on the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 test administrations are expected to be available no later than December 2011, at which point they will be incorporated into an updated list of Priority schools.

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.

Introduction

A staff of qualified school turn-around experts located in seven RACs throughout the State will identify and ensure effective implementation of a system of intense interventions targeted to address the eight turnaround principles. The identified needs, specific intervention plans and progress monitoring goals will be included in individualized school improvement plans developed for each Priority school and approved by the school's LEA. The RAC staff will be fully supported by NJDOE senior staff. Resources developed by the NJDOE and used in Priority school interventions will include: model CCSS- and UDL-aligned curriculum and assessments, professional development supporting improved instruction, data systems for improving teaching and learning, guidelines for identifying quality enhanced and extended learning opportunities, as well as innovative strategies to support SWDs, ELLs and low-achieving students.

The NJDOE senior staff will prioritize the resource needs of the RACs and continually improve the NJDOE resources based on RAC feedback from school-level implementation. This process will efficiently leverage the NJDOE staff to develop, adopt or identify resources that can be used across all RACs, while requiring RACs, located closer to schools, to help implement interventions and provide feedback on implementation issues to the NJDOE. This dynamic system is supported by a strong communication system and accountability for all parties to improve student achievement in these lowest performing schools. RACs will also have the freedom and flexibility to look outside of the NJDOE to adopt resources, materials or programs they believe will best meet the needs of the students in the specific Priority schools under their direction. These RACs will be staffed with qualified school-turnaround experts by spring 2012. Training on QSR's, CCSS, UDL and any other required training in their specific area of expertise will be completed during the spring and summer of 2012. The seven fully staffed RACs will be prepared to start work in the identified Priority schools at the start of the 2012/2013 school year. The full set of interventions to be implemented in Priority schools address all of the eight turnaround principles including: school climate and culture, strong principal leadership, effective instruction, curriculum, assessments and interventions, use of time, use of data, effective staffing practices, and family and community engagement. In order to develop specific intervention strategies aligned with the eight turnaround principles RACs will conduct QSRs focused on the eight turnaround principles as well as student data disaggregated by sub-groups (e.g. SWDs and ELs).

If the Priority school is in a Title I district, the district will have to incorporate the school's individualized improvement plan in its annual Local Educational Agency Plan and sign assurances that the district will faithfully implement its LEAP. If the district refuses to do so, the NJDOE will withhold the district's Title I monies until the district comes into compliance. If the Priority School is in a non-Title I district, then the NJDOE will compel implementation of the school's individualized improvement plan by using the statutory and regulatory powers discussed, in part, in section 2.A.i.

Turnaround Interventions[2]

See Appendix 7 for a chart of Turnaround Interventions

In order to ensure the effective implementation of strategies addressing all eight turnaround principals, the RACs will assign one team member to work closely with the school principal in creating a first year plan that includes the concurrent implementation of all eight interventions. In addition the school principal and RAC staff will work to develop a communication plan that helps school staff and parents understand how the eight interventions are related and required in order to increase and sustain improved student achievement. This approach will not only allow staff and parents to better understand the plan but will drive increased staff and family support for the plan.

In order to develop improvement plans for implementing the appropriate level of intervention required for a given school RACs have the freedom to determine the intervention strategies they will use from a list of possibilities (bullets below); at the same time each RAC is held accountable to monitor the effectiveness of their work using a common set of expectations.

Although all interventions will be concurrently implemented in Priority schools, the interventions themselves are listed separately along with a set of strategies as well as expected outcomes in order to clearly outline how each intervention will be implemented and regularly measured for effectiveness:

School Climate & Culture

RACs will ensure the effective implementation of intervention strategies (listed below) in order to support the development of a safe and healthy learning environment capable of meeting the social, emotional and health needs of students:

- Embed a climate and culture specialist in the school funded with school-level Title I funds to work with the leadership, staff and families to develop or adopt a plan for creating a climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations;
- Require professional development for all staff and leadership to implement a comprehensive plan for creating a climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations; and
- Require professional development to build the capacity of the leadership team to collect and analyze appropriate data and take appropriate actions for continually improving the climate and culture of the school.

The effectiveness of these interventions will be monitored in part using attendance and discipline disaggregated data as well as climate survey responses from students, parents and staff. Effectiveness will ultimately be measured by improved student achievement on school and State level assessments.

School Leadership

In order to be sure the school leader is able to lead the turnaround effort RACs, in coordination with

[2] All interventions will be implemented consistent with State statutes and regulations, as well as any district collective bargaining agreement.

LEAs, will ensure the effective implementation of intervention strategies listed below:

- Remove and reassign the school principal and approve any replacement;
- Require professional development for the school leader focused on instructional leadership including the collection of data and feedback mechanisms for continually improving instruction; and
- Provide flexibility in the areas of scheduling, budget, staffing and curriculum.

The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instructional leadership behaviors of the principal including the collection and analysis of school and classroom level achievement and instructional data as well as the development and implementation of a plan for improvement using the data. Effectiveness will ultimately be measured by improved student achievement on state-level assessments.

Curriculum, Assessment & Intervention System

The RACs will ensure effective implementation of the intervention strategies listed below in order to prepare all students, including SWDs, ELLs and low performing students, to be college- and career-ready:

- Implement the NJDOE CCSS- and UDL- (precise learning goals, non-biased assessment items, clear & intuitive instructions, maximum readability and legibility) aligned model curriculum and unit assessments; and
- Implement research-based interventions for all students two or more grade levels behind in reading or mathematics.

The effectiveness of this intervention will be measured by improved instructional data (walkthroughs, formal/informal observations), curriculum implementation data (walkthroughs, formal/informal observations), classroom level assessment data and intervention implementation and achievement data as well as improved student achievement measured by state-level assessments.

Effective Instruction

The RACs will ensure effective implementation of the intervention strategies listed below in order to continually improve the quality of instruction:

- Require mutual consent for up to 100 percent of staff;
- Require professional development for all teachers focused on effective instruction;
- Prohibit Tier 1 (ineffective) or Tier 2 (partially effective) teachers from being assigned to the school following the full implementation of the new teacher evaluation system (2013-2014); and
- Require professional development for the principal focused on the skills necessary for improving instruction.

The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instructional data (walkthroughs, formal/informal evaluations), an increase in the number of teachers identified as Tier 3 (effective) or Tier 4 (highly effective) on the new teacher evaluation system (2013-2014), and improved student

achievement as measured by state-level assessments.

Effective Use of Time

The RACs will identify one or more of the following strategies in any Priority School that fails to effectively utilize time for improving instruction and achievement for all students (e. g. SWDs, ELLs):

- Require a schedule change to increase instructional time for students who need more time to meet the rigorous goals of the CCSS;
- Require additional time for professional development focused on all teachers learning strategies for effectively working with SWDs or ELLs;
- Require additional time for professional development focus on understanding the rigorous requirements of CCSS for all teachers including special education teachers and teachers supporting ELLs;
- Require additional time for professional development focused on teachers developing and using common assessment data to inform and differentiate instruction;
- Require professional development for all teachers on effective use of instructional time including effective transitions; and
- Require professional development for school leaders on effective scheduling to support learning for students and teachers.

While the form of this intervention may include extended learning time during the school day, it may also include extended learning opportunities in the form of either before school or afterschool programs consistent with CCSS. The NJDOE may partner with organizations, either for-profit or not-for-profit, and school-based entities to identify best practices and strategies for effective extended learning opportunities. Where the RACs, in consultation with the leaders, teachers, and parents of the Priority School, determine that implementation of extended learning opportunities are necessary to help in improving student achievement, they will work with the school to identify appropriate programs. To the extent the RACs identify before school or afterschool tutoring or related supports as appropriate, the school may provide these services themselves or contract with an appropriate provider organization (either for-profit or not-for-profit) or school-based entity.

The effectiveness of this intervention will be measured by improved instruction for all students (walkthrough data, formal/informal observations), classroom level assessment data for all students, and student achievement as measured by state-level assessments.

Effective Use of Data

The RACs will ensure effective implementation of the strategies listed below in order to increase the effective use of data to improve instruction:

- Embed a full time data specialist in the school focused on implementing a system for teachers to develop and use common assessment data for improving and differentiating instruction funded by school-level Title I funds;

- Require professional development for all teachers in formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction; and
- Require professional development to build the capacity of the principal to collect and analyze data for improving instruction and the skills necessary to develop a schedule and system for increasing teacher ownership of data analysis for improving instruction (PLC).

The effectiveness of this intervention will be measured by an increase in the numbers of teachers using data to inform and differentiate instruction as well as improved student achievement as measured by state-level assessments.

Effective Staffing Practices

The RACs will ensure effective implementation of the strategies listed below in order to increase the recruitment, retention and development of effective teachers:

- Require professional development to certify that all administrators in the school can effectively evaluate instruction and give quality feedback to teachers;
- Require professional development for the principal and leadership team on effective recruiting and retention practices; and
- Require outside master educators to conduct observations as part of a comprehensive evaluation process that supports reliable observations.

The effectiveness of these interventions are measured by improved instruction (walkthrough data, formal/informal observations) and an increased number of teachers identified as Tier 3 or 4 on the new teacher evaluation system (2013-2014) as well as improved student achievement as measured by state-level assessments.

Effective Family and Community Engagement

The RACs will ensure effective implementation of the strategies listed below in order to increase the engagement of families and the community.

- Revise the job description of the family and community engagement staff in order to focus engagement on academics;
- Require professional development for family and community engagement staff designed to increase their skill level in developing academically focused engagement opportunities for families and the community;
- Require professional development for all staff on the effective support of SWDs and ELs and their families; and
- Require professional development for all staff on the development and implementation of effective academically focused family and community engagement.

The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by an increase in the number of family and community engagement opportunities, including academically focused activities, as well as improvement

on key indicators on the school climate survey. In addition, effectiveness will be measured by student achievement state-level assessments.

Focus schools that are identified as not meeting the needs of SWDs will be required to implement:

- Curriculum aligned to UDL;
- Collaborative teaching model;
- Improved use of data for differentiating instruction;
- Professional development for special education teachers to better understand the rigor of the CCSS; and
- Professional development for all teachers to better meet the needs of SWDs.

The specific interventions will be determined by the RAC, school leaders, and the LEA. Effectiveness measures will be determined based on the interventions and will be required to include student achievement measures.

Focus Schools identified as not meeting the needs of ELLs will be required to implement:

- Research-based strategies for teaching academic English;
- Strategies to improve the use of native language support;
- Strategies to scaffold learning to meet the rigorous requirements of CCSS;
- Professional development for all teachers to learn strategies for meeting the content learning needs of ELLs; and
- Professional development for teachers supporting ELLs to better understand the rigorous requirements of the CCSS.

The specific interventions will be determined by the RAC, school leaders and the LEA. Effectiveness measures will be determined based on the interventions and will be required to include student achievement measures..

For all schools, the impact of the interventions will be regularly monitored by the RAC staff in order to ensure that all schools are implementing interventions effectively and making progress towards increasing student achievement. The RACs will be in constant communication with the NJDOE leadership in the central office in order to ensure that the central office is designing and providing the resources and guidance most effective to drive school improvement.

Additional Legislative Strategies

Though we believe strongly that the interventions described above will lead to substantial improvements in our Priority and Focus schools, the NJDOE believes that a number of changes to State law will both strengthen our proposed interventions and will significantly facilitate our work with struggling schools. Accordingly, the Christie administration and the NJDOE are strongly supporting four pieces of legislation presently before the Legislature that will enable the NJDOE to provide greater support to districts, schools, and, most importantly, students.

The first is comprehensive educator effectiveness legislation. The bill would create a statewide educator

evaluation system (consistent with the provisions outlined in this waiver invitation), tie tenure to effectiveness, end forced placements and Last-In-First-Out (LIFO), and improve compensation systems. These changes to current law will drastically improve the State's human capital strategies, helping districts and schools recruit and retain highly effective educators. (the NJDOE already has the authority under current law and regulation to develop the statewide educator evaluation system described in Principle 3.)

Three of the bills would increase the educational options available to students in low-performing schools and districts. A bill to improve the State's charter school law would expand the number of charter authorizers, permit charter school conversions, and increase charter autonomy and accountability. The Opportunity Scholarship Act would provide tax credits to corporations that contribute to scholarship programs for low-income students. And the Urban Hope Act, which was signed into law by Governor Christie on January 12, 2012, will encourage the development of new, high-performing schools in the State's five lowest performing districts. In combination, these bills would do a great deal to provide disadvantaged families with an immediate exit strategy while the State and districts work to improve performance in Priority schools.

In advance of the passage of the above-enumerated bills, and alongside the interventions described in this waiver application, the State will use its current set of authorities to vigorously recruit high-performing turnaround organizations to partner with struggling schools and charter operators to start new schools in districts with Priority Schools. During the state's annual charter application review process, the NJDOE will give preference to proposals that seek to locate in these districts and serve students in the grade spans found in the district's Priority Schools.

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.

Timeline for Interventions

New Jersey's newly created RACs will be fully staffed by fall 2012 in order to deliver the interventions within Priority and Focus schools as schools open in September 2012. Therefore, the work to deliver support and ensure that schools implement interventions within Priority and Focus schools will begin before the start of the 2012 – 2013 academic year.

Priority Schools

The Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement (CAPA) review process was designed by the NJDOE to assess the need areas of schools in Year 3 of improvement status under NCLB. A work group reviewed the data collected and determined that this data could be used to inform the work of the RACs rather than repeating the data collection process. In addition the work group is completing a process to align the data collection of CAPA to the eight intervention principles used by RACs in order to both present the data in a workable structure for the RACs and to inform the development of the

Quality School Review process that will be used moving forward.

By the end of the 2011-2012 school year all schools currently listed as Priority Schools will have a completed a CAPA review within the last 24 months, which will allow the RACs to begin developing school improvement plans and implementing interventions at the start of the 2012-2013 school year.

All Priority Schools will receive the targeted interventions as determined by the RACs and agreed to by the LEA for a three-year period, providing schools the time needed to implement required changes and demonstrate improvement in student achievement. Priority Schools that fail to implement the required interventions or fail to demonstrate required improvement in student academic achievement may become subject to state-ordered closure or other action.

Focus Schools

In order to start quality interventions in all Focus Schools at the start of the 2012-2013 school year RACs will require identified schools to present the following reports and data sets:

- Report progress on interventions currently in place to improve sub-group performance;
- Present sub-group attendance, discipline and all school-level academic data;
- Present sub-group curricular materials;
- Present randomly selected student schedules); and
- Present the work done, if any, to increase family involvement targeted to meet the identified sub-group needs;

The presentation of this information can take place during the month of August allowing the RACs to plan interventions designed to address the needs of the identified sub-group(s) that start at the beginning of the school year and take into account the plans already in place in each focus school.

RACs will complete the full QSR process and adjust interventions as needed during the 2012-2013 school year. All interventions within each school turnaround principle area will continue for one full year, or until sustained improvement has been observed by the regional achievement teams.

For all schools, the impact of the interventions will also be regularly monitored by the RACs in order to ensure that all schools are making progress towards increasing student achievement. The RAC staff will be in constant communication with the NJDOE leadership in the central office in order to ensure that the central office is designing and providing the resources and guidance most effective in driving school improvement.

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.

In addition to monitoring whether a school continues to meet the definition of the Priority classification (within the bottom 5% of all Title I schools in overall student achievement outcomes or maintaining a

low graduation rate), the NJDOE will also monitor improvements in student learning and the extent to which required interventions are being faithfully implemented .

A school can become eligible for exiting Priority status if it meets all three of these requirements:

1) no longer meets the definition of a Priority school for two consecutive years;
2) has, as determined by its RAC, successfully implemented all interventions required through its QSR;
3) reduced the count of students not demonstrating proficiency on statewide assessments by 25% over a three-year period or, if a high school, reduced the count of students not graduating by 25% over a three-year period; and/or demonstrated high growth for two consecutive years, as measured by an SGP score of 65 or higher (as defined in 2.C.i).

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."

In addition to identifying schools as Reward, as outlined above in 2.C.i., and Priority, as outlined above in 2.D.i., the waiver application requires the NJDOE to identify at least 10 percent of its Title I schools, 144 schools, as Focus schools. As the name implies, the category of Focus schools includes schools with 'focused' deficiencies. With Focus schools, the NJDOE sees the opportunity to develop interventions and supports that may be targeted to a subset of a school's population to address its low achievement or a large within-school achievement gap.

As specified in the key to Table 2, the waiver application identifies three sub-categories within Focus Schools. The first requires the NJDOE to identify schools that have the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroups and the lowest-achieving subgroups. Because these differences are measured in proficiency rate gaps, the within-school gap is a relative measure. In order to determine which schools have the largest within-school gaps, these gaps are determined for all schools and then ranked against each other across the state. The schools with the largest such gaps are identified for inclusion (Table 2: Category F).

A second sub-category requires the identification of schools that simply have subgroups whose performance, as compared to the rest of the state, is particularly low (Table 2: Category G). This subcategory consists of schools whose lowest-performing subgroups are demonstrating low levels of proficiency on statewide assessments when ranked against the rest of the State.

When determining the membership of Categories F and G described above, the NJDOE will combine the performance of a school's two lowest-performing subgroups and then rank the schools based on the combined performance of those two subgroups. For example, if the proficiency rate of a school's two lowest subgroups is 15 percent and 30 percent, respectively, the NJDOE will average these rates together (weighted by their respective shares of tested enrollment) to form a weighted average of proficiency Category F schools will be those that have the lowest performance using this combined proficiency rate. Category G schools will be those that have the largest within-school gap between the proficiency of the highest-performing subgroup and this combined proficiency rate.

When including subgroups in this analysis, the NJDOE has included only subgroups with more than 30 students, that represent at least 5 percent of its school's tested student enrollment, and whose student growth percentile (described more fully in 2.C.i.) is below 65 (failing to reach the NJDOE's marker for "high growth"); this was done to ensure that the 'focused' deficiencies in a particular building are pervasive enough to warrant the investment of the NJDOE interventions and supports.

The third sub-category of schools within Focus requires the identification of a high school whose graduation rate is less than 60 percent (Table 2: Category H). As detailed above in the identification of

Priority Schools, in section 2.D.i., the NJDOE chose to raise this graduation threshold to 75 percent to prevent the under-identification of high schools with significant dropout or retention rates.

The universe of schools from which Focus Schools are selected is all Title I schools that are not already identified as Priority Schools. As mentioned above, the waiver requires the identification of 10 percent of Title I schools as Focus, 144 schools. The NJDOE's methodology, described below, identifies 19 schools in Category H, 35 Title I schools in Category F, and 90 Title I schools in Category G. Our inclusion of non-Title I schools (described below) added 27 schools to Category F, 1 to Category G and 7 schools to Category H. To create the particular subcategories, the NJDOE utilized the following methodology:

Step 1: The NJDOE began by identifying all Title I-eligible and Title I-participating high schools that are not previously identified as a Priority School with a graduation rate less than 75 percent (Table 2: Category H). This resulted in the identification of 19 high schools across the state.

Step 2: Next, the NJDOE computed the within-school gap, as measured by the difference in percentage points of proficiency, between the highest-performing subgroup and the average proficiency of the two lowest-performing subgroups in each Title I school. As mentioned above, to be included in the analysis, a subgroup must have at least 30 students, represent at least 5 percent of the total student population, and have an SGP score below 65 (if an elementary or middle school). The Department then ranked the schools according to their gaps and selected the 35 schools with the largest gaps across the State – representing about 30 percent of the remaining schools in the Focus category after the identification of the 19 high schools in Step 1 above. (Table 2: Category F).

Step 3: The NJDOE then ranked the remaining Title I schools that are not already classified as Focus Schools according to the combined and weighted proficiency rates of their two lowest-performing subgroups. Again, to be included each subgroup must have at least 30 students, represent at least 5 percent of the total student population, and have an SGP score below 65 (if an elementary or middle school). From this ranking, the Department selected the 90 schools with the lowest combined proficiency rates across the State (Table 2: Category G). This netted to a total of 144 schools within the Focus School category.

Step 4: In order to create a unified system of accountability, recognitions, and interventions, the Department added any non-Title I school ranking below the highest ranked Title I school that meets the above criteria to their appropriate Focus School category.

The Focus School list in Table 2 is based on the past three years (2008-2009, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011) of State assessments data, graduation rates, median student growth percentiles (SGPs), based on the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 assessments, and, for high schools, increases in proficiency rates over time.

New Jersey aims to avoid one-year aberrations from unduly influencing our results, and the Department will incorporate additional years of this data as it becomes available. An additional year of

cohort graduation rate data, for instance, will allow the NJDOE to track improvements in college readiness over time, while additional years of SGP data will allow the Department to determine which schools are consistently most effective in advancing student learning. SGPs based on the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 test administrations are expected to be available no later than December 2011, at which point they will be incorporated into an updated list of Focus Schools.

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.

In order to start quality interventions in all Focus Schools at the start of the 2012-2013 school year RACs will require identified schools to present the following reports and data sets:

- Report progress on interventions currently in place to improve sub-group performance;
- Present sub-group attendance, discipline and all school-level academic data;
- Present sub-group curricular materials;
- Present randomly selected student schedules); and
- Present the work done, if any, to increase family involvement targeted to meet the identified sub-group needs.

The presentation of this information can take place prior to the month of August allowing the RACs to plan interventions designed to address the needs of the identified sub-group(s). These interventions will start at the beginning of the 2012-13 school year and take into account the plans already in place in each focus school.

RACs will complete the full QSR process on each Focus school and adjust interventions as needed during the 2012-2013 school year.

Focus schools that are identified as not meeting the needs of SWDs will be required to implement:

- Curriculum aligned to UDL;
- Collaborative teaching model;
- Improved use of data for differentiating instruction;
- Professional development for special education teachers to better understand the rigor of the CCSS; and
- Professional development for all teachers to better meet the needs of SWDs.

The specific interventions will be determined by the RAC, school leaders, and the LEA. Effectiveness measures will be determined based on the interventions and will be required to include student

achievement measures.

Focus Schools identified as not meeting the needs of English Learners will be required to implement:

- Research-based strategies for teaching academic English;
- Strategies to improve the use of native language support;
- Strategies to scaffold learning to meet the rigorous requirements of CCSS;
- Professional development for all teachers to learn strategies for meeting the content learning needs of ELLs; and
- Professional development for teachers supporting ELLs to better understand the rigorous requirements of the CCSS.

The specific interventions will be determined by the RAC, school leaders and the LEA. Effectiveness measures will be determined based on the interventions and will be required to include student achievement measures..

For all schools, the impact of the interventions will be regularly monitored by the RAC staff in order to ensure that all schools are implementing interventions effectively and making progress towards increasing student achievement. The RACs will be in constant communication with the NJDOE leadership in the central office in order to ensure that the central office is designing and providing the resources and guidance most effective to drive school improvement.

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.

In addition to measuring the degree to which a school meets the quantitative definition of the Focus classification (a school that continues to demonstrate the largest within-school achievement gap based on proficiency outcomes and a lack of growth), the NJDOE will also monitor the extent to which a school is accomplishing the implementation of the interventions aligned to the turnaround principles.

A school can become eligible for exiting Focus status if it:

1) no longer meets the definition of a Focus school for two consecutive years;
2) has, as determined by its RAC, successfully implemented all interventions required through its QSR;
3) if identified as Category F or G, its lowest performing subgroups have met their annual measurable objectives for three years; and/or has demonstrated high growth for two consecutive years as measured by SGP of 65 or higher (as defined in 2.C.i). If identified as Category H reduced the count of students not graduating by 25% over a three year period.

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.

To ensure all schools are engaged in continuous improvement, the NJDOE will develop a school performance report for all schools, as described in 2.A.i. In a clear and accessible manner, the NJDOE will report on the performance of each school by focusing on the most critical measures of student achievement including subgroup measures and key college- and career-readiness metrics (e.g. AP, SAT, scores). (See Appendix 5 for a copy of the prototype Performance Report)

As demonstrated in the table below, a school's meeting each performance target is an integral part of the performance report's summary metric of Academic Achievement. Each subgroup's performance at each school will be measured and identified as meeting or not meeting its specific performance targets.

Performance Targets - Language Arts Literacy**

This table presents the annual proficiency targets, as measured by the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), established for this school under New Jersey's Elementary and Secondary Act Waiver.

Subgroup	*2010-2011 Pass Rate*	*2010-2011 Target*	*Met Target*
Schoolwide	64.6%	65.0%	**YES**
White	78.0%	73.0%	**YES**
Black	81.0%	76.0%	**YES**
Hispanic	65.0%	74.2%	**NO**
American Indian	72.0%	78.0%	**NO**
Asian	93.0%	92.0%	**YES**
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	**N/A**
Two or More Races	58.0%	74.0%	**NO**
With Disabilities	60.0%	68.0%	**NO**
Limited English Proficiency	70.0%	67.0%	**YES**
Economically Disadvantaged	69.0%	73.4%	**NO**

These performance reports will identify schools that are not making progress or not meeting other targets, such as participation rates in SAT test-taking. They will also identify highly successful schools, thereby allowing the NJDOE to recognize and celebrate districts and schools with high achievement and/or high

growth. This recognition will serve as an incentive for schools and districts to continue innovating and improving, and it will enable the NJDOE to learn from these schools and districts and share their best practices widely.

The performance report will identify key areas of need for all New Jersey schools. That is, while some schools will not fit into the Priority or Focus categories, they may nevertheless have weaknesses in need of attention. For non-Priority and non-Focus Schools:

- Each LEA will be required to develop, for each school missing performance targets, a local school board-approved school improvement plan that addresses the school- and/or subgroup-missed performance targets, as described above.
- These plans will be required to describe the alignment of Title I funds to address the deficiencies in performance identified for that school.

Guidelines for such plans will be provided by the NJDOE at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. This work will be a joint product of the Divisions of Academics and Performance and the Department's RACs.

Because the NJDOE is committed to ensuring that achievement gaps are addressed in all schools—not just in Priority and Focus Schools—the Department will identify another subset of schools for further attention. The NJDOE will follow the process below to identify the most at-risk non-categorized schools:

Step one:
The NJDOE will use the school Performance Report Card data to identify schools with at least one subgroup failing to meet academic achievement performance targets for two years.

Step two:
The NJDOE will then rank-order subgroups in these schools by their absolute academic achievement, i.e., the percentage of students who are demonstrating proficiency.

Step three:
The NJDOE will then select from this list no fewer than the bottom 5% of Title I schools.

Multiple factors will be taken into consideration when determining whether to expand this additional subset beyond the lowest 5% of Title I schools. The factors will include though may not be limited to:

1) whether identified schools are missing AMOs in multiple subgroups;
2) whether identified schools are within LEAs with a substantial number of Priority and/or Focus schools (indicating the LEAs' limited capacity to address the needs of non-Priority and non-Focus Schools); and
3) the capacity of the RACs to meaningfully support non-Priority, non-Focus Schools.

Beginning at the end of Year One (2012-13 school year), the NJDOE will utilize this analytical method to identify at-risk non-categorized schools and plan for future supports and interventions. At the end of Year Two (2013-14), schools identified for two years using this method will receive additional supports. The Director in each RAC will:

- assess and approve the LEA's School Improvement Plan and case for Title I alignment;
- offer technical assistance targeted to the struggling sub-group(s); and
- monitor school-level progress for future academic cycles and increase technical assistance when needed.

NJDOE is committed to continuously improving both the process for identifying these additional schools and the interventions and supports designed to decrease their achievement gaps. After the first identification and intervention cycle of these at-risk but non-categorized schools, the NJDOE will assess whether the above identification rules captured a sufficient number of at-risk schools (seeking to eliminate false negatives) and whether all identified schools actually required interventions (seeking to eliminate false positives). The NJDOE will also assess whether its interventions were successful and whether extending the RACs to cover these additional schools substantially diminished the RACs' ability to successfully address the needs of Priority and Focus Schools. The results of these analyses will inform both the identification rules and interventions for at-risk, non-categorized schools moving forward.

Other Title I schools will be invited and encouraged to attend regional trainings and professional development sessions designed around the NJDOE interventions and school turnaround principles, and the State's model curriculum will be made available to all schools and districts. In these ways, other Title I schools will have access to many of the same supports being provided to Priority and Focus Schools. Further, many additional resources will be placed on the NJDOE website. These web resources include, but are not limited to, webinars, online professional development courses, toolkits and guidance. All schools will benefit from these resources.

Finally, RACs will also pay particular attention to schools that are close to reaching Priority status. Though RACs will not immediately intervene in such schools, regional teams will monitor progress and offer assistance in order to prevent the school from falling into the Priority category.

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. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their Priority Schools; and

iii. 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).

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

The State has several strategies for ensuring the success of interventions in Priority and Focus Schools. The state's seven new RACs will be committed solely to improving student outcomes; they will focus primarily on Priority and Focus Schools. These offices will conduct reviews of underperforming schools, diagnose the causes of schools' challenges, and provide the support and interventions required for meaningful and lasting improvement. The teams will include specialists in reading, math, data use, and more; they will be in schools regularly. The teams will be able to ensure that reforms are underway and that results follow. This is a departure from prior NJDOE practice, in which school supports and interventions were often delivered in an unfocused, temporary, and undifferentiated manner.

It is also a departure from the NJDOE's historic reliance on districts as conduits for state-level reforms. In years past, the State sought to improve the performance of the most persistently troubled schools by intervening at the LEA level. The State has had, and continues to have, a number of powers and strategies designed to improve district capacity. For example, the State has taken over troubled districts such as Newark, Paterson, and Jersey City. In these locations, the NJDOE has taken numerous bold steps, including removing governance authority from a local board, installing a new state-hired superintendent, and more. The NJDOE has also placed highly empowered State employees in a number of troubled districts in the form of fiscal monitors and "highly skilled professionals" with authority over a wide array of areas, including personnel and budget.

The State also uses QSAC to assess and build district capacity. Executive County Superintendents, State employees, oversee a process that identifies LEAs' areas of weakness in operations; instruction and program; governance; personnel; and fiscal management. The process reveals where districts need to focus greater attention and, in cases where results are particularly troubling and no progress is being made, can lead to severe State interventions.

The State will continue to use these tools and others to build districts' capacity to help struggling schools improve; however, these strategies have not been successful alone. The NJDOE's new approach is to focus its resources on schools, which are the true units of change. Through the RACs and other central office divisions, the NJDOE will provide greatly increased support to principals and teachers in a wide array of areas. It is the state's conviction that these robust and highly targeted interventions will drive improvement in far superior ways to NJDOE's previous approach.

Another strategy for ensuring improvements in student learning is the NJDOE's addition of a Delivery Unit to its new organizational structure (See attachment 1). This division, reporting directly to the Deputy Commissioner, is charged with ensuring that results are achieved across all of the NJDOE's initiatives. It consists of three entities. The Office of Project Management develops departmental priorities, performance metrics, and work plans and serves as the Commissioner's internal accountability mechanism. The Office of School Improvement oversees the seven RACs and works closely with the department's senior executives to ensure that all school improvement initiatives are tightly coordinated and effective. The department's County Offices execute the QSAC process and ensure that districts comply with critical State statutes and regulations.

The State has numerous levers for ensuring that LEAs improve the performance of their lowest-achieving schools. The first way to hold LEAs accountable is through a robust school performance report. Annually, each school will receive a thorough report detailing its performance along a number of measures (see 2.A. i.). These reports will be made public.

Each school will be evaluated based on its achievement on State assessments; the growth of its students as measured by the SGP; and in its College and Career Readiness as measured by a variety of school metrics. (See Appendix 5 for a copy of the Prototype Performance Report).

Each school will be compared to the State overall as well as to schools with similar student bodies. The report will provide demographic information as well as financial data, again in comparison to the State average and peer schools.

The report will provide detailed information on the performance of the school relative to the school's specific school-wide and subgroup targets for accountability purposes. Proficiency and growth will be reported over time for language arts, math and science, and by each subgroup.

This performance report will be used to identify schools that are not making progress or meeting targets. Districts will be required to have public meetings to review the data and identify the areas in which improvement is needed. Districts will be required to address performance gaps among various groups. Districts will develop proposed targets for improvement that will be reviewed annually by the RACs. Targeted technical assistance will be offered through the RACs.

For schools that have not been designated as Focus or Priority, the RACs will review performance reports to identify areas for improvement and identify the combination of services and interventions that could improve student learning. Such interventions and services may include training to improve the quality of school leadership, high-quality curriculum aligned to the Common Core, and assistance in the analysis and use of data. The RACs will devote that vast majority of their time to Priority and Focus Schools; however, by monitoring other schools, they can ensure that non-identified schools don't regress and fall into priority or focus status and that schools' otherwise hidden areas of need are addressed.

Beyond making school information public, and as described more fully in Section 2.A.i., the NJDOE has extensive authority under federal and State law to bring about major change in school and district behavior. The NJDOE can, among other things, reassign teaching staff, redirect spending to ensure funds are spent effectively and efficiently, alter curriculum and programs, charter new schools, and, where all else fails, close chronically failing schools

In total, then, the State is relying on five strategies for growing the capacity of schools, LEAs, and the State to improve student learning and close the achievement gap. The first is increased information. Through detailed, user-friendly school performance reports, the NJDOE's new Division of Performance will provide actionable information on student achievement to schools, districts, and the

public.

Second, the NJDOE has restructured its central organization to enable the State to provide improved supports to schools and LEAs. The new Division of Educator Effectiveness, through initiatives on recruiting, preparation, certification, evaluation, and more, will help grow and improve the State's human capital, that is, collection of effective educators. The new Division of Academics will provide to schools and districts an abundance of support, including model curricula, formative assessments, leadership training, and more. The new Division of Innovation will recruit, develop, incubate, and support new, high-quality education models so students assigned to the lowest-performing schools have improved options.

Third, the NJDOE is building seven RACs as described in 2.D.iii. Each will be responsible for improving student achievement, particularly in Priority Schools, in its region. State Title I funds will be repurposed to provide the aforementioned supports and interventions to Title I Priority and Focus Schools.

Fourth, the NJDOE has undertaken an exhaustive effort to remove unnecessary burdens placed on the State's educators. A Governor's task force on regulatory reform is culling thousands of pages of laws and regulations to identify provisions that inhibit educators from focusing on student learning.

Fifth, the State will use its broad authority to take over troubled districts or place specialists into them and will execute its power over the QSAC process to ensure that LEAs have the capacity to help struggling schools improve.

Combined, these efforts will enable the State, LEAs, and schools to faithfully implement meaningful interventions in struggling schools. They will also help strengthen the internal capacity of the State, LEAs, and schools to continue and develop school improvement efforts over time.

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**	**Option C**
☒ If the SEA has not already developed any 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 15).	☐ If the SEA has already developed and adopted one or more, but not all, guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide: i. a copy of any 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); iii. the SEA's plan to develop and adopt the remaining guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year; iv. a description of the	☐ 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.

	process used to involve teachers and principals in the development of the adopted guidelines and the process to continue their involvement in developing any remaining guidelines; and v. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the remaining guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 15).	

Introduction

New Jersey is in the 2nd year of a 4 year, ambitious and comprehensive plan to improve its teacher and leader evaluation system that includes four phases:

1) Educator Effectiveness Task Force (EETF) develops evaluation guidelines (2010-2011);

2) Excellent Educators for New Jersey (EE4NJ) evaluation pilot program is implemented and Commissioner regulations are adopted on key provisions of a statewide framework (2011-2012);

3) State-wide pilot expansion of evaluation system into a subset of schools in every district (2012-2013); and

4) Complete roll-out and implementation of new evaluation system, used to inform personnel decisions (2013-2014).

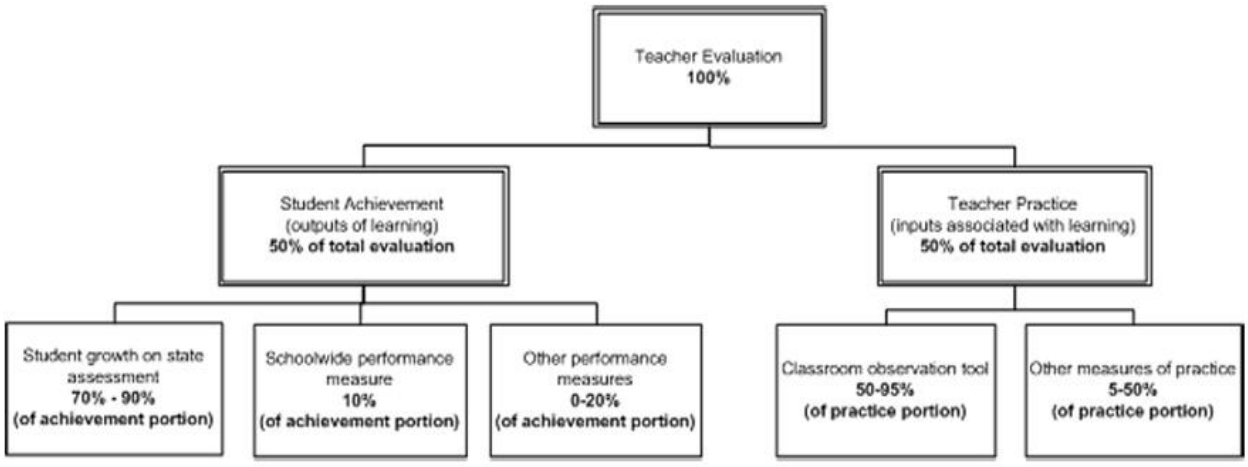
Year 1 (2010-2011): Task Force Recommendations

In October of 2010, Governor Christie launched the EETF, designed to recommend a fair and transparent system of educator evaluations that centered on student learning and achievement. The task force was comprised of nine members, including teachers, a representative from NJ's IHEs, a school board member, and district and school leaders from traditional and charter schools.

Over four months, the task force worked with experts on various elements of educator evaluation systems, researched model evaluation systems in other States and districts, and heard presentations from stakeholder groups and local districts to produce a report that included recommendations for teacher evaluations, leader evaluations, and conditions for success.

The task force recommendations included a clear framework for evaluating teachers based on equal parts teacher practice (inputs), and student learning (outputs). Evidence of student learning was defined to include progress on statewide summative assessments, but was not limited to it in recognition that the majority of teachers teach in untested grades or untested subjects. (See Appendix 8 for a copy of New Jersey's Educator Effectiveness Task Force Report).

Task Force Recommended Framework for the New Teacher Evaluation System

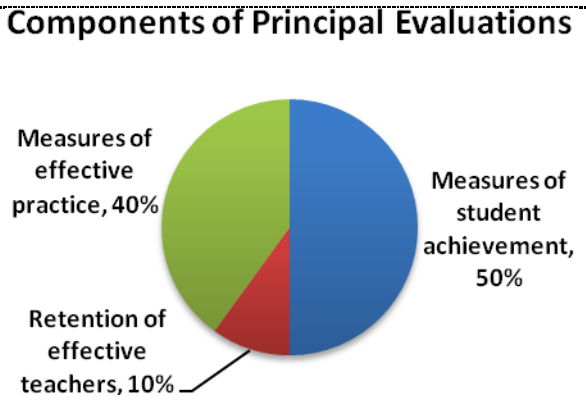


In addition to the framework above, the task force report emphasized how a good evaluation system can support teachers to become more effective, by clarifying expectations, providing actionable feedback, facilitating collaboration among teachers, and targeting professional development that is aligned with teachers' needs.

Finally, it recommended a teacher evaluation system with four summative categories: highly effective, effective, partially effective, and ineffective to differentiate levels of performance and appropriately identify teachers who are excelling and can share their techniques with others, those who need support and those who should be counseled to leave the profession.

The task force also recommended specific components and weights for a new principal evaluation system:

- Measures of effective practice (40 percent);
- Differential retention of effective teachers (hiring and retaining effective teachers and exiting poor performers (10 percent); and
- Measures of student achievement (50 percent).



Year 2 (2011-2012): Teacher Evaluation Pilot Program

Based on the recommendations offered by the task force in March of 2011, the NJDOE launched EE4NJ, an initiative to pilot a new teacher evaluation system in a wide variety of LEAs in the 2011-2012 school year.

To help pilot districts implement a strong evaluation system, the NJDOE awarded $1,160,000 in EE4NJ grants to districts selected to pilot through a competitive grant process. The funding is being used primarily to train teachers and principals on the new system, particularly on the use of high-quality observation frameworks. This was a major investment in this critical work and demonstrated the NJDOE's commitment to working with districts and schools as partners.

Pilot districts were selected so as to achieve representation across different regions of the State and varying socio-economic demographics. Ten districts were selected as pilots, along with Newark through its own funding source.

In addition, the NJDOE required that all SIG schools (19) participate in the pilot program during the 2011-2012 school year. Pilot districts, including the SIG schools, must implement the NJDOE requirements for a robust teacher evaluation system during the 2011-2012 school year. In accordance with the task force recommendations, these requirements include the following:

- Thorough training of evaluators and teachers in effective teacher practices based on professional standards;
- Annual teacher evaluations that include multiple observations and result in clear, actionable feedback for improvement;
- Multiple measures of teacher practice and student performance, proven to be valid and reliable, with student academic progress or growth as a key measure;
- A summative rating that combines the scores of all the measures of teaching practice and student achievement;
- Four summative rating categories that clearly differentiate levels of performance; and

- A link from the evaluation to providing professional development opportunities that meet the needs of educators at all levels of practice.

By the end of the 2011-2012 school year, the NJDOE will have adopted regulations that will provide guidance to districts on a framework for principal and teacher evaluations. These guidelines will align with those required by this application.

While the year-long pilot is crucial to understanding how to best implement a statewide evaluation system in the coming years, the NJDOE has already established some core principles for the measures and processes used to evaluate educators, based on the recommendations of the task force and learning from leading States, districts, and the NJ pilots.

The NJDOE will seek to have all districts pilot the evaluation system in a subset of their schools in 2012-13 and then fully adopt the new evaluation system in all their schools in 2013-14. Data systems linking student performance and class rosters will be completed and available to all schools in September 2012.

Coordinating Timeline with Proposed Legislation and Collective Bargaining Agreements

The 4-year timeline described above is designed to align with proposed enactment of legislation addressing the State's tenure laws and to provide adequate time for collective bargaining agreements to reflect new Department regulations.

Educator evaluations are currently required in existing NJ statute and supported by regulations. Specific measures and many of the processes are delineated in existing statute and regulations and are not subject to collective bargaining agreements (CBAs). CBAs may, however, specify the procedures and due process attendant to the evaluations. Proposed evaluation regulations will mandate that Districts implement new robust evaluation systems in 2012-13 and 2013-14 as outlined in the year-by-year timeline above; further, these proposed regulations will require that all collective bargaining agreements for teachers and principals entered into after the regulations are in effect be consistent with its provisions.

However, the regulations will not override conflicting provisions of any collective bargaining agreement in effect at the time of passage. Rather, the regulations will apply when the agreement expires and a successor agreement is entered into. Approximately 95% of all CBAs are three years or less in length, thereby providing substantial time for the majority of districts to adopt the new regulations prior to the 2013-14 school year.

PROPOSED EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Measures of Teacher Practice

Measures of teacher practice must account for at least 50 percent of a teacher's evaluation. The measures of teacher practice should be based on clear performance standards that define effective teaching. The NJDOE will adopt updated teaching standards in June 2012 (likely based on the new 2011 InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards) that will be used as the foundation of the teacher practice evaluation framework.

Districts must use a high-quality, State-approved teacher practice evaluation framework that includes observation as a major component and at least one additional State-approved tool to assess teacher practice (see below).

Teaching Practice

Any teacher practice evaluation framework adopted by an LEA must be shown to meet, at minimum, the following criteria:

1. Is research-based and shown to be valid and reliable, or, after one year of implementation, must provide evidence of such;
2. Aligns to and addresses the New Jersey Teaching Standards that identify and describe effective teaching practice;
3. Includes classroom observation as a major component;
4. Requires collection of evidence-based data;
5. Incorporate a teacher's self-reflection on practice;
6. Includes rubrics for assessing teacher practice that have a minimum of 4 levels of performance ratings; and
7. Provides a differentiated evaluation process or criteria for novice and veteran teachers.

Training on the Teacher Practice Evaluation Framework

All teachers and those conducting evaluations must receive comprehensive training on the teacher practice evaluation framework before any evaluations/observations are conducted. Any coaches, mentors, or master teachers responsible for formative or informal observations of teachers must also be appropriately trained.

The training must incorporate:

1. The teaching practice evaluation domains/components of effective teacher practice that tie to the New Jersey teaching standards;
2. The use of effective evaluation strategies and requirements;
3. Sufficient practice for fidelity of implementation;
4. Proof of mastery or certification that indicates the evaluator has met the training requirements; and
5. Time-management to ensure evaluators schedule the necessary instructional time to complete all evaluations in the most efficient manner.

In addition, a process must be in place to monitor and remediate evaluator accuracy, inter-rater reliability, and score inflation.

Teacher Practice Evaluation Procedures

The teacher practice evaluation procedures were developed to provide clear, timely and useful feedback for teachers to inform effective practice. Contingent upon information gleaned from the 2011-12 pilot, LEAs will review every teacher using the following procedures:

1. For non-tenured teachers, conduct a minimum of three formal observations with post-conference input and feedback, for a designated amount of time, to be determined by the NJDOE; at least two of these observations must be unannounced;
2. For tenured teachers, conduct a minimum of two formal observations with post-conference input and feedback, for a designated amount of time; At least one, and preferably both, of these observations must be unannounced;
3. At minimum, one formal teacher evaluation be conducted by an evaluator who does not work in the teacher's school; and
4. Prepare one summative evaluation that results in a mutually-developed teacher professional development plan and aims to inform career growth and recognition opportunities, retention provisions, and, where applicable, separation procedures;

Use of an additional measurement of teacher practice

LEAs may select additional measures of teacher practice that must be approved by the NJDOE. Examples include teacher portfolios and student and parent surveys.

Student Achievement Measures

Fifty percent of a teacher's evaluation must be based on measures of student performance as demonstrated by assessments and other evaluations of student work. There are two required measures and one optional measure. The largest required percentage must be based on one or more measures of a teacher's students' achievement. The other required component would be a State-approved school-wide performance measure.

Teachers in Tested Subjects and Grades

Student growth scores SGPs from State assessments, when available, must be used to measure teachers of tested subjects and grades, and these growth scores must account for the largest percentage of the evaluation based on student achievement. (These include math and language arts in grades 4-8, where both prior and current year scores on the State assessments are available.)

Teachers in Untested Subjects and Grades

SGP scores cannot be computed for all teachers because not all subjects and grades have Statewide assessments. Therefore, LEAs must identify existing measures of performance or develop new measures of performance capable of generating growth or mastery scores for all other teachers. These measures need not be derived from standardized tests but may be come from an array of sources, such as student learning objectives based on alternative methods of assessing student performance. Guidance on the selection or use of these measures will be provided by the NJDOE, as will the processes that will ensure they are comparable, fair, and rigorous. In addition, the NJDOE's

Chief Academic Officer will oversee the development of assessments in these grades and subjects over time.

School-wide Measure of Student Achievement

LEAs must also select a school-wide measure of student achievement, based on guidance provided by the NJDOE. Examples include growth in graduation and proficiency rates, or a narrowing of the school's achievement gap.

Stakeholder Engagement

Pilot districts have the opportunity to help shape the new system from its inception and will provide critical information and feedback to the NJDOE thereby guiding statewide implementation in the future. There are several ways for the pilots to provide feedback: through regular communication with an NJDOE Implementation Manager, whose role is to work with the pilots, helping with implementation; through the external researcher who will collect data and other input from the pilots; and through the Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC).

The EPAC is comprised of education stakeholders, including teachers and school leaders, who will collaborate with and advise the NJDOE throughout implementation of the EE4NJ pilot program. The role of the EPAC is to engage in outreach to their constituencies and to provide feedback and guidance on issues and challenges to inform statewide implementation of an educator effectiveness evaluation system. The NJDOE has ensured that the voices of teachers will be heard by requiring that every pilot district designate a teacher to serve on the EPAC.

In addition to the State-level EPAC, each pilot district must form its own stakeholder committee, called the District Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (DEPAC), to discuss challenges and opportunities and participate in decision-making about program development and implementation. The DEPAC will also have a communications role and share information about the pilot to the district community, ensuring transparency of the system.

DEPACs represent key stakeholders in the evaluation system and school community. These include: a school board representative; elementary, middle, and high school teachers (as applicable given pilot participation); a principal; a superintendent; a central office representative; an administrator conducting evaluations; a data coordinator; a parent; and others as determined by the district. Each DEPAC must appoint two of their members, including one teacher, to also serve on the State EPAC and attend monthly meetings. This will ensure that district-level concerns are raised with the State-level EPAC, and that pilot districts will receive information shared at the State-level meetings.

Principal Evaluation System Development

Also during Year 2 of its comprehensive plan to educator evaluations, the NJDOE is working with a small group of stakeholders to draft guidelines for a principal evaluation system, building from the recommended framework set forth in the Educator Effectiveness Task Force report. To inform its knowledge base, this group has reviewed research on critical leadership behaviors, recommendations on best practices for principal evaluation, and details already available about requirements and processes

from various systems currently being implemented in New Jersey districts and in other States.

This group's recommendations were presented to the larger EPAC stakeholder advisory committee and representatives from the pilot district DEPACs for review and feedback. A special subcommittee of EPAC is being created to support the development and implementation of a principal evaluation system statewide.

New Jersey understands that a fair, comprehensive, and robust system for evaluating principal effectiveness is critical to getting the outcomes we expect from our teacher evaluation system. The two systems must align in order to support a continuous cycle of educator development and improved learning results for students. The purposes of principal evaluation include both assessment and professional development. In order for a principal evaluation system to be truly successful, it must accurately assess the current performance of the principal and provide feedback on where and how to improve.

Implementing Principal Evaluation

The goals for Year 2 around principal evaluation are to finalize guidelines and to pilot implementation in SIG schools during the second semester of 2011-12.

As with the teacher evaluation implementation, districts will be allowed the flexibility to select a State-approved model of principal practice evaluation to apply in their particular contexts. It is intended that the requirements for evaluation will pertain to both principals and assistant principals, but only principals will be included in the pilot process.

The SIG schools were chosen as the first cohort to begin pilot testing a revised principal evaluation system because of their grant requirements to implement robust evaluation systems for principals as well as teachers. Because all SIG schools have expressed interest in implementing the same principal practice model, school and district administrators involved in both being evaluators and being evaluated will receive training on this model through December 2011.

Apart from the SIG schools, a few districts that have already made progress in improving their principal evaluation systems have reached out to the NJDOE to express interest in beginning a pilot this year as well. During the statewide pilot expansion of teacher evaluation during Year 3 of our plan in 2012-13, we will solicit applications and select districts in which to pilot a principal evaluation system; thereby allowing us to learn about the systemic relationships between the principal and teacher evaluation systems.

The SIG schools will continue to refine their implementation during this year, and the 10 teacher pilot districts will be invited to participate as well. This complete pilot year will inform our understanding of principal evaluation as it is applied, help us revise our guidance materials, allow us to test frameworks, assessments, and tools, and learn more about what supports are necessary in preparation for a full State implementation in 2013-14.

Assessment of Principal Practice

The Educator Effectiveness Task Force recommended that 40 percent of the principal evaluation be based on measures of effective principal practice.

Districts will be expected to adopt or develop a principal practice framework which measures principal performance on the critical factors associated with effective school leadership. Any principal practice framework used for evaluation must align with the NJ Professional Standards for School Leaders.

In order to update its 2004 professional standards to incorporate the most recent research on effective school leadership and to provide the foundation and vision for a coherent system of leadership development across the continuum of practice, in 2012 New Jersey will adopt new leadership standards, likely aligned to the ISLLC 2008 Educational Leadership Policy Standards. LEAs will be able to determine their own framework for assessing principal practice as long as it meets the requirements specified in the State's guidelines and criteria and aligns with the professional standards.

The State will assist LEAs in making their determinations by creating a list of approved models, rubrics, protocols, and tools. The State will also develop a process through which districts may submit their own locally-developed tools for review and approval. Requiring each district to use State-approved models and tools will enhance clarity and fairness, facilitate monitoring, and ease inter-district comparisons.

Principal Practice Framework

The following minimum criteria are being recommended for any principal practice evaluation framework adopted by an LEA. The framework must:

1. Be research-based and shown to be valid and reliable;
2. Be based on multiple sources of evidence collected throughout the year;
3. Encompass domains of practice aligned to the NJ Professional Standards for School Leaders;
4. Include at least two observation of principal performance;
5. Include a measure of progress on at least one individual, school and/or district performance goal;
6. Incorporate feedback from teachers;
7. Incorporate feedback from any other stakeholder groups (such as parents or students) if deemed appropriate based on designated performance goals;
8. Include an assessment of the quality of the principal's evaluations of teachers;
9. Include evidence of the principal's leadership for implementing a rigorous curriculum and assessments aligned to content standards;
10. Include evidence of the principal's leadership for high-quality instruction; and
11. Include rubrics for assessing practice that have a minimum of 4 levels of performance.

Measures of Retaining Effective Teachers

A further recommendation was that 10 percent of the principal evaluation be focused on the principal's ability to improve organizational effectiveness through the retention of effective teachers and the steps they take to exit ineffective teachers.

Measures of Student Achievement

Two categories of student achievement measures are to be included as 50 percent of the principal's evaluation: aggregated student growth on standardized assessments across all subjects and grades for which data are available (35 percent of this component) and school-specific goals (15 percent of this component). A school-specific goal would reflect an area of need identified by the principal or district administration, such as graduation rate in the case of a high school.

Combination of Practice and Achievement

The ratings of principal practice and student achievement will be combined to form a summative measure designating the principal as highly effective, effective, partially effective, or ineffective.

Professional Development

Evaluation systems alone are not sufficient to produce higher levels of principal effectiveness. Outcomes of principal evaluation must be linked to a system for developing principal practice.

New Jersey already has a standards-based professional development requirement for school leaders conducted on a three-year planning and review cycle, which was initiated in 2005. Currently, each active principal is required to create an individualized professional growth plan that aligns with professional standards; grounds professional development activities in objectives related to improving teaching, learning, and student achievement; requires evidence of plan fulfillment; and identifies professional goals that address specific district or school needs.

The current process for creating and reviewing principals' professional growth plans will dovetail with the proposed evaluation process in that it incorporates self-reflection, a professional conversation between principals and their supervisors to set goals for the plan, and monitoring of plan fulfillment by the supervisor. In addition, the principal creates a peer-review committee to support development and implementation of the plan and to certify completion of the plan to the chief school administrator.

As part of our systemic efforts to improve educator effectiveness, we are currently reviewing these professional development requirements in order to make more explicit the links between the results of principal evaluation, our expectations for principal practice, and the creation of the required leadership development plan.

Submission of Guidelines

Per Assurance 15 the NJDOE will provide a copy of the guidelines for teacher and principal evaluations to the United States Department of Education by June 30, 2012. This will provide the NJDOE the necessary time to strengthen the provisions outlined herein through lessons learned from the pilot program as well as feedback and insight from our teachers, leaders, DEPACs and EPAC.

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.

DEVELOPMENT, MONITORING AND SUPPORT TO ENSURE QUALITY

Based upon the lessons learned from our pilot districts, as well as our stakeholder group and the national context, the State is drafting guidelines and regulations so that all districts can develop plans and prepare for pilot implementation by Sept. 2012. This 7 month planning and implementation window will enable districts to build costs into their SY 2012-13 budgets, select and contract with a teacher practice provider, conduct training for all evaluators and teachers, and give stakeholders in each district time to participate in decision-making.

During this same time period, the NJDOE will develop guidance on the development/selection of assessments for non-tested subjects and grades and develop a "student learning objectives" (SLOs) process that can be implemented across the State in a way that is comparable, rigorous and valid.

The support and guidance for districts implementing all of this work will come from multiple sources:

- Regular meetings with the EPAC and DEPAC groups have proven to be fertile environments to bring in national experts, learn from local successes and pain points, and access recommendations on State policy from those who are doing the work. These meetings are shaped to wrestle with decisions that will guide statewide implementation. The meeting participants include teachers, principals, superintendents, NJDOE staff, higher education institutions, the teacher association and union representatives, and parents. The State will look to replicate the teacher evaluation model that has worked successfully for the principal evaluation pilot.

- The NJDOE has completed a significant departmental reorganization that has recast the department as a service delivery organization from one that has traditionally focused on compliance. Key elements of the reorganization include changes to internal offices and divisions and the development of seven RACs. The former includes a new Office of Educator Evaluation, which will be responsible for overall project progress, including guidance on expenditures and procurement issues, leveraging economies of scope and scale in delivery, and monitoring key milestones and deliverables. The latter will provide focused support to some of our lowest-performing schools in the areas of procuring frameworks and providing meaningful training, conducting observations and providing feedback, and identifying student achievement measures for teachers of non-tested grades and subjects.

  As the State shapes and staffs the RACs, the NJDOE is providing service to our pilot districts and SIG schools through dedicated resources. Specifically, the NJDOE has a team in the field

comprised of an Implementation Manager, Education Specialists and Network Turnaround Officers. The Network Turnaround Officers work up to 100 days in each of the schools they serve as both changes agents and conduits for the State to learn directly from the schools.

- The State realizes that to do this work well there is a cost to training, calibration of observers, and implementation. To assist districts with the cost, the State has and will continue to provide grant opportunities for districts to advance this work. Additionally, through our recent Race to the Top award, districts will be able to access and utilize their pro-rata share of the $19M to help support these efforts. Title I SIA funds will also be directed to evaluation system development and implementation activities. Lastly, by providing fiscal guidance and working to bring together districts with similar needs, the DOE is helping them prepare for and leverage their expenditures.

- The State is currently finalizing a contract with an external evaluator to assess the implementation of the 2011-12 pilot. Through both interim and final reports, the State will get an independent analysis of the pilot. This information will help inform our 2012-13 cohort 2 pilots, as well as spotlight areas where districts and schools need more guidance and support. A similar evaluation will be conducted for the 2012-13 principal evaluation pilot.

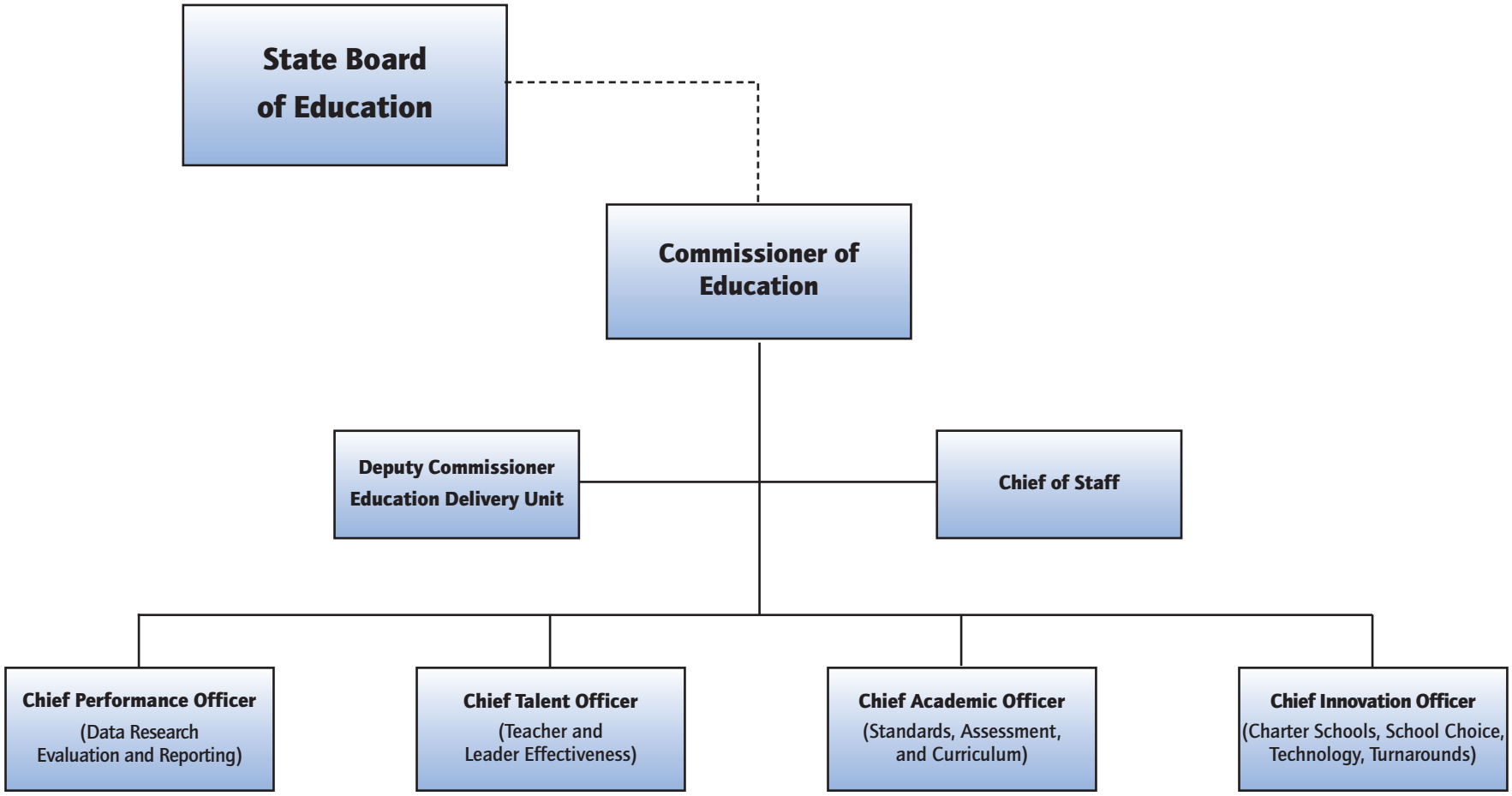
Through insight and lessons learned both locally and nationally, the State believes it has set forth an aggressive, yet realistic path to build high-quality teacher and principal evaluation systems..

Definitive plans regarding statewide implementation await further lessons from the pilot program. As we learn more about obstacles and opportunities, elements of the proposed system may be modified. The following charts list activities relating to each element of the evaluation system that must be implemented district-wide in 2012-13.

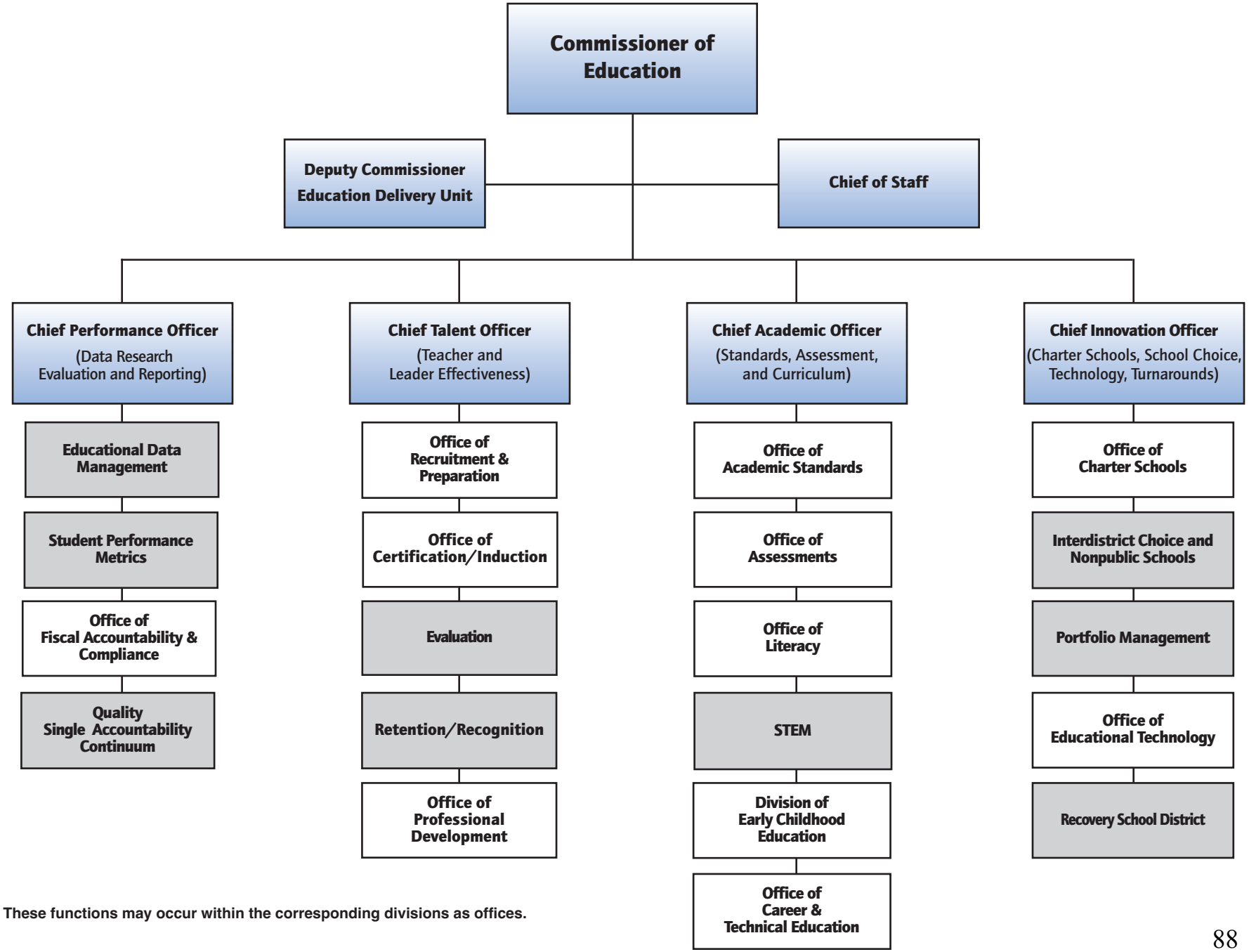
(See Appendix 9 and 10 for teacher evaluation and principal evaluation implementation plans.)

Appendices

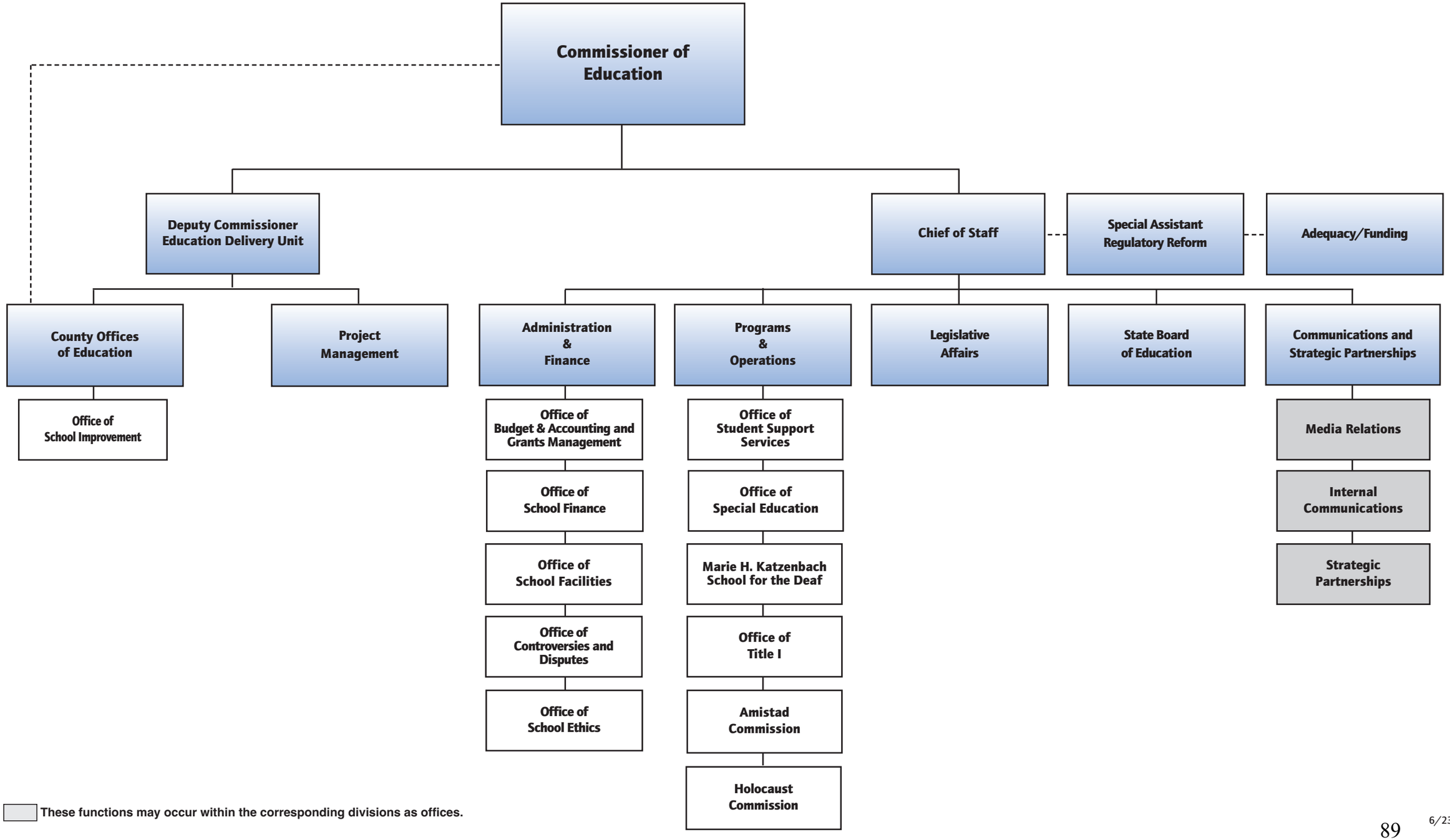
NJ Department of Education
Organization Strategy



NJ Department of Education
Organization Strategy



These functions may occur within the corresponding divisions as offices.


Commissioner of Education
Deputy Commissioner Education Delivery Unit
Chief of Staff
Special Assistant Regulatory Reform
Adequacy/Funding
County Offices of Education
Project Management
Administration & Finance
Programs & Operations
Legislative Affairs
State Board of Education
Communications and Strategic Partnerships
Office of School Improvement
Office of Budget & Accounting and Grants Management
Office of School Finance
Office of School Facilities
Office of Controversies and Disputes
Office of School Ethics
Office of Student Support Services
Office of Special Education
Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf
Office of Title I
Amistad Commission
Holocaust Commission
Media Relations
Internal Communications
Strategic Partnerships
These functions may occur within the corresponding divisions as offices.

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

REGIONAL ACHIEVEMENT DIRECTOR

Job Description:

The New Jersey Department of Education is building seven regional offices that will lead the state's efforts to accelerate student learning and close the achievement gap. Of particular importance to the Department is providing high-impact support to the state's lowest-performing schools, to ensure that all students will graduate college-and career-ready. Reporting to the School Improvement Director, a Regional Achievement Director will lead each regional office and play a critical role in the Department's efforts to drastically improve student performance across the state. As one of the only leaders in the Department located "in the field," the Regional Achievement Director plays an essential role in the NJDOE's reform agenda. The Regional Achievement Director will have expertise in the full range of K-12 academic issues, including Common Core State Standards, rigorous assessments, curriculum, instruction, data use, and educator effectiveness. He/she will be an experienced and dynamic executive capable of building and leading a high-performing organization. The Regional Achievement Director will be responsible for ensuring that the state's ambitious achievement goals are met within the region, and as a result, will have tremendous authority. This work will include staffing the regional office; identifying innovative, best-in-class approaches to teaching and learning; partnering with district and school leaders on school improvement efforts; working closely with the Department's senior management team to implement priority initiatives; and effectively utilizing the Department's resources to drive educational outcomes.

- Work collaboratively with schools, districts, and NJDOE leadership to develop a strategic and implementation plan for achieving substantial improvements in student performance
- Recruit, hire, and retain top talent for the regional office
- Lead and manage regional staff of approximately 15 – 20 professionals
- Analyze regional student performance data to identify areas of need and priority interventions
- With NJDOE leadership, help establish for the region target performance metrics and strategies for tracking progress
- Build understanding of and support for the Department's key projects and performance goals among regional stakeholders
- Work with Department leadership to ensure that central office activities support the achievement of regional goals
- With regional staff and NJDOE leadership, work closely with target districts and schools to implement high-quality curriculum, assessments, and instructional practices, with a particular focus on formative assessment and the use of data
- With regional staff and NJDOE leadership, work closely with target districts and schools to improve teacher and school leader effectiveness through strategies including recruitment, placement, development, and evaluation
- Ensure that all reform initiatives reach the classroom level and improve student learning
- Help establish and coordinate a diverse, vibrant, and high-performing K-12 environment by, among other activities, partnering with charter schools and other non-district schools and strategically utilizing the inter-district choice program

Requirements

Education:

Master's degree in education, public policy/administration, business administration, or related field

Experience:

Ten years of experience in education practice, policy, or management focused on outcomes. A demonstrated record of your experience and knowledge of school improvement, including standards, assessments, curriculum, instruction, data use, educator effectiveness, and school culture. A clear track record of leading initiatives that drive improvements in student learning in public school systems. Proven ability to build and lead high-performing organizations and develop and implement ambitious work plans. Demonstrated ability to manage complex initiatives, build relationships, and analyze data. Proven track record as a strong consensus builder with experience inspiring exceptional and extraordinary service. Proven track record of exceptional verbal and written communication skills, including the ability inspire and build consensus among diverse audiences. Successful examples of your experiences that demonstrate all students are capable of succeeding in college and careers. Proven track record of moving towards ambitious goals for student performance and equity.

Regional Achievement Office Locations (geographic area by county)
Morris - Sussex - Warren
Bergen - Passaic
Essex - Hudson
Hunterdon - Mercer - Somerset - Union
Middlesex – Monmouth - Ocean
Camden - Burlington
Atlantic - Cape May - Cumberland - Salem - Gloucester

New Jersey Department of Education - Common Core Standards Implementation Plan

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Information Sessions (Phase 1) -Introduction to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the major shifts inherent in transitioning to the standards.	Aug. 2010 - Dec. 2011	NJDOE, teachers, administrators, superintendents, parents, and board members	Analysis of alignment findings indicate that all content areas and grade levels need revision, with some content areas and grade levels needing more than others	NJDOE staff, ACHIEVE	Communicating effectively with all key stakeholders
Coalition of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Experts (Phase 2) - Create a coalition to develop or adopt a CCSS-aligned "model" curriculum system.	Dec. 2011 - Jan. 2012	NJDOE in collaboration with state and national curriculum experts (TBA)	Coalition group membership that demonstrates involvement of key stakeholders	NJDOE academic staff	Connecting with national experts, including state departments and other educational organizations doing similar work
"Model" Curriculum System (1) - Will include defined student learning objectives divided into units of study with end-of-unit assessments, model lessons, formative assessments, and a list of quality instructional resources.	Feb. 2012 - May 2012	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Director of Standards, Literacy, and Mathematics in collaboration with state- level coalition of curriculum, instruction, and assessment experts	Model Curriculum System, K-12, ELA, and Mathematics	Curriculum experts, NJDOE, coaliton of curriculum, instruction, and assessment experts	Short timeline for a significant collaborative effort; hoping to leverage similar efforts being developed in other states through partnerships
"Model" Curriculum System (2) - Special education experts will analyze the learning required in each instructional unit to determine the accommodation factors necessary to ensure students with disabilities have the opportunity to access CCSS on the same schedule as all students.	Feb. 2012 - May 2012	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Director of Special Education in collaboration with special education experts	Model Curriculum System, K-12, ELA, and Mathematics including unit level accomodations supporting students with disabilities	Special education consultant, NJDOE, coaliton of Curriculum, instruction and assessment experts	Large variability of needs within the population of students with disabilities
Model Curriculum System (3) - Model units and assessments, as well as a bank of CCSS-aligned assessment items, will be available to help teachers, prinicpals, parents, and students better understand and meet the rigorous CCSS standards.	Feb. 2012 - May 2012	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Director of Assessments in collaboration with assessment design experts	Model Curriculum System, K-12, ELA, and Mathematics with a bank CCSS-aligned assessment items	Resources to support assessment expert, NJDOE, coaliton of curriculum, instruction and assessment experts, item development costs	Item development costs
Building Model/Aligned Curriculums to Increase High School Rigor - All high school Social Studies and Science courses will include well defined CCSS-aligned curriculum (including formative and end-of-course assessments) developed in collaboration with state institutions of higher education	Feb. 2012 - May 2012	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Director of Science, NJDOE Director of Social Studies, Experts in Science and Social Studies	Model Curriculum System for grades 9-12 in Science and Social Studies	Resources to support High School consultants, NJDOE , coalition of curriculum, instruction, and assessment experts	Decisions concerning current high school assessments, graduation requirements
Data System For Student Tracking - (High school course and assessment evaluation) - DOE designed system to track student achievement in high school courses and assessments with student attainment levels in AP, dual enrollment, and other accelerated learning opportunities; student success on SAT, ACT and/or NAEP as well as acceptance into post-secondary opportunities, achievement on college entrance assessments, and any need for remediation.	Nov. 2011 - May 2012	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Chief Performance Officer, NJDOE data staff	Data system tracking correlation of student achievement in high school courses and assessments with student attainment levels in AP, dual enrollment, and other accelerated learning opportunities, SAT, ACT, NAEP, acceptance into post-secondaryachievement on college entrance assessments and any need for remediation.	NJDOE data system staff, National Clearing House data	Completing work with districts and high schools to use agreed upon state-wide common course codes (work in process)

New Jersey Department of Education - Common Core Standards Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
English Language Learners - WIDA ELP standards that set reasonable and clear expectations for student language development (aligned with CCSS).	Feb. 2012 - May 2012	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Director of LEP in collaboration with experts in the area of English learners	Model Curriculum System, K-12, ELA, and Mathematics including unit level linguistic accomadations supporting English Learners	Experts in English learner linguistic needs, NJDOE, coaliton of Curriculum, instruction, and assessment experts	Effective strategies for meeting the needs of all English Learners
Assessment Development - Increase the rigor of current state assessments by increasing the number of items aligned to the CCSS.	Nov. 2011 - 2014	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Director of Assessment	Transition versions of NJASK for 2013 and 2014	NJDOE Technical Advisory Committee, ACHIEVE, PARCC governing body	Utilization of NJASK in teacher evalutaion growth models
Professional Development (Teachers)- Focus: 1) Grade level and content area student learning requirements to meet CCSS model/aligned currriculums; 2) Rigor in assessing CCSS requirements; 3) Effective lesson design and instructional strategies; and 4) Use and design of formative asessments.	June 2012 - June 2013 (ongoing)	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Chief Talent Officer	Professional development session plans and feedback mechanisms	Experts in professional development, experts in program management, NJDOE staff, ACHIEVE	Reach all districts adopting NJDOE model curriculum
Professional Development (Instructional Leadership/Principals) - Focus: 1) Collecting classroom data to verify teaching and rigor to meet student needs; 2) Collecting and analyzing assesssment data to drive teacher/teacher team working toward improvements; and 3) Form teacher teams that will be responsible for continuous improvement and achievement through observation and assessment data.	June 2012 - June 2013 (ongoing)	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Chief Talent Officer	Professional development session plans and feedback mechanisms	Experts in professional development, experts in intructional leadership, experts in program management, NJDOE staff, ACHIEVE	Reach all district administrators adopting NJDOE model curriculum
Evaluation of External Vendor Material/Programs - Evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, programs, and technology-based supports designed by external vendors to align and support CCSS implementation. Evaluations will be disseminated throughout the state to inform all districts in their decision making.	Feb. 2012 - June 2013 (ongoing)	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Chief Performance Officer	Formal reviews of external instructional materials, programs, and technology-based supports	Publisher's criteria for CCSS aligned resources, NJDOE staff	Determining quality criteria reviews

New Jersey Department of Education - Common Core Standards Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
CCSS Impact on Teacher and Leader Preparation Programs - IHE and DOE will collaborate in the planning and implementation of professional development designed to prepare teachers and principals in the effective implementation of CCSS, as well as the strategies required to best meet the needs of English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students. State IHE's will receive data linking their graduates to student achievement in the classrooms and schools in which they work and lead in order to assist them in understanding the current and ultimate outcome of their preparation programs.	Feb. 2012 - June 2013 (ongoing)	NJDOE Chief Academic Officer, NJDOE Chief Talent Officer	Partnership with IHEs to continually review preparation programs and student achievement	Key stakeholders in New Jersey Higher Education, experts in teacher and principal preparation programs, NJDOE staff including Directors of Special Education and LEP	Aligning K-12 goals with Higher Education goals

Education Transformation Task Force

Initial Report

September 12, 2011

Contents

Introduction

The core goal of a state public education system is to assure that all children – regardless of background or economic circumstances – graduate from high school ready for college and career. New Jersey's educators should take great pride in our track record of success against this measure, especially relative to that of other states.

NJ Student Achievement on National Assessments

Test	Measure	*National Ranking in Grade* 4	8	11 & 12
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	Math	5th	5th	
	Reading	2nd	2nd	
Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS)	Math	11th	9th	
	Science	8th	11th	
ACT college entrance exam	Composite			5th
SAT Reasoning Test	Composite			11th
Advanced Placement exams	Percentage scoring > 2			3rd

At the same time, a substantial distance remains to be travelled. Most notably, while New Jersey's students perform at higher levels than their peers in virtually every other state, this aggregate figure masks several discouraging realities. To a startling and unacceptable degree, "zip code is destiny" in New Jersey. While the State ranks second in reading nationally, only three states have a larger achievement gap between economically disadvantaged children and their wealthier peers. Tens of thousands of children attend schools where only a minority of students meets basic levels of proficiency in reading and math, and hundreds of thousands of children overall perform below these minimal standards. In entire districts, barely half of the children who begin 9th grade successfully graduate from high school. Perhaps most alarmingly of all, while New Jersey has the nation's highest graduation rate, a distressingly high percentage of those who do graduate are unprepared for success. For example, almost 90% of students who matriculate into both Essex and Bergen County Community Colleges require remediation in reading, writing or math.

NJ Student Achievement Gap

Achievement of Non-Economically Disadvantaged (Non-ED) and Economically Disadvantaged (ED) on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Grade	Measure	National Ranking Non ED	ED	ED-Non ED Difference
4th	Math	4th	13th	47th
	Reading	4th	24th	34th
8th	Math	3rd	18th	48th
	Reading	3rd	20th	48th

As these figures suggest, we must work together to find the right balance between celebrating New Jersey's impressive educational accomplishments and adopting a perspective of moral urgency in tackling the deep concerns that coexist with them. At minimum, this is hardly a time for complacency. When, quite literally, children's futures and even lives are at stake, no stone can remain unturned in identifying impediments to progress and implementing positive changes to our schools.

Remediation in NJ Community Colleges

- In 2009-2010, 91% of first-time Bergen Community College students tested into remedial math or English.
- In Fall 2009, 61.2% of full-time, first-year students at Union County College were enrolled in at least one remedial class.
- In Fall 2007, 89.5% of Essex County College students tested into remedial math, 58.2% tested into remedial reading, and 82.9% tested into remedial writing.

It is in that spirit that Governor Christie has called for an unflinching examination of all that is – and is not – working in the State's education system. Towards that end, on April 4, 2011 the Governor issued Executive Order No. 58 establishing an Education Transformation Task Force consisting of accomplished educators from across the State, including a teacher, principal, and superintendant. E.O. No. 58 charged the Task Force with two interrelated responsibilities:

1) Review "existing accountability systems" including the Quality Single Accountability System (QSAC) and provide recommendations on "a revamped accountability system, which would grant more autonomy to public schools and public school districts while maintaining strict measures of accountability in the areas of student performance, safety and fiscal responsibility."

2) Conduct a comprehensive review of all education-related statutes and regulations "to determine the extent to which they increase the quality of instruction for students, improve academic achievement of students, improve teaching effectiveness within schools or improve the safety and well being of students . . . or are overly prescriptive."

These twin charges share a common education reform philosophy, which the Task Force today emphatically reaffirms. As noted above, an effective state education system embodies a partnership between two central values: 1) establishing ambitious academic standards with associated "output-oriented" performance objectives for every school and district, coupled with concrete, state-enforced consequences for failing to meet them; and 2) empowering districts and local educators with the information, support, and decision-making authority to craft their own paths to meeting these ambitious goals.

If our single-minded focus is to increase the number of children, regardless of birth circumstances, who graduate from high school prepared for college and career, our State education authority must move from a compliance orientation to one organized around accountability for results, from one of micromanagement of districts to one that encourages innovation, from one where State officials are not viewed as "white gloved" auditors but as partners in a professional collaboration to advance

student learning. The State must use its convening power, resources, and economies of scale to generate educational supports that districts embrace – not because they "must," but because they conclude that they will help them achieve their performance goals.

To be sure, the Task Force recognizes, these are not always easy lines to draw. How do we define the level of school failure that is sufficiently injurious to children that we can no longer afford to "empower" districts with the authority to be the primary decision-maker? In addition to the core duty of setting goals and enforcing a schedule of consequences for failure, are there other areas that are so central to success that a state should continue to hold them "tight" rather than devolve them to local control? (Examples might include teacher certification and evaluation criteria, requirements that schools have systems and processes in place to enable data driven decision-making to adjust instruction and address deficiencies, or matters related to health and safety.) As the entity ultimately responsible for the fiscal health of the State and the legal distribution of hundreds of millions of dollars of federal funds, should state authorities reserve a larger measure of involvement to assure that districts are responsible wards of taxpayers' money?

These are difficult questions, which the Task Force will continue to wrestle with throughout its tenure. Whatever the answer in these more nuanced areas however, the Task Force believes that there is much that can and should be accomplished as quickly as possible with respect to the two inextricably connected elements of the Governor's charge: 1) an evaluation and redesign of the State's accountability system, and 2) reduction of "empowerment-restricting" red tape.

With respect to the first, the Task force has concluded that the State's accountability system warrants significant revision. More likely to frustrate than positively affect behavior, the system is a patchwork of essentially unconnected, sometimes contradictory, federal (No Child Left Behind) and State (QSAC, etc.) mandates.

NCLB has played a critical role in shining a light on student achievement, both in the aggregate and for subgroups of students, and reinforcing that schools' and districts' failure to advance student learning must have real consequences. However, as Secretary of Education Duncan himself acknowledges, the law suffers from some basic flaws, including its failure to give credit for progress (as opposed to absolute performance), its one-size-fits-all approach to labeling schools as "failing," the unrealism of the assumption that every student in the nation will achieve academic proficiency by 2014, and the perverse incentive it has created for some states (fortunately, not New Jersey) to water down academic standards.

New Jersey's own accountability system also suffers from some critical concerns. Designed primarily as a pathway to State takeover or restoration of local authority, QSAC applies equally to all 600 of the State's districts, even those many that are achieving powerful results for the children they serve. Interviews with superintendants and others reveal that the review process is viewed almost universally as highly bureaucratic, easily gamed, and overly focused on "inputs" rather than student achievement.

Districts who are achieving outsized results for children can do poorly, while some whose students are failing at alarming rates can score well.

Accepting the Governor's challenge to "provide recommendations…on a revamped accountability system," the Task Force has reached several preliminary conclusions. Most importantly, consistency and clarity are essential components of any effective accountability system. That goal is not achievable so long as schools and educators labor simultaneously under overlapping and sometimes conflicting federal and State measures of success and schedules of consequences.

Accordingly, we recommend the development of a unitary accountability system that would be the basis of a waiver application to the federal government. A successful application would result in a single accountability system that incorporated the best of both NCLB and QSAC while correcting for the deficiencies of each. Hallmarks of the system would include 1) focusing on schools, more than districts, as the accountable unit; 2) emphasis on "outcomes" (graduation rates, achievement gains) rather than "inputs;" 3) a commitment to measure success by high standards directly correlated to college and career readiness; 4) recognizing academic progress, not absolute achievement levels, as the proper benchmark for success; 5) considerably less paperwork and fewer bureaucratic demands on districts, so they can focus on what matters; and 6) a clearly articulated schedule of interventions for schools experiencing persistent educational failure. As this new system is designed, the State must also ensure that the other core purpose of QSAC – restoration of local control to State-operated districts– is separately addressed and responsibly honored.

With respect to the Governor's second charge, elimination of "excessive and unnecessary state mandates," the Task Force is well underway in its comprehensive review of the over 2,000 pages of regulations and statutes governing New Jersey's schools. This process has been supported by a team of nine lawyers, DOE personnel, and an array of extremely helpful educators from across the State. This Report contains the preliminary fruit of that effort, including over 40 specific recommendations for regulatory reform.

In making these recommendations, we wish to stress three points. First, the review process has revealed that much of problem identified above is rooted in statute rather than in regulation. This Initial Report concentrates on regulations that are within the unique power of the State Board of Education or the Commissioner to address. Second, every mandate, whether administrative or legislative, has its origins in good intentions or, typically, as a reaction to a specific event or concern that arose at the time. As a result, every one of them has a rational basis, and often a constituency that is sure to advocate for its preservation. The issue then is not with any one provision, but with the Code in the aggregate, which imposes an extraordinary burden on educators and perpetuates a mentality of compliance rather than a performance that is often contrary to the best interests of children. Third, the Task Force wishes to stress the interim and preliminary nature of these recommendations and hopes they contribute to a lively discussion by policy makers, the State Board, and educators across the state.

Process

On May 9, 2011, the Governor appointed the Task Force's eight members, individuals who, per E.O. No. 58, have "practical experience, knowledge or expertise" in education, including at least one teacher, principal, school business administrator and superintendant." [See Appendix for list of members and copy of Order] The Task Force as a whole met seven times and heard presentations from various experts. It also held two public meetings – one in South Orange in the northern half of the State and one in Pittsgrove in the southern. At these meetings, valuable input was received from school and school district leaders, teachers, other education professionals, community groups and other interested parties. The meetings, which were publicized widely, drew over 150 attendees and over 50 speakers. In addition, two focus group sessions engaged over 40 educators in detailed discussions about opportunities for improvement from the vantage point of some of our most talented practitioners. Further public input came via postal mail and a dedicated email address, which has received over 100 submissions to date. Members of the Task Force also contacted over 40 stakeholder groups to seek ideas and other recommendations. Lastly, we are grateful that two members of the State Board of Education served as liaisons to the Task Force and were actively involved in the overall process.

Executive Order No. 58 directs the Task Force to issue an initial report to the Governor by August 15, 2011. After the submission of the report, the Task Force is directed to continue work on its overall charge, continue to receive input from the public and other stakeholders, and review and revise its recommendations accordingly. The Task Force will submit a report to the Governor containing its final recommendations by December 31, 2011, at which point the Task Force will expire.

Pursuant to this timeline, the Task Force respectfully submits this preliminary Interim Report. Part I consists of a review of the State's principal accountability systems and proposes a framework for improvements. Part II addresses the challenge of overly prescriptive regulatory mandates and makes a number of specific recommendations to address them.

Accountability Systems

Over the past 10 years, the concept of "accountability" has been central to education reform efforts in the United States. Educators and policymakers have paid increasing attention to the performance of students, and states have developed systems to identify the outcomes of students, schools, and districts each year. Accountability systems matter because they positively affect the behavior of educators and administrators as they work to strengthen student outcomes[1].

Accountability systems do not exist for their own sake, but as part of an overall strategy to advance student learning and ensure that children graduate from high school ready for college and a career. A meaningful accountability system sets clear standards of success and a high bar for achievement, measures the success of schools and districts in meeting those standards, provides helpful data and supports to help schools improve performance year after year, and identifies appropriate interventions in the case of persistent education failure.

New Jersey operates under two parallel, and at times conflicting, accountability systems. At the federal level, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) focuses on schools and districts, as evaluated by absolute student performance on State exams. At the State level, the Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) evaluates districts on five components of effectiveness, where student performance informs only one indicator.

In the sections below, we describe how NCLB and QSAC operate. We also identify the flaws of each accountability system, both in isolation and in their interaction together. We then propose a different set of principles around which a revised accountability system should be organized.

New Jersey's Quality Single Accountability Continuum – An Overview

The Quality Single Accountability Continuum ("QSAC") is the State's statutorily mandated system of school district performance assessment. QSAC serves as the State's set of standards for measuring how well local school officials manage tax dollars and educate children, and the State's yardstick for determining the appropriate level of State oversight of local district governance and administration. QSAC was created in accordance with the Quality Single Accountability Continuum Act, which was signed into law in September 2005. Administrative regulations to implement QSAC were adopted by the Commissioner of Education, effective February 22, 2007.

[1] Armstrong, J. May 2002. "Next-generation" Accountability Models: Principles from Interviews. Education Commission of the States Briefing Paper 4029. Retrieved 8/1/11 from http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/40/29/4029.htm.

History of QSAC

The evaluation of New Jersey school districts has been evolving for decades. State Board of Education regulations in 1891 required each county superintendent to visit every school in his region at least once per year and

> He shall note at such visits, in a book provided for the purpose, to be designated "The Superintendent's Visiting Book," the condition of the school buildings and out-houses, the appearance and correctness of the records kept in the School Registers, the efficiency of the teachers, the character, record and standing of the pupils, the methods of instruction, the branches taught, the text-books used, and the discipline, government, and general condition of each school; and from the notes thus taken he shall ascertain and report the relative grade of each school[2]

More recently, in 1975, the Legislature sought to address the poor condition of statewide education performance standards, and to satisfy the State's obligation under the "thorough and efficient" education clause of the New Jersey Constitution, by mandating that the Commissioner of Education develop a "uniform, Statewide system of evaluating the performance of each school." Shortly thereafter, the Department adopted standards for the monitoring and assessment of school districts, known as the "T & E" standards, which have guided the evaluation of school district performance ever since.

From the late 1990s until 2007, the T & E standards included elements pertaining to curriculum and instruction, implementation of State/federal mandated programs, quality assurance, school-level planning, school resources (finance and facilities), student behavior and performance, and teaching staff quality and professional development. The monitoring process consisted of an annual "desk audit" comprised of a review of aspects of school district operations reported annually in the Quality Assurance Annual Report (QAAR), and a site visit every seven years by the county superintendent of schools. If satisfactory performance was demonstrated at the site visit, districts were certified for a seven-year period as providing their students with a thorough and efficient education. Districts that were not certified, or were given certification with conditions, were subject to additional monitoring. The T & E standards were a small subset of the performance requirements governing New Jersey school districts. The State had a patchwork of standards and guidelines for assessing various aspects of district performance, which included mandatory curriculum standards in seven subject areas, called the core curriculum content standards, high school graduation standards, particularized mandates for the 31 special needs districts known as the Abbott districts, and extensive requirements relating to students who are eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA).

The T & E monitoring process identified some districts with severe deficiencies in performance. In 1987, the Legislature found that "the monitoring process may reveal some school districts which are unwilling

[2] Rules and Regulations Prescribed by The State Board of Education, October 13, 1891

or unable to correct the deficiencies identified during the process," and that "the State Department of Education should be empowered with the necessary and effective authority in extreme cases to take over a local school district which cannot or will not correct severe and complex deficiencies in that school district." Accordingly, the Legislature authorized the State Board of Education in such cases to disband the district board of education, appoint a State district superintendent, and establish a State-operated school district. The State exercised this "takeover" authority in Jersey City (1989), Paterson (1991), and Newark (1995).

By 2000, it had become clear that even with the many standards governing school district performance, the State lacked clear guidance for measuring the performance of the State-operated districts, their capacity to perform satisfactorily without State intervention, or their ability to be returned to local control. This led to discussions regarding a new single, uniform set of standards that could be used to assess the performance of all school districts in the State and could better inform decisions regarding when to return the State-operated districts to local control. The ensuing legislation became known as the Quality Single Accountability Continuum.

How QSAC Works

Although its interrelationship with NCLB is loose at best, QSAC seeks to combine, in one comprehensive set of objective standards, all of the legal and regulatory requirements and other accountability measures with which school districts must comply. QSAC requires an assessment of the performance of every school district in the State at least every three years. The QSAC statute itself does not specify the standards by which school district capacity and effectiveness are to be measured (the core QSAC statute addressing district evaluation is merely three paragraphs in length).

Through regulations, the Department has developed a set of standards known as quality performance indicators, and compiled them in an instrument known as the District Performance Review ("DPR"). The DPR is published as an appendix to the QSAC regulations and is available on the Department's web site[3]. There are five discrete DPRs representing the "five key components of school district effectiveness: instruction and program; personnel; fiscal management; operations; and governance."

- The Instruction and Program section encompasses the areas of student performance (including NCLB requirements), curriculum, instruction, mandated programs, early childhood programs and high school/graduation.
- The Personnel section encompasses the areas of licensed personnel, personnel policies and professional development.
- The Fiscal Management section encompasses the areas of budget planning, financial and budgetary control, annual audit, restricted revenues and efficiency.
- The Operations Management section encompasses the areas of facilities, student conduct, school safety and security, student health, and student support services.

[3] http://www.nj.gov/education/genfo/qsac/regs/dpr.htm

- The Governance section encompasses the areas of board training, disclosure and operation, ethics compliance, policies, procedures, and by-laws, standard school board practices, annual evaluative process, school board/administration collaboration, budget priorities, and communications.

The DPRs are to be completed in three phases. First, districts assess their own performance via a committee composed of the chief school administrator, administrative staff, teaching personnel representative of different district grade levels and/or schools, the school business administrator and assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, one or more member representatives of the board of education and of the collective bargaining unit of the educational staff, and any other members selected by the local board of education. This review must be supported by documentation, approved by the local board of education, accompanied by a statement of assurance signed by the chief school administrator and approved by the board of education.

Second, the executive county superintendent verifies the district's responses by conducting a "desk audit" of the completed DPR and supporting documentation, as well as with a site visit to the district. And third, the Commissioner reviews each assessment and places each school district at the appropriate point on a "performance continuum" ranging from 0 to 100 percent for each DPR.

The district's placement on the performance continuum determines whether improvement is required and the extent of any technical assistance, support or oversight the district may receive from the Department. When a district's performance is rated satisfactory on 80 to 100 percent of the indicators in all five of the key components of school district effectiveness, it is designated "high-performing." Districts with performance measuring in the range of 50 to 79 percent in any of the five key components are required to develop and implement an improvement plan for each deficient area and may be required to undergo an in-depth evaluation.

Districts with performance measuring below 50 percent in any of the five key components are required to undergo an in-depth evaluation for each deficient area. They also are required to develop and implement an improvement plan. The Department may intervene in one or more key components of these districts' performance.

In addition to the district improvement plan, in-depth evaluation, and technical assistance previously mentioned, three additional interventions are available to assist these districts. First, the Commissioner may appoint a Highly Skilled Professional ("HSP") to provide additional targeted technical assistance and monitoring in any discrete DPR area in which the district scored below 50 percent. These HSPs are intended as advisors and do not have any authority to make or veto decisions independently.

Second, the Commissioner, via an order to show cause, may seek partial State intervention in any discrete DPR area in which the district scored below 50 percent. Partial State intervention is, essentially, direct oversight of one, two, three or four areas of school district functions by a highly skilled professional appointed by the Commissioner. Unlike the previously-mentioned HSP, this type of highly

skilled professional has the authority to veto decisions of the superintendent and local board of education relevant to his QSAC area(s). Further powers under partial State intervention include the ability to appoint three members to the local board of education.

Third, the Commissioner, via an order to show cause, may seek full State intervention of a district if it satisfies less than 50 percent of the quality performance indicators in all five key components of school district effectiveness. Upon full State intervention, the local board's authority to govern the district is removed, and the State Board of Education may appoint a State district superintendent, who will have all the authority ordinarily exercised by a local board of education. While a district is under full State intervention, the State district superintendent may abolish senior administrative positions, reorganize the central administrative and supervisory staff, evaluate all individuals employed in central and supervisory positions, establish an assessment unit for principals and vice principals, and dismiss tenured principals and vice principals. A capital project control board may be established to review any capital project proposed by the State district superintendent. Meanwhile, the local board of education remains in place, but its authority to govern is removed and it becomes advisory.

Withdrawal from partial or full intervention may be initiated at the recommendation of the Commissioner and with the support of the State Board of Education once a district has achieved a score of at least 80 percent in a component and the district sufficiently demonstrates evidence of sustained and substantial progress and substantial evidence that the district has adequate programs, policies and personnel in place and in operation to ensure that the demonstrated progress will be sustained. Thus far, local control over operations was returned in Newark and local control over governance and finance management was returned in Jersey City, both in 2007.

New Jersey's Quality Single Accountability Continuum – Limitations

Although QSAC is an improvement over the State's previous systems for district monitoring, it suffers from several important limitations.

QSAC focuses on district "capacity" instead of student performance.

Education accountability systems should focus on what matters most: academic achievement. Unfortunately, QSAC prioritizes inputs instead of outputs. For instance, the QSAC Governance DPR awards a district points for mentioning the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in its mission statement. As a result, districts get credit for having policies on shelves and showing good intentions even if student performance results are dismal. In other words, a district can be deemed a success even if its students are failing.

For example, the Paterson School District earned a score of 88% in governance, suggesting the district runs a tight ship and ostensibly indicating that the State might consider returning this area to local control. Yet, despite spending over $20,000 per student, the district's self-reported total graduation rate for the 2009-10 school year was only 50.4%. Moreover, many of those who did graduate were

unable to pass the High School Proficiency Assessment (HPSA), the State's standard exam for determining proficiency in basic subjects. Currently, 62.3% of the district's students are below proficiency in language arts literacy (LAL) and 55% are below proficiency in math. Of the district's 39 schools, 25 are in need of improvement (SINI[4]) under No Child Left Behind criteria and 16 have been in SINI status for at least five years.

QSAC misdirects districts' attention

Because QSAC gives credit for a wide range of inputs, many completely unrelated to student performance, it incentivizes low-scoring districts to focus on the wrong things. Knowing that it could increase its QSAC scores by checking an additional box or two in the transportation or facilities categories, a district might direct its resources toward these areas instead of making tough decisions about instruction or educator effectiveness. Indeed, since many of these districts have been unable to improve student learning over long stretches of time, they would be behaving rationally—under this irrational system—were they to focus on areas *other* than student achievement since these would be likelier to gain QSAC points. Districts should devote virtually all of their attention to student performance, but since QSAC prioritizes other things, strategies to improve achievement can and often do take a back seat.

This misdirection of priorities stems from the unfortunate reality that QSAC focuses predominantly on the central office rather than the school or classroom – both in assessing performance and in directing interventions to improve performance. It presumes that the point of significance and influence in a district is not the principal and the instructional leaders but rather central administrators.

QSAC is premised on the false view that a comprehensive reform agenda can be disaggregated

QSAC defines five discrete components of district effectiveness and prescribes different interventions for district underperformance in each category. It also permits the State to take and relinquish control of each of these components separately. These categories, however, are inextricably interconnected. Ensuring that every teacher is effective is an issue not simply for the "personnel" DPR but also has implications for curriculum and program, financial management, operations and governance. Similarly, the fiscal management of a district cannot be isolated from academic performance. To state the obvious, spending and investment decisions have a direct impact on program effectiveness. Is it better for student achievement to spend more money on aides and less on technology? To reduce class size or pay teachers more? A comprehensive and successful education reform agenda is an integrated strategy involving each of the five "DPRs." A system that is premised on the view that they can be disaggregated – with the State responsible for some and local authorities others – is inherently artificial and unlikely to succeed.

[4] The federal No Child Left Behind legislation, which will be explained in the following section, designates School In Need of Improvement (SINI) status on schools which fail to meet certain academic criteria.

QSAC is a highly imperfect pathway for transition to local control

One of QSAC's primary purposes is to provide the Department a reliable tool for assessing whether a district under State operation should reacquire local control. Because QSAC is "input focused" and largely indifferent to how students are actually performing, however, a district can score well on QSAC despite having terribly low student achievement results. Moreover, QSAC is based on an "all or none" philosophy: A district either has or does not have control of one or more DPR areas. Accordingly, it sheds little helpful light on the common situation in which many schools in a district are showing significant forward progress, while a number of others continue in a state of persistent educational failure. A focus on schools rather than districts seems a far more targeted way to trigger (or relinquish) state control.

The QSAC process is deeply flawed

QSAC begins with a district self-assessment. This process is extraordinarily burdensome, requires over a year and hundreds of hours of staff time to address each of the over 300 items on the DPR "checklist." Much of this mandated activity is unnecessarily demanding; for example, the district must collect information that is already submitted to the State via other means.

Moreover, the conclusions reached by the district are merely advisory. The State makes the ultimate determination on scores. On its face, this is a misallocation of resources. District energy is certainly better spent on trying to improve student learning than generating score recommendations that will later be overridden. Indeed, it is often the case that district assessments have little bearing on final scores. For example,

Wide Variance between QSAC District Self-Assessment Scores and Final Department Scores

QSAC initial and final DPR scores of selected districts

District	DPR category	District score	County score	Gap
Asbury Park	Instruction & Program	56	22	**34**
Bloomfield	Governance	100	66	**34**
	Instruction & Program	72	51	**21**
	Personnel	94	73	**21**
Burlington City	Governance	89	67	**22**
East Orange	Fiscal Management	92	62	**30**
	Governance	100	45	**55**
	Personnel	71	30	**41**
Essex Fells	Governance	56	23	**33**
	Instruction & Program	86	64	**22**
Glassboro	Governance	100	77	**23**
	Instruction & Program	56	24	**32**
	Personnel	88	69	**19**
Paulsboro	Fiscal Management	89	51	**38**
	Governance	89	66	**23**
	Instruction & Program	81	58	**23**
	Operations Management	98	70	**28**
Trenton	Governance	78	33	**45**
	Instruction & Program	39	22	**17**
	Operations Management	73	56	**17**
	Personnel	58	30	**28**

East Orange in its most recent self-evaluation awarded itself a score of 71 on the personnel DPR which was reduced to 30 by the State. Trenton awarded itself a score of 78 in the Governance DPR, which was reduced by Department staff to 33.

Finally, and probably most importantly, QSAC reviews fail to generate useful information. According to a recent survey of New Jersey superintendents conducted by the Department, only 22% of superintendents believe that "overall, the QSAC process plays an important role in helping [them] achieve [their] core mission of elevating student achievement and the number of students who graduate college and career ready."

QSAC provides inconsistent, and therefore unreliable, information

An effective accountability system tells a full and accurate story. A strong district assessment system would zero in on strengths and weaknesses and show the gradual changes over time. However, QSAC scores can be erratic from year to year, giving the State no reason to believe that the system is providing a fair depiction of a district's standing. Pleasantville's Fiscal Management score has ranged from 29% in 2008, to 73% in 2009, to 52% in 2010, and back to 29% in 2011 while its Governance DPR started at 11% in 2008, climbed to 44% in 2009, and reached 56% in February 2010, only to fall to 0% six months later in August 2010. The April 2011 review yielded a score of 11%. In Beverly, the Personnel DPR score was 53% in 2008, 53% in 2009, 73% in 2010, and 23% in 2011. Similarly, Trenton's Governance DPR was 22% in 2007, 88% in 2009, and 33% in 2011.

These erratic scores – and the jarring disconnect that frequently exists between student learning and DPR performance – point strongly towards the conclusion that QSAC can be "gamed." Districts have found that hiring lawyers and approving policies that may gather dust on shelves are a far easier means of raising QSAC scores than is boosting student achievement.

QSAC process fails to distinguish between very different districts

Many of New Jersey's districts are performing at the highest levels. Their student achievement results are strong and their fiscal houses are in order. A strong accountability system would take these factors into account and give such districts a greater degree of freedom. Previous district accountability systems allowed for up to seven years between evaluations, but QSAC mandates that all districts undergo a review at least every three years, even if the most recent review was unerringly positive. These rules not only burden our best performers, they also misallocate State resources. The Department should be able to focus its attention on struggling districts not those at the top of their games.

QSAC meshes poorly with NCLB

Despite its manifest flaws, NCLB does properly focus on academic achievement. Its reporting requirements, though many, force schools to direct their attention to improving student learning, both in the aggregate and for subgroups. As a result, district administrators are compelled to invest their

resources in the right areas. QSAC, however, with its focus on so many other things, diverts attention. As a result, educators are spread thin, pulled in numerous directions as they try to satisfy a laundry list of demands. The State needs an accountability system that simultaneously meets the needs of Uncle Sam and Trenton—and those needs should all be tightly tethered to measures of student achievement. QSAC frustrates this goal.

QSAC has failed to drive district improvement

A high-quality district accountability system would effectively improve the performance of our schools. QSAC has not done so. Only a quarter of New Jersey school superintendents agree that the Department helps them integrate the results of QSAC into their districts' overall strategies for improving student achievement. QSAC provides little actionable information to the Department, so developing State assistance programs based on QSAC-identified deficiencies is difficult. This harms districts and the Department. Districts typically see QSAC as punitive, providing a wagging finger without a helping hand. The State receives alarming reports but isn't certain how to respond: Nearly three dozen districts have received QSAC scores below 50% in at least one DPR, yet the State has never sought to use its legal authority under QSAC to engineer a partial State takeover.

In sum, while those who crafted QSAC tried to improve district performance and State oversight, the system hasn't lived up to its billing. It pays too much attention to things of minimal importance, burdens our educators, creates perverse incentives, and fails to improve student learning.

We can and must do better.

No Child Left Behind – An Overview

The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed into law in 2001 in order to hold states, districts, and schools accountable for the performance of all students. The law set a goal of having 100% percent of students across the country proficient in several tested subjects by 2014.

In order to define "proficiency," NCLB requires all states to establish their own standards and tests for all schools and districts in their state. The law requires states to test all students annually in grades 3 through 8 in both mathematics and language arts, and once in grades 10-12. States must also test students in science once in grades 3-5, 6-8, and 10-12. Individual schools and districts must publicly report their test results both aggregated by grade and subject level and disaggregated by specific student subgroups. Those student groups include:

- Low-income students
- Students with disabilities
- English Language Learners
- Major racial and ethnic groups: American Indian, Asian & Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, White, Two or More Races

New Jersey's State assessments in language arts literacy and mathematics are based on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. The New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK), is the State's comprehensive assessment for grades 3 through 8, while the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) is the Core Curriculum Content Standards-linked assessment for grade 11. New Jersey determines proficiency by grade span: elementary includes grades 3 through 5; middle includes grades 6 through 8; and high school. In each grade span, schools are held accountable for each different subgroup of students as well as for all students as a whole.

Students must score either "proficient" or "advanced proficient" on the assessments to be counted as meeting the benchmarks, with the goal of having 100% of students in New Jersey proficient by 2014. In addition to meeting proficiency targets, schools must also meet secondary indicators. For example, elementary and middle schools must also meet attendance benchmarks while high schools must meet a dropout benchmark.

States set their own yearly incremental proficiency targets for how they will reach 100% proficiency, and schools are rated on making "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) by meeting the state-defined proficiency targets each year. For a number of reasons, the yearly benchmarks for the percentage of students meeting proficiency is increasing at a faster rate as 2014 approaches. Therefore, the number of schools in New Jersey and across the country that are not meeting AYP is also increasing at a higher rate each year. In New Jersey, more than 50% of schools missed an AYP target last year, and the number is highly likely to increase.

In 2003, for instance, in order for a New Jersey school to make AYP, 68% of its students, and 68% of each subgroup of students, in grades 3 through 5 on the language arts literacy assessment needed to be deemed proficient. The benchmark rose to 75% in 2005, but was reset to 59% in 2008 when the third and fourth grade tests were revised. In 2011, the benchmark is now 79%.

The following chart shows the rising rates of proficiency required to meet AYP between 2003 and 2014. In certain years, the percentages were adjusted and lowered as new and more difficult tests were implemented.

Content Area	Grade Span	2003 (Start)	2005-2007	2008-2010	2011-2013	2014
Language Arts Literacy	Elementary (Grades 3-5)	68	75	59	79	100
	Middle School (Grades 6-8)	58	66	72	86	100
	High School (Grade 11)	73	79	85	92	100
Mathematics	Elementary (Grades 3-5)	53	62	66	83	100

	Middle School (Grades 6-8)	39	49	61	80	100
	High School (Grade 11)	55	64	74	86	100

Beyond proficiency and secondary factors such as participation and dropout rates, several additional factors are taken into account when determining whether a school made AYP. First, NCLB provides for a "Safe Harbor" provision. The goal of this provision is to give schools credit for making significant progress, even if they missed one or more proficiency targets. If a school reduces the number of students below proficient by at least 10 percent from the prior year, the school can still make AYP. For example, if in one year 40 students in a grade span were below proficient, the following year the school could make AYP under the "Safe Harbor" provision if 10 percent fewer students, meaning 4 fewer students or 36 students in all, are below proficient.

In addition, the State must account for other issues that can affect an AYP calculation. For example, the State must establish confidence intervals around proficiency outcomes to protect against data aberrations. The State must also account for student mobility from school to school in a given year.

Finally, the State holds a school accountable for the performance of subgroups only when the number of students in that subgroup is 30 or above. As a result, if there are only 20 low-income students in one grade span, the school is not held accountable for the subgroup results for those students, although those students are still counted in the overall calculation.

No Child Left Behind – Missing AYP

If a school misses a proficiency target for one or more subgroup(s) in one content area, or misses a target for testing participation, the school does not make AYP for that year. When a school does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same content area, it is designated as a "school in need of improvement" (SINI).

School Intervention

At the school level, NCLB requires a series of interventions when schools do not make AYP. The interventions vary by the number of years a school has not made their AYP targets, as described below:

Year 1 – Early Warning: A school that does not make AYP for one year is placed into "early warning" status. If a school does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same content area, it will be identified as a school in need of improvement. There are no formal consequences in year 1.

Year 2 – In Need of Improvement/School Choice: A school that does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same content area is designated as a "school in need of improvement." Certain interventions apply, including:

- Either intra-district school choice or supplemental educational services (if choice is not available). Under intra-district school choice, families may choose to send their child to another school in the district so long as the new school is not also labeled a "school in need of improvement." Under supplemental education services (SES), students are eligible for free extra academic help, such as tutoring or remedial help, from a state-approved provider selected by parents.
- Parents must be notified that the school is in need of improvement, as well as the options available to them through choice or SES.
- Development of a school improvement plan for Title I schools[5].

The district must offer the school technical assistance to address the areas that caused the school to be in improvement.

Year 3 – In Need of Improvement/Supplemental Educational Services (SES): A school that does not make AYP for three consecutive years in the same content area continues to be identified as a "school in need of improvement." The Title I school must continue to offer intra-district school choice and must *also* offer SES to eligible students. Technical assistance must continue to be offered by the district, parents must receive notification of the school's status, and the school improvement plan (Title I Unified Plan) must be revised.

Year 4 – Corrective Action: A school that does not make AYP for four consecutive years in the same content area is identified as a school in corrective action. Such a school must continue to offer intra-district school choice and SES, notify parents of the school's status, revise its school improvement plan (Title I Unified Plan), and receive technical assistance from the district and the state.

The district also must take at least one of the following corrective actions:

- Provide, for all relevant staff, appropriate, scientifically research-based professional development that is likely to improve academic achievement of low-performing students.
- Institute a new curriculum grounded in scientifically based research and provide appropriate professional development to support its implementation.
- Extend the length of the school year or school day.
- Replace the school staff that are deemed relevant to the school not making adequate progress.
- Significantly decrease management authority at the school.
- Restructure the internal organization of the school.
- Appoint one or more outside experts to advise the school (1) how to revise and strengthen the improvement plan created while the school was in improvement status; and (2) how to address the specific issues underlying the school's continued inability to make AYP.

[5] Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA) establishes a set of programs that distribute funding to schools a high percentage of students from low-income families.

The state offers school support by engaging a team of experienced professionals to conduct an extensive school review called Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement (CAPA). The CAPA team interviews stakeholders and staff, reviews school and district documents, and conducts on-site observations to develop a report that contains recommendations for school improvement, which then becomes part of the Title I Unified Plan.

Year 5 – Planning for Restructuring: A Title I school that does not make AYP for five consecutive years in the same content area must plan to restructure. The restructuring plan is implemented at the beginning of the following school year if the school continues to miss AYP benchmarks. During the planning year, the Title I school must continue to offer intra-district school choice and SES, notify parents of the school's status and invite their input during the restructuring process, and receive technical assistance from the district and the state. The technical assistance design for a school being restructured emphasizes the following:

- The importance of improving instruction by using strategies grounded in scientifically based research so that all children in the school achieve proficiency in the core academic subjects of reading and mathematics.
- The importance of analyzing and applying data in decision-making.
- The restructuring plan must include one of the following alternative governance systems for the school as outlined by NCLB regulations and consistent with New Jersey statute:
    - Implement any major restructuring of the school's governance that is consistent with the principles of restructuring as set forth in the No Child Left Behind Act.
    - Re-open the school as a public charter school as defined by state statute and regulation (N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 6A).
    - Replace all or most of the school staff, which may include the principal, who are relevant to the school's inability to make adequate progress (consistent with existing contractual provisions and applicable statutory protections in Title 18A).

Year 6 – Restructuring: A Title I school that does not make AYP for six consecutive years in the same content area must implement the approved restructuring plan. The school must continue to offer intra-district school choice and SES, notify parents of the school's status and invite their input and support during the implementation process, and receive technical assistance from the district and the state. Technical assistance is critical to help school staff remain focused on increasing student achievement while the school is adjusting to potentially radical changes in its administration and governance structures.

District interventions

At the district level, NCLB requires the rollup of student and school performance on state exams to identify the progress that the district is making on the path to 100 percent proficiency. As with schools, the law mandates sanctions based on district performance.

Year	Status	Interventions for Title I Districts
1	**Early Warning**: Did not make AYP for one year	None
2	**District Improvement – District In Need of Improvement (DINI 1):** Did not make AYP for two years.	Parent notification; develop a district improvement plan to analyze and address leadership, governance, fiscal infrastructures, curriculum, and instruction. The plan must address the needs of the low-achieving students, instructional strategies, professional development, and fiscal responsibilities the district will use to bring about increased student academic achievement.
3	**LEA Improvement – (DINI 2):** Did not make AYP for three years.	Parent notification; revise the district improvement plan, as indicated.
4 and above	**District Corrective Action:** Did not make AYP for four or more years.	Parent notification; state notification to the district; state takes one of the following actions: • Defer funding • Implement a new curriculum • Replace district personnel • Appoint a Highly Skilled Professional

No Child Left Behind – Importance

For all the controversy it has generated, NCLB has been transformative. By focusing national attention on student performance as the most important outcome in schools, it has permanently affected K-12 public education in profound and important ways. The law sets clear standards for success – 100% proficiency by 2014 – and measures the progress both of students in the aggregate, and by socio-economic status and other subgroups, in achieving that goal. This disaggregation of students by subgroup has been crucial in unmasking the problems that too often hid beneath the surface for our most vulnerable students.

The law also reinforced the idea that when schools and districts fail to advance student learning, there must be real consequences. These consequences range from providing extra support to structural changes at the school or district level. But the focus on consequences for performance has been a culture shift in the world of education. Requiring that all students participate in a state's assessment and accountability system has indeed brought increased attention to those students typically at risk of low performance. There is little doubt that this focus has resulted in a new prioritization of improving outcomes for economically disadvantaged students as well as other subgroups.

No Child Left Behind – Limitations

Despite these important benefits, the law suffers from a number of critical flaws. These limitations are well documented and have led the US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to announce that he will accept waiver applications from states to substitute rigorous state-level accountability systems in place of NCLB.

First, while NCLB correctly focuses on student achievement, the law fails to give schools sufficient credit for student progress (growth) as opposed to absolute measures of performances. In general, the law takes a snapshot of student performance at the end of each year, and evaluates schools based on how many students are proficient in that year[6]. No credit is awarded even for substantial academic growth unless it results in a score deemed proficient. Moreover, no credit is awarded for individual student progress since the only focus is on cohorts (e.g., comparing this year's third graders to last).

Second, based on this imperfect measure of student achievement, the law requires that schools be placed in either of only two categories: passing or poor-performing. This binary approach is deeply problematic in that it treats with absolute equivalence schools that are failing across the board with those that only "miss" in a single category. Schools are often in varying states of growth or achievement, and labeling schools with a one-size-fits-all approach does not accurately identify the true status of a school. The system does not distinguish between a school that has not met the targets in most subgroups from one that has not met the target for a single subgroup. Nor does it distinguish one that is far from the targets from one that is close to the targets.

As a result, the law has not done an adequate job either of assessing school performance or providing the type of data that would help a school to improve. The results from an annual test and a label of poor-performing might indicate poor performance, but does not provide rich context to policy makers, educators, and administrators about what the schools need in order to improve or what type of interventions would be most successful. Instead, this poor-performing label requires a series of interventions that may not only be unhelpful but may actually hinder the progress that the school is already making. Further, certain NCLB-endorsed interventions for failing schools are not possible for many New Jersey families. For example, intra-district choice is not an option in many smaller districts where there are no other schools into which students can transfer.

Third, the combination of the federal requirement to meet 100% proficiency by 2014 and the responsibility of states to define proficiency has also led to several unintended consequences. For example, many states have lowered their standards for proficiency and "watered-down" their state tests, resulting in the phenomenon of the "race to the bottom." In addition, many states have set lower

[6] While the "Safe Harbor" provision does evaluate school improvement based on the year-to-year increase of the number of students rated proficient in a given grade, this still does not fully measure student growth. For example, the provision also only looks at the total number of students proficient in grade span 3-5 in a given year. The provision then looks at the number of students proficient in the following year in grade span 3-5. But these are not the same cohort of students, since last year's fifth graders have moved onto sixth grade. So the provision measures "school" growth, but does not track an individual student's growth directly.

proficiency rates for meeting AYP in the first several years of the law, masking potential problems in certain schools and making comparisons of progress from state to state impossible. Fortunately, New Jersey, among other states, has actually increased the rigor of its state tests during this time period.

Fourth, as stated previously, in New Jersey schools are only held accountable for subgroups of 30 students or more. As a result, a school with 31 students in a particular subgroup is held directly accountable for the subgroup's performance, while a school with 29 students in that same subgroup is not. This creates situations where smaller schools are outside of the accountability system regardless of their student achievement. As states vary widely on the size of the subgroup necessary for accountability, this translates to enormous variability on the meaning of AYP from state to state.

Fifth, the inflexible timeframe for all schools to achieve 100 percent proficiency has created an incentive for schools to focus narrowly on helping a small group of students move from below proficient to proficient on tests in two subjects. If our goal is to make sure that all students graduate from high school ready for college and career, the law incentivizes schools to focus on too few students in too few subject areas.

Finally, the Task Force finds that NCLB largely has failed to drive meaningful improvement in the performance of the State' worst-performing schools. The numbers are quite illustrative. 181 New Jersey schools have been in SINI status for at least five years – over 8% of all public schools in the State. Less than 1 in 8 schools – only 21 in total – that had been in SINI status for at least five years achieved AYP this year.

The Path Forward: Key Principles of a "Next Generation" Accountability System

New Jersey needs a new accountability system, one that is transparent, fair, and rigorous. It should set the highest expectations for all our children and hold adults responsible for delivering on the purpose and promise of public education. Parents and taxpayers should trust that it provides complete and reliable information on the condition of our schools. Educators should know that it fully and fairly reflects the importance and expanse of their work

Our current system falls far short of this mark.

We have created a system that is at the same time painfully simple and yet indecipherably complicated. Part of the explanation is that the requirements emanating from Washington, DC and those coming from Trenton are often at odds.

Federal rules mandate that each school be assessed on a binary scale—either it met AYP or it didn't—when no one believes that something as complex as public education can be reduced to an up-or-down judgment. But state rules tell us that it takes 334 indicators to understand whether a district is meeting its obligations to children. Little actionable or intelligible information can be gleaned from a system made up of two such dissonant components.

10 Principles of the Accountability System of the Future

1. A single, streamlined system
2. Accurate differentiation of schools
3. Assess school outputs not inputs
4. Set explicit, measurable, appropriate targets
5. Evaluate growth in addition to status
6. Generate appropriate interventions
7. Intensify responses in cases of persistent failure
8. Grant earned autonomy to high performers
9. Provide diagnostic information as well as judgments
10. Focus on schools not districts

The Task Force believes that the first step toward creating the accountability system of the future is agreeing that we need **a single, streamlined system**. The federal government and the State of New Jersey want the same thing: schools that prepare all boys and girls for success throughout life. There is no reason why a unitary system can't satisfy the needs of both. Committing to developing the right set of performance metrics and reporting requirements will not only focus our attention on what matters most, it will ease the burden on educators who currently feel like they are shooting at multiple targets, serving two masters, and filing stacks of meaningless but mandatory paperwork.

Fortunately, the timing is right to make this necessary shift. The limitations of QSAC, the State accountability system, are becoming clearer by the day, and the federal government, recognizing the shortcomings of NCLB, is inviting waivers from states committed to embracing more meaningful accountability. The Task Force believes New Jersey should seize the opportunity by applying for a waiver on the basis of a single, unitary accountability system that draws from the best features of NCLB and QSAC but corrects for the deficiencies of each.

No more federal indicators on one report card and state measures on another. No more differing federal interventions and state sanctions for the same set of schools. Just a single, clear, concise slate of metrics for assessing our schools and strategies for remediation underperformance.

A hallmark of this new system must be an ability to **accurately differentiate schools** at different points in the quality distribution. This means a thorough and nuanced assessment of performance. The system should use multiple measures—certainly not a single test score—as a means of triangulation, so the true strengths and weaknesses of a school can be determined.

These measures should be based on **outputs not inputs**. It is not enough to say we are spending a great deal of money on our schools, that our class sizes are small, or that we can "check the box" on hundreds

of other policies and procedures. Though important, these variables are not tightly correlated with what matters most: student learning. We need to measure and then judge ourselves based on our classroom results.

An effective system should identify those schools with troubling results, whether among all of their students or at-risk subgroups. It should pinpoint schools that aren't performing up to expectations – for example, high schools receiving high-performing middle school students who then disproportionately fail to enter college.

But it should also be able to identify the very best schools. We should know which schools have outstanding comprehensive test scores as well as those making remarkable progress with disadvantaged students. We should know which schools' students are truly prepared for college and career when they graduate. We should know which schools' graduates not only enter institutions of higher education but earn degrees.

The Task Force believes strongly that all schools want their students to succeed. But in order for a school to hit the mark, it must know at what it should aim, and that target has to be within reach. So an accountability system must set **explicit, measurable, and appropriate targets.**

An elementary school's teachers must know whether increasing 3rd grade reading scores is the goal, or reducing the 5th grade achievement gap between students of different racial backgrounds is the goal - or whether both are goals. They must know how their school's performance on those indicators will be assessed. Is proficiency the aim or advanced proficiency? Or are they tracking scale scores? And they must know that they can reach their targets. No middle school can be reasonably expected to hit a 100 percent passing rate among 6th graders if its elementary feeder schools graduate woefully underperforming 5th graders.

This final point raises arguably the most important characteristic of a high-quality accountability system: it must measure **student growth.** Of course, our aspiration for every child is the absolute mastery of key skills and the total acquisition of essential knowledge. But different schools receive students at vastly different levels of achievement. This phenomenon is most evident in our lowest-income communities, where many teachers begin their school years with classrooms of students far behind grade level.

Public education must never shy away from its responsibility to raise all students to high levels of achievement regardless of socioeconomic or other extrinsic conditions; however, it is terribly unfair to schools and demoralizing to their educators if they are not given credit for the progress made by their students. Yes, it is a shame if each of Ms. Johnson's 7th graders fails to end the year with 7th grade reading skills; but if each entered her classroom with 3rd grade skills and made several years worth of progress during their time with her, she deserves our praise and admiration, not censure.

Though the above characteristics are critical, an accountability system's work is still far from over when metrics are established, goals are set, and progress toward targets is tallied. The system then **must generate appropriate interventions** for each school.

That begins by acknowledging that not all struggling schools are alike. The system must have a tailored response for the school with struggling English-language learners, the school where low-income students lag far behind their more affluent peers, and the school where too few students take Advanced Placement classes.

It also means recognizing that there are vastly different levels of "underperformance." While we may seek change in both the school with a 20 percent failure rate and the one with a 90 percent failure rate, they must be labeled and treated quite differently.

With this said, we must have a sense of urgency about the students in all of our struggling schools. Our responses must grow in scope and seriousness when underperformance persists. No school should be allowed to under-educate its students indefinitely. **Intensified response** means that while a school may expect ample support at the first signs of trouble, unresponsiveness should lead to additional and more intrusive interventions, possibly ending in state takeover or closure of the school.

Though addressing our low-performing schools should be our highest priority, a great accountability system will go further. Unlike our current system, which virtually ignores schools that excel, there should be consequences – *positive* consequences – for those on the far right side of the quality distribution.

For example, a district with consistently superior results should have the opportunity to enjoy **earned autonomy.** Rules and regulations are generally designed to preclude worst-case scenarios. But they can also tie the hands of innovative, high-performing professionals. The leaders of our best schools should have greater flexibility when it comes to inputs: for example, teacher certification rules and seat-time requirements. These schools should also be free of heavy-handed state oversight – e.g. monitoring visits, reporting requirements – that might be appropriate for lower-performing schools, on which the limited resources of the Department are best invested.

Another major flaw in the current order is the sense it has generated among educators that accountability systems are solely about judgment and sentencing – a school receives its verdict at the end of the year and then awaits punishment. Educators shouldn't dread the release of assessment scores or school report cards; they should look forward to them.

This can only occur if these are seen as providing **diagnostic information** that is actually helpful to educators in driving improvement. An accountability system should inform a school's staff of its areas of strengths and weakness with as much specificity as possible so they can adjust and improve. It doesn't help a principal to tell her that her African-American student subgroup is underperforming in reading; she wants to know precisely which students are struggling, which standards they were unable to master,

and how far behind they are. She'd also appreciate receiving early warning signs so she and her team are able to develop remediation strategies throughout the year, instead of learning about the problem after summer vacation has begun.

Finally, the accountability system of the future should focus its attention on **the real unit of change, the school**. QSAC prescribes interventions for low-performing districts while ignoring the reality that failure affects children at the school level and that effective reforms should concentrate there.

This is more than a philosophical position. New Jersey has a generation of experience with district interventions, with mixed results at best. To be sure, district dysfunction certainly seeps into schools. Nonetheless, if an accountability system is to have meaningful and lasting influence, it must set its sights on school performance and direct its energies toward principals, teachers, students, and classrooms.

Next Steps

The Task Force recommends that the Department, working with the State Board, move forward on three fronts. First, it should develop a clear and rigorous accountability system based on the 10 principles outlined above. Pending federal action and state statutory reform, the State can begin tackling much of this work. That is, the State can set new and more challenging performance targets, it can focus on growth in addition to status, it can develop more robust interventions, and it can provide more diagnostic information to schools and their teachers.

These activities might be consolidated into and be given energy by a new State Report Card system. Districts such as New York City and states such as Florida have, for some time, graded their schools and applied targeted interventions based on these grades. While it is premature to endorse such a "single score" approach, and provisionally, we are disinclined to recommend this, such report cards can be thorough and nuanced and provide invaluable, actionable information to parents, educators, and policymakers.

Second, the State should apply for a waiver to NCLB. The federal Department of Education recently has invited states to develop new, tough accountability systems that would replace the framework mandated under the decade-old federal law, and the Department should seize on this opportunity.

Third, the Department should draft legislation that would modify QSAC to a unitary accountability system, based on the 10 principles, that accurately assesses schools and delineates meaningful interventions would better advance the goals behind this flawed state program.

Pursued together, these three strategies will make New Jersey a national leader in school accountability and greatly improve the state's system of public education.

The Task Force also recognizes that in our State-operated districts, the State has a responsibility to pursue policies that are in the best interests of children while also recognizing the democratic value of

local control. As the State transitions to a new accountability system, a responsible transition should be negotiated for each district based upon achieved benchmarks of student performance.

Regulatory Reform

Overview

New Jersey's public schools are governed by an astoundingly dense and complex array of laws and regulations[7]. Many of these are appropriate. Academic standards done right add value by establishing expected learning results; assessments done right add value by measuring actual learning results; financial management done right confirms how taxpayer resources are spent and to what effect; prudent health and safety requirements protect children and reporting done right provides transparency to the public.

But we have gone too far. Embedded within 1,200 pages of statutes and 1,000 pages of regulations is a host of rules that needlessly burden our educators. In some cases, such as the regulation specifying the type of filing cabinet districts must use to house student records, these policies are hard to understand and even harder to justify. These overly prescriptive rules and regulations inhibit the initiative of teachers, school leaders and administrators and stifle creativity in schools and central offices throughout the state. They are also at odds with an effective accountability system that embodies a partnership between two central values: 1) establishing ambitious academic standards with associated "output-oriented" performance objectives for every school and district, coupled with concrete, state-enforced consequences for failing to meet them; and 2) empowering districts and local educators with the information, support, and decision-making authority to craft their own approach to meeting these ambitious goals.

If the Department is going to truly focus on results and empower educators to do right by their students, the State must engage in a comprehensive review of this mountain of rules to ensure that local schools have the necessary freedom and flexibility to innovate as they continue to strive toward school improvement and student results.

Every hour a teacher spends filing forms is an hour less spent on lesson plans or professional development. Every day a superintendent spends complying with unnecessary policies is a day that could have been invested in closing the achievement gap or improving the high school graduation rate. Every week the Department spends updating old regulations or promulgating new ones is time not spent on improving our lowest-performing schools.

The opportunity costs of education's regulatory culture are staggering.

[7] A statute is a law passed by the New Jersey Legislature and signed by the Governor. A regulation is a rule promulgated by either the Commissioner of Education or the State Board of Education that fills in the gaps of a statute. For example, a statute might require teachers to complete 50 hours of professional development each year, while a regulation interpreting that statute might specify the specific courses to be taken. Importantly, a statute can only be amended or repealed through the legislative process. A regulation, on the other hand, can be amended or repealed through the unilateral action of the Commissioner of Education or the State Board of Education.

Process

As mandated by the Governor's Executive Order, the Task Force has begun a comprehensive review of the laws and regulations governing New Jersey's public schools. Our review has been organized around two related considerations. First, any mandate that does not directly advance student learning, safety, or fiscal integrity is a candidate for elimination or modification. Second, other than in certain circumscribed areas where it is appropriate for the State to retain firm central direction, districts and schools are in by far the best position to craft their own pathways to meet the ambitious performance standards set by the State.

The Task Force began the process by assembling a working group to conduct a comprehensive and detailed review of Title 6A of the Administrative Code regulations. For each regulation, we have analyzed:

1. The statutory authorization and intent.
2. The degree to which it exceeds the statutory mandate.
3. The degree to which it impacts student achievement.
4. The need for the regulations to protect student/employee health and safety.
5. The need for the regulations to provide minimum standards of fiscal stewardship.

While this massive task is daunting, the Task Force has tackled it with vigor. To date, with the support of our team of lawyers, we have reviewed much of the regulatory code. In the coming months, the Task Force will comb through the rest, along with the underlying statutes, and offer the Governor, Legislature, Department, and State Board of Education a complete list of changes for consideration. That list will be included in our final report to be issued on or before December 31, 2011.

In the interim, below, the Task Force proposes an initial list of regulatory changes for the Department's consideration. This list is the product of our research and input from a variety of stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, parents, and more. The Task Force is encouraged by what we have collectively uncovered; we believe strongly that the adoption of these recommendations will both ease the burden placed on educators and facilitate the Department's work to significantly improve student learning.

Proposed Regulatory Changes

The regulations identified for alteration fall into a number of categories. Some are simply unrelated to student learning, fiscal integrity, or student health and safety – the areas about which we should be most concerned. Others are duplicative of statutory language, thereby causing clutter in our code book. Some regulations are unclear, confusing both those charged with administering them and those attempting to comply with them. Finally, some regulations clearly stifle educator innovation and autonomy.

For each of the proposed regulatory changes below, the Task Force provides the citation to the regulation, the operative language, how the regulation has been interpreted where not self-evident, the proposed change, and the reason or reasons underlying the proposed change.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:30 Evaluation of the Performance of School Districts (QSAC)**

  In Part I of this Report, we propose a fundamentally revised system of accountability for the State that would replace both NCLB and QSAC and would provide for new approaches to supporting schools in their improvement efforts. In some respects, this recommendation would require statutory changes in addition to federal approval of a waiver from NCLB. Accordingly, this will not be implemented in time for the current school year. In the meanwhile, a Department working group has examined the regulations implementing QSAC in hopes of a more immediate streamlining of the current process within the confines of the existing statute.

  Under QSAC, the Department evaluates school districts in five areas: fiscal management, governance, instruction & program, operation management, and personnel. Districts are currently measured on a total of 334 indicators within the five review sections. Districts must meet 80 percent of the indicators in all five areas to be State certified, and those falling below 80 percent in one or more sections must implement an improvement plan and other actions as directed by the Department.

  The streamlined process proposed by the Department working group would keep the five review sections intact, but reduce the number of indicators from 334 to 54. In addition, the proposal calls for each superintendent to annually submit to the Department a "Statement of Assurance" to verify that the school system is meeting 49 other standards in each of the five sections. Each school board must approve the document by saying that it attests, to the best of its knowledge, that the district is complying with the standards in the Statement of Assurance.

  The Task Force wholeheartedly endorses this regulatory reform and encourages the State Board of Education to adopt the new regulations. Making the NJQSAC process more efficient and less time-consuming will allow districts to more efficiently use limited resources and to focus attention on factors that directly impact student achievement. While this regulatory reform should not be viewed as a substitute for the more comprehensive reform proposed by the Task Force, this proposal will yield better data for the Department and districts while substantially reducing the compliance burden of the current process.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-15.2 Amount, duration and content of required continuing professional development.**

  "Each district board of education shall require all active teachers in the school district to complete 100 clock hours of approved professional development every five years. Each teacher must make annual yearly progress during the five-year cycle, though there is no specific annual

hourly requirement for teachers entering a five-year cycle in years one through four. For teachers entering a five-year cycle in year five, 20 hours of professional development must be completed in that one year. All new teachers employed under provisional or standard certificates must fulfill this requirement and must therefore have a Professional Development Plan (PDP) within 60 instructional days of the beginning of their teaching assignment."

The Department and State Board should seek to amend this regulation to focus on student learning rather than hours of professional development seat-time; that is, the goal should be driving outputs not mandating inputs. Amending this regulation will also encourage innovation as the state and districts are able to experiment with different approaches to improving academic achievement via professional development. For example, districts might conclude that devoting increased time to expanding Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) has a greater impact on student achievement than does traditional professional development.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:23A-5.2(c) Public relations and professional services; board policies; efficiency.**

"School district and county vocational school district publications shall be produced and distributed in the most cost-efficient manner possible that will enable the district to inform and educate the target community. The use of expensive materials or production techniques where lower cost methods are available and appropriate, such as the use of multi-color glossy publications instead of suitable, less expensive alternatives, is prohibited. School district and county vocational school district publications shall be produced and distributed in the most cost-efficient manner possible that will enable the district to inform and educate the target community. The use of expensive materials or production techniques where lower cost methods are available and appropriate, such as the use of multi-color glossy publications instead of suitable, less expensive alternatives, is prohibited."

The Department and State Board should seek to modify this overly prescriptive regulation. The Department should not be in the business of determining what kinds of paper districts use. In light of the 2 percent property tax cap, which properly constrains increases in aggregate district spending, district administrators should have greater flexibility with regard to the nature of their expenditures.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:23A-5.2(a)(3) Public relations and professional services; board policies; efficiency.**

"Districts with legal costs that exceed 130 percent of the Statewide average per pupil amount should establish the following procedures and, if not established, provide evidence that such procedures would not result in a reduction of costs."

The Department and State Board should seek to modify this regulation. In light of the 2 percent property tax cap, which properly constrains increases in aggregate district spending, district administrators should have greater flexibility with regard to the nature of their expenditures.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:23A-9.3(c)(3) Efficiency standards for review of administrative and non-instructional expenditures and efficient business practices.**

  "Efficient administrative and non-instructional costs include, but are not limited to, the following . . . [c]ustodians and janitors on a ratio of one for every 17,500 square feet of building space calculated on a district-wide basis."

  The Department and State Board should seek to modify this regulation. Although this restriction technically applies to the budget review process by county superintendents, it has come to establish a norm for all districts that was not intended. In light of the 2 percent property tax cap, which properly constrains increases in aggregate district spending, district administrators should have greater flexibility with regard to the nature of their expenditures.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:23A-9.3(c)(8) Efficiency standards for review of administrative and non-instructional expenditures and efficient business practices.**

  "Efficient administrative and non-instructional costs include, but are not limited to, the following . . . [v]acant positions budgeted at no more than step one of the salary guide unless justification for the additional amount has been approved by the Department."

  The Department and State Board should seek to modify this regulation. Although this restriction technically applies to the budget review process by county superintendents, it has come to establish a norm for all districts that was not intended. In light of the 2 percent property tax cap, which properly constrains increases in aggregate district spending, district administrators and educators should have the flexibility to attract and hire the best educators.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:23A-9.3(c)(9) Efficiency standards for review of administrative and non-instructional expenditures and efficient business practices.**

  "Efficient administrative and non-instructional costs include, but are not limited to, the following . . . [a]ides that are not mandated by law or required by an IEP employed only when supported by independent research-based evidence that demonstrates the use of aides is an effective and efficient way of addressing the needs of the particular student population served."

  The Department and State Board should seek to modify this regulation. There are valid justifications for aides beyond the requirements of law and Individualized Education Program IEPs. In light of the 2 percent property tax cap, which properly constrains increases in aggregate

district spending, district administrators should have greater flexibility to determine staffing within their schools.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:23A-9.3(c)(14) Efficiency standards for review of administrative and non-instructional expenditures and efficient business practices.**

  "Efficient administrative and non-instructional costs include, but are not limited to, the following . . . [p]ublic relations services that are incorporated into the duties of the superintendent, business administrator and/or other staff position or positions and not provided by a dedicated public relations staff position or contracted service provider."

  The Department and State Board should seek to modify this regulation. The Task Force believes that decisions about how to best keep families and the community informed and empowered should be left to districts. In light of the 2 percent property tax cap, which properly constrains increases in aggregate district spending, district administrators should have greater flexibility with regard to the nature of their expenditures.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:23A-16 *et seq.* Fiscal accountability, efficiency, and budgeting procedures.**

  "Each district board of education and charter school board of trustees shall maintain a uniform system of financial bookkeeping and reporting. . . . Quotations for fresh or frozen fruits, vegetables and meats need not be solicited more than once in any two-week period*"*

  These regulations prescribe a highly specific system of double-entry bookkeeping and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles ("GAAP") to be employed by districts and schools. The Department should consider condensing some of these burdensome regulations and reducing financial reports requirements not required by statute, particularly when a school demonstrates sound financial practices through independent audits.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A-32.7.8(e) Retention and disposal of student records**.

  "The New Jersey public school district of last enrollment, graduation or permanent departure of the student from the school district shall keep for 100 years a mandated record of a student's name, date of birth, name of parents, gender, citizenship, address, telephone number, health history and immunization, standardized assessment and test answer sheet (protocol), grades, attendance, classes attended, grade level completed, year completed, and years of attendance."

  The Department and State Board should seek to amend this regulation to encourage electronic recordkeeping, which would allow districts to maintain the same records at significantly lower costs.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:11-2.1 [Charter] Application and approval process.**

  "The Commissioner with the authority of N.J.S.A. 18A:36-1 et seq. may approve or deny an application for a charter after review of the application submitted by an eligible applicant and the recommendation(s) from the district board(s) of education or State district superintendent(s) of the district of residence of the proposed charter school."

  The Department and State Board should seek to amend this regulation, which is burdensome for charter school applicants, school districts, and the Department. Among other issues, it establishes both a normal and a separate expedited charter school application process, requires that applicants submit documentation which is occasionally duplicative, and limits the ability of the Department to establish performance contracts with charter school applicants. The Department should develop new regulations that continue to enable local stakeholders to voice opinions on charter applications while streamlining and simplifying this process.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:11-6.1 [Charter] Tenure acquisition.**

  "All teaching staff members, janitors and secretaries shall acquire streamlined tenure in a charter school after three consecutive academic years, together with employment at the beginning of the next succeeding academic year, in accordance with the tenure acquisition criteria as set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:28-5(b), 18A:28-6 and 18A:17-2(b)2."

  The Department and State Board should carefully study the charter tenure regulations. The charter school statute introduces the concept of "streamlined tenure," but leaves its definition and related process questions to regulation. This presents an opportunity for the Department to tie tenure in charter schools to assessments of effectiveness as determined by robust evaluations.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:11-2.3 Renewal of charter.**

  "The Commissioner shall grant or deny the renewal of a charter upon the comprehensive review of the school including, but not limited to [several factors]: A renewal application submitted by a charter school to the Commissioner, the respective county superintendent of schools and the district board(s) of education or State district superintendent(s) of the district of residence of the charter school no later than 4:15 P.M. on October 15 of the last school year of the current charter. . . ."

  The Department and State Board should seek to amend this regulation to ensure that charter school operators are held accountable for results through a charter school renewal process that balances effective decision-making with a reasonable process for the Department, charter school leaders, and other stakeholders.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:11-2.1(m) [Charter] Application and approval process.**

  "A charter school shall locate its facility in its district of residence or in one of the districts of its region of residence."

  The Department and State Board should seek to repeal this regulation. The charter school statute does not require that a charter school locate its facility in its district or region of residence. Charter schools should be free to determine the best location for their buildings, subject to the input of any affected district.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:11-2.6 Amendment to charter.**

  "A charter school may apply to the Commissioner for an amendment to the charter following the final granting of the charter."

  The Department and State Board should study this regulation carefully. "Charter amendment" is given only passing mention in the charter school statute; process and related issues are all defined in this regulation alone. Accordingly, the Department and State Board should consider how this instrument might be best utilized to advance student learning, for example by facilitating the expansion and replication of high-performing charters or by enhancing accountability for existing charter schools.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:11-1.2 (Definitions) and N.J.A.C. § 6A:11-2.1 [Charter] application and approval process.**

  "'District of residence' means the school district in which a charter school facility is physically located; if a charter school is approved with a region of residence comprised of contiguous school districts, that region is the charter school's district of residence."

  The Department and State Board should consider eliminating the "contiguous" requirement from the definition of "district of residence" to provide future charter school founders with increased flexibility in establishing charter schools.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A.11-2.1(i)(14) [Charter] application and approval process.**

  "The Commissioner may approve an application for a charter which shall be effective when all necessary documents and information are received by the Commissioner. The charter school shall submit on or before the dates specified in the letter of approval the documentation not available at the time of the application submission including, but not limited to, copies of . . .

[e]vidence of enrollment of at least 90 percent of approved maximum enrollment, as verified by student registrations signed by parent/guardian(s).”

Historically, this regulation has been interpreted to require 90 percent of approved maximum enrollment in the charter school’s district of residence. The Department and State Board should seek to clarify that this regulation means 90 percent of enrolled students, whether inside or outside the charter school’s district of residence. This regulation has also been interpreted to preclude innovative charter school models, such as virtual or online schools. The Department should clarify that this regulation does not proscribe such innovative models.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:11-2.2 [Charter school] Reporting.**

“The board of trustees of a charter school shall submit an annual report no later than 4:15 P.M. on August 1 following each full school year in which the charter school is in operation to the Commissioner, the respective county superintendent of schools and the district board(s) of education or State district superintendent(s) of the district of residence of a charter school. If August 1 falls on a weekend, the annual report is due on the first subsequent work day.”

“The board of trustees of a charter school shall submit documentation annually to the Commissioner for approval prior to the opening of school on dates specified by and in a format prescribed by the Commissioner.”

The Department and State Board should consider amendment of this regulation. Although charter schools’ annual reporting requirement is statutory, the scope of that requirement is defined in regulation. The obligation to provide “annual documentation,” however, is purely regulatory. The Department should consider whether the annual report and “annual documentation” provide overlapping information, and to the extent that they do, the Department should consider eliminating such redundancies.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-4.6(c) [Early childhood] Family and community involvement.**

“The district board of education shall establish a preschool through grade three early childhood advisory council (ECAC) to review preschool program implementation and to support transition as children move from preschool through grade three.”

The Department and State Board should review this requirement. While family, community, and other stakeholder involvement is critical to the success of preschool programs, the regulation’s one-size-fits-all mandated approach may not be suitable for all districts. Flexibility should be encouraged so that local districts can review and support these programs and their students in ways they deem appropriate. Further, the Department should strive to identify and recognize exemplary preschool programs throughout the State and support struggling preschool programs with targeted improvement efforts.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-4.6(b) [Early childhood] Family and community development.**

  "The services shall be provided by a combination of social worker(s), family worker(s) and community parent involvement specialist(s) (CPIS) as part of the school district's five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update as required and approved by the Department."

  The Department and State Board should review the merits of this regulation. The Task Force agrees that social services are an integral part of any preschool program and that families and the community must be engaged. However, regulations should not require dedicated community parent involvement specialists (CPISs) to be hired to perform those functions. Rather, flexibility should be encouraged so that preschool providers and local districts can provide these mandated social service functions in ways they deem appropriate, whether by a dedicated CPIS or other appropriate personnel.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-9.1(e)(3) [Early childhood] Mandated contract.**

  "Each private provider or local Head Start agency that has not previously held a preschool program contract with a district board of education shall be able to meet the following criteria to be eligible for a contract . . . (3) [b]e able to accommodate at least 90 eligible children in a manner consistent with this chapter."

  The Department and State Board should review the merits of this regulation. This regulation impedes smaller private preschool providers with fewer than 90 students from serving school districts, and thus limits choice and flexibility for parents, particularly those in the State's smaller districts. The Department should consider relaxing this minimum capacity requirement permitted that preschool providers demonstrate the efficacy of their programs and finances.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-9.1(a) [Early childhood] Contract and N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-9.4(b) [Early childhood] Termination of a preschool program contract.**

  "The preschool program contract with private providers and local Head Start agencies shall be in a form provided and/or approved by the Department."
  "The district board of education shall use the following process to terminate a contracting private provider or local Head Start agency's preschool program contract . . . (1) [i]f a contracting private provider or local Head Start agency fails to comply with all terms of the preschool program contract or applicable Federal, State or local requirements, the school district shall notify the contracting private provider or local Head Start agency and the Department of the deficiency in writing and provide a timeframe for compliance."

The Department and State Board should review these regulations. In particular, the Department should consider converting the mandatory requirements of the regulations into non-mandatory guideline of a model contract for districts, so long as the requirement for a contract with each provider is met.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-9.2 [Early childhood] Informal dispute resolution process.**

  "The district board of education and contracting private provider or local Head Start agency shall attempt to resolve any dispute that may arise."

  The Department and State Board should review this regulation. Informal dispute resolution is not mandated by law. Accordingly, while informal dispute resolution should be encouraged by the Department, it should not be mandated in regulation.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-9.3 Renewal or non-renewal of a preschool program contract.**

  "The district board of education and contracting private provider or local Head Start agency and Department shall use the following process for renewal or non-renewal of a private provider or local Head Start agency preschool program contract."

  The Department and State Board should review this regulation. The Department should not be required to approve every renewal and non-renewal decision made by local districts. Districts should be able to make their decisions regarding the renewal or non-renewal of a preschool program contract without interference from the Department, so long as the program meets clear performance targets.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-9.4(f) Termination of a preschool program contract.**

  "In the event of non-renewal or termination of the preschool program contract by the school district or the contracting private provider or local Head Start agency, the contracting private provider or local Head Start agency may be required by the school district to continue the service until the school district has found an appropriate placement for all children. At no time shall the contracting private provider or local Head Start agency be required to continue and be reimbursed for the service for more than 90 days beyond the expiration date of the existing preschool program contract."

  The Department and State Board should review this regulation. In particular, the Department should consider whether the 90-day requirement could be shortened or eliminated altogether.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-10.1(b)(4) [Early childhood] School district fiscal responsibilities.**

"The district board of education shall request regular updates on the status of any corrective action plans or outstanding issues raised as a result of a limited examination or audit report."

The Department and State Board should review this regulation. Since this regulation was enacted, the State passed a new school funding formula, the School Funding Reform Act ("SFRA"). The Department should consider the audit process in light of the SFRA, and with an eye to treating public and private preschool providers comparably by holding them to comparable standards for fiscal integrity.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-11.1 Preschool program appeals.**

"A school district may file an appeal of their preschool program plan and/or annual update and budget decision with the Commissioner of Education, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:3, Controversies and Disputes, and shall generally proceed as a contested case except as noted in this subchapter. Service of the petition is required on the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey, and should be directed to the Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Law, P.O. Box 112, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0112; Attention: Education and Higher Education Section."

The Department and State Board should review this regulation. The Task Force believes that the formal service of the Department of Law and Public Safety in the appeals process is unnecessary.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-13.4 School nurse/non-instructional.**

"To be eligible for the standard educational services certificate with a school nurse/non-instructional endorsement, a candidate shall hold a current New Jersey registered professional nurse license issued by the New Jersey State Board of Nursing, hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university, hold current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillators (AED) certificates and complete either a Department-approved college curriculum for the preparation of school nurse/non-instructional or a program of studies, minimum of 21 credits that includes study in [nine separate areas] . . . . Human and intercultural relations. Studies designed to develop understanding of social interaction and culture change, including courses such as the following: urban sociology, history of minority groups, intergroup relations, and urban, suburban and rural problems. . . . School law including legal aspects of school nursing.."

The Department and State Board should seek to limit the breadth of the "program of studies" from nine separate areas to two – study of public health nursing and human growth and development. This change will provide districts and schools with larger applicant pools for their non-instructional school nurse positions.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13-1.1(a) Purpose and applicability of rules.**

  " These rules are promulgated pursuant to the School Funding Reform Act, P.L. 2007, c. 260, to ensure that all students receive the educational entitlements guaranteed them by the New Jersey Constitution. These rules shall ensure that all districts provide students with a rigorous curriculum that is based on the Core Curriculum Content Standards; that relies on the use of State assessments to improve instruction . . . ."

  The Department and State Board should consider amending this regulation to include the phrase "and other relevant data" after "State assessments" and before "to improve instruction" to make clear that districts may offer their own assessments in addition to those provided by the Department.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13-2.1(a)(3) Standards-based instruction.**

  "All school districts shall implement a coherent curriculum for all students, including English language learners (ELLs), gifted and talented students and students with disabilities, that is content-rich and aligned to the most recent revision of the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS). The curriculum shall guide instruction to ensure that every student masters the CCCS. Instruction shall be designed to engage all students and modified based on student performance. Such curriculum shall include . . . [a] pacing guide."

  The Department and State Board should consider amending this regulation to eliminate the pacing guide requirement. If we are focused on results, we should minimize such mandates on inputs. District and school leaders and their teachers should determine the best ways to ensure that students learn what is expected.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:7-1.7(b)(2) Equality in school and classroom practices.**

  "Each district board of education shall ensure that the district's curriculum and instruction are aligned to the State's Core Curriculum Content Standards and address the elimination of discrimination by narrowing the achievement gap, by providing equity in educational programs and by providing opportunities for students to interact positively with others regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability or socioeconomic status, by . . . (2) [e]nsuring that courses shall not be offered separately on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability or socioeconomic status."

  The Department and State Board should review this regulation to be certain that it is consonant with federal and State constitutional and statutory protections, which prohibit students from

being assigned to single-sex classrooms but allow families and students to "opt-in" to such arrangements.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:14-4.7(e) Program criteria: special class programs, secondary, and vocational rehabilitation.**

  "Instructional group sizes for preschool, elementary and secondary special class programs shall not exceed the limits listed below. The instructional group size may be increased with the addition of a classroom aide according to the numbers listed in Column III as set forth below. When determining whether a classroom aide is required, students with a personal aide shall not be included in the student count."

  The Department and State Board should seek to amend this regulation to permit school administrators, consistent with the requirements of the applicable Individualized Education Program (IEPs) and the determinations of the Child Study Team (CST), to determine the number of classroom aides needed.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-5.11(b) Validation of college degrees and college professional preparation.**

  "Professional education preparation programs required for New Jersey certificates shall be accepted from: (1) A New Jersey college approved by the State Board for the preparation of teachers; (2) Out-of-State colleges approved by the State board or department of education or department of higher education in the state in which the college is established and approved by the Department on the basis of reciprocal agreements; and (3) Regionally accredited two-year colleges provided that . . . [n]o more than six semester-hour credits in professional education are completed on the two-year college level, except as provided for in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.18."

  The Department and State Board should seek to repeal this regulation since it is duplicative of statute and other regulation. Further, the six semester-hour cap on credits from two-year colleges is an arbitrary limitation that gives no consideration to the quality of the programs offered by the two-year colleges.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:27-7.2 [School bus] Capacity.**

  "The number of students assigned to a seat shall not exceed the gross seating length in inches divided by 15. The maximum number of students who may be transported in each vehicle shall be determined by this seat measurement. Application of this formula shall not result in the use of a school vehicle with a seating capacity in excess of 54."

The Department and State Board should seek to eliminate the upper limit on school bus seats. Provided that rigorous safety requirements are met, districts should be able to select the bus size that best serves their needs.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-12.7(b)(2) School business administrator.**

  "To be eligible for a provisional administrative certificate with a school business administrator endorsement, the candidate shall . . . [o]btain and accept an offer of employment in a position that requires the school business administrator endorsement in a public school district that has agreed formally to sponsor the residency."

  This regulation requires a school business administrator obtaining a certificate of eligibility to work in a public school. The Department and State Board should seek to amend this regulation so that school business administrators at private schools for the disabled are treated the same as are school business administrators at district schools. Doing so will eliminate the unfair requirement that business administrators first work in a public school before being able to obtain a certificate of eligibility.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:13A-7.1 [Preschool] Space requirements.**

  "The district board of education shall ensure, for all newly contracted private provider and local Head Start agency preschool classrooms, a minimum of 950 square feet per classroom consisting of 750 square feet of usable space, 150 square feet of storage and equipment or furnishings that are either built in or not easily movable and 50 square feet of toilet room."

  The Department and State Board should seek to relax or repeal this regulation while maintaining rigorous standards for student health and safety. Doing so will allow private preschool providers to achieve cost efficiencies with no adverse impact on student learning, health, or safety. The Department already issues frequent waivers of these rules, and the regulation should reflect Department policy and practice.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:16-10.1 Home or out-of-school instruction due to a temporary or chronic health condition.**

  "The school district shall provide instructional services within five school days after receipt of the school physician's verification or, if verification is made prior to the student's confinement, during the first week of the student's confinement to the home or out-of-school setting."

  This regulation requires that districts provide home instruction for any student absent for at least ten days beginning five days following receipt of a letter of verification from the school physician. Targeted instruction for students during extended illnesses is critical to the pursuit of

college-and career-readiness, but this regulation is burdensome for districts in the case of shorter-term absences (e.g., between 10-20 days). The Department and State Board should seek to relax this regulation. For example, districts should be able to pursue alternatives to home instruction, such as online programs or various tutoring options.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:16-10.2(d)(3) Home or out-of-school instruction for a general education student for reasons other than a temporary or chronic health condition.**

  "The teacher shall provide one-on-one instruction for no fewer than 10 hours per week on three separate days of the week and no fewer than 10 hours per week of additional guided learning experiences that may include the use of technology to provide audio and visual connections to the student's classroom."

  The Department and State Board should seek to relax this regulation and allow districts to reduce the number of hours of one-on-one instruction if alternative approaches, such as the creative use of technology, can be used to increase instructional time.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-6.1-6.3 Types of teacher certificates.**

  "The standard certificate is a permanent certificate issued to candidates who have met all requirements for State certification . . . The provisional certificate is a two-year certificate issued to candidates who have met requirements for initial employment as part of a State-approved school district training program or residency leading to standard certification. . . .An emergency certificate is a substandard certificate issued only to educational services certificate candidates who meet the requirements specified for each endorsement. . . ."

  These three regulations define the three types of teacher certificates – standard, provisional, and emergency. These regulations, however, may be confused with the three types of credentials that a teacher may earn – instructional, educational, and administrative. The Department and State Board should endeavor to clarify these three regulations.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-5.2(c) Certificates – general.**

  "The chief school administrator of each district board of education shall annually report the names and teaching assignments of all teaching staff members to the county superintendent. The county superintendent shall provide to the employing district board of education and the Commissioner written notice of any instance in which a teaching staff position is occupied by a person who does not hold appropriate certification."

  The Department and State Board should consider repeal of this regulation as it already receives comparable information from other mandated reports.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-14.1(b) [Professional licensure and standards] General provisions.**

  "If such approval is given by the Commissioner, it shall be of three months' duration, and may be renewed by him or her upon application for a period of three months at a time. Consideration of said request shall be made on a case-by-case basis. If the acting status of said individual is to extend beyond a year, no such permission can be given except upon recommendation of the Commissioner to the State Board that the application of the district board of education be granted."

  This regulation requires both Commissioner and State Board of Education approval where the "acting status" of an administrator is extended beyond one year. The Department and State Board should seek to amend the regulation to allow for approval from the Commissioner alone. The dual approval process creates a needless redundancy.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-11.12 Swimming and water safety.**

  "To be eligible for the swimming and water safety endorsement, candidates shall hold: (1) [a] standard New Jersey instructional certificate; (2) [a] valid Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation for Professional Rescuer Certificate issued by the American Red Cross or the YMCA; (3) [a]valid Lifeguard Certificate issued by the American Red Cross or YMCA; and (4) [a] valid Water Safety Instructor Certificate issued by the American Red Cross or the YMCA."

  The Department and State Board should review this regulation and determine whether an individual needs all four of these certificates to be prepared to deal with the emergency situations that may arise at a school pool or other body of water. Of course, student safety remains paramount, and if the Department determines that each certificate is necessary, the Department should leave the regulation unchanged.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-4.1(a) and § 6A:9-4.2(a) State Board of Examiners.**

  "There shall be a Board of Examiners, consisting of the Commissioner, ex officio, and one assistant commissioner of education, two presidents of State colleges, one county superintendent, one superintendent of schools of a Type I district, one superintendent of a Type II district, one high school principal, one elementary school principal, one librarian employed by the State or by one of its political subdivisions, one school business administrator and four teaching staff members other than a superintendent, principal, school business administrator or librarian, all of whom shall be appointed by the Commissioner with the approval of the State Board."

  "The Board of Examiners shall issue appropriate certificates to teach or to administer, direct, or supervise, the teaching, instruction or educational guidance of pupils in public schools operated

by district boards of education, and such other certificates as it shall be authorized to issue by law, based upon certified scholastic records, documented experience or upon examinations, and may revoke or suspend such certificates. The authority to issue certificates also includes the authority to refuse to issue a certificate under appropriate circumstances as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.2. All actions taken by the Board of Examiners shall be taken pursuant to rules adopted by the State Board."

The Department and State Board should consider repealing these regulations as they are duplicative of N.J.S.A. § 18A:6-34 and N.J.S.A. § 18A:6-38 respectively.

- **N.J.S.A. § 6A:19-2.3(a)(1) Access to county vocational schools.**

"Each resident district board of education shall ensure that resident students may apply to and, if accepted, attend a county vocational school pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:54-20.1. The existence of the same career and technical education program at the resident district board of education shall not negate a student's right to apply to and, if accepted, attend a county vocational school, subject to the following limitations: (1) The resident district board of education shall be responsible for the tuition and transportation costs of any resident student admitted to the county vocational school in which the school district is located, unless the resident district board of education maintains a vocational school pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:54-5 et seq., and such school offers the same program as the county vocational school where the student has been admitted. A program shall be deemed the same, for purposes of this section, if it is approved by the Department in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:19-3.1 and 3.2, is assigned the same Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code, and meets or exceeds all applicable program performance standards."

The Department and State Board should consider eliminating this regulation as it is duplicative of N.J.S.A. § 18A-54-20.1.

- **N.J.A.C. § 6A:9-5.6(b) Oath of allegiance required.**

"Any person who is a citizen or subject of any country other than the United States is required to file an oath to support the Constitution of the United States while so employed."

The Department and State Board should consider repealing this regulation as it is duplicative of N.J.S.A. § 18A:6-7, which already mandates an oath of allegiance for candidates.

Upcoming Work of the Task Force

This Initial Report represents a first step in the work of the Task Force; the great majority of the regulatory reform project and accountability system development will occur after the submission of this update.

Once this Report is released publicly, the Task Force will solicit comments on the ideas expressed in the document from the public, stakeholders, and the State Board of Education. These perspectives will be used to review and revise the recommendations expressed herein and to inform the future work of the Task Force.

With regard to evaluating school and district performance for a revamped accountability system, the Task Force recommends that the Department's Division of Performance develop specific definitions of academic achievement for this purpose, in compliance with federal mandates and in accordance with the principles expressed in this report. This and other efforts should be undertaken toward the goal of achieving approval of a proposed alternative accountability system and a granting of a waiver of NCLB by the federal Department of Education.

Further, the Task Force recommends that the Department's financial and oversight offices create detailed standards for district fiscal responsibility with a focus on internal control systems and standards operating procedures in light of the 2% "hard" property tax cap. The Task Force recommends that the Department's Division of Program and Operations create clear standards for district responsibility regarding student health and safety.

With regard to supporting schools and districts in their efforts to increase the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career, the Task Force will continue its review and will work with Department staff to develop further details of a revised proposal.

With regard to regulatory reform, the process of reviewing each chapter of Department regulation, and each underlying statute, will continue through the end of year. The Task Force's team of lawyers and educators will continue to evaluate the extent to which each regulation exceeds federal mandate, State law, or case law. If the regulation exceeds the underlying authority and does not serve to improve student achievement, operational efficiency, or fiscal effectiveness, then the Task Force will recommend its repeal. The Task Force will collaborate with Department leadership and staff to prepare revised chapter of code which reflect this new regulatory perspective and which shall be proposed to the State Board of Education for adoption. In addition to this review of regulations, the Task Force is also charged with reviewing the statutes supporting these administrative regulations and making further recommendations.

The recommendations derived from these streams of work will be shared in a final report submitted to the Governor by December 31, 2011, at which point the Task Force will expire.

Appendix

Task Force Membership

Dave Hespe (Chair)	Chief of Staff, New Jersey Department of Education[8]. Prior positions include Co-Executive Director and VP of STEM Education at Liberty Science Center; Interim Superintendent, Willingboro School District; Chair and Associate Professor, Educational Leadership Department, Rowan University; Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Education.
Angel Cordero	Co-Founder and Director, Community Education Resource Network and Co-Founder, East Side Preparatory High School.
Angela Davis	Principal, Teaneck High School. Prior positions include Teacher, Clifford J Scott High School, East Orange.
Frank Digesere	Retired Superintendent, Kearny School District[9]. Prior positions include Superintendent of Bloomfield School District and Supervisor, Principal, and Teacher in Kearny School District.
Linda DuBois	Mayor, Pittsgrove Township, and Teacher, Pittsgrove Middle School. Prior positions include Member, Pittsgrove Township Committee.
Don Goncalves	Assistant Board Secretary, Elizabeth Public Schools. Prior positions include Freeholder, Union County; Director of Projects and Community Relations, Elizabeth Development Company.
Bruce Litinger	Executive Director, ECLC of New Jersey (nonprofit provider of services to the children and adults with special needs). Prior positions include Director of Special Services, School Social Worker, and Special Education Teacher in Woodbridge Township School System.
Mike Osnato	Chair, Seton Hall University Department of Education Leadership, Management and Policy. Prior positions include Superintendent, Montclair Public Schools (2003 NJ Superintendent of the Year); Superintendent, Pearl River School District (NY); Superintendent, Cohoes City School District (NY); Superintendent and Principal, Livingston Manor Central School District (NY); Teacher, New York City Department of Education.

[8] Mr. Hespe's position at the Department commenced after his appointment to the Task Force.
[9] Mr. Digesere's retirement occurred after his appointment to the Task Force.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the more than 200 people who met with us, submitted thoughtful written commentary, or attended a public meeting and shared their perspective on how to improve our regulatory code and accountability systems. Without their cooperation and ideas, our work would not have been possible.

We thank the Foundation for Education Advancement / New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, Seton Hall University, and Pittsgrove Township for providing a welcoming place to hold some of our meetings.

We extend our thanks to the team of lawyers and legal interns who have assisted with our legal review of regulations: Maksim Feofanov, Matt Franson, Chris Leavell, David Morin, Justin Nelson, Mac Robertson, Chris Skufca, and Justin Yost, under the leadership of Kevin Mitchell. Finally, we are indebted to the Department of Education staff members who provided invaluable assistance with our work. Thank you, Michael Blaustein, Christopher Emigholz, Diana Pasculli, and Eric Taylor.

Performance Report – Draft

The following document represents a very preliminary draft of the next generation school performance reports. As outlined in the application, the Department will convene a working group and solicit public input before finalizing the metrics, style, or content of this report. This draft is meant for discussion purposes only, and all statistics in this report are theoretical and are not based on actual school or state-wide numbers. When finalized, the performance report will include all data as required by state statute.

Central Township High School

School Score Card

Performance Indicators	Statewide Ranking	Peer School Ranking	% Performance Targets Met
Academic Achievement	82%	17%	50%
College/Career Readiness	82%	78%	25%
Graduation/Post Secondary	95%	10%	25%
Closing Achievement Gaps	65%	5%	33%
Improvement Status:	***Focus***		
Rationale:	***Achievement Gaps***		

Change since last year: *Improvement* *No change* *Decline*

Summary of School Performance

The overall performance of this school is strong; however, its peer schools are outperforming it.

> This school's statewide ranking is in the top 25% of the state in three of the four performance indicators.

> This school's peer school ranking is in the bottom 25% of its peer group in three of the four performance indicators.

> This school met 31.3% of its New Jersey Performance Targets.

During the course of the next academic year, this school should focus on improving its performance with underachiving subgroups.

What do the performance indicators measure?	The performance rankings for Central Township HS indicate:
Academic Achievement	
"**Academic Achievement**" is measured by combining the school's pass rate (proficiency rate) on both the Language Arts Literacy and Math sections of New Jersey's High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA).	This school is a top performer across the state as demonstrated by its **statewide ranking in the 82nd percentile ranking in Academic Achievement** . However, this school is demonstrating much less student achievement success than schools who are educating students with similar demographics, as noted in its **Peer School Ranking of 17th percentile**.
College and Career Readiness	
"**College and Career Readiness**" measures how well the school is preparing its students for college and careers after high school. This indicator includes results from college entrance exams, such as the SAT and AP, and industry or career certification exams.	The students in this school are demonstrating success on early indicators of College and Career Readiness as noted by its **statewide ranking in the 82nd percentile**. Also, this school's **Peer School Comparison ranking is in the 78th percentile**, indicating that on early indicators of college and career readiness it is outperforming most schools who are educating students with similar demographics.
Graduation and Post-Secondary	
"**Graduation and Post-Secondary Enrollment**" measures the school's success in preparing their students to graduate high school and subsequently enroll in post-secondary institutions without requiring remedial coursework.	With regards to the percentage of students that graduate and go on to post-secondary institutions, this school earned a **statewide ranking in the 95th percentile**. Compared to schools that educate students with similar demographics, this school's **Peer School Ranking is in the 10th percentile** indicating that its outcomes are much lower than its peer group.
Closing Within School Gaps	
"**Closing Within School Gaps**" measures the school's progress to address the performance of historically disadvantaged groups. It disaggregates the Academic Achievement indicator into student subgroups as well as measuring the range of outcomes between the 25% and 75% percentile students in the school.	Within the school, performance gaps continue to exist as noted by its **statewide ranking in the 65th percentile**. When compared to schools who are educating students with similar demographics, this school's **Peer School Ranking is in the 5th percentile** indicating that its peers are demonstrating more success in closing their performance gaps.
Improvement Status	**Peer School Ranking**
"**Improvement Status**" represents the school's federal accountability status under New Jersey's waiver for No Child Left Behind. **This school is classified as a Focus school because of its significant within school achievement gaps**.	"Peer School Ranking" represents the school's performance when compared to a group of schools with similar demographics, such as the percentage of free and reduced lunch students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and percentage of Black and Hispanic students.

School Enrollment Information

Enrollment by Grade

This table presents counts for students who were 'on roll' by grade in October of each school year.

Grade	*2007-2008*	*2008-2009*	*2009-2010*	*2010-2011*
Grade 9	152	106	112	155
Grade 10	79	105	140	144
Grade 11	95	111	101	98
Grade 12	119	94	66	84
Ungraded	47	63	36	31
Total	**491**	**478**	**454**	**510**

Enrollment by Subgroup

This table presents counts for students by Subgroup

Subgroup	*2007-2008*	*2008-2009*	*2009-2010*	*2010-2011*
White	220	218	209	170
Black	79	81	87	122
Hispanic	95	88	87	98
American Indian	25	33	22	18
Asian	25	23	21	72
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Two or More Races	47	35	28	31
Male	279	188	226	208
Female	212	290	228	302
With Disabilities	67	89	90	78
Limited English Proficiency	89	90	76	69
Econ. Dis.	153	145	167	210

Language Diversity

The percentages in this table represent the proportion of students who speak each language in their home.

Language	*Percent*
English	92.8
French	1.4
Haitian Creole French	0.6
German	0.2
Portugese	2.9
Spanish	2.0

Average Class Size

This table presents an average count for classroom enrollment.

Grade	*School*	*Peer Schools*	*State Average*
Grade 9	18.9	14.5	19.5
Grade 10	17.9	19.2	19.8
Grade 11	16.9	22.0	19.6
Grade 12	15.9	17.0	19.7

Instructional Time

This table presents the average amount of time students are engaged in instructional activities.

	School	*Peer Schools*	*State Average*
Presented in hours and minutes	6 h. 38 m.	6 h. 10 m.	6 h. 53 m.

Performance Indicators For Academic Achievement

Academic Achievement*			
Academic Achievement Performance Indicators	School	Peer School	Content Areas - Targets Met
Total HSPA Language Arts Proficiency	64.6%	60.6%	50%
Total HSPA Math Proficiency	74.6%	87.0%	50%
Total	139.2%		50%

How are totals and ranking calculated?	
Total points earned	>Determined by adding the percentage points associated with 'Total HSPA Language Arts Proficiency' and 'Total HSPA Math Proficiency'.
Statewide Ranking	>The total number of points earned ranked against other high schools in the state (Statewide Ranking found in the School Score Card on page one of this report)
Peer School Ranking	>The total number of points earned ranked against other high schools that are educating students with similar demographics
Content Areas - Target Areas	>Derived by dividing the total number of targets met in each content area, as listed in the tables below, by the possible number of targets.

***Academic Achievement in New Jersey's high schools is measured by a student's performance on the New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA)**. Students are first eligible to take the HSPA in the Spring of their junior year. Students are given a second and third opportunity to pass the test during their senior year as well. The indicators above show the proficiency - or pass rate - of students in both sections of the HSPA.*

Performance Targets - Language Arts Literacy**

This table presents the annual proficiency targets, as measured by the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), established for this school under New Jersey's Elementary and Secondary Act Waiver.

Subgroup	*2010-2011 Pass Rate*	*2010-2011 Target*	*Met Target*
Schoolwide	64.6%	65.0%	YES
White	78.0%	73.0%	YES
Black	81.0%	76.0%	YES
Hispanic	65.0%	74.2%	NO
American Indian	72.0%	78.0%	NO
Asian	93.0%	92.0%	YES
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Two or More Races	58.0%	74.0%	NO
With Disabilities	60.0%	68.0%	NO
Limited English Proficiency	70.0%	67.0%	YES
Economically Disadvantaged	69.0%	73.4%	NO

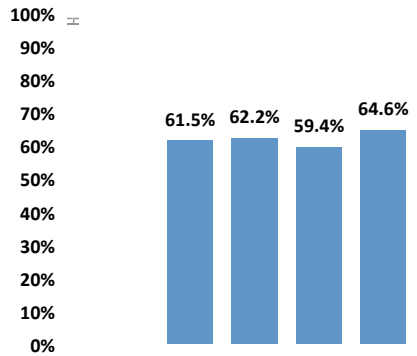
Performance Targets - Math**

This table presents the annual proficiency targets, as measured by the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), established for this school under New Jersey's Elementary and Secondary Act Waiver.

Subgroup	*2010-2011 Pass Rate*	*2010-2011 Target*	*Met Target*
Schoolwide	74.6%	75.0%	YES
White	67.0%	69.0%	YES
Black	78.0%	76.0%	YES
Hispanic	56.0%	68.0%	NO
American Indian	67.0%	78.0%	NO
Asian	96.0%	95.0%	YES
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Two or More Races	62.0%	74.0%	NO
With Disabilities	56.0%	60.0%	NO
Limited English Proficiency	68.0%	69.0%	YES
Economically Disadvantaged	64.0%	72.0%	NO

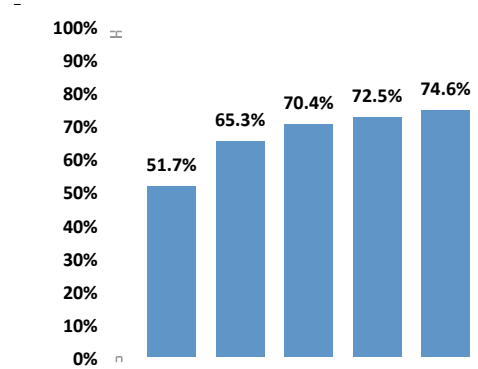
**The targets listed in the table above are derived from the Annual Measurable Objectives methodology (AMO - Option A) found in the ESEA Waiver. For each school and subgroup, individual targets have been specified that take into account the 'starting place' of each subgroup and the difference between the starting point and a goal of all students in each subgroup in every school achieving the Common Core Standards. Goals for annual equal increments are thus individually determined and set for each subgroup and are calculated so that the subgroups who are the furthest behind have higher performance targets to meet on an annual basis.

HSPA LAL Performance Level Over Time***



2010-2011 Results	
Partially Proficient	35.40%
Proficient	30.0
Advanced Proficient	34.6
Subgroup Proficiency	
White	86.0
Black	78
Asian	92
Hispanic	81
Two or More	90
Special Ed	67
Econ Dis.	79
LEP	**71**

HSPA Math Performance Level Over Time***



2010-2011 Results	
Partially Proficient	25.40%
Proficient	50.0
Advanced Proficient	24.6
Subgroup Proficiency	
White	86.0
Black	78
Asian	92
Hispanic	81
Two or More	90
Special Ed	67
Econ Dis.	79
LEP	71

****Percentage of students meeting and/or exceeding state standards.*

Performance Indicators For College and Career Readiness

College and Career Readiness*

College and Career Readiness Indicators	School	Peer Schools	Statewide Target	Met Target
Percent of Students Taking SAT	71%	78%	70%	YES
Percent of Students Scoring Above SAT Composite Benchmark of 1550	45%	60%	65%	NO
Percent of Students Taking at Least One AP Test	7%	9%	22%	NO
Percent of AP Tests with scores greater than 3	29%	35%	40%	NO
% of Career and Technical Students Passing an Industry Exam or Certification	65%	56%	N/A	N/A
Total	152			25%

How are totals and rankings calculated?

Total points earned	>Determined by summing the percentages associated with the 'Percent Taking the SAT', 'Percent Scoring Above 1550', 'Percent Taking at Least One AP', and 'Percent of AP Tests with a score 3 or higher' indicators
Statewide Ranking	>The total number of points earned ranked against other high schools in state (found in School Score Card)
Peer School Ranking	>The total number of points earned ranked against other high schools that are educating students with similar demographics
Content Areas - Target Areas	>Derived by dividing the total number of targets met by the possible number of targets

***College and Career Ready indicators are important early predictors of whether a student will attend college and whether he/she is positioned to do well.** In the chart above, four indicators of college readiness and one indicator of career readiness are displayed:

>"**Percent of Students Taking SAT**" - is a calculation of the number of twelfth grade students who took the SAT during high school divided by the total twelfth grade enrollment during the previous academic year.

>"**Scoring Above SAT Benchmark**" - is a calculation of the number of students whose score was above the College Board-established benchmark of 1550 divided by the total number of students who took the SAT during the previous academic year.

>"**Percent of Students Taking At Least One AP Test**" - is a calculation of the number of students who took at least one AP Test during the previous school year divided by the sum of the eleventh and twelfth grade enrollment.

>"**AP Tests Greater Than 3**" - is a calculation of the number of tests with a test score of 3 or higher divided by the total number of AP tests taken.

>"**Industry Exam/Certification**" - is a calculation of the number of students, enrolled in a Career and Technical Program, who passed an industry or certificate based exam divided by the total number of students enrolled in the school's Career and Technical Program.

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Results

This table presents the results from the SAT tests administered during the previous school year.

	School	*Peer Schools*	*State Average*
Percentage of Students Taking Test	**71%**	**78%**	**66%**
Composite SAT Score (M + V + E)	**1011**	**1214**	**1515**
Mathematics Average Score	**340**	**415**	**520**
25th Percentile	295	350	440
50th Percentile	340	410	510
75th Percentile	400	480	600
Verbal Average Score	**339**	**400**	**496**
25th Percentile	290	330	420
50th Percentile	330	390	490
75th Percentile	380	460	570
Essay Average Score	**332**	**399**	**499**
25th Percentile	285	340	420
50th Percentile	335	390	490
75th Percentile	375	460	580

Advanced Placement Test (AP) Results

This table presents the results from the AP tests administered during the previous school year.

	School	*Peer Schools*	*State Average*
% of Students Taking At Least One AP Test	**7.1%**	**9.0%**	**19.9%**
% of Scores Above 3			
Biology	3%	8%	10%
Calculus AB	4%	9%	15%
Calculus BC	5%	9%	25%
English Language and Composition	12%	20%	45%
US History	16%	25%	48%
Total	29%	35%	60%

Performance Indicators For Graduation and Post-Secondary Enrollment

Graduation and Post-Secondary Enrollment*				
Graduation and Post-Secondary Performance Indicators	School	Peer Schools	Statewide Targets	Met Target
Total Graduation Rate	82.0%	88.0%	90.0%	NO
Graduation via HSPA	74.3%	72.0%	85.0%	NO
Remediation Rate in NJ Post-Secondary	10.0%	15.0%	N/A	N/A
Enrolled in Post-Secondary within 6 months	35.0%	47.0%	48.0%	NO
Enrolled in Post-Secondary within 18 months	53.0%	50.0%	55.0%	YES
Total	244.3			25%

How are totals and rankings calculated?	
Total points earned	>Determined by summing the percentages associated with 'Total Graduation Rate', 'Graduation via HSPA', 'Enrolled in Post-Secondary within 6 months', and 'Enrolled in Post-Secondary within 12 months' indicators
Statewide Ranking	>The total number of points earned ranked against other high schools in state (found in School Score Card)
Peer School Ranking	>The total number of points earned ranked against other high schools that are educating students with similar demographics
Content Areas - Target Areas	>Derived by dividing the total number of targets met by the possible number of targets

*>"**Total Graduation Rate**" is calculated according to the Federal "4-year, adjusted cohort graduation rate", which divides the number of graduates in a cohort of students by the number of students who entered ninth grade four years before. The denominator is adjusted to take into account those students that transfer in and/or out.
>"**Graduation via HSPA**" - is the percentage of graduates in a given year who successfully demonstrated proficiency on both the Language Arts and Math sections of New Jersey's High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) during any of the possible administrations of the test.
>"**Remediation Rate in NJ Post-Secondary**" - is a calculation of the number of students who enrolled in an institution of higher education in New Jersey and required remedial coursework divided by all students enrolled in a New Jersey higher education institution.
>"**Enrolled in Post-Secondary**" indicators - are calculations of the number of graduates who enrolled in a post-secondary institution, both in-state and out-of-state, within 6 months and 18 months respectively divided by the total number of graduates.

Graduation Rate by Subgroup

This table presents the percentage of students who graduated within four years of entering ninth grade, according to the 4-year, adjusted cohort graduation rate.

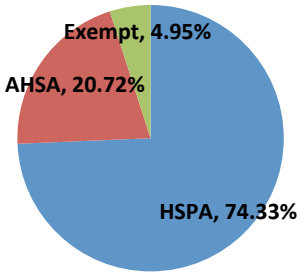
Subgroup	*School*	*Peer Schools*	*State Average*
White	92.0	89.0	92.0
Black	87.0	84.0	86.0
Hispanic	78.0	80.0	82.0
American Indian	87.0	67.0	88.0
Asian	93.0	92.0	94.0
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	92.0
Two or More Races	89.0	88.0	92.0
Male	89.0	90.0	92.0
Female	91.0	88.0	93.0
Students With Disabilities	38.4	25.1	2.7
Limited English Proficiency	7.1	4.5	2.7
Economically Disadvantaged	16.5	15.9	1.7

Dropout Rate by Subgroup

This table presents the percentage of students in grades 9-12 who dropped out during the school year.

Subgroup	*School*	*Peer Schools*	*State Average*
White	12.0	8.0	0.9
Black	13.1	9.0	3.7
Hispanic	11.4	9.0	2.9
American Indian	0.2	1.0	1.0
Asian	6.0	2.3	0.4
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	1.0
Two or More Races	9.0	4.2	1.2
Male	19.6	17.0	1.9
Female	13.1	11.8	1.5
Students With Disabilities	38.4	25.1	2.7
Limited English Proficiency	7.1	4.5	2.7
Economically Disadvantaged	16.5	15.9	1.7

2011 Graduation Rate (by pathways)



Attendance Rate by Grade Level

This table presents the percentage of students present on average each day.

	School	*Peer Schools*	*State Average*
Grade 9	77.4	89.0	94.1
Grade 10	83.4	92.0	94.0
Grade 11	85.0	88.0	93.8
Grade 12	86.1	91.0	92.4
Ungraded	69.1	89.0	92.0
Total	81.5	89.0	94.6

Performance Indicators For Closing Within School Gaps

Closing Within School Gaps*

Closing Within School Gaps Indicators	School	Peer Schools	Statewide Targets	Met Target
Bottom 25th Percentile v. 75th Percentile HSPA LAL Scale Score	55	60	35	**NO**
Bottom 25th Percentile v. 75th Percentile HSPA Math Scale Score	60	55	40	**NO**
Total	210			33%

*The table above displays the difference in scale score points between the student at the 25th percentile and the student at the 75th percentile (the interquartile range) in each content area of the New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA).

How are totals and rankings calculated?

Total points earned	>Determined by summing the scale score point gaps for each indicator
Statewide Ranking	>The total number of points earned ranked against other high schools in state (found in School Score Card). A higher statewide ranking indicates that the school has made more progress in closing their achievement gaps than others
Peer School Ranking	>The total number of points earned ranked against other high schools that are educating students with similar demographics
Content Areas - Target Areas	>Derived by dividing the total number of targets met by the possible number of targets

Annually, to receive Title I, Part A funds, these districts must agree to the programmatic and fiscal guidelines that are delineated in the Department's application for the funds. Annually, the district's chief school administrator signs assurances that the funds will be used in a manner consistent with the authorizing federal legislation and regulations, as well as the state plan and assurances.

The Department will amend the assurances in its 2012-2013 application for Title I, Part A funds to reinforce the following expectation for Title I districts:

The NJDOE is hereby assured that the applicant will satisfy the following:

(1) In collaboration with its teachers and principals, begin or continue the process to develop, adopt, pilot, and implement, teacher and principal evaluation and support systems. The district will use an NJDOE-approved teacher and principal practice model/framework that will:

- be used for continual improvement of instruction;
- meaningfully differentiate performance using at least four performance levels;
- use multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, including as a significant factor data on student growth for all students (including English Language Learners and students with disabilities), and other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent surveys);
- evaluate teachers and principals on a regular basis;
- provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development; and
- be used to inform personnel decisions in subsequent years.

(2) With input from families and community stakeholders, and consistent with State statute, regulation, and the district's collective bargaining agreement, implement the individualized school improvement plan for each Priority and Focus School in the district. The school improvement plans are attached to these assurances as Exhibits INSERT to INSERT. These school improvement plans are consistent with the Regional Achievement Team's recommendations based on the team's review of the school and consist of one or more of the turnaround interventions enumerated below. By signing these assurances and accepting Title I funds, the district agrees to

faithfully implement these interventions with assistance from the district's Regional Achievement Center:

- 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;
- 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;
- redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;
- 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;
- using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;
- 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
- providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

Appendix 7 – Turnaround Interventions for Priority and Focus Schools

I. Differentiated Interventions for Schools

The Regional Achievement teams will conduct comprehensive school reviews focused on measuring school-level proficiency in the recently adopted school turnaround principles including: Principal Leadership, Instructional Quality, Quality of Standards -Based Curriculum, Effective Use of Data to Inform Instruction, Effective Staffing, School Climate and Culture, and Academically focused Family and Community Engagement. School review results will be used to target intervention supports which will be implemented and monitored by the Regional Achievement Team.

School Turnaround Principles	Improvement / Corrective Actions		Performance Targets	Student Achievement Targets	Support Services Provided by NJDOE
	Priority Schools	Focus Schools			
Principal leadership	• Removal of principal if they have served more than 2 years in the school • Oversee and approve the process for hiring a new principal • Instructional leadership PD	• Optional removal of principal • Instructional leadership PD	• Improved instructional leadership	• School and state level student achievement measures determined by grade level in school	• Flexibility and support in scheduling, staffing and budgeting • Instructional Leadership PD
Quality of instruction	• Mutual consent of 100% of staff	• Mutual consent of staff in identified need areas	• 80% or above teachers rated effective (level 3 or 4)	• School and state level student achievement measures determined by grade level in school	• Effective teaching PD for teachers • PD on monitoring and improving teacher effectiveness for all school leaders

Appendix 7 – Turnaround Interventions for Priority and Focus Schools

School Turnaround Principles	Improvement / Corrective Actions		Performance Targets	Student Achievement Targets	Support Services Provided by NJDOE
	Priority Schools	Focus Schools			
Quality of standards-based curriculum, assessment, intervention system	• Implement NJDOE-approved district curriculum, assessment & intervention system; OR • Implement NJDOE model curriculum, assessment & intervention (2 or more grade levels behind) system	• Implement NJDOE-approved district curriculum & assessment system; OR • Implement NJDOE model curriculum, assessment & intervention (2 or more grade levels behind) system	• 90% effective curriculum implementation	• School and state level student achievement measures determined by grade level in school	PD for: • Curriculum implementation • Reading instruction (K-3) • Intervention strategies for targeted populations • Monitoring and improving curriculum implementation for school leaders
Effective use of data to improve student achievement	• Full-time data specialist funded with school Title I funds • Schedule in support of teacher teams using data to inform instruction	• Effective plan for using data targeted to school need areas OR • Full-time data specialist funded with school Title I funds	• 80% of staff using data to inform instruction	• School and state level student achievement measures determined by grade level in school	PD for: Teachers teams using data to inform instruction School leaders monitoring and improving the use of data to inform instruction

Appendix 7 – Turnaround Interventions for Priority and Focus Schools

School Turnaround Principles	Improvement / Corrective Actions		Performance Targets	Student Achievement Targets	Support Services Provided by NJDOE
	Priority Schools	Focus Schools			
Effective staffing	• Mutual consent • No placement of Tier 1 and 2 teachers (2013 – 14)	• Mutual consent • No placement of Tier 1 and 2 teachers (2013 – 14)	• All Teaching positions filled with Tier 3 and 4 teachers	• School and state level student achievement measures determined by grade level in school	• PD on effective staffing practices (recruitment, hiring, retention of effective staff)
School Climate & Culture	• Culture & Climate Specialist funded through Title I	• Principal receives targeted culture and climate support	• Climate survey results • Student and Staff attendance • Discipline data	• School and state level student achievement measures determined by grade level in school	PD for: • Developing Effective climate and culture for learning • Increasing student engagement
Academically-focused family & community engagement	• Revised job descriptions with academic focus for family & community engagement staff • Required PD for family & community engagement staff	• PD for family & community engagement staff in identified need area	• Climate survey results on family & community engagement	• School and state level student achievement measures determined by grade level in school	PD for • Academically focused family & community engagement for teachers, staff and school leaders

School Turnaround Principles	Improvement / Corrective Actions		Performance Targets	Student Achievement Targets	Support Services Provided by NJDOE
	Priority Schools	Focus Schools			
Redesigning school time	• School schedule supports required intervention PD • School schedule supports required teacher collaboration • School schedule supports students in need of more time for learning	• Extra learning time is available for students in the targeted population	• Individual intervention targets are met as a result of school staff attending quality PD sessions or school staff having time for collaboration	• School and state level student achievement measures determined by grade level in school	PD for flexible schedule design

Additional Considerations:

If a school review indicates that a given school performs poorly in all seven School Turnaround Principals the Regional Achievement Team will prioritize interventions for year one in the following areas: School Climate & Culture, Principal Leadership, Quality Instruction and Quality Curriculum. In year two the Regional Achievement Team will implement interventions in the Use of Data to Inform Instruction, Effective Staffing and Academically focused Family and Community Engagement. This plan allows struggling schools to receive an aligned set of interventions in year one that will support effective implementation of the second set of interventions completed in year two. Schools that fail to perform at required levels by the third year of Regional Achievement Team support will be placed in the Commissioners District.

This plan requires that the NJDOE develop or adopt a model curriculum aligned to common core standards that defines student learning objectives, includes rigorous formative and summative assessments, defines an intervention plan for students two or more grade levels below in reading or math, includes model lessons and is supported by quality professional development.

This plan requires a third party be engaged to develop and deliver:

- **Instructional leadership professional development for principals**
- **Effective teaching professional development for teachers and all school leaders**
- **School Climate and Culture professional development for teachers and all school leaders**
- **School leader practices for effectively monitoring and leading the improvement of instruction, curriculum implementation as well as school climate and culture initiatives**

Should new Principals have coaches in addition to the supports already listed?

Recommended Staffing for Regional Achievement Team: In addition to performing the School Reviews designed to measure school-level proficiency in the School Turnaround Principals the Regional Achievement Team will be responsible to monitor and take appropriate actions to continually improve the interventions designed to address school needs.

1) **1-2 principal leadership specialist to facilitate the provision of and monitor the effectiveness of instructional leadership professional development**
2) **1 instructional specialist to facilitate the provision of and monitor the effectiveness of effective teaching professional development**
3) **4 Content area specialist to facilitate the provision of and monitor the effectiveness of curriculum implementation: 1 elementary literacy, 1 secondary literacy, 1 mathematics, 1 science**
4) **1 data specialist to facilitate the provision of and monitor the effectiveness of data coaches placed in schools**
5) **1 climate and culture specialists to facilitate the provision of and monitor the effectiveness of the climate and culture specialists placed in schools**
6) **1 family and community engagement specialist to facilitate the provision of and monitor the effectiveness of engagement strategies as delivered by school level engagement staff**
7) **3-4 staffing specialists to assist Regional Achievement Teams as needed**

INTERIM REPORT

NEW JERSEY EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS TASK FORCE

March 1, 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

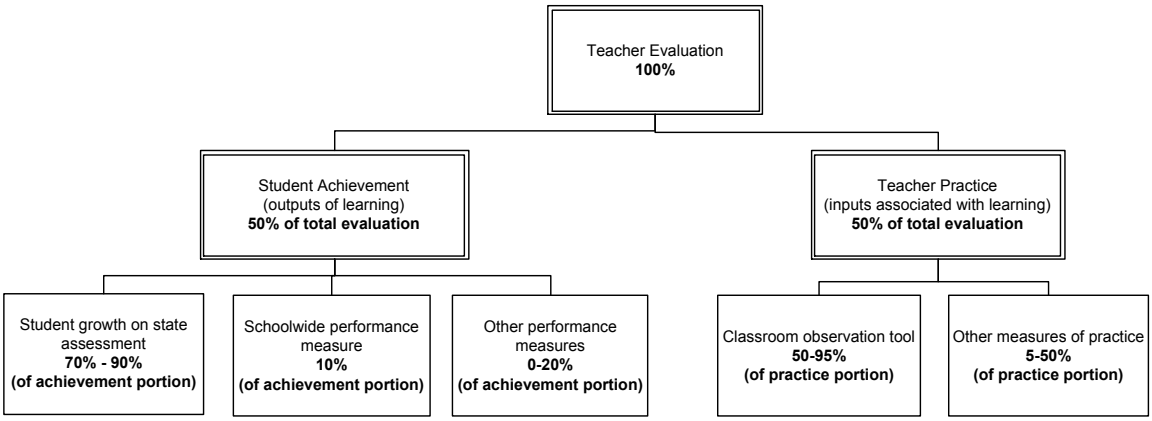
The Task Force report presents recommendations for improving student achievement in New Jersey by revamping our educator evaluation system. Our recommended system is based on the knowledge that educator effectiveness is the most important in-school factor for improving student achievement. New Jersey, like the vast majority of other states, does not have an evaluation system that accurately differentiates the effectiveness of educators. High-quality evaluation systems for our teachers and principals will enable districts and the state to vastly improve personnel decisions, such as the awarding of tenure and the setting of compensation levels, and drive significant improvements in student learning.

The report consists of four sections: teacher evaluations, principal evaluations, conditions for success, and next steps.

Teacher Evaluations

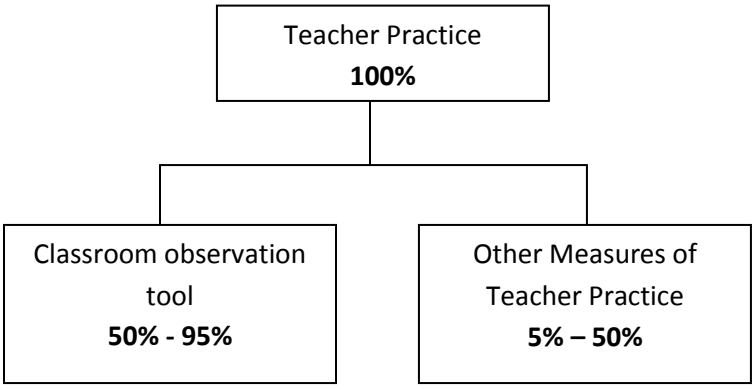
In the first section, the Task Force recommends the development of a new teacher evaluation system that is based entirely on student learning; that is, all measures used to assess effectiveness should be linked to achievement. Initially, it would comprise equal parts teacher practice (inputs) and direct measures of student achievement (outputs). Over time, however, the Task Force encourages the state to increase the percentage of the evaluation contributed by measures of student achievement.

Recommended Framework for the New Teacher Evaluation System



Measures of Teacher Practice
The measures of teacher practice should be based on clear performance standards that define effective teaching. The Task Force recommends that New Jersey use the new national core standards, reviewed and adapted as needed, as the basis for teacher evaluations.

Once clear standards have been established, measurement tools are needed to collect and review evidence to determine if teachers are meeting the standards. The Task Force recommends that all districts use one high-quality state-approved observation protocol and at least one additional state-approved tool to assess teacher practice.



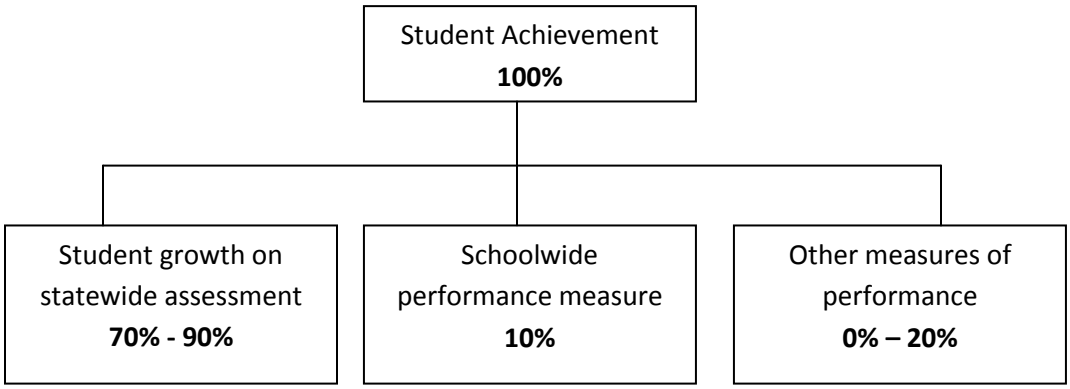
Because observation can be such a comprehensive tool for gathering information, the Task Force recommends that it alone comprise at least half of the weight within the teacher practice section, accounting for 50%-95% of this component. We recommend that every district use at least one additional measurement tool, and that each of these tools comprise at least 5% of the teacher practice component, but not more than 50% in combination.

The New Jersey Commissioner of Education should develop a list of approved observation protocols and measurement tools from which districts may choose. The state may also consider developing a waiver process so districts have the opportunity to submit for approval a measurement tool that has not yet been accepted by the state.

The state's review and approval of measurement tools and their protocols will assure that they are sufficiently rigorous, valid, and reliable for measuring teacher effectiveness, and that all teachers are held to the same high standards. Providing districts some flexibility to create their own measurement tools will encourage innovation and experimentation in this area.

Measures of Student Achievement
Fifty percent of a teacher's evaluation should be based on direct measures of student achievement as demonstrated by assessments and other evaluations of student work.
The Task Force recommends that the student achievement portion of the evaluation comprise two required components and one optional component. The largest required component (70% - 90%) would be an individual teacher's contribution to his/her students' progress on a statewide assessment. The other required component would be a state-approved schoolwide

performance measure (10%). A third, non-required component, would be another measure of performance (0% - 20), also State-approved.



Measures of student growth

Growth measures are preferable to attainment measures because they account for a student's academic starting point and give credit for progress made during the school year. The state will be able to generate growth scores in fall 2011. By fall 2012, the State will be able to tie growth scores to teachers.

However, because not all subjects and grades have statewide assessments, growth scores can be computed for a limited number of teachers. The Task Force recommends that the state develop assessments capable of generating growth scores in as many additional subjects and grades as appropriate and financially feasible so growth scores can be calculated for more teachers. This work can be done in partnership with districts, teachers, subject matter experts, and others.

Schoolwide performance measure

The Task Force recommends that a total school performance measure comprise 10% of the student achievement portion. This measure could be a schoolwide aggregation of all students' growth on state assessments. Alternatively, teachers could share credit for meeting a school-specific goal. A school-specific goal would reflect an area of need identified by the school or district and approved for use by both the Commissioner and district superintendent.

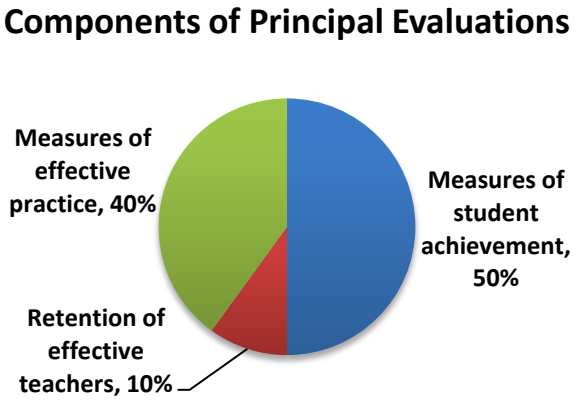
Other measures of student performance

The Task Force recommends that districts be permitted to choose one or more additional measures of student achievement from a list of state-approved measures. Such measures might include student performance on nationally normed assessments or State-mandated end-of-course tests. These measures could comprise up to 20% of the achievement portion of the evaluation.

Leader Evaluations

The Task Force recommends that the principal evaluation comprise the following components and weights:

- Measures of effective practice: **40%**
- Differential retention of effective teachers (hiring and retaining effective teachers and exiting poor performers): **10%**
- Measures of student achievement: **50%**



Measures of Leadership Practice

The Task Force recommends that New Jersey adopt the updated Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008.[1] The ISLLC standards have been adopted by most states, are widely accepted by the profession, and serve as a credible and useful foundation for principal evaluations.

The Task Force recommends that the Commissioner develop or adopt statewide performance indicators to establish clear and consistent expectations for all principals. Districts should be able to choose the data sources and tools they wish to use from a list of state-approved rubrics, templates, and tools. The Commissioner may also develop a waiver process for districts to submit locally developed tools to the state for approval.

Retention of Effective Teachers

The principal's success in building and maintaining a high-quality faculty is critical to school success. Differential retention of effective teachers means hiring and retaining effective teachers and exiting poor performers. The Task Force recommends that differential retention of effective teachers contribute 10% of the principal evaluation.

The following indices should be used to measure differential retention:

- Principal's effectiveness in improving teacher effectiveness (i.e., growth of teachers' ratings)
- Principal's effectiveness in recruiting and retaining effective teachers
- Principal's effectiveness in exiting ineffective teachers

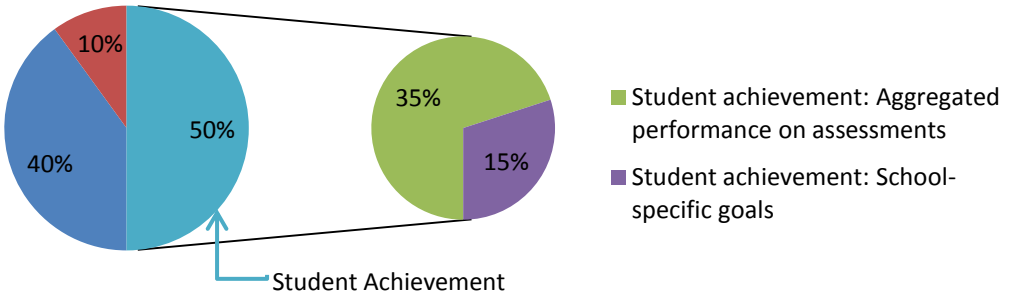
[1] New Jersey uses an older version of the ISLLC standards, adopted in 2003 and based on 1996 ISLLC standards, to accredit leadership preparation programs, license school leaders, and approve professional development activities.

It is critical to note that principals can only be judged against this measure if they are given a clear role in teacher hiring, organizing professional development, dismissing ineffective teachers, and more.

Measures of Student Achievement

The Task Force recommends that a principal's evaluation be based substantially on empirical measures of student learning. We have identified two different measures of achievement that should be included in the principal's evaluation: aggregated student growth on standardized assessments and "school-specific goals."

Components of Student Achievement Portion of Principal Evaluations



The Task Force recommends that principals be evaluated on the aggregated growth of all students on statewide assessments for all subjects and grades. This measure should comprise 35% of the total evaluation. The Task Force recommends that every principal also be measured on at least one school-specific goal, such as high school graduation rate increase. A school-specific goal would reflect an area of need identified by the school or district and should be approved by the Commissioner of Education. This measure or combination of measures would comprise 15% of the total evaluation.

Conditions for Success

The Task Force believes that in order to maximize the positive influence of these new evaluation frameworks, the State should simultaneously pursue a number of related policies and activities. These "Conditions for Success," will lay the foundation and build the support structure for this new system. This list of issues to consider include the following: training for those conducting observations, informing educators of the new system's components and implications, ensuring high-quality data systems, continuously monitoring the system's effects after implementation, and more.

Next Steps

The Task Force has identified a number of additional activities to be pursued over the next several months. This includes soliciting feedback from the State Board of Education and other education experts and stakeholders; further study of appropriate performance measures for teachers of special populations and non-tested subjects and grades; and developing recommendations for implementing the new evaluation system, including the possible use of pilots.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, policymakers and other education stakeholders have pursued a wide array of strategies designed to improve academic outcomes, especially for our most disadvantaged children. Of these, efforts to improve educator effectiveness have been among the most prominent, popular, and important.

For decades we have known that a number of out-of-school factors, most notably poverty, can substantially depress student learning. But research has shown conclusively that teachers and principals have the ability to overcome these obstacles and help all students achieve at high levels.

The impact of our most effective teachers is remarkable. Studies have shown that if we were to give at-risk students access to our highest-performing teachers, we could close the achievement gap, helping deliver on our nation's promise to provide equal opportunity to all. But the data also show that if a child is placed in the classrooms of a series of ineffective teachers, he/she will struggle mightily to recover academically and may never catch up.

The cornerstone of any broad initiative to improve educator effectiveness is an evaluation system that accurately measures our educators' influence on student learning. Evaluations that fail to account for differences in effectiveness are unfair to families and their children.

But they are also unfair to the adults working in our schools. These professionals will never receive the respect they deserve if we continue to treat teachers and administrators like machines on an assembly-line instead of the highly skilled professionals that they are.

The purpose of this report is to help New Jersey create a new system for evaluating teachers and principals that leads to substantial and lasting improvements in public education. Such a system will provide actionable information to schools, parents, taxpayers, and policymakers. As a consequence, the state will be better positioned to help educators improve, rethink compensation plans, reform tenure, and much more.

Guiding Principles

The recommendations of this Task Force flow from three guiding principles. The first is that the needs of students are paramount.

Public education cannot function without adults, and changes to the system inevitably affect their day-to-day work and long-term careers. We must keep this in mind and be sensitive to its implications.

But public education exists for the benefit of children. It is society's means of ensuring that all children have the chance to reach their full potential and lead healthy, productive, and satisfying lives. We believe that the reforms recommended here are good for both children and

adults. But we understand that some elements of this report may generate opposition from adult-oriented interest groups. We believe that when the interests of adults and the interests of children don't align it is our duty to side with the latter.

The second principle relates to our belief that all children can achieve at the highest levels. Some contend that a child's neighborhood, race, and family income amount to destiny—that we can only expect so much from public schools because external forces are determinative. This would suggest that an educator evaluation system based on student achievement is unfair because teachers and principals would be held to account for something over which they have no control.

We believe that the purpose of public education is to lead all students to high levels of achievement no matter where they begin.

Our third principle is our belief in the efficacy of educators. We believe that educators, equipped with the right skills, knowledge, and dispositions and given the proper supports, have the power to inspire, engage, and broaden the life opportunities of students.

The evaluation system recommended in this report reflects these convictions.

Finally, we would not argue that our plans are perfect, only that they will substantially improve the status quo. Similarly, we do not argue that this report should be the final word, but the beginning of a long-avoided conversation.

Process

Governor Christie established the Education Effectiveness Task Force through a September 28, 2010 Executive Order. Nine members, with experience in and knowledge of education policy, administration, and teaching were selected (members are listed in the Appendix) on October 28, 2010.

The Task Force was charged with recommending an educator evaluation system based on measures of effectiveness. According to the Executive Order, its recommendations must include measures of student achievement (representing at least 50% of the evaluation); demonstrated practices of effective teachers and leaders; and weights for the various components.

An initial report was mandated by March 1, 2011. After the submission of the report, the Task Force is to receive comments from the public, stakeholders, and the State Board of Education and to review and revise its recommendations.

To complete its work, the Task Force, with the support of staff from the Department of Education, reviewed the latest research on educator evaluations, examined systems in use both in-state and nationally, and studied a range of issues related to the development of high-quality

evaluation systems, such as observation protocols, growth measures, and special education considerations. The Task Force met 12 times between November 16, 2010 and March 1, 2011.

A full list of the resources utilized by the Task Force, including presenters and written materials, is included in the Appendix.

Report Outline

The report is composed of four sections. The first offers recommendations for a new teacher evaluation system. It includes two subsections, one for measures of teacher practice; the other for measures of student achievement.

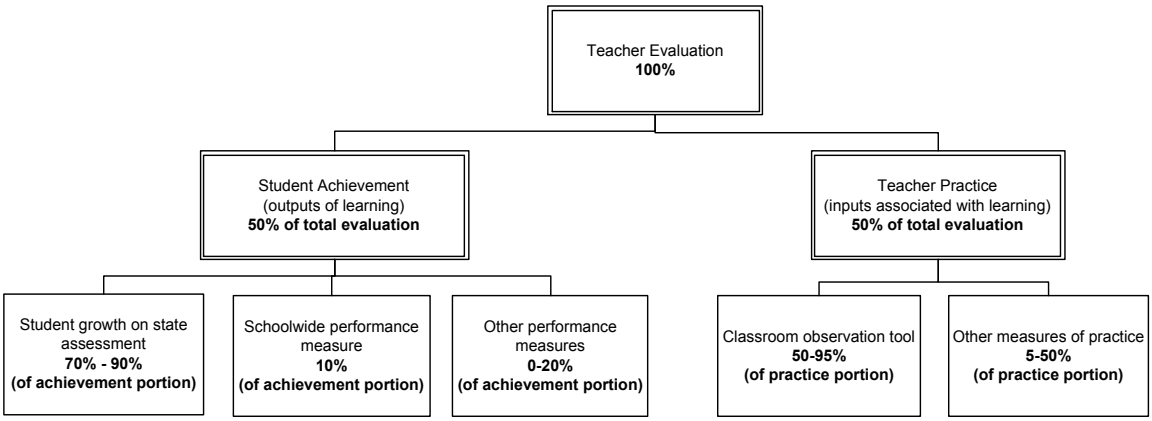
The second section offers recommendations for a new principal evaluation system. It has three subsections dedicated to measures of practice, retention of effective educators, and student achievement, respectively.

The third section includes a set of recommendations regarding additional considerations. Through our work, the Task Force developed a great appreciation for the broad infrastructure needed to build high-quality evaluation systems. We highlight a number of issues, such as the need for additional assessments and expanded administrator training, that the state might consider alongside our other recommendations.

The final section is on next steps. The Task Force has identified a number of activities to pursue in the months to come to help further advance the cause of improved educator evaluations.

SECTION I:
TEACHER EVALUATIONS

Recommended Framework for the New Teacher Evaluation System



Purpose of an Educator Evaluation System

Teachers have a powerful influence on student learning. No in-school factor has a greater bearing on achievement than the effectiveness of the adult in front of a classroom. Though out-of-school factors certainly exert a significant influence, for years we have known that teachers can help even the most disadvantaged students excel.

A high-quality evaluation system has the power to accurately assess the effectiveness of teachers and differentiate between those excelling and those struggling. In this way, an evaluation system can be the foundation for a wide range of critical personnel decisions. If we have reliable information on effectiveness, districts and the state can make highly informed decisions related to hiring, tenure, compensation, dismissal, and more.

And when used properly, a strong evaluation system will also help educators become more effective.[2]

<u>It will help clarify expectations</u>. Teachers will know what behaviors, practices, and results are expected and by what metrics they will be evaluated.

[2] For more on this subject, see the discussion in DC IMPACT: http://dc.gov/DCPS/Learn+About+Schools/School+Leadership/IMPACT+(Performance+Assessment)

It will provide meaningful feedback. Results from observations, test scores, and more will clearly delineate strengths and weaknesses and provide a path for improvement.

It will facilitate collaboration. By providing a common evaluation framework and language, the system will enable educators to work together, within and across schools, to improve their collective work.

It will improve and target professional development. A strong evaluation system will indicate areas for improvement, enabling schools, districts and the state to develop improved professional development opportunities and ensure that each teacher receives training that matches her needs.

In these ways, an effective evaluation system will help earn the trust and support of teachers. They will know that the system isn't in place merely to declare winners and losers; it exists to help teachers improve their capacity to help students succeed.

The Task Force recommends that as it develops a new teacher evaluation system, the State ensures that it succeeds on both fronts: assessment and development.

Essential Features

Through our research, we have noted that the most compelling evaluation systems share a number of key characteristics. These features contribute to the fairness and transparency of evaluations and, most importantly, help ensure that they are highly correlated with and, therefore, help drive gains in student achievement.

The Task Force recommends that a new teacher evaluation system adhere as closely as possible to the follow principles:

- The system should be based on clear standards that describe the characteristics of effective and ineffective teaching.
- The standards and evaluative criteria should reflect a high level of rigor, meaning the system has the highest expectations for all teachers and students.
- To the greatest extent possible, the system should have a uniform design so measures are consistent across districts and within schools.
- The system should allow for differences in teaching positions (performing arts, career tech, special education, for example, do not lend themselves to the same types of assessments as math and science).
- The system should make use of multiple measures or data sources so an array of evidence is utilized when assessing a teacher's effectiveness.
- Care should be given to ensuring that the measures assess educator effectiveness with reasonable accuracy (validity) and generate consistent results across different raters and contexts (reliability).

- Those implementing the evaluation system must faithfully adhere to the system's measurement process, including the collection of data and the observation of teachers.

Summative Rating Categories

The Task Force recommends that the new system have four summative categories: Highly Effective, Effective, Partially Effective, and Ineffective. The number of rating categories should be large enough to give teachers a clear picture of their performance, but small enough to allow for clear, consistent distinctions between each level and meaningful differentiation of teacher performance[3].

[3] "Teacher Evaluation 2.0," p. 7, The New Teacher Project, 2010.

MEASURES OF TEACHER PRACTICE

Definition of effective teaching
Most evaluations and personnel decisions have not adequately distinguished teachers of varying levels of effectiveness. In a robust evaluation system, effective teaching is defined by practices that contribute to student learning and empirical measures of student achievement.

The Task Force recommends that measures of effective teacher practice represent 50% of a teacher's evaluation.

Teaching Standards
Teaching standards serve as the foundation for teacher evaluations by outlining the professional responsibilities, behaviors, and expectations of teachers. New Jersey's current standards for teachers were adopted by the State Board of Education in 2003.

According to New Jersey regulations, the standards are used in the accreditation of teacher preparation programs, the recommendation of candidates for certification, and the approval of professional development programs. However, they have not been a required part of teacher evaluations.

The Task Force recommends that these standards serve as the basis for teacher evaluations in the state.

However, new draft core teaching standards have been developed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). Unlike the original 1992 INTASC standards that were designed for "beginning" teachers, these are intended as professional practice standards for use at different developmental stages of the teacher's career. They differ from the previous standards in several other ways: there is greater emphasis on the learner, greater knowledge and skill is expected around the use of assessment data to improve instruction and support learner success, and technology is infused throughout all the standards.

The Task Force recommends that the new national standards, when finalized, be carefully reviewed by the state and considered for adoption. If New Jersey is to have a robust, trusted, and transparent evaluation system, it must be grounded in a widely acknowledged and respected set of standards.

Summary of the Draft Model Core Teaching Standards

	Standard	Description
The Learner and Learning	1. Learner Development	The teacher understands how children learn and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
	2. Learning Differences	The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that allow each

		learner to reach his/her full potential.
	3. Learning Environments	The teacher works with learners to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, encouraging positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.
Content	4. Content Knowledge	The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners.
	5. Innovative Applications of Content	The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical/creative thinking and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues
Instructional Practice	6. Assessment	The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to document learner progress, and to inform the teacher's ongoing planning and instruction.
	7. Planning for Instruction	The teacher draws upon knowledge of content areas, crossdisciplinary skills, learners, the community, and pedagogy to plan instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals.
	8. Instructional Strategies	The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to access and appropriately apply information
Professional Responsibility	9. Reflection and Continuous Growth	The teacher is a reflective practitioner who uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, families, and other professionals in the learning community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
	10. Collaboration	The teacher collaborates with students, families, colleagues, other professionals, and community members to share responsibility for student growth and development, learning, and well-being.

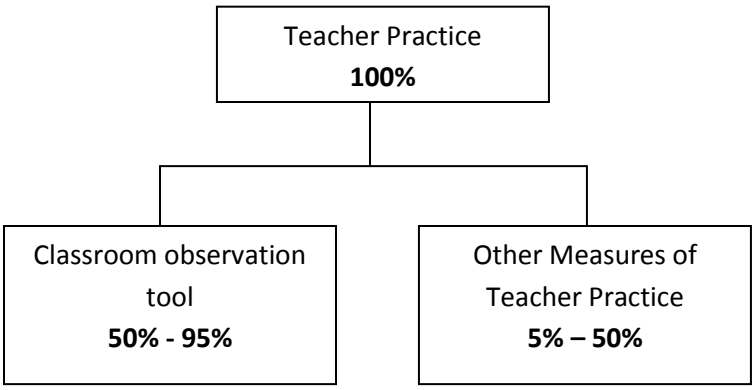
Measurement Tools

Once clear standards have been defined for an evaluation system, measurement tools are needed to collect and review evidence to determine whether teachers are meeting the standards. These measurement tools must be valid (the capacity to measure what they are intended to measure) and reliable (the capacity to measure accurately and consistently).

The Task Force recommends the use of a high-quality observation protocol and at least one additional measurement tool to assess teacher practice. The Commissioner should develop a list of approved measurement tools and protocols from which districts can choose. In addition, the Commissioner should develop a waiver and review process through which districts could submit alternative tools for approval.

The state review and approval of measurement tools and their protocols will assure that they are sufficiently rigorous, valid, and reliable while also providing districts flexibility to innovate and develop their own tools.[4]

Because observation can be such a comprehensive tool (it is able to cover most teaching standards), the *Task Force recommends that it alone comprise at least half of the weight within teacher practice, accounting for 50%-95% of this portion*. *We further recommend that every district use at least one additional measurement tool and that each of these tools comprise at least 5% of the teacher practice score, but not more than 50%.*



Classroom Observations

Observation protocols are the most common tool for measuring teacher practice, but how thoroughly and frequently they are conducted and what they evaluate vary widely. Observations are required in New Jersey, and they are used in all the model systems we reviewed.

Some of the model systems have created their own observation protocols (e.g., DC IMPACT and Harrison, Colorado) and some have adopted existing observation protocols (e.g., Delaware uses Danielson's Framework for Learning). Essential elements of successful observation practices include well-trained observers, a high-quality rating rubric, and the faithful administration of the selected protocol.

The Task Force recommends a minimum of four observations a year, as well one annual summative evaluation for all teachers. Successful districts often conduct frequent observations and provide feedback to the teachers on a regular basis. In Washington, DC, every teacher has five formal observations per year, and in Harrison, Colorado, every teacher has at least four spot observations (between 10-15 minutes each); probationary teachers have eight.

[4] The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in collaboration with many prominent research organizations are in the process of testing a wide array of measurement tools in the Measuring Effective Teaching project: http://metproject.org/

There are numerous observation protocols in use and many are well grounded in research. Among the most well-known is Charlotte Danielson's "Framework for Teaching," which is currently used by more than 30% of New Jersey districts.

Additional Tools

We recommend that the Commissioner develop a list of approved additional tools from which districts can choose. Potential options include the following.

- Documentation logs/portfolios*:* Logs or portfolios can provide evaluators with information about student learning that might not be uncovered by assessments or standard in-class observations. Teachers can collect artifacts showing how well their practices adhere to performance standards (e.g., planning and preparation, lesson plans, student assignments). If these tools are utilized, the state and districts should take care to ensure that the material collected is truly representative of the teacher's work.

- Student surveys: Students have a unique and valuable perspective on classroom environment and their teachers' effectiveness. Studies have found that the results of student surveys can be tightly correlated with student achievement results. Persuasive evidence can be found in the Gates MET study, which uses a survey instrument called Tripod.[5] It asks students if they agree or disagree with statements about their classroom's instructional environment, such as:

  "My teacher knows when the class understands and when we do not."
  "My teacher has several good ways to explain each topic that we cover in class."
  "My teacher gives me useful feedback that helps me improve."

- Assessments of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge: The MET study is also testing the use of assessments developed by ETS to measure a teacher's ability to recognize and diagnose students' misunderstandings of lessons. The assessments measure teachers' general, specialized, and pedagogical content knowledge. If these assessments, or others, are found to be valid measures of teacher effectiveness, the Department should consider including them as an approved tool.

Reviewers

Any evaluation system that emphasizes the value of teacher practice will inevitably increase the demands on principals and other administrators; observations and other reviews of teacher work require significant investments of time. The Commissioner might consider addressing this issue through the use of the following models, which have the potential to both reduce the burdens placed on administrators and generate stakeholder support.

[5] *Learning about Teaching: Initial Findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching Project*, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2009

Peer Assistance and Review (PAR)

PAR was created to be a collaborative assessment process, with peer teachers and a greater emphasis on professional development. The program identifies underperforming teachers and provides them with a supportive yet consequential professional improvement plan. Teachers that participate in a PAR program relinquish their tenure rights. The following components of a PAR system are recommended:

- *A PAR Panel:* An oversight panel comprising both teachers and school leaders that provides assistance and makes decisions on dismissal. The panel members should be outside the bargaining unit so as to eliminate any possible conflicts of interest.

- *Consulting Teachers*: Educators also outside the bargaining unit that provide instructional support to teachers under review and collect data through observations. They report monthly on the progress of the teachers to the PAR Panel.

Based on information gathered through the review program, the PAR Panel makes recommendations to the principal and superintendent for both provisional and tenured teachers regarding contract renewal, recommendation for a second year in PAR, or contract termination.

Master Teachers

Several evaluation systems studied by the Task Force use "master teachers" (in addition to the principal) to conduct teacher reviews; DC IMPACT and the system developed by Colorado's Harrison District Two are notable examples. The use of master teachers can be valuable because they can confirm the accuracy of a principal's evaluation and offer teachers an additional set of suggestions for improvement.[6] In both the referenced systems, the master teachers are from the district—not the teacher's school.

[6] In DC, master educators are expert practitioners who work at the district level. They conduct observations without prior knowledge of the scores given by principals. Over the course of one year, the principal conducts three formal observations and a master educator will conduct two. In Harrison school district, district-level observers review only those teachers at the very low and high ends of the rating scale. Principals conduct spot observations of instruction eight times each semester for probationary teachers and four times each semester for non-probationary teachers.

MEASURES OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The Task Force recommends that measures of student achievement initially comprise 50% of a teacher's evaluation in the new system. Over time, as the system is improved and gains support, we recommend that measures of student achievement grow to a larger portion of the evaluation.

Principles Guiding Recommendations

Use Multiple Measures

No single empirical measure can fully summarize a teacher's performance, so evaluation systems should use a number of measures to determine whether a teacher is effective.

A brief explanation of growth models

Growth models measure student progress. Such systems assess student performance at two points in time and generally control for factors such as previous performance or demographic characteristics.

Growth scores can be tied to teachers: in simple terms, if the students in a teacher's class make greater gains than similar students elsewhere, that teacher is credited with effectively raising student achievement.

Some say growth scores should not be used in evaluations. But based on our research, we believe that they provide important, if not perfect, information. When used in conjunction with other measures, growth can tell us a great deal. Despite limitations, these scores tell us *something*; that is, evaluations are better off using them than disregarding them altogether.

We recommend that the new system use growth alongside other measures and that the State work with testing experts to continually improve their validity.

Use Growth Models

Measuring attainment, for example whether a student reaches proficiency on a state assessment, doesn't take into consideration academic growth. Failing to account for progress is particularly unfair in the case of students who start a school year academically behind their peers.

Growth scores are a fairer and more accurate means of measuring student performance and teachers' contributions to student learning. In fact, over half of the states surveyed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)—24 out of 43—reported that they either already do or plan to use student growth in analyzing teacher effectiveness.[7]

The state will be using a growth model to measure student achievement on state assessments with data from 2009-2010. These scores will be released in fall 2011.

Use the Best Assessments Possible

The state does not have a single, comprehensive system of assessments covering all subjects and all grades.[8] The new evaluation system should use the best assessments available to generate

[7] *State Growth Models for School Accountability: Progress on Development and Reporting Measures of Student Growth*, 2010, by the Council of Chief State School Officers.

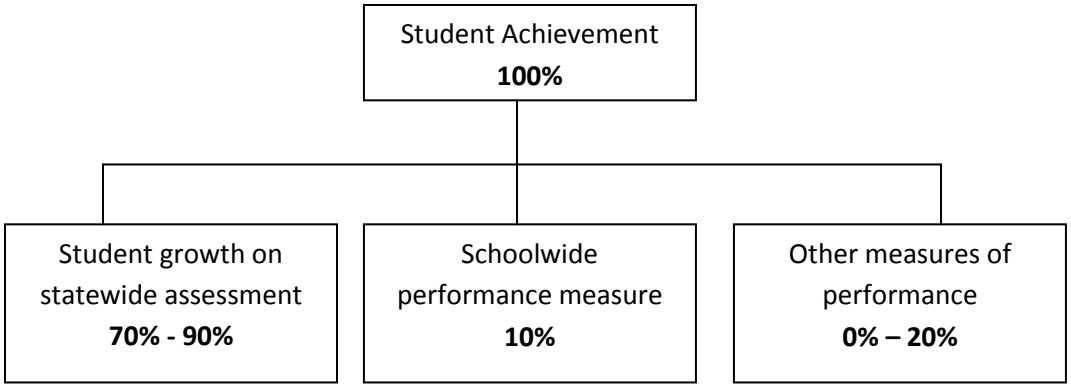
[8] New Jersey conforms to the federal NCLB requirements that students be tested in math and language arts in grades 3-8, and once again in high school. Some science assessments are also required by the state.

empirical measures of student performance. Where possible, teachers should be evaluated using state standardized tests. For currently non-tested subjects and grades, the assessments used should be rigorous and comparable across classrooms and should measure learning growth.

Measures of Student Achievement

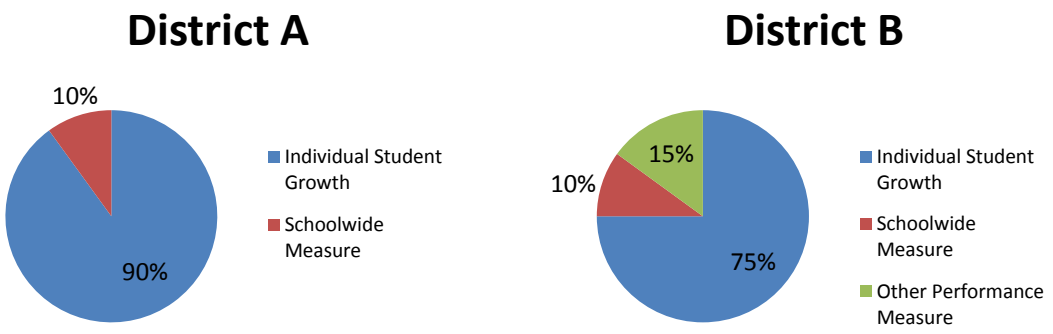
The Task Force recommends that the student achievement portion of the evaluation comprise two required components and one optional component. The largest required component would be an individual teacher's contribution to her students' progress on a statewide assessment. The other required component would be a schoolwide performance measure. A third, non-required component would be another measure of performance.

The schoolwide and non-required performance measures that districts could choose would be approved by the Commissioner to assure goals are appropriate and sufficiently challenging yet attainable. The Commissioner should also consider creating a waiver and review process by which districts could submit for approval some other performance measure to be used in the evaluation.



The Task Force recommends that each district be allowed to choose whether to use two or three components and have discretion over how to weight these components within the bands recommended here.

For example, District A may choose to use only the two required components. In that case, growth on the statewide assessment would comprise 90% and the schoolwide measure 10%. District B, however, may choose to use all three components, deciding to weight individual growth at 75%, the schoolwide measure at 10%, and another measure at 15%.



Individual Student Growth

The Task Force recommends that a teacher's student growth score make up the core of the student achievement section of her evaluation: 70% - 90% of the student achievement portion (or 35%-45% of the total evaluation).

Because not all subjects and grades have statewide assessments, currently growth scores can be computed for a limited number of teachers. For math and language arts/literacy in grades 4 – 8, these scores will be available in the fall of 2012.[9]

The Task Force recommends that the State work to develop standardized assessments in as many additional subjects and grades as appropriate so growth scores can be calculated for a growing number of teachers.

The Task Force recommends that the Commissioner approve the types of assessments that are acceptable for use in these areas in advance of the development of standardized assessments.

In some subjects, standardized year-end assessments may never be suitable (e.g., art, music, physical education, or career-tech fields). *In these cases, the Task Force recommends the use of other rigorous performance-based evaluations of student work. The use of re- and post- tests would be ideal so student growth, not merely attainment, can be gauged.*

A general rule embraced by the Task Force is that, within a district, different categories of teachers may be evaluated differently (e.g., gym teachers vs. 4th grade math teachers), but all teachers within a category should be evaluated using the same measures and weights.

Several states, such as Delaware, have assembled subject-specific groups of teachers and subject-matter experts to develop recommendations for addressing assessments in untested grades and subjects. New Jersey should consider convening similar groups. The groups of experts could provide guidance on how to develop new standardized assessments, how to measure growth before such assessments are available, and how to measure growth in subjects

[9] The link between students' growth scores and individual teacher will be completed in Fall 2012.

where standardized assessments are inappropriate. This work can be done in partnership with districts, teachers, subject matter experts, and others.

Schoolwide Performance Measure ("Shared Attribution")
The Task Force recommends that a total-school measure comprise 10% of the student achievement portion (or 5% of the total evaluation).

This measure could be a schoolwide aggregation of all students' growth on state assessments. Alternatively, teachers could share credit for meeting a school-specific goal. A school-specific goal would reflect an area of need identified by the school or district and approved for use by both the Commissioner and district superintendent.[10] The list of state-approved measures might include:

- High school graduation rate increase
- Promotion rates from 9th to 10th grade
- College matriculation rate increase
- Proficiency level increases for an underserved subgroup
- Advanced-level increases for the school or subgroups
- Student attainment level or proficiency increase on nationally normed or supplemental assessments (e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Stanford 9, International Baccalaureate, APA, SAT, ACT, early childhood)

The Task Force believes that the use of such shared attribution scores would focus all teachers on a school or district priority, thereby facilitating collaboration among educators and increasing the likelihood of accomplishing a major task.

Other Measures of Performance
The Task Force recommends that the Commissioner promulgate a list of state-approved student achievement measures. Interested districts would be permitted to choose a measure or measures from this list to comprise up to 20% of the student achievement portion of the evaluation (or up to 10% of the total evaluation).

Possibilities might include:
- Growth or attainment on a nationally normed tests (e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills)
- Growth or attainment on supplemental assessments (e.g., Stanford 9)
- State-mandated end-of-course tests (e.g., biology)
- Student achievement goals, also called "student learning objectives" (e.g., DC's IMPACT system, Harrison, CO)[11]

[10] This concept came from IMPACT, DC's Effectiveness Assessment System for School Leaders, 2010-2011.
[11] Teachers set goals for student growth, subject to certain parameters, with their principal's approval. Teacher evaluation is based on students' progress on the established goals, as determined by an end-of-the-year principal review using pre-determined assessments. While not comparable across classrooms, student learning objectives (SLOs) have been shown to be effective measures of student achievement growth.

Hypothetical Case: Scoring the Evaluation

Possible Component Ratings
4: Highly Effective
3: Effective
2: Partially Effective
1: Ineffective

Summative Rating Categories
4 – 3.25: Highly Effective
3.24 – 2.5: Effective
2.49 – 1.75: Partially Effective
1.74 – 1: Ineffective

- Grade- and subject-specific student outcomes (e.g., graduation/college acceptance rates)

Scoring

There are many different ways to combine the scores of the components of educator evaluations (e.g., the index system or panel approach). For example, since four summative rating categories are required, a district might choose to rate a teacher's performance on each component on a 1 – 4 scale, weight the components, and then sum the results.

So a teacher in District B who was found to be effective (a score of 3) on her students' growth scores (75% weight), partially effective (2) on her school's other performance measure (15%), and highly effective (4) on the schoolwide measure (10%) would earn for the achievement section:

(3 * .75) + (2 * .15) + (4 * .1) = 2.95 = Effective

This is just one of many ways to combine the component parts. *The Task Force recommends that the Commissioner develop guidelines and model scoring systems for districts to follow.*

SECTION II:
SCHOOL LEADER EVALUATIONS

School leaders play a crucial role in raising student achievement. According to research, principal and teacher quality account for nearly 60% of a school's total impact on student achievement, with principals alone accounting for 25%. The influence of school leaders is so significant because of their enormous contributions to schoolwide success conditions. Key among these contributions are activities related to teacher effectiveness, such as hiring, professional development, evaluation, retention, and dismissal.

Furthermore, even though a single teacher can have a profound impact on student learning over the course of a year, that effect generally fades unless a student's subsequent teachers are equally effective.[12] In order for a student to have high-quality learning gains year after year, the entire school must have a culture that supports learning and that school must be populated by the most effective teachers. These conditions are only brought about by high-performing school leaders.

In New Jersey, school leaders include principals, assistant principals and supervisors. Each of these positions has unique responsibilities, and therefore each should be evaluated based on their performance of those responsibilities. The Task Force recommends that *all* school leaders be evaluated, but has developed specific evaluation recommendations only for principals in this report.

Purpose of Principal Evaluation

As is the case with teacher evaluations, the Task Force believes that the purposes of principal evaluations are two-fold: assessment and development. In order for a principal evaluation system to be truly successful it must accurately assess the current performance of a principal and provide feedback on where and how to improve.

Definition of Effective Leadership

A large body of research has identified the leadership practices that produce successful schools. Principal evaluation systems have used this information to varying degrees.[13] But very few principal evaluation systems have held principals accountable for the academic outcomes of their students. It is only recently that reform-minded policy experts and education researchers have concluded that principal evaluations must include measures of both practice and student performance.

[12] "Principal Effectiveness: A New Principalship to Drive Student Achievement, Teacher Effectiveness, and School Turnarounds with Key Insights from the UEFTM" by New Leaders for New Schools, 2009

[13] Source: The Evaluation of Principals: What and How do States and Districts Assess Leadership?; Ellen Goldring, Andrew Porter, et. al., 2008

A principal's work has direct and indirect influences on school success.[14] Through the direct actions of hiring and retaining high-quality teachers, supporting their work, fostering a culture of student achievement, and more, the principal indirectly influences student achievement. Thus, for the principal, "...achieving results through others is the essence of leadership."[15] Schools with high at-risk populations that exceed expectations share a common element: a strong leader committed to education.[16]

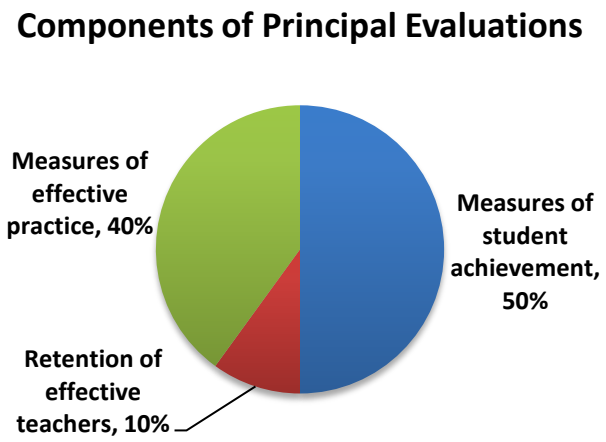
Summative Categories

T*he Task Force recommends that the new principal evaluation system have the same four summative categories as the teacher evaluation system: Highly Effective, Effective, Partially Effective, and Ineffective.*

The Components of Principal Evaluations

The Task Force recommends that the new principal evaluation comprise the following components with the following weights:

- Measures of effective practice: **40%**
- Differential retention of effective teachers (hiring and retaining effective teachers and exiting poor performers): **10%**
- Measures of student achievement: **50%**



[14] One study conducted with the Dallas, Texas, Public Schools found "...that the quickest way to change the effectiveness of a school, for better or worse, is to change the principal" (Mendro, R.L. (1998). *Student achievement and school and teacher accountability.* Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 12, pp. 263- 264.

[15] Mendro, R.L., p. 39.

[16] Cawelti, G. (1999). *Portraits of six benchmark schools: Diverse approach to improving student achievement.* Education Research Service.

MEASURES OF PRACTICE

Performance Standards

Before we can recommend how to evaluate principal effectiveness we must define the essential skills and responsibilities of an effective principal. This is the purpose of performance standards.

The Task Force recommends that New Jersey adopt the updated and revised Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008.[17] The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards have been adopted by most states, are widely accepted by the profession, and serve as a credible and useful foundation for principal evaluations.

New Jersey uses an older version of the ISLLC standards, adopted in 2003 and based on the 1996 ISLLC standards, to accredit leadership preparation programs, license school leaders, and approve professional development activities. However, they are *not* currently required by code for use in principal evaluation. Using the same standards across the continuum from preparation through practice will promote consistency and help drive systemic change.

The 2008 ISLLC standards provide high-level guidance and insight about the traits, functions of work, and responsibilities expected of school and district leaders, and are organized into six domains:

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION 1: Vision, Mission, and Goals
Education leaders ensure the achievement of all students by guiding the development and implementation of a shared vision of learning, strong organizational mission, and high expectations for every student.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION 2: Teaching and Learning
Education leaders ensure achievement and success of all students by monitoring and continuously improving teaching and learning.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION 3: Managing Organizational Systems and Safety
Education leaders ensure the success of all students by managing organizational systems and resources for a safe, high-performing learning environment.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION 4: Collaborating with Families and Stakeholders
Education leaders ensure the success of all students by collaborating with families and stakeholders who represent diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources that improve teaching and learning.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION 5: Ethics and Integrity
Education leaders ensure the success of all students by being ethical and acting with integrity.

[17] Revised ISLLC standards were adopted through the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) as model standards in 2008. ,

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION 6: The Education System

Education leaders ensure the success of all students by influencing interrelated systems of political, social, economic, legal, and cultural contexts affecting education to advocate for their teachers' and students' needs.

The Task Force recommends that the domains within the standards be weighted equally by all districts throughout the state. When research identifies which domains are most highly correlated with school success, this issue should be reconsidered.

Performance Indicators

Performance indicators provide descriptions of observable or demonstrable behaviors for each standard. That is, the performance indicators describe the types of performance that will occur if a standard is being met successfully.

New Jersey has not adopted a set of performance indicators for each standard, leaving to individual interpretation what specific actions and results are expected from an effective principal. New Jersey is not alone in this. A flurry of activity is now underway across the nation as states work to develop principal evaluation systems aligned to clear standards and performance indicators.

A handful of principal evaluation systems, complete with evaluation instruments and tools, already exist (e.g., McREL's Principal Evaluation System, New Leaders for New Schools Leadership Rubric, the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association's *Teacher and School Leader Evaluation Standards and Data Sources*). Some states and district have created systems of their own (e.g., DC IMPACT, Harrison, Colorado, and Rhode Island). The Task Force has reviewed many of these systems.

The Task Force recommends that the Commissioner develop a set of performance indicators or adopt existing performance indicators for the state. *The state should also establish a waiver process by which districts could develop rigorous, comparable performance indicators that meet guidelines established by the Commissioner.*

Evidence of Performance

No single data source can adequately capture the complexities of a school leader's work. A holistic view of professional practice and performance is needed. *The Task Force recommends that the principal evaluation include multiple data sources for gathering evidence of performance.*

We further recommend that the evaluation include the following data sources:

- Observations of instructional meetings, faculty meetings, professional learning communities, and other activities in which principals should be deeply engaged; such observations should be conducted by the superintendent or a designee and occur twice per year, at minimum.

- Annual surveys of teachers and families to assess school culture, learning climate, community engagement and other key elements.
- Document logs or portfolios (prepared by the principal) that provide evidence of success associated with the standards; interviews to review portfolios should occur twice per year.[18]
- Evidence of the principal's progress toward meeting district goals; assessment should be conducted twice per year.

The Commissioner may consider approving other data sources that may be used by districts, for example 360 degree survey tools (e.g., VAL-Ed).[19]

Evaluation Tools

The Task Force recommends that the Commissioner develop a list of approved rubrics, templates and tools that have been validated for use in leader evaluation, and develop a review process for districts to submit their own locally developed tools for review and approval.

Requiring each district to use state-approved measurement procedures and data collection protocols will enhance clarity, increase fairness, and ease inter-district comparisons. Should the NJDOE select only one set of tools for use across the state, it would provide a common language for evaluation and provide the opportunity for realizing economies of scale, especially for professional development.

Evaluators and Frequency of Evaluations

The Task Force recommends that principal evaluations be performed by superintendents or their appropriately trained designees. Thorough training should be provided to the evaluators so that the review process is implemented in a rigorous and consistent manner.

The Task Force recommends that reviews of leadership practice occur at least twice per year. This will enable principals and their evaluators to engage in constructive conversations that provide the opportunity for principals to make needed adjustments.[20] *In addition, an annual summative evaluation should occur at the end of the year.*

[18] In current code, a professional growth plan is required for all principals. This plan should be based on the professional growth goals established as a result of the evaluation.

[19] VAL-ED: http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/EducationLeadership/Documents/VAL-ED-Technical-Manual.pdf

[20] In DC's IMPACT evaluation system, instructional superintendents evaluate principals twice each year, which guarantees regular formative feedback. However they are expected to be in their principals' schools *at least* once every two weeks.

RETENTION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

The principal's success in building and maintaining a high-quality teaching staff is critical to the success of the school. Differential retention of effective teachers means hiring and retaining effective teachers and exiting poor performers. *The Task Force recommends that differential retention of effective teachers contribute 10% of the principal evaluation.*

The following indices should be used to measure differential retention of effective teachers:

- Principal's effectiveness in improving teacher effectiveness (i.e., growth of teachers' ratings)
- Principal's effectiveness in recruiting and retaining effective teachers
- Principal's effectiveness in exiting ineffective teachers

The Task Force recommends that principals be empowered with the role of human capital manager. It is critical to note that principals can only be judged against this measure if they are given a clear role in teacher hiring, organizing professional development, dismissing ineffective teachers, and more. Current New Jersey law states that superintendents are responsible for most of these personnel decisions. To make the individual school accountable for its student achievement outcomes, the school principal must be given more control over the inputs. The Commissioner should develop policies to ensure principals and superintendents have responsibility for personnel decisions.

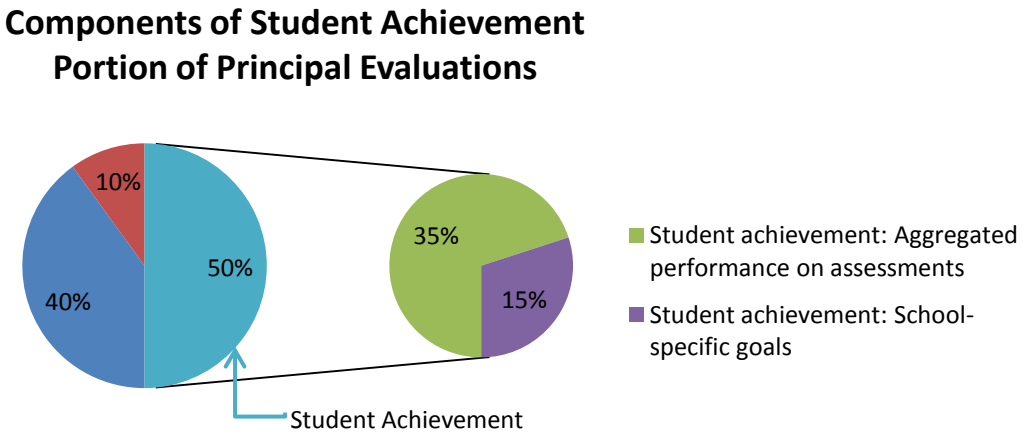
As previously discussed, teacher effectiveness is the most important in-school factor related to student achievement, and principals influence teacher effectiveness by providing instructional leadership and through their personnel decisions.

MEASURES OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A principal's primary indicator of success is the improvement of student achievement throughout her school. Accordingly, a principal's evaluation should be based substantially on empirical measures of student learning.

As discussed above, a principle guiding our recommendations is the use of multiple measures overall and within the student achievement category. The use of multiple measures will provide a district a number of angles by which to inspect principal performance, and it will broaden the list of performance indicators on which the principal, and therefore her faculty, will focus.

The Task Force has identified two different measures of achievement that should be included: aggregated student growth on standardized assessments and "school specific goals."



The Task Force recommends that principals be evaluated on the aggregated growth of all students on statewide assessments (all subjects and grades). This measure should comprise 35% of the total evaluation (or 70% of the achievement portion of the evaluation). The state's development of end-of-year assessments across a broader swath of subjects and grades will facilitate the availability of a larger number of growth scores, providing a fuller measure of the school's overall performance.

The Task Force recommends that every principal also be measured on at least one school-specific goal.[21] A school-specific goal would reflect an area of need identified by the school or district and should be approved for use by both the Commissioner and district superintendent. This measure or combination of measures would comprise 15% of the total evaluation, or 30% of the student/school performance portion of the evaluation.

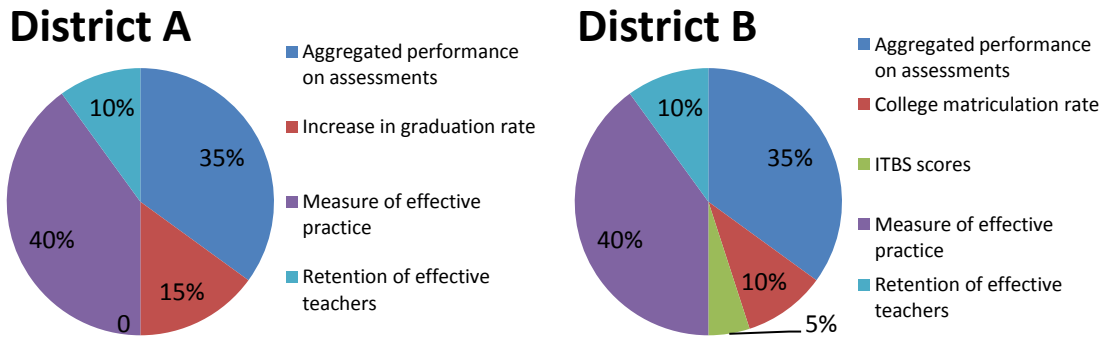
[21] This concept came from IMPACT, DC's Effectiveness Assessment System for School Leaders, 2010-2011.

The list of state-approved measures might include:

- High school graduation rate increase
- Promotion rates from 9th to 10 grade
- College matriculation rate increase
- Proficiency level increases for an underserved subgroup
- Advanced level increases for the school or subgroups
- Student attainment level or proficiency increase on nationally normed or supplemental assessments [e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), Stanford 9, International Baccalaureate, APA, SAT, ACT, early childhood]

Implementation

District A could choose to select only one school-specific metric—in this instance, high school graduation rates. This would account for 15% of the principal's evaluation. District B, however, could choose two school-specific measures—here, college matriculation rates and ITBS scores. These two measures would combine to total 15% of the evaluation.



Scoring

As in the teacher section, a district might decide to use a 1 – 4 scale for each of the principal's components, weight the components, and then sum the results.

So a principal in District A found to be highly effective (a score of 4) on aggregated growth scores (35%), effective (3) in raising graduation rates (15%), highly effective (4) in measures of her practice (40%), and partially effective (2) in her retention of effective teachers (10%) would earn:

(4 * .35) + (3 * .15) + (4 * .4) + (2 * .1) = 3.65 = Highly Effective

This is just one of many ways to combine the component parts. *We recommend that the Commissioner develop guidelines and model scoring systems for districts to follow.*

SECTION III:
CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

As the Task Force studied the complex field of educator evaluations, it became clear that evaluation systems cannot be considered in isolation. In order for an evaluation system to have a meaningful and lasting impact, many other supportive policies and practices must be in place. That is, the success of the evaluation systems recommended here will depend largely on the environment into which they are introduced. Though the identification of these conditions for success was not required by the governing Executive Order, the Task Force believed that the cause of improving educator effectiveness would be well served by raising these interrelated issues.

What follows is an overview of the key issues the Governor and his administration might consider as they build and implement an improved evaluation system.

Evaluator Capacity and Training

The evaluation system recommended in this report calls for a substantial portion of a teacher's evaluation to be based on observations of teacher practice. The responsibility of conducting classroom observations rests on principals, other administrators, and possibly seasoned, skilled teachers. In order for these observations to be fair to teachers, to elicit a high level of trust and confidence in the system, and ultimately drive improvements in student learning, high-quality evaluator training is essential.

As the instructional leaders for their schools, principals will need adequate training on the observation protocol and other measurement tools used to evaluate teachers. If evaluation results are to be tied to a wide array of personnel decisions, the importance of proper training cannot be overstated. We strongly recommend that New Jersey's Commissioner of Education prioritize such training and work with districts to ensure that those conducting teacher observations--and therefore exerting an enormous influence on teachers' professional standing--be qualified to do so. The system depends on a high level of reliability and accuracy in the evaluations.

The Task Force recommends that the Commissioner consider the development of regional training centers, so that training will be consistent and high-quality. These training centers could be modeled on those that existed under previous administrations or are operating successfully in other states.

The same recommendations apply to those evaluating school leaders. Superintendents must be adequately trained in the observation protocol and other measurement tools used to evaluate principals.

Engaging and Educating Teachers and Principals
Most teachers and principals are accustomed to the current, longstanding systems of evaluation. The recommendations in this report would, if implemented, represent a major change to their professions; without fully explaining the new system and its implications, the state would risk confusing, and possibly alienating, its educators.

We recommend that the Commissioner develop plans for ensuring that educators are made aware of the contours and consequences of the new system, given the opportunity to learn why and how it will work, and engage in its implementation. This could include developing statewide professional development programs, working with existing programs, or partnering with districts, membership organizations, or other nonprofits to develop tools, practices, or policies to successfully implement the system. One possible model to emulate can be found in Delaware, which has formed groups of teachers and subject matter experts to develop measures of student achievement in non-tested subjects and grades.

Observation Frequency and Teacher Feedback
A commonality among the strong systems we studied was the increased frequency of observations. In many schools, classroom visits by administrators are rare or perfunctory. This means a teacher is given few opportunities to demonstrate her skills and knowledge, and little opportunity to receive constructive feedback. We believe a cornerstone of a robust evaluation system is a commitment to frequent observations coupled with an ongoing dialogue between teacher and observer that offers the opportunity for continuous improvement. The Commissioner should set guidelines around the minimum number of observations teachers should receive.

Reconsidering Priorities
The demands of implementing a quality educator evaluation system present a number of challenges to schools and districts. One of the greatest is the need to reconsider how educators spend their time. For principals, conducting observations, writing evaluations, and then conferring with teachers require a significant commitment of time. With so many other responsibilities and regulatory requirements, administrators will be hard-pressed under current conditions to find such time. As the state and its districts develop a comprehensive strategy for improving educator effectiveness, finding ways to enable administrators to adequately do this important work should be a priority.

The Commissioner should conduct a thorough code review to eliminate redundancies and unnecessary mandates that pose a burden on the school leaders' time. Another possible solution is to shift some non-instruction functions to other administrators or the central office.

Teachers may need to spend more time learning how to reach the most disadvantaged students, use data in the classroom, and align instruction with clear performance goals. This suggests the possible need for changes in teacher preparation programs, different or expanded professional development opportunities and more opportunities to engage in professional learning communities.

Developing High-Quality Assessments
Currently, fewer than half of educators teach in tested grades and subjects, so student growth scores can only be generated for a portion of the state's teaching corps. Growth scores, however, are absolutely essential for the system recommended here; they provide a measure of how far students have progressed in the span of a school year, thereby taking into account each student's starting point.

The state should determine how best to develop valid and reliable empirical measures of student performance in all subjects and grades. Whether traditional standardized assessments or others tools that accurately assess learning, these measures should be tightly aligned with clear standards and, to the fullest extent possible, measure growth in addition to attainment.

The state could engage teachers and other subject matter experts in an initiative to develop these assessments. This would go far toward ensuring these assessments measure what matters most and generating support among practitioners.

Though this will be a challenging and time-consuming task, the state should not delay taking it on. Developing empirical measures of student learning in all subjects and grades will send a powerful message about the importance of standards, assessments, and student achievement. Moreover, the new evaluation system will not be complete and internally consistent until every teacher's evaluation has some empirical measure of her students' learning.

Developing High-quality Data Systems
The success of our recommended evaluation system will depend largely on the quality of the data systems that undergird it. We must have systems that not only calculate student growth scores and tie these results back to teachers, but also process this information swiftly so it can be used by the state, districts, and schools in a timely fashion. Moreover, this information must make its way to teachers if they are to have a true opportunity to learn from the data. Similarly, if districts are to use interim assessments for evaluation or formative purposes, data systems must be prepared for this additional responsibility.

The state should give particular attention to several issues related to growth scores. The NJDOE will be able to link student achievement scores to individual teachers by fall 2012. However, the state must find ways to verify student rosters for all teachers in a timely fashion, and apportion responsibility for student performance in team teaching settings and when students change teachers during the year.

Additional Observers
Although principals and assistant principals are typically the primary observers, it may be the case that they lack the specific content knowledge to effectively evaluate all teachers, especially those in higher grades and specialized subjects. Developing a cadre of "master teachers" with content expertise who are empowered to observe would help address this issue.

It would also decrease the total number of observations a time-strapped administrator must conduct and give a school another view of a teacher's practice.

For example, Washington, D.C.'s IMPACT system uses district-level "Master Educators" in addition to administrators to conduct classroom observations. A Master Educator is defined as "an expert practitioner in a particular content area who will serve as an impartial observer" of teacher practice. Master Educators give confidence to teachers that their evaluations will be less vulnerable to the subjectivity of a single person and that the observer is knowledgeable in their content area.

Access to Resources

The type of robust evaluation system recommended in this report places new responsibilities on schools and districts. To help those on the ground implement this new system the state should consider developing a range of supports. The list could include tools that ease data collection and facilitate the tracking of students or programs that help teachers with interim assessments and data analysis.

Continuous Improvement

A common refrain from those with the most impressive evaluations systems is that the work of building a great system is never done. A number of our presenters noted that no evaluation system is perfect and that each year they must strive to make it fairer, more accurate, and more transparent. Despite our faith in its attributes, we know that the system recommended here will not be perfect from the start. Much will be learned about its strengths and weaknesses during its implementation. We strongly encourage policymakers and practitioners to continuously study this new system and make modifications over time to ensure that it is both improving educator effectiveness and driving student learning. This could be accomplished through a variety of means, such as empirical studies of changes in student performance over time or regular surveys of teachers and principals. This kind of feedback loop will also help build support for the new system, as those in schools will see that it is responsive to changing conditions and new information and tightly aligned to explicit results.

Increased Principal Autonomy

Our recommended system would make a principal highly accountable for the gains of her school's students and the effectiveness of her teaching faculty. This increased accountability should be coupled with increased authority at the school level; that is, more responsibility for outputs requires greater control over inputs. Principals, in collaboration with superintendents, should have the power to select and develop their teachers and dismiss those not succeeding at their craft. They should also have greater authority over their budgets and other resources.

Teachers of Special Populations

During the course of our research, we came to the conclusion that in some cases the framework recommended here may not apply fully. Teachers of special populations, including ELL and special education students, may need to be evaluated using different measures. We

recommend that the Commissioner convene work groups to determine how best to evaluate teachers who work in these areas.

Superintendent Evaluation
The Task Force recommends that superintendents and their professional staffs be evaluated in part based on the quality of their principals' teacher evaluations and their records of development and differential retention. Each level of the education system must be held accountable for student achievement and each must be aligned along the same goals.

Evaluations for All
The executive order charged the Task Force with recommending evaluation measures for teachers and school leaders. However, for schools to be most effective, all staff should be evaluated, including librarians, nurses, school social workers, secretaries and custodians. In this way, each person will be treated as an important member of the school community responsible for contributing to student achievement.

Implementation
Given that the long-term sustainability of this new system will be influenced by its early effectiveness, we recommend that the administration carefully plan an implementation process. Several issues mentioned in this report, such as the availability of growth scores, the development of additional assessments, the timely delivery of data to districts, the need for data collection and other types of support, and high-quality training for reviewers need to be addressed.

The state might also consider piloting the system in a limited number of districts before taking it statewide. This would afford policymakers and practitioners the opportunity to build support and resolve initial challenges before attaching high stakes to the results. A gradual roll out would also give the state time to align other policies and practices, such as reforms to tenure and compensation, with the new evaluations.

One possible implementation plan would look as follows:

<u>Fall 2011: Pilots</u>
Measures of student achievement and the link to individual teachers are needed:

- Student growth scores using 2009/10 and 2010/11 will be available in Oct. 2011.
- Participating pilot districts would need to provide student-teacher roster data for the 2010/2011 school year (roster data will be collected statewide for 2011/2012).
- Other measures of student achievement will need to be developed for teachers of non-tested subjects and grades.

Measures of teacher practice must be identified and evaluators need to be trained:

- Districts will need to identify an observation protocol and at least one additional measure of teacher practice.
- Training for evaluators will be needed.

- Expectations for teachers and how they will be evaluated must be clearly communicated.

Fall 2012: Statewide rollout without "high stakes"

The link of student achievement data to individual teachers will be available statewide:

- The first growth scores attributable to teachers of language arts and math in grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 will be available in fall 2012 using 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 data.

Fall 2013: Full implementation statewide; impact on personnel decisions:

After two years of testing the evaluation system and making adjustments, it should be ready to be used in making personnel decisions.

SECTION IV:
NEXT STEPS

The completion of this report represents the first step in developing improved educator evaluation systems. The Task Force has identified the following next steps that it might pursue in an effort to continue advancing this important work:

- Solicit feedback on the report's recommendations from the State Board of Education and other stakeholder groups in order to make revisions and refinements.
- Convene sub-groups to develop recommendations for student achievement measures for teachers of special populations and non-tested subjects and grades.
- Develop detailed recommendations for piloting the evaluation system in selected districts.

APPENDIX

Task Force Members

- Brian Zychowski, Task Force Chair: Superintendent, North Brunswick schools
- Derrell Bradford, Executive Director, Excellent Education for Everyone (E3)
- Donna Chiera, Executive of the American Federation of Teachers, NJ, and Special Education Resource Teacher (Perth Amboy)
- Jane Cosco, retired teacher (Paramus) and Director of Operation Goody Bag
- Ross Danis, former Associate Dean of Education, Drew University; current Executive Director, Newark Education Trust
- Rafael Fajardo, former President of the Elizabeth Board of Education
- Peggy Sue Juliano, Executive Board Member of the Lacy Township High School PTA (invited)
- Rev. Edwin Leahy, Headmaster of St. Benedict's Prep in Newark
- Jesse Rector, Principal, North Star Academy Charter School; Clinton Hill (Newark) Campus

Presenters

- Evaluation experts:
    - Laura Goe (Teacher Quality Source; ETS): Using evaluation to improve teacher effectiveness
    - Drew Gitomer, Distinguished Researcher and Director of the Understanding Teaching Quality Center, ETS
    - Margaret Terry Orr, Bank Street College of Education: Evaluating Principals--Considerations and Recommendations from Research and Practice
    - Charlotte Danielson: Operationalizing performance standards for all teachers
- Model evaluations systems:
    - Mike Miles, Superintendent of Harrison, CO: Using performance data in an evaluation system
    - Paul Bambrick, North Star Academy Charter School, Newark: Uncommon's evaluation system
    - Jason Kamras: DCPS: Washington DC's IMPACT system
    - Tony Davis, Principal Consultant: McRel principal and teacher evaluation systems
    - Ted Herschberg, Professor, Public Policy and History; Director, Operation Public Education, University of Pennsylvania

- Ulcca Joshi Hansen, Associate Director for Educator Effectiveness, Colorado Legacy Foundation: Colorado's Framework for Evaluating Educators

- New Jersey districts
  - Nathan Parker, Summit Superintendent: Summit's system and approach
  - Brian Osborn, Maplewood-South Orange Superintendent: Principal evaluation
- Stakeholder groups
  - EQuATE: Creating a More Perfect System: A Draft Report on Improving Educator Effectiveness from Concerned Practitioners and Policymakers: Earl Kim, Superintendent of Schools, Montgomery Township
  - NJDOE Professional Development Advisory Committee: Brian Cory, Co-Chair; Vice Principal at Tenafly HS
  - State Special Education Advisory Council: Howard Lerner, Chair; Kathy Roberson, Vice Chair
  - New Jersey Association of School Administrators: Richard Bozza, Executive Director
  - New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association: JoAnn Bartoletti, Executive Director, Debra Bradley, Director of Government Relations, Jay Doolan, Director of FEA
- NJDOE Staff:
  - Elaine Davis, Director of Leadership Development: Principal evaluation
  - Jeffrey Hauger, Director of State Assessment: Assessment issues
  - Bari Erlichson, Director, Office of Education Data: NJSMART and Growth Models

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New Jersey Department of Education -Teacher Evaluation System Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
NJDOE COMMUNICATIONS TO DISTRICTS					
NJDOE announces statewide roll-out plans and issues guidance on evaluation system requirements, including specifications on all measures, processes, and implementation expectations.	Early Jan. 2012	NJDOE Evaluation office	Guidance documents, planning template for districts to use, webinars, regional and county roundtable presentations	NJDOE staff time	Learning from pilots will not be complete so guidance on all components of the system may not be fully fleshed out.
ENSURING DISTRICTS GET COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT					
Districts establish a district advisory committee (DAC) to select framework, engage in decision-making on other measures and disseminate communications to the broader community.	Late Feb. 2012 and on-going	NJDOE provides guidance on establishing DACs and decisions to be made at the district level. District Central Office Administrators organize establishment of DACs.	Monthly reports	NJDOE and district staff time	
CHOOSING A TEACHER PRACTICE/OBSERVATION FRAMEWORK/MODEL					
NJDOE establishes core criteria for selecting a framework and writes into code.	Draft code presented to State Board by Dec. 2011 and approved by June 2012	NJDOE Evaluation office with internal counsel support (Chief of Staff's office)	Regulations	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE creates approved vendor list with frameworks that meet criteria, including pricing, to eliminate the need for districts to conduct competitive bidding.	Feb. 2012	NJDOE Evaluation office and Purchasing office	Approved vendor list with specifications and pricing	NJDOE staff time	None (work underway)
Districts submit pilot teacher evaluation plans to NJDOE with selected pilot schools (minimum of 1 school) and framework to pilot.	District pilot plans due June 30, 2012	NJDOE District Central Office	District evaluation pilot plans	District staff time; additional funding	
NJDOE approves district pilot evaluation plans.	Late Aug. 2012	NJDOE County Offices	Evaluation plan guidance and rubrics for reviewing, approved plans	NJDOE staff time, additional funding to staff up County Offices	NJDOE funding to staff up; tight timeframe to review plans
TRAINING EVALUATORS, CONDUCTING EVALUATIONS AND PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT					
DOE cadre of external/third party evaluators are recruited and trained and ready to be deployed in selected districts. (External evaluators must conduct a minimum of one of the required formal observations.)	Feb. 2012-July 2012	NJDOE Regional Achievement Centers will recruit and train content-area specialists who want to be evaluator-certified.	DOE cadre of trained external evaluators and their observation schedules.	Funding to pay for external evaluators' salaries, training and certification in multiple frameworks	Recruiting timeline, costs to hire and train
District-level evaluators in pilot schools are trained and certified (a proficiency exam is required).	July-Sept. 2012	District administrators	Proof of evaluator certification or proficiency (due in Fall 2012 report)	District administrators' time	Scheduling and completing the training over the summer (some administrators are 10 and 11 month employees); cost of training
A process is in place to monitor and remediate evaluator accuracy, inter-rater reliability and score inflation throughout 2012/13.	Include in plan due April 2012. Remediation/recalibration must occur throughout 2012/13.	District administrators	Plan due June 2012	District administrators' time; additional funding	Costs associated with process
Teachers' observations and post-conferences are scheduled in pilot schools.	Include in plan due April 2012	School administrators	Plan due June 2012	District administrators' time	
Pilot teachers' required observations and post-conferences are conducted/completed.	Sept. 2012 -- April 30, 2013	School administrators	Summative ratings that include rating for observations; audits that collect observation rubrics and rating sheets, post-conference reports	District administrators' time	Getting all teachers trained before observations begin.

New Jersey Department of Education -Teacher Evaluation System Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
TRAINING TEACHERS					
All pilot teachers are trained in the teacher practice framework.	July-Sept. 2012	District administrators	Plan due June 2012; report due Fall 2012	Teachers' time, cost of training	Finding unscheduled days for training; paying teachers for training days; trainer capacity
All teachers in district are trained in teacher practice framework.	Sept. 2012-June 2013	District administrators	Plan due June 2012; report due Fall 2012	Teachers' time, cost of training	Finding unscheduled days for training; paying teachers for training days; trainer capacity
LINKING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TO EVALUATIONS					
Teachers' evaluations will be linked to professional learning: each teacher must have PD plan linked to evaluation results and school/district goals. Each teacher is to be assigned to a collaborative team focused on curriculum, assessment and instruction.	PD plans due Jan-Feb. 2012. Teachers' involvement in PD and PLCs ongoing throughout 2012-13.	School and district administrators	District and school PD plans	Teachers' time; additional cost of training for effective PLCs; DOE Regional Achievement Centers have personnel who can advise on individual training opportunities and can train principals in PLCs.	
TRAINING ON USING STUDENT GROWTH DATA & DATA DECISION MAKING					
All pilot administrators and teachers are trained.	By Dec. 2012	NJDOE and district/school administrators	NJDOE training schedule, webinars	NJDOE and district/school staff time; additional cost of training	Scheduling time in districts—finding unscheduled days for training
IMPLEMENTING AN INTERNET-BASED PERFORMANCE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM					
Districts select performance data management system and implement.	Fall 2012	District administrators with input from DAC	DOE specifies functionality of systems so data can be integrated into a statewide system by Fall 2012	District/school staff time; additional cost	Cost
ASSESSING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN TESTED GRADES AND SUBJECTS (LA & Math in grades 4-8)					
Pilots use SGP as growth measure in evaluations in SY 2012/13.	Use SGP from 2011/12-2012/13 in summative scores by Sept.	DOE Performance office	DOE has linked students and teachers by Sept. 2012 to create	NJDOE and district/school staff time	
ASSESSING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN NON-TESTED GRADES AND SUBJECTS (NTGS)					
NJDOE provides guidance/criteria to districts in developing/selecting assessments for NTGS and process for setting student learning objectives.	July 2012	NJDOE Office of Evaluation and Office of Academic Standards and Assessment	DOE guidance documents, rubrics	NJDOE staff time and technical expertise	NJDOE staff time to engage subject area specialists
NJDOE develops list of approved assessments (proven to be valid, rigorous) that districts can use, and some assessments developed by 10 pilots and SIGs from 2011-12.	Aug. 2012 for small number of assessments and building list throughout year	NJDOE Office of Evaluation and Office of Academic Standards and Assessment	List of assessments	NJDOE staff time, additional cost to hire psychometricians	Time to prove assessments are valid and rigorous; assumes 2011-12 pilots have developed some good assessments that can be used in expanded pilots
NJDOE develops some assessments for NTGS (e.g., science, LA and Math in NTG)	Aug. 2012 for small number of assessments and building more throughout years	NJDOE Office of Academic Standards and Assessment	assessments	NJDOE staff time, additional cost to hire psychometricians	Time to prove assessments are valid and rigorous
District-wide groups of educators convene to review and select assessments and performance tasks to use with teachers in NTGS.	July 2012-Dec. 2012	School administrators in collaboration with teachers	District reports to DOE due Spring 2013	School staff time, time and cost for training on SLOs, PLCs; NJDOE county offices and Regional Achievement Centers provide training in SLO process and PLCs to help districts in selection/development of assessments	

New Jersey Department of Education -Teacher Evaluation System Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
Pilots begin using assessments in NTGS	Jan. 2013	School administrators in collaboration with teachers	Summative ratings for NTGS teachers in pilots	School staff time, time and cost for training on SLOs, PLCs; NJDOE county offices and Regional Achievement Centers provide training in SLO process and PLCs to help districts in selection/development of assessments	
SELECTING OTHER MEASURES OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT					
NJDOE develops list of approved school-wide performance measures NJDOE develops list of approved optional performance measures	July, 2012	NJDOE Office of Performance, Office of Evaluation, and Office of Academic Standards and Assessment	List of school-wide performance measures List of optional performance measures	NJDOE staff time	
Pilot schools select school-wide performance measures and optional performance measures.	December, 2012	School administrators with input from DAC	Each component measure is submitted to NJDOE in report/performance data management system	District staff time	
ASSIGNING A SUMMATIVE RATING TO TEACHERS					
Pilot schools assign summative ratings to all teachers and enter into NJSMART.	By May 2013	School administrators	Data are entered into NJSMART	School administrators' time	School administrators know how to assign points to each subcomponent of the evaluation so a summative score can be calculated.
NJDOE OVERSIGHT & MONITORING					
Schools/districts will report to NJDOE ratings on evaluation subcomponents.	Jun-13	School administrators; NJDOE accountability review team	Each component measure is submitted to NJDOE in report/performance data management system	School administrators' time; Cost to train/employ NJDOE staff or consultants	
NJDOE will collect ratings on evaluation subcomponents to check for consistency across ratings of subcomponents**.**					Building an NJDOE accountability review team
Significant inconsistencies will be flagged for county office follow up.					Capacity of NJDOE to check for consistency and follow up
FEEDBACK LOOP TO DOE FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT					
Districts provide feedback to NJDOE researcher so the system can be continuously improved.	Summer 2013	NJDOE Office of Evaluation and researcher	Researcher report	Cost of research	Cost of research
EXPANDED PILOT IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY 2012-13;					
Pilot schools begin using teacher practice framework	Sept. 2012				
Pilot schools begin using assessments for NTGS and SGP for TGS	Jan. 2013				
Summative ratings are given to teachers in pilots	Spring 2013				
STATEWIDE ROLL-OUT IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY 2012-13;					
All NJ schools begin using teacher practice framework	Sept. 2013				
All NJ schools begin using assessments for NTGS and SGP for TGS	Sept. 2013				
Summative ratings are given to all NJ teachers	Spring 2014				

New Jersey Department of Education - Principal Evaluation System Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
DEVELOPMENT OF REQUIREMENTS, SY 2011-12					
NJDOE develops requirements and guidelines for principal evaluation system and solicits feedback from stakeholder groups.	By December 2011	Eval and PD Office, EPAC subcommittee, Professional Development Advisory Committee for School Leaders (PDAC)	Communications, website, presentations, dedicated email, dedicated phone number	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE establishes regulations governing principal evaluation and updates its Professional Standards for School Leaders.	By June 2012	Eval and PD Office, State Board of Ed	Approved regulations	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE revises its professional development requirements for school leaders to align with the evaluation requirements.	By June 2012	PD Office, school leader advisory boards, State Board of Ed	Approved regulations	NJDOE staff time	
COMMUNICATIONS AND SUPPORT, SY 2011-2014					
NJDOE communicates initial guidance to districts on the recommended criteria for high quality principal evaluation, timelines for pilot, state rollout activities, and suggestions for district advance planning.	January 2012	Eval Office, PIO, with help from EPAC and county offices	Communications, website, presentations	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE communicates pilot year expectations and application process and solicits partners to pilot in 2012-13. (SIG pilots will continue to refine their processes during 2012-13 and extend to more schools in SIG districts. Teacher pilot districts will be invited to participate.)	January 2012	Eval Office, PIO, with help from EPAC and county offices	Communications, website, presentations	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE creates communication plan for statewide rollout in 2013-14 and begins to implement.	March 2012 with regular updates	Eval Office, PIO, with help from EPAC	Communications, website, presentations, meeting minutes, planning documents	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE continues to create support materials including checklists and webinars to guide districts in implementing principal evaluation systems.	Ongoing	NJDOE multiple offices, with help from EPAC	Materials, website, presentations, meeting minutes, planning documents	NJDOE staff time, IT support	
NJDOE creates network of regional support centers to provide assistance to districts for full implementation and to ensure district training needs are being met, including necessary training on data systems, SGPs, evaluation frameworks, etc.	Developed during 2012	Eval Office, PD Office, County Offices, Regional Centers, Delivery Unit, other NJDOE offices as necessary	Meeting minutes, personnel assignments, communications records, support materials, planning documents	NJDOE staff time, other hires if necessary to support regional efforts	Building the capacity of state staff to support the districts in implementing their evaluation requirements.

New Jersey Department of Education - Principal Evaluation System Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
NJDOE develops plan to sample evaluation results and get regular feedback about concerns and needs for full state rollout.	Developed during 2012	Eval Office	Plans and resulting feedback	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE works with professional development partners to support high quality professional development plans and opportunities for school leaders.	Ongoing	PD Office	Meeting minutes, communications records, support materials, planning documents, training schedules	NJDOE staff time	
PILOT OF ONE PRINCIPAL EVALUATION MODEL IN SIG SCHOOLS, SY 2011-12					
NJDOE creates EPAC subcommittee on principal evaluation.	November 2011	Eval Office, EPAC	Subcommittee roster and meeting minutes	NJDOE staff time	
SIG schools choose a model that meets the requirements which they all will implement and begin to train principals and district administrators/evaluators.	December 2011	SIG DEPAC, NTOs, local BOEs with support from Eval and Title I Offices	Plans and reports	School, district, and NJDOE staff time	
SIG schools select, develop, or extend a performance management system to capture evaluation data and evidence for principals.	February 2012	SIG DEPAC, NTOs, local BOEs with support from Eval and Title I Offices	Plans and reports	School, district, and NJDOE staff time	
SIG schools work with NJDOE to identify student achievement measures and the measures used to assess the 10% HR component; develop a process for combining all measures into a summative score.	By April 2012	SIG DEPAC, NTOs, local BOEs with support from Eval and Title I Offices	Reports, measures, plans	School, district, and NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE monitors implementation and tracks issues, processes, and outcomes to inform larger state pilot in 2012-13.	December 2011-June 2012	Eval Office and EPAC	Meeting minutes, communications records, feedback sheets	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE analyzes results of pilot and revises guidelines and plans.	Ongoing	Eval Office and EPAC	Reports, communications, plans, guidance materials	NJDOE staff time	
PRINCIPAL EVALUATION PILOT ACROSS STATE, SY 2012-13					
Districts submit applications to be pilot sites.	March 2012	District Central Office	Applications	District staff time	Lack of funding to give to districts to support their expenses for pilot year.
NJDOE reviews district applications and selects 20-25 new pilot districts.	April 2012	Eval Office	Rubrics, communications	NJDOE staff time	
Selected pilot districts create or extend a district advisory committee to provide leadership for implementation and handle communications with community of stakeholders.	May 2012	District Central Office	DAC roster	District staff time	

New Jersey Department of Education - Principal Evaluation System Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
NJDOE creates an advisory group from representatives of the district advisory committees who will meet regularly throughout the year to inform the pilot process.	By June 2012	Eval Office and Districts	Advisory group roster	NJDOE and district staff time	
Pilot districts select a principal practice framework and submit to NJDOE for approval.	By June 2012	District Advisory Committee (DAC)	Reports	District staff time	
NJDOE reviews/approves plans and finalizes details of pilot year with participating districts.	July 2012	Eval Office, EPAC, DAC	Rubrics, approval letters, planning documents	NJDOE staff time	
Pilot districts select, develop, or extend a performance management system to capture evaluation data and evidence for principals.	By Fall 2012	DAC	Reports	District staff time	Expenses involved with training and support
SIGS continue to refine their systems and expand to more schools in SIG districts.	Fall 2012	SIG DEPAC, NTOs, local BOEs with support from Eval and Title I Offices	Reports, plans	NJDOE staff time	
Pilot districts provide training on framework for all principals and their district level evaluators.	Fall 2012	DAC	Reports, observations	District staff time	Expenses involved with training and support
Pilot districts receive training on SGP and use of student achievement data in principal evaluation system.	Fall 2012	Data and Eval Offices	Reports, observations	District staff time	
Pilot districts work with NJDOE to identify student achievement measures and to refine measures used to assess the 10% HR component which were developed in SIG pilot.	Ongoing	DAC and Eval Office	Meeting minutes, identified measures	NJDOE and district staff time, possible use of technical assistance consultant	
Pilot districts assist NJDOE to develop guidelines for adjusting the evaluation criteria for assistant principals.	Ongoing	DAC, Eval Office, EPAC	Meeting minutes, recommendations	NJDOE and district staff time, possible use of technical assistance consultant	
Pilot districts share data collection instruments and measures with NJDOE to help compile list of approved instruments for statewide implementation.	Ongoing	DAC, Eval Office, EPAC	Meeting minutes, recommendations, list of approved instruments	NJDOE and district staff time, possible use of technical assistance consultant	
Pilot districts share achievement measures with NJDOE to help compile list of approved instruments for statewide implementation.	Ongoing	DAC, Eval Office, EPAC	Meeting minutes, recommendations, list of approved instruments	NJDOE and district staff time, possible use of technical assistance consultant	

New Jersey Department of Education - Principal Evaluation System Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
As evaluations are conducted, pilot districts analyze results and get feedback from participants to inform NJDOE on utility of criteria, measures, evidence, and procedures for determining summative ratings.	Ongoing	DAC, Eval Office, EPAC	Reports, observations, feedback	NJDOE and district staff time, possible use of technical assistance consultant	
NJDOE compiles findings from pilot to inform statewide rollout guidelines, procedures, and necessary supports.	Ongoing	DAC, Eval Office, EPAC	Reports, support materials	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE reviews samples of principal professional growth plans created in conjunction with the evaluation process and revises guidelines to support professional development planning for principals.	By July 2013	PD Office, PDAC	Support materials, website, communications, presentations	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE reiterates plans for statewide rollout in 2013-14, including district responsibilities and timelines.	By November 2012	Eval Office, PIO, with help from EPAC and county offices	Communications, website, presentations	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE creates an approved list of frameworks and vendors including pricing information which is communicated to all districts.	By December 2012	Eval Office, EPAC, Purchasing Office	List, communications	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE creates a waiver process for districts who want to develop or use a model not on approved list.	By December 2012	Eval Office, EPAC	Waiver process, communications	NJDOE staff time	
NJDOE uses pilot district experiences to provide suggestions for assessments, instruments, and tools suitable for use in principal evaluation	By March 2013	DAC, Eval Office, EPAC	Support materials, website, communications, presentations	NJDOE staff time, possible use of technical assistance consultant	
STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION, SY 2013-14					**Implementing the principal evaluation system statewide at the same time as the teacher evaluation system will create a significant time burden on principals**
Districts create or extend a district advisory committee to provide leadership for implementation of principal evaluation system and to integrate with teacher evaluation processes.	January 2013	District Central Office	DAC roster	District staff time	
Districts select a principal practice framework from approved list or choose to request waiver.	By February 2013	DAC	Application to NJDOE	District staff time	
Districts submit plans to NJDOE for approval.	March 2013	DAC	Application to NJDOE	District staff time	

New Jersey Department of Education - Principal Evaluation System Implementation Plan					
Key Milestone or Activity	**Detailed Timeline**	**Party or Parties Responsible**	**Evidence (Attachment)**	**Resources (*e.g.* , staff time, additional funding)**	**Significant Obstacles**
NJDOE reviews/approves plans and finalizes details of rollout year.	April- May 2013	Eval Office, EPAC	Rubrics, communications	NJDOE staff time	Number of plans that must be reviewed
Districts select, develop, or extend a performance management system to capture evaluation data and evidence for principals.	By Fall 2013	DAC	Reports	District staff time	
Districts provide training on framework for all principals and their district level evaluators.	August through October 2013	DAC	Reports, observations	District staff time	
Districts receive training on SGP and use of student achievement data in principal evaluation system.	As needed	Data and Eval Offices	Reports, observations	NJDOE and district staff time	
Districts implement chosen framework.	Ongoing	DAC	Reports, observations, communications	District staff time	
NJDOE monitors implementation, continues to provide support, and solicits feedback from districts.	Ongoing	DAC, Eval Office, EPAC	Meeting minutes, communications records, support materials, planning documents, feedback notes	NJDOE and district staff time	
NJDOE revises guidance as necessary based on feedback and data from statewide rollout.	Ongoing	Eval Office, EPAC	Communications, website, presentations	NJDOE staff time	

Appendix 11: Reducing burdens on educators, schools, and districts (per Assurance #10)

SEA should remove duplicative and burdensome reporting requirements that have little or no impact on student outcomes. To receive the flexibility, an SEA must assure that it will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools.

New Jersey has undertaken two key, concurrent initiatives to reduce the administrative burden on its LEAs and schools.

Regulatory Reform

First, Governor Christie on April 4, 2011 issued Executive Order No. 58 establishing an Education Transformation Task Force charged with conducting a comprehensive review of all education-related statutes and regulations

> "to determine the extent to which they increase the quality of instruction for students, improve academic achievement of students, improve teaching effectiveness within-schools or improve the safety and well being of students . . . or are overly prescriptive."

The Task Force, consisting of accomplished educators from across the State, including a teacher, principal, and superintendent, is in the midst of a comprehensive review of over 2,000 pages of regulations and statutes governing New Jersey's LEAs and schools. These regulations and statutes in the aggregate impose an extraordinary burden on educators and perpetuate a mentality of compliance rather than of performance that is often contrary to the best interests of children.

The Task Force's review, aided by a team of lawyers, the NJDOE senior staff, and leading educators, has been organized around two related considerations. First, any mandate that does not directly advance student learning, safety, or fiscal integrity is a candidate for elimination or modification. Second, other than in certain circumscribed areas where it is appropriate for the State to retain firm central direction, districts and schools are in by far the best position to craft their own pathways to meet the ambitious performance standards set by the State.

The Task Force released an Initial Report on August 15, 2011 containing over 40 recommendations for revisions to Administrative Code that eliminate "excessive and unnecessary State mandates," thereby reducing duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. It should be noted that none of these recommendations will require legislative approval; they are all exclusively under the purview of the NJDOE and the NJSBOE.

The Task Force is currently developing a complete set of recommendations in a Final Report that is due to the Governor on December 31, 2011. These recommendations, along with rewritten, revised regulations, will be forwarded to the NJSBOE for review and their hopeful adoption by mid-2012.

Second, the NJDOE has substantially streamlined its Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC), the NJDOE's monitoring and evaluation system for public school districts. Under QSAC, NJDOE

evaluates school districts in five areas: fiscal management, governance, instruction & program, operation management, and personnel. Districts are currently measured on a total of 54 indicators within the five review sections. Districts must meet 80 percent of the indicators in all five areas to be State certified, and those falling below 80 percent in one or more sections must implement an improvement plan and other actions as directed by the NJDOE.

The revised QSAC process will allow districts to Focus attention and resources on factors that directly impact student achievement, fiscal accountability and local district governance, creating a more concise self-evaluation for districts as well as an accountability tool for the NJDOE. The Working Group also examined how to create a less cumbersome process for districts.

This regulatory reform will make the QSAC process more efficient and less time-consuming, thus allowing districts to more efficiently use limited resources and to Focus attention on factors that directly impact student achievement and college and career readiness.

Data Collection Improvement

Our second significant initiative to reduce the burden on LEAs and school is our effort to streamline our data collection processes. As is the case with most State Departments of Education, as federal programs developed program-specific data reporting requirements, the NJDOE responded by creating a separate data collection from schools and districts Focused on the narrow data needs of the federal program.

Recently, the NJDOE has undertaken an effort to establish data governance procedures to both reduce redundant data collections and improve data quality throughout the State. To that end, as the NJDOE has developed its state wide, student-level, longitudinal data system (called NJSMART) and as its collections have been determined to be of sufficient quality, legacy collections have been sunsetted.

From 2009-2011, the NJDOE sunsetted the following collections and is now utilizing NJSMART as our data of record for:

1. Fall Survey, October 15th enrollment count
2. Assessment PreID label file for grades 3 – 8
3. Separate collections for special education students
4. A separate enrollment count for limited English proficient students
5. A separate collection for homeless students
6. A separate collection for 8th grade technology literacy
7. A separate collection for home language
8. A separate dropout and graduation collection

In 2011-2012, the NJDOE will sunset the following collections:

1. A separate enrollment count for district budgeting
2. A separate certificated and non-certificated staff collection
3. A separate collection for public high schools receiving Perkins funding
4. A separate collection for Access for ELLs PreID labels
5. A collection for special education personnel
6. A separate collection identifying Title III personne

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

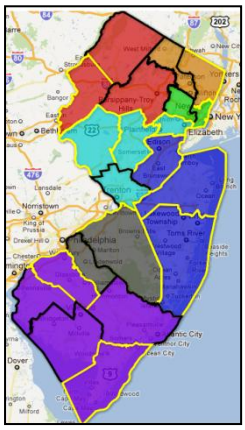
Regional Achievement Center update

Planning

The NJDOE has designated two full time project managers to lead planning efforts for the Regional Achievement Centers. The project managers have convened a team of 10 additional NJDOE employees to manage specific tasks associated with launching the RACs. Each team member has completed a detailed work plan and is being held accountable for specific deliverables on a clear timeline. The project managers meet with the planning team once a week to track progress and resolve issues.

Each of the following work streams is led by a member of the planning team:

- Strategy (drawing on best practices from New Jersey and other states)
- Staffing (identifying and recruiting talented staff for the RAC teams)
- Professional development (training RAC staff and preparing schools and districts)
- Communications (engaging internal and external stakeholders)
- Operations (supporting efficient RAC teams)
- Accountability (designing strong systems to track progress and assess data)
- Transition (ensuring smooth coordination with other NJDOE functions)



The RAC project managers also facilitate ongoing decision-making through weekly advisory meetings that include the Deputy Commissioner, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Talent Officer, and Chief of Staff. Policy decisions and major operational decisions are discussed and resolved at these meetings. The Commissioner is given regular updates on RAC progress and is included in all major policy decisions.

Regions

New Jersey's 21 counties have been grouped into seven geographically contiguous regions that will each house one Regional Achievement Center. The state made an effort to design the regions so that each RAC team would serve a similar number of Priority and Focus schools, but in many cases this was difficult due to the concentration of Priority and Focus schools in certain counties. The state will adjust staffing ratios to accommodate the number of Priority and Focus schools in each region.

The NJDOE has identified office space for each Regional Achievement Center using existing NJDOE county offices and other DOE and state buildings. Office space for RAC teams will be operational by the end of the school year.

	Region (counties)	Priority & Focus Schools	Priority Schools	Focus Schools
1	Morris - Sussex - Warren	6	0	6
2	Bergen - Passaic	41	6	35
3	Essex - Hudson	60	26	34

4	Hunterdon - Mercer - Somerset - Union	44	13	31
5	Middlesex – Monmouth - Ocean	34	3	31
6	Camden - Burlington	31	24	7
7	Atlantic - Cape May - Cumberland - Salem - Gloucester	37	2	35
	Total	**253**	**74**	**179**

Staffing

School Improvement Director (1)

All seven Regional Achievement Centers will be led by a School Improvement Director who will be held accountable for the progress of Priority and Focus schools across the state. The School Improvement Director's primary responsibilities will include managing the seven Regional Achievement Directors and working with NJDOE senior leadership to continually improve the effectiveness of the Regional Achievement Centers. The NJDOE will advertise this job vacancy through various channels in January, and hiring will be complete by April.

Regional Achievement Directors (1 per region)

Each Regional Achievement Center will be led by a Regional Achievement Director (RAD) who will be held accountable for the progress of each Priority and Focus school in his or her region. In addition to driving school improvement efforts within the region, each RAD will manage a RAC team, manage relations with school districts, and ensure coordination with other RAC regions and the Department of Education. The NJDOE advertised seven RAD job vacancies across several channels in November 2011 and received close to 200 resumes. The NJDOE then convened committees to screen resumes, design a performance task for select candidates, and develop interview protocol. 39 candidates are in the process of completing a performance task which will then determine their eligibility for an interview. Hiring will be complete by the end of March.

Regional Achievement Center Teams (~12 specialists per region)

In early January the RAC Planning Team held numerous information sessions open to all employees of the New Jersey Department of Education. Several hundred employees attended the sessions to hear about the state's plans for the RACs and to learn about RAC specialist opportunities (e.g., elementary literacy specialist, special education specialist, ELL specialist, data specialist). The RAC Planning Team then followed up with a survey to all NJDOE employees to assess interest in specific job titles and regions. Job openings for all specialist positions will be released internally and externally in February. The NJDOE anticipates hiring many internal candidates to fill RAC roles.

Quality School Reviews

Currently, the state conducts four-day CAPA reviews (Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement) at each Title I school in improvement status (SINI) under NCLB. The CAPA process is a partnership among the NJDOE, schools, districts, and local educators designed to empower schools and districts to go beyond current efforts to improve student achievement. The program strives to pinpoint obstacles to student achievement, identify needs and develop solutions to improve school performance. CAPA is a four-day process that targets Title I schools in improvement status as defined under NCLB. During a CAPA visit, a team of six to seven experienced educators, district and school staff, representatives of higher education and DOE staff conduct a review of the school using CAPA Indicators and essential questions. During the visit, the team analyzes data; reviews the school's

NCLB Unified Plan; conducts interviews; makes classroom visitations. A draft of the school report of findings and recommendations is discussed with the district and school leadership staff. Based on this collaborative effort, an action plan is developed.

The Chief Academic Officer has reviewed the CAPA process and determined that data from CAPA reviews conducted within the past 24 months can be utilized to assess the needs of Priority and Focus schools for purposes of designing school improvement plans and interventions in Fall 2012. Any Priority school that has not received a CAPA review in the past 24 months will undergo a review this spring so that all Priority interventions can begin this fall. CAPA data will be supplemented with data that RAC teams collect during their initial walkthroughs in Priority schools.

There are 74 Priority schools including 19 schools that are current SIG recipients. Each of these SIG schools underwent a Needs Assessment review as part of their Grant application process. Of the remaining 55 Priority schools, 7 have had a CAPA review completed within the previous 24 months. An additional 7 schools have had no previous CAPA review. The remaining 41 priority schools had a CAPA review but more than 24 months ago. All Priority schools that are not SIG schools or have not had a CAPA review completed within the last 2 years will be scheduled for a CAPA review to be completed by the Spring of 2012 allowing us to start all priority school interventions by Fall 2012.

During the spring of 2012 the CAPA review process will be revised by a team with deep expertise in the turnaround principles. The resulting Quality School Review (QSR) will replace the CAPA process beginning in the fall of 2012.

In order to start quality interventions in all Focus Schools at the start of the 2012-2013 school year RACs will require identified schools to present the following reports and data sets:

- Report progress on interventions currently in place to improve sub-group performance;
- Present sub-group attendance, discipline and all school-level academic data;
- Present sub-group curricular materials;
- Present randomly selected student schedules); and
- Present the work done, if any, to increase family involvement targeted to meet the identified sub-group needs;

The presentation of this information can take place during the month of August allowing the RACs to plan interventions designed to address the needs of the identified sub-group(s) that start at the beginning of the school year and take into account the plans already in place in each focus school.

RACs will complete the full QSR process in Focus schools and adjust interventions as needed during the 2012-2013 school year. All interventions within each school turnaround principle area will continue for one full year, or until sustained improvement has been observed by the regional achievement teams.

There are 179 schools on our Focus School list. Of these schools, 6 have had a CAPA review within the last 24 months. Of the remaining 173 schools, 56 Title I schools have not had a previous CAPA review completed and 75 Title I schools have had a previous CAPA review but these reviews were completed more than 24 months ago. The remaining 32 schools are not Title I and none have had a CAPA review within the last 24 months ago.

Funding

The state will streamline existing school improvement efforts (e.g., CAPA reviews, school improvement office) to make funding available for RAC positions, training, and operations. In many cases, employees serving in a school improvement function will join a RAC team. The state has also consolidated some functions at the county level to eliminate overlap and provide additional funding for the Regional Achievement Centers.

List of Attachments

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF
Acting Commissioner

October 11, 2011

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver – Request for Feedback/Input

Dear School Administrators:

On September 23, the US Department of Education announced that the federal government would invite states to apply for flexibility from the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). States would be granted flexibility in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction.

An overview of the federal guidance for this application can be found in the document below, located on the US Department of Education's website.

http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility

As outlined in this guidance, states would be required to submit a plan in the following three areas:

- Transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments
- Developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support
- Evaluating teacher and principal effectiveness and supporting improvement

Because such changes would have a major impact on our state's educators and families, we are soliciting input from K-12 stakeholders and the broader public on what elements should be included in New Jersey's application. Please visit the link below to submit comments to the Department.

https://education.state.nj.us/esea/

Submissions will be received from October 11 until October 21, 2011. We welcome feedback in any of the three areas outlined in the federal application. Please circulate this link to all interested parties.

Sincerely,

Christopher D. Cerf

Acting Commissioner of Education

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF
Acting Commissioner

November 3, 2011

TO: District Superintendents
Charter School Leaders

FROM: Andrew Smarick
Acting Commissioner [redacted]

SUBJECT: **NCLB Waiver Application**
Deadline for Comments: November 9, 2011

On September 23, the US Department of Education announced that the federal government would invite states to apply for flexibility from the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). States would be granted flexibility in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. The first application deadline is November 14.

Over the past month, the Department has solicited input from educators and community members across the state on the federal government's guidelines. We collected comments through our website over two weeks in October, and met with both educators and the leadership of teachers unions and professional associations to solicit recommendations.

Before finalizing the application, the Department is soliciting additional comment on the draft outline of our application. This document captures the findings from our initial outreach and additional work done by the Department.

Because such changes would have a major impact on our state's educators and families, we are soliciting input from K-12 stakeholders and the broader public on this draft outline.

A copy of the draft outline and the form for public comment can be found at the link below. **Submissions will be received through November 9, 2011.**

https://education.state.nj.us/esea2/

c: Executive County Superintendents

NAME	CITY	ST	AFFILIATION	TRANSITION_TO_COLLEGE	DEVELOP_SYSTEMS_RAS	EVALUATE_EFFECTIVENESS
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher		It talked about achievement gaps when comparing subgroups to determine focus schools. - The biggest achievement gaps exists between ELLs and non-ELL students. When comparing achievement gaps, one school could have a large amount of newcomer ELLs who do not speak English but who need to be assessed in math or English. Another school could have a population of ELLs that have been in the country for 3-5 years. - Is it fair to compare the achievement gaps between these schools because of their populations? I think the state needs to consider length in program between ELL populations when examining achievement gaps to determine focus schools.	One thing that was mentioned was parent and student surveys to measure teacher effectiveness. How would this work for ELLs and parents of ELLs when populations consist of uncommon language groups.

NAME	CITY	ST	AFFILIATION	TRANSITION_TO_COLLEGE	DEVELOP_SYSTEMS_RAS	EVALUATE_EFFECTIVENESS
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	School Administrator	How exactly is the State going to help schools and districts transition to implementing standards? This reads eerily like more unfunded mandates. I like the idea of the standards, but I would like to see as much of a focus on career-readiness and not just college-readiness. In my experiences, career preparation is often looked down upon.	This sounds like it could help ELLs, but it still reads like schools/teachers will be punished instead of supported.	As long as "multiple measures" are included, this sounds ok to me. I don't want to see only one test score decide the fate of a teacher. The larger picture always needs to be considered.
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	School Administrator		In developing a sustem for accountability the amount of time and money spent on State testing should be scaled back to allow for more time for instruction. Currently most districts have developed tier assessments for all grades and subjects to help drive classroom instuction. Additionally, most districts have developed quarterly and yearly assessment to monitor student progress. If districts do not have such an assessment design in place than perhaps they can be encouraged to do so. Therefore, the move back to State testing in grades Four, Eight and Eleven would save districts money, allow for beter instructin and would be beneficial for all stakeholders.	

NAME	CITY	ST	AFFILIATION	TRANSITION_TO_COLLEGE	DEVELOP_SYSTEMS_RAS	EVALUATE_EFFECTIVENESS
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher	While keeping in mind the goals of the college/career-ready measures, please also keep in mind the needs of our special education students, as well as English Language Learners. The last thing any educational system should do is discourage any student from reaching his/her fullest potential, and by following these new standards, there is a risk that these students will not be provided with the tools they need in order to be successful. In the best case scenario, these standards will allow every child to reach his/her upmost potential.	Struggling schools are often in that state due to external factors that are difficult to address. In order to achieve success, we must provide both educators and families with adequate resources. This means updating school buildings, providing families with structured support, and providing all educators training and strategies to try to overcome some of these difficulties. Schools should be provided adequate funding to ensure class sizes do not become too large, and there are people available to help students who require it. Also, educators from these low-performing schools should be given a chance to serve on committees or panels to address these issues. This will result in educators feeling real "ownership" of these reforms. Bottom up will always work better than top down. Focusing on the people who deal with these issues on a daily basis should be an absolute priority. If these reforms become punitive, both educators and students will become disengaged, and the issues will begin to snowball into even bigger problems.	Although teacher accountability is important, basing almost ½ of an evaluation on a standardized test is not only unfair, but also treats educators in an unprofessional manner. Studies have often shown that up to 2/3 of a child's success in school depends on factors other than the teacher. I implore the state to keep in mind the needs of our special education and low-income students. These students struggle just to keep their heads above water. What teachers are able to do in some of these classrooms around the state is simply amazing. However, that does not mean a student will "pass" a random test on a random day in May. A better way to "grade" teachers may be to use the standardized test as a smaller measure of evaluation, while also allowing for portfolios, projects, and examples of thoughtful student work. These measures are more likely to show actual growth from year to year. The standardized tests should be used as a tool to help educators focus on their areas of success, and those which may require a bit more focus. To use it as a punishment tool with not do anything to help student success, and will in fact discourage teacher collaboration within our schools.

NAME	CITY	ST	AFFILIATION	TRANSITION_TO_COLLEGE	DEVELOP_SYSTEMS_RAS	EVALUATE_EFFECTIVENESS
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher			When teaching ELL students we need to measure personal academic growth for each and every student. Personal growth plans should be the measure of how a "new comer" is learning. By holding these students to the same academic levels as their peers seems unfair to the ELL students and an impossible task for the teachers in the general education classroom. We need to reevaluate the testing process. Teaching with the standards in mind should help direct us academically and assessing personal growth of ELL students rather than standardized tests they cannot read or comprehend seems logical.

NAME	CITY	ST	AFFILIATION	TRANSITION_TO_COLLEGE	DEVELOP_SYSTEMS_RAS	EVALUATE_EFFECTIVENESS
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Principal	I fully believe and support rigorous standards for all children and believe that as educators we should be held accountable for making sure that the students progress each year. For me, the main area of concern is ensuring that a growth model will be utilized when assessing the standards. For students with moderate to severe learning disabilities, the ability to realize the same standards as non-learning disabled peers may be unrealistic. For some of the most significant children that are currently in my school (a grades 3-5 public school), we have established goals which include getting them to be able to speak to another person or use the toilet independently. Reading the level of college readiness is simply not obtainable for these students. The attempt to fit every child into the same box is unfair and unrealistic.	A tiered system makes sense and looks at the holistic picture. The current AYP system may label an entire school as failing or needing improvement when in reality; it may be a small group within the school that is struggling. As long as multiple factors are addressed when determining the status of schools, it seems to be a fair concept. A concern that I have is that resources are not disproportionately allocated. For many years, Abbott school received considerably large amounts of funding with little achievement to support the expense. If money is to be directed to fund problem schools, there must be a return on investment. Another component that needs to be included is recognition for schools that are making significant strides in any areas that are being evaluated. Finally, everyone should be compelled to show growth. A school that is just making the bar should not be encouraged to just keep making it, there needs to be an incentive for everyone to get better. Our students deserve that.	If feedback is timely and student achievement is measured on a growth model, a research validated framework such as Danielson's for teachers would be welcomed. There must be a plan and financial support to train all administrators that will be involved in conducting high-stakes evaluations as well as training for teachers so everyone understands clearly what the expectations are.

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Principal	I work in a K-8 district where we have programs in place to encourage children to start thinking about future plans, but I do not feel that this is an area of expertise for me to offer feedback in at this time. In addition, I am an elementary school principal and imagine that middle and high school administrators would have more to offer in this area.	In the area of accountability and state testing, I feel that schools should be accountable for individual student growth, rather than looking at students by group. The expectation should be that children make growth on a scale that is specific to them as an individual and their needs. Although it is still important to analyze the data for achievement gaps among gender and race, I do not believe it is realistic or appropriate to expect the same growth or proficiency level from a special education child with a diagnosed disability or an LEP student that we should expect from a regular education student. In addition, it is important to look at where the student started and how much growth occurred within one school for any given child, regular and/or special education. Sometimes we receive children that are several grade levels behind their peers. It would be more efficient and appropriate to expect individual growth for this type of student that is reasonable within one calendar year. So, my suggestion is that New Jersey schools adopt a model of "growth added" for accountability. This will still enable analysis of individual	My recommendations in the area of staff evaluation and effectivness are as follows: I feel that staff evaluation is crucial in ensuring that we have successful academic programs for all students. I think it is important to have regular and thorough evaluation of teachers. This evaluation process should be formally documented and utilize research-based evaluative practices. In particular, I like Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. I feel the rubrics that she provides cover all school personnel (school nurse, counselor, therapists, etc...) thoroughly. Her indicators are specific allowing accurate analysis of teaching and providing solid feedback to help the teacher improve. I feel that an evaluative system that utilizes her rubrics or a similar type of system is more objective than a system that primarily uses data collection in a narrative format without clear standards and indicators. Forms that have clear indicators and standards are not only more objective, but easier for administrators to complete and for teachers to synthesize to make professional growth. With that said, I have two concerns. One involves merit pay and the use of student progress or achievement data. Considering that we only strictly assess students in several subjects, primarily literacy and math, I do not believe it is an equal system

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					teacher success as well as school and district educational success, but allows each child to grow on a level that is developmentally appropriate based on their individual needs. I believe that this type of model for accountability will also bring a clearer picture of which schools in NJ are truly low-performing schools. Then the State Department of Education can focus their resources and energy on these low-performing schools, while allowing schools that are performing adequately to continue their work independently with less government interference and state regulation. In my opinion, this management system would be more efficient and productive for students, staff, and government officials.	to evaluate some staff with a different standard than other educational professionals. For example, in the elementary school, it would be difficult for me to evaluate student achievement in music, art, physical education, counseling, nursing services, various therapies, etc... In a middle school, the standards for a language arts or math teacher would be more stringent based on state testing and standardized testing at the district level than in social studies, science, art, instrumental music, physical education, health, counseling services, nursing services, etc... And obviously, the same could be said for high school staff members. This could easily lead to a staff shortage. I am certain that individuals who feel a passion for teaching will choose academic areas where their job and pay will not be "on the line" with the same pressure as language arts and math teachers would feel under this type of system. At this point, there is already a math teacher shortage and I am sure an evaluative model that includes student achievement will make it even more difficult to find these teachers. This is also a difficult evaluative model for special education teachers. Some of the best special education teachers that I have ever had the opportunity to meet, have worked with the same cognitively impaired student for two or more years before significant

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						academic achievement can be documented. Many special education students require life skills, social skills, and various other types of programs that can be difficult to track academic achievement. I do not believe that this type of system is appropriate for evaluation. I fear an educational system in which teachers are in competition with each other and the workplace is becomes one in which each teacher is out for themselves, rather than one which encourages teamwork. Children are complex and their learning styles are sometimes very individual and specific. We need as many teaching styles and professional minds working together and offering each other support and advice in order to help each individual child grow. My second concern is as an administrator who operates a K-4 elementary school of 545 students without an assistant principal and only a part-time curriculum supervisor. I take teacher and staff evaluations very seriously. I spend at least 1 1/2 hours on each observation, sometimes more depending on how much support the teacher requires. As it is, I have to schedule two observations every week from October through March in order to complete all tenured and non-tenured observations in my building. Then I have to begin teacher annual evaluations and

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						evaluate all support staff, before helping teachers develop their PDPs for the upcoming school year. As the only administrator in the building, primarily due to administrative cut-backs, I spend the rest of my week working with parents and students, handling daily building procedures, maintaining student discipline, managing personnel issues, supervising the school finances, as well as a host of other duties, of which I couldn't list all even if I tried. My situation is common to most school administrators in NJ and across the country. So one can imagine my concern when considering an evaluative program that could require me to evaluate tenured teachers three times a year and non-tenured teachers five times a year without additional administrative support. This type of evaluative cycle will most likely cause several severe consequences. I will not be able to spend the amount of time on evaluations that I do now, so they will be less productive in helping teachers improve instruction and more a matter of completing tedious paperwork. I will also have to spend less time supporting parents, students, and teachers on a daily basis. I currently know almost every student in my school by first and last name. I can tell you the teacher that they have had since they started in my school and can give you a detailed report on their academic

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						program. I pride myself on knowing my students, their families, and my staff in a personal manner that allows me to individualize my management style to meet each of their needs. There is no way that I will be able to give this same attention to the school community if the level of evaluative paperwork increases; and I believe this level of knowledge about my school community positively impacts student achievement on a daily basis. The relationships that I have developed with staff, students, and their families are crucial in providing an academic environment that maximizes each student's potential. If I am not able to provide this for my school, I would be unhappy and less satisfied in my job, which will most likely cause me to look for a change in career. I have my doctorate so I could easily move on to a career in higher education or a host of other opportunities so that I can be utilized to my full potential. I imagine that other administrators will feel the same and slowly there will be an administrative shortage in this state. Many of the administrators who will remain will be the ones who just want their paycheck each week and will not be concerned with offering the level of service that is my top priority currently as a school administrator. In conclusion, I do not feel that

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						quantity equals quality. In other words, more evaluations and more observations do not necessarily equate to better teaching and more quality education. So, the teacher evaluation model that the state develops should be one that promotes quality, while making it manageable and motivational for teachers and administrators.
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher	Allowing flexibility into the current system will foster the development of programs and assessments that will prepare students for the work force, not simply, one test.	Loosening the grip of NCLB on our schools will certainly be better for all, yet, it is still necessary to adapt measures that will continue to close the achievement gap. Meaningful analysis must be considered in the creation and implementation of programs. Continuing education and support for teachers must be part of the equation.	As teachers need support, principals and administrators need support. Understanding and being aware of the needs of various populations is imperative in creating a meaningful education.

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	School Administrator	1.Sustained professional development will be provided to our staff along with other supports to prepare our teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new standards. This will be done in accordance with established State of NJ guidelines. Our goal will be to align with the new standards and provide opportunities for our teachers to expand their horizons to teach to the new standards, use instructional materials aligned with those standards, and use data on multiple measures of student performance (e.g., data from formative, benchmark, and summative assessments) to drive instructional practice in the classroom. Evidence based research strategies will also be incorporated in the lessons to afford students more opportunities for success.	2.By establishing various methods to assess student progress, rigorous interventions such as RTI can be used to assist students and identify areas of deficiency and address them appropriately. Starting in grade 3 we can work with students to help them establish skills to give them an opportunity to map out their career plans and meet their needs. Remediation can be provided and this will be done based upon the identification of student progress via the assessments. Achievement gaps can be closed and proficiency for students can be obtained focusing on those students demonstrating the most need.	Our plan is to work collaboratively with the teachers and administration to develop and eventually adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems. Successful adoption will likely occur within the next two years based upon our state's timelines and directives. This system will provide feedback based upon valid measures of student progress and teacher effectiveness.

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Superintendent	Please note my comments below. Statewide assessments for students with moderate to severe disabilities are not realistic. Districts such as mine(a Special Services District) could be required to show progress toward teaching students job readiness skills as well as progress in preparing for post graduation outcomes, including preparation needed to apply and interview for a job as well as the skills necessary to maintain a job in their community if possible. For many of my students who will be in a DDD program as a post secondary outcome, a job in competitive employment will not be possible, and therefore unrealistic.	My biggest area of concern is the assessment of students with special needs. My students, who have moderate to severe disabilities, generally cannot demonstrate proficiency on the Alternate Proficiency Assessment. Asking a child to demonstrate proficiency on cumulative progress indicators well above their level of functioning is unfair to the student, parent and teacher. A majority of my students need to demonstrate literacy and mathematical skills through a functional life skills curriculum. An adolescent who cannot feed him or herself, does not track with his/her eyes, needs assistance in recognizing what type of clothing to wear in particular weather, needs full assistance with toileting and functions at an infant to toddler level will never be proficient in curriculum geared toward grade level CPI's. So, what do we do? We need to use a growth model that can show incremental changes over time. Each of my students has a Individualized Education Program (IEP). Objectives are tracked and progress reported on at IEP meetings. If that is not enough than an assessment tool such as the Brigance can be used to demonstrate progress within	Based on my comments in section two above, evaluating teacher and principal effectiveness has to be different for those choosing to work with the moderate to severely disabled. Should they be penalized because their students are not reading on grade level? Will we continue to be able to find teachers with the heart and soul needed to work with these children if their effectiveness is to be based on whether their children are proficient on state tests? My staff work with students whose needs are more than can be handled in a general education setting. Developmental Disabilities, high mobility, and extreme behaviors that create huge gaps in learning are facts of life in my schools. Basing staff evaluations on progress over time is realistic within certain parameters, and I agree that data needs to be kept and evaluated- but the state and federal governments need to realize that we are teaching much more than math, language arts and science to these students with very special needs.

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					certain areas. When the federal and state government talk about special needs students falling through the cracks in reading and math- they are not talking about ALL special needs children. They are talking about those with learning disabilities who can be taught using specific methods which will get them to grade level. Respecting students with moderate to severe disabilities means recognizing and respecting the small, incremental successes they achieve and recognizing that some students may plateau at a certain level.	

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher			As a special education teacher I look at my kids as individuals and consider where they are academically and then consider what is realistically possible for them. If I have an incoming 8th grade student reading on a 3rd grade level, do I believe that student will be able to read on an 8th grade level by the time he or she leaves my class? Miracles can happen but a miracle for this student is to leave my class reading on a 5th grade level which is much more realistic with a lot of work on everyone's part, not just the teacher, but the student as well. I think measuring a student's progress over time is the way to go, that is how I do it in my classroom to determine where this child's strengths and weaknesses are and they teach from there. I think we are on the right track here.
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher		SES should be controlled by Title 1 failing schools or District Office and parents only giving imput after Educators(Principal,Teacher,Reading/Math Supervisor) decide what each child needs and which vendor can provide the most rigorous improvement program (or tutoring)for low achieving student.	

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	School Administrator		I support this concept. The schools in our district are far from low-performing in my opinion but, due to the failure of a single subgroup to make AYP in one subject, we currently have a SINI. It does not seem fair to submit schools like ours, who achieve excellent results for the majority of the student population, to the same sanctions imposed upon those that are consistently missing the mark by a wide margin. We pride ourselves on implementing best practices and enjoy the support of the board of education and the community. Another school in our district was visited by the CAPA team several years ago, and the team was unable to find much to recommend by way of improvement. Our schools are not the ones that need this kind of attention. In all truth, eventually every school will be a SINI because 100% proficiency is not a realistic or achievable goal.	I have a couple concerns in this area. First, increasing the number of observations required for each teacher will not necessarily improve performance or even assess it more effectively. In our ditrict we could not meet those increased requirements without increasing our administrative staff, which by state regulation, and based on our budget constraints, is not possible. If our current staff is required to double the number of observations conducted annually, there are many other important items that will not be addressed. I would prefer to be proactive in providing professional development and working side-by-side with teachers in their classrooms as opposed to simply evaluating them. I also find that teachers are far more open to improving their practice in a coaching-type situation than they are in an observation situation. Finally, I am concerned that the extremely high stakes test that presented a threat to schools will now pose that threat to individual teachers instead. I'm not sure that is an improvement. A person's career is too precious to put at risk over test scores that could be, and are, impacted by so many factors outside a teacher's control.

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher	These readiness skills should be incorporated into all subject areas.	The measurement of student improvement will be in constant debate. Student progress must be tracked in all areas, through all grades.	Our school district is a pilot school for EE4NJ. Our staff is having the initial inservice today, for our new system of evaluation. They are encouraging teachers to be involved with the process. Please access our website to view our program. http://www.wdeptford.k12.nj.us/districtweb/ee4nj.aspx

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Principal			There is a lot of talk about increasing the amount of observations of tenured staff. This sounds good, but time is the enemy. Administrative costs have been cut, but there is demand for more oversight???? Even if we are to higher supervisors, we would have to cut teachers, and I already have 26 students in a first grade class. This would be another unfunded mandate. In a meeting with [redacted] in August, he talked about how he received a waiver for [redacted] High School so that they did not have to observe tenured teachers who were engaged in Action Research. This allowed his staff the ability to focus on PLC's to improve achievement with the powerful leverage of peer pressure, while creating a viable and consistent curriculum for all students. This freed up valuable time to focus on results! The time that the administration saved on observations allowed them to support the PLC model and to provide extensive support through numerous observations and PD for non-tenure staff. Please read "What Ever it Takes: How professional learning communities respond when kids don't learn" by Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, and Gayle Karhenek before moving the state in a

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						direction that would pull away valuable resources (ie. time, energy, and money) from a proven method of improving student achievement. Thank you for asking for the input.
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	School Administrator			I think it is extremely important to link student performance to their evaluation. We just need to consider how we are going to do this effectively, since not all teachers in all subject areas provide instruction in a tested area.
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher	Sounds good, especially for the students with disabilities.	HOW!!!!!! Rigorous intervention has been implemented forever. Implemented Yes, implemented properly NO! Lack of accountablity is grave. We have to start not with the actual schools, but with the entire district. Rigorous changes must be made at the district level. Rigorous change must be made by the community.	Sounds great. I do not have much faith in the state or district developing and/or implementing these practices,even with teacher input. Paterson has been under state control for 20 years. It is a big undertakening and I do not see if processing accurately for a long while. I do have hope. I love what I do and there are many of us out here. Good Luck :). Yours in Education!

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	School Administrator	We are a Vocational High School District with 7 campuses. Two of our campuses each contain approximately 280 students with disabilities. Our school district has revised its math, science and language arts curriculum to reflect the new NJCCCS and/ or the State Common Core Standards. Our special needs classes (departmentalized) as well as our regular education classes (including in-class resource) are required to follow the common district course of study outlines. While our special needs students have made progress over the last couple of years, they still struggle to meet AYP. Students with disabilities should be given credit towards meeting those goals through continued progress on state assessments. AYP should include student progress over time. We are a Vocational High School District with 7 campuses. 2 are Academy style schools, 2 are schools that each contain 280 students with disabilities and 3 schools are traditional vocational schools. We have a school that is not considered a Title I school but can benefit from Title I funds. We would like flexibility in spending Title I funds amongst the schools that need additional support in helping students increase their achievement levels. Currently, we		

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				can only spend the money in our Title I schools. Our non Title I schools could use the extra support as well to increase student achievement.		

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Superintendent	We are in the process of developing secondary programs that support academic rigor for our students with disabilities and our economically disadvantaged population. We are in our first year of a five year plan to develop a career and awareness program, including the purchase of computers and scanners to provide transitional life skill training for our most disabled population.	We don't meet the criteria for a state's lowest performing school, priority school, or a focus school. However, we have identified programs to address our needs. We have created initiatives at the elementary and primary level to meet the needs of our Special Education/BSI sub groups. We use a growth mode to measure student progress year to year as well as benchmark assessments.	Monroe Township Public Schools (MTPS) has recently selected Dr. Robert Marzano's Causal Teacher Evaluation Model to evaluate and support teacher effectiveness. We have selected this model based on the research and proven instructional strategies of Dr. Marzano to inform effective instruction because of its historical studies and contemporary research foundation, as well as Learning Sciences ability to offer the most inclusive look at teacher effectiveness and development of expertise. Existing teacher evaluation models, despite being widely used, still lack agreement among observers when using the performance rating rubrics. In contrast, Marzano's Causal Teacher Evaluation Model has been shown by studies to achieve significant inter-rater reliability, indicating a high level of agreement among observers that legacy models fail to produce. We believe that this evaluation model is architected to "cause" teacher growth and development through measurable improvements in classroom practices. This evaluation model is so potent that teachers can actually measure their students' gains in learning through implementation of the research-based strategies. Through the Marzano Causal Teacher Evaluation

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						Model, every teacher in MTPS can incrementally increase his or her teaching expertise every year resulting in gains in student learning every year with a powerful cumulative effect. The Marzano Causal Teacher Evaluation Model was developed specifically for teachers to thrive with value-added student measures. Furthermore, this model supports Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). Recent federal initiatives and state legislation have called for rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems that differentiate teacher effectiveness based on student achievement as described by value-added models. Subsequently, there is an increased need for a teacher evaluation model that also includes a comprehensive robust, and research based description of teacher effectiveness that can be measured using observation protocols, classroom artifacts, portfolios, student work, and professional growth plans. Our goal of an effective evaluation system is for MTPS teachers to incrementally increase their expertise in teaching year to year and, therefore, incrementally increase their ability to raise student-learning gains year to year. Dr. Marzano's Causal Teacher Evaluation

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						Model is based on his acclaimed Art and Science of Teaching Framework, which identifies the instructional strategies identified by research to increase student learning gains. The Marzano Causal Teacher Evaluation Model not only aligns with New Jersey's State Teaching Standards through the development of clear criteria for success and a mechanism (student data module) that ties student achievement to teacher evaluation using data closest to the classroom; but it also aligns with the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) model core teaching standards. The Marzano Causal Teacher Evaluation Model provides a means for MTPS teachers to translate the standards into their daily practice. The Marzano Framework provides for a research-based common language of instruction that defines effective teaching at a more granular level and provides the tools for MTPS to deeply implement and operationalize the InTASC teaching standards at the level of using specific research-based strategies. This provides robust support for MTPS implementing the state teaching standards with a research-based observational protocol for monitoring classroom implementation and providing

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						support for teachers. A common language or model of instruction provides a framework for a way to talk about instruction that is shared by everyone in MTPS. Principals and teachers will use a common language of instruction to converse about effective teaching, give and receive feedback, collect and act upon data to monitor growth regarding the reasoned use of the strategies identified in the framework, and align professional development needs against the framework. MTPS is committed to aiding the Department of Education in defining and finalizing a teacher evaluation system that will meet all of the Department's goals including increasing student achievement, assessing and improving the effectiveness of our educators, and establishing school-wide collaborative cultures focused on continuous improvement. We have found that the Marzano Causal Evaluation Model provides a calculation system and set of tools to support evaluators in the process of calculating teacher evaluation scores. The scores reflect differentiated performance compliant with Race to the Top requirements of at least four performance levels that represent a bell-shaped curve from highly

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						effective, effective, needs improvement, unsatisfactory. The use of multiple data sources constructs teachers' final evaluation. By using more than one information source, evaluators offer a more comprehensive perspective of teachers' instructional practice. Various data points also strengthen the validity of the information that is gathered to ensure accuracy and fairness. The Marzano Causal Evaluation Model is the only teacher evaluation model to recommend a weighting system that is grounded on substantial contemporary research data. Leaders can use this model as a guide and be confident that they are carrying out a highly valid, reliable, and defensible system that gets results. MTPS hopes that the Department of Education will share with the federal government how our district is working towards evaluating and supporting teacher effectiveness. We are in support of increasing quality instruction and improving academic achievement for all students. It is clear that NCLB requirements has inadvertently caused barriers, but has also brought the importance of restructuring our current educational system to compete within our growing global society. MTPS has vetted Dr,

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						Marzano's Art and Science of Teaching Framework and the meta-analytic research he has gathered over the past fifty years. We are appreciative to President Obama for allowing flexibility with ESEA. More importantly, if as a society we are truly espousing the need to give our students the skills to compete with jobs of the future then we need to change our instructional practices. For this shift to occur we have to provide our teachers with the ability to collect and report student learning gain data that is linked to the use of targeted instructional strategies. Our district is utilizing the Marzano model to do this very notion.

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[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher	i do hope the state does help out. NJ is famous for changing directions constantly. We need a contract, a promise to finally get standards together, get a direction and not change the course in the next day or two. That's what the state owes it teachers and students.	I don't work in one of these areas and cannot really comment except that saying I truly believe that the entire environment outside of the school makes it harder. Stuff these poor kids have to deal with would seem to make it difficult to put priorities on school, when, in their world, life on the street is the unfortunate reality.	The growth formula is a great idea. But, there still has to be a limitation on how much scores matter. Especially for those students in the low income areas. Although In know you can't just measure what goes on at home. We cannot ignore the correlation. I teach honors and have also taught classes with many struggling students. attendance in honors level students is astounding, and back-to-school nights have as many parents attending as there were students in the room. Classes filled with struggling students. The exact opposite. Back-to-school night was like a ghost town in those classes and attendance was very spotty. We can only help them if they are there and have involvement at home. Especially at the high school. In a regular week I have them for 4 hours of their lives (if they show up). That's it. Tests are hard to pass if they are not in the seats or doing the work when I am not around.

NAME	CITY	ST	AFFILIATION	TRANSITION_TO_COLLEGE	DEVELOP_SYSTEMS_RAS	EVALUATE_EFFECTIVENESS
[redacted]	[redacted]	NJ	Teacher	Dialogue with colleges and universities is critical in assessing what students need to be able to do (not necessarily know) as a post-secondary student. What skills are necessary for incoming first year students on a college-level, especially in the areas of writing, reading and mathematical skills. The main weaknesses that need remediation upon entering college are in these subject and skill areas. Articulation with higher-level institutions and collaboration on curriculums aligned with the expectations of college level students is a key component. Extended learning opportunities should be available in high schools - students should have the opportunity to take courses to prepare for college, taught by teachers trained in college material and receive college credit for taking those courses. Students identified early as having trouble in subject areas should take the remedial courses offered by colleges (especially county colleges) during their senior year of high school so that they may build that foundation and start on track their first semester of college.	Low-performing schools should be paired with higher performing schools with similar demographics in close proximity. A partnership between these schools would foster collaboratve efforts and present models to implement effective strategies and practices. Outside organizations such as the Center for Teaching and Learning or other credible consultants could be used with funding from the state to evaluate and implement changes in instruction. An increase in professional development for staff, leadership and coaching training for administrators and teacher-leaders and community outreach programs need to be in place to address all stake-holders.	Peer collaboration and review could be an element present in the evaluation process, especially for teachers struggling in instructional components of effective teaching. Pairing with a support system that is not top-down could produce a more collaborative, collegial environment where support systems are in place, constructive feedback is given and problem-solving and best practices are shared. Just as new teachers are mentored, perhaps seasoned teachers can be placed in groups not necessarily in their subject areas to participate in walkthroughs, professional learning communities, and professional development to address areas for improvement and model different techniques in questioning, assessment (formative vs. summative), activity building, lesson planning and core standard alignment. Opportunities for training, workshops, conferences should be a component of a teacher's evaluation. Teachers should be required to attend two workshops or professional development outside of their respective schools throughout the school year and report back to their departments as well as show evidence of implementation of learned strategies. Evaluation cannot just revolve around paperwork, but conferencing, observing, and feedback. Just as students should be assessed based

NAME	CITY	ST	AFFILIATION	TRANSITION_TO_COLLEGE	DEVELOP_SYSTEMS_RAS	EVALUATE_EFFECTIVENESS
						on growth, so should teachers.

ESEA2_SURVEY

Monday, November 14, 2011
7:51:46 AM

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: 9-12 need data from post-secondary institutions to also help assess their own programs and effectivness for college and career readiness. Perhaps adopt http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/colleges/Tracker/default.htm

Or, include feedback from State colleges and universities on the readiness and retention rates of Freshmen, perhaps agregated in a way to assist 9-12 schools in determining the effectiveness and improvement areas in their educational programs.

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Principal

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: I am concerned about the reporting of the scores for our subgroup...special needs population and the analyzing of that data. The scores go back to the school in which the students "reside" which is not necessarily where they are educated. Some of the students attend a school within the district or out of the district which has the program needed to met their needs.

1) Schools are receiving their scores according to their address within the district (residency). That school's faculty and principal has absolutely nothing to do with their education. In many cases, the students have never set foot into the building. Yet, the scores are counted in the school's reports as opposed to the school where they are educated. The school which educates the students do not even initially receive these scores. In addition, these scores are never a part of that school's reports. Where is the ownership and accountability?

All educators and principals should be held accountable for the success of every child in the school. However, the accountability should go to the principal and teachers where students are educated and not where they reside. Once again,ownership.

The way the system is set up for this group of children is different that all the other subgroups . It is not fair to these students. They are part of that school's community in every aspect including test results and the anaylzing of that data. If school improvement is to be done correctly,everyone must be included.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: All students should be prepared to enter a competitive 21st century market economy; by being able to read and write effectively, complete complex mathematical applications for real world scenarios, and apply technological skills in their everyday life and professional habits.

DEVELOP_RAS: All schools should use data and train teachers on the use of data analysis in order to plan effective lessons and master 21st century learning goals. In addition, teachers and administrators must consistently strive for excellence through their attendance in an affiliated secondary institution, professional development, and opportunities to observe external and internal classes or areas of academic instruction that have demonstrated their consistent ability to not only pass the NJASK test, model acceptable social behaviors, and have actively participated in on-site or off-site programs that have benefited the local school and community.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Educators should be encouraged and supported to increase their students academic performance through district and state recognition affairs that notes schools that have made growth and/or implemented successful strategic plans.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Schools must be made accountable to share data with internal stakeholders in order to implement best teaching practices.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: Include recognition for volunteering time in the afternoon to offer extra help.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: All students should be college and career ready after graduating high school. The federal funding provided extra help for low income families that would otherwise not have access. Allowing districts to use the funds as they see fit may exclude lots of students that need the help.

DEVELOP_RAS: States should include in their plan ways to support all groups with the funds. The states should be closely monitored by a panel to make sure that all groups are included.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: As educators, we should be trying to assist every student to reach their full potential. This can mean solving literacy problems at a very young age and monitoring that student as they progress. It can also mean developing strategies for older students before they graduate. And assisting thosestudents who "drop out" or give up.

DEVELOP_RAS: Each educator must have on-going teaching strategies for a diverse community. The NJ community is continually getting more and more diverse. Teachers must understand these differences.
Along with teachers the administrators and the Boards of these communities must also be educated and sensitized to the growing diverse population.
There are ways to encourage all parents to educate themselves to the opportunities for themselves and their children.

The state can examine and mimic other successful states where diversity is embraced AND all students do well. Thorough and on-going training of teachers and administrators was critical.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Supportive effective instruction means the leaders/administrators/Board members/ principals MUST see teachers working spontaneously in the classroom; not announce their coming.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Children should have certain skills, but testing them continually can take the "j" out of joy. There must be other avenues to assess their intake of knowledge while balancing their school day with enjoyment.

Teachers should have on-going strategies, TIME to try & implement them and sharing-time to work out the kinks.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: I am concerned about the following:
1. the principal evaluation process. Shouldn't a pilot timeline be included
2. the student performance piece of the evaluation system which require the development of local benchmark assessment. Districts need guidance and time in this area.
3. As NJPSA delineates, the waiver includes several controversial legislative proposals that have nothing to do with the waiver process including the Opportunity Scholarship Act (aka voucher program), the Urban Hope Act, and charter school related legislation. These need not be part of this waiver proposal.

DEVELOP_RAS: I am concerned about the following:
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2. the student performance piece of the evaluation system which require the development of local benchmark assessment. Districts need guidance and time in this area.
3. As NJPSA delineates, the waiver includes several controversial legislative proposals that have nothing to do with the waiver process including the Opportunity Scholarship Act (aka voucher program), the Urban Hope Act, and charter school related legislation. These need not be part of this waiver proposal.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: I am concerned about the following:
1. the principal evaluation process. Shouldn't a pilot timeline be included
2. the student performance piece of the evaluation system which require the development of local benchmark assessment. Districts need guidance and time in this area.
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2. the student performance piece of the evaluation system which require the development of local benchmark assessment. Districts need guidance and time in this area.
3. As NJPSA delineates, the waiver includes several controversial legislative proposals that have nothing to do with the waiver process including the Opportunity Scholarship Act (aka voucher program), the Urban Hope Act, and charter school related legislation. These need not be part of this waiver proposal.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: Do I see the option for vouchers? Once again it would appear that we are just a voice for a very dominating Governor.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: I do not see any consideration of the principal evaluation.

I do know that states that tried to fire prinicpals in hopes of finding new and better could not. Let us not go there.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Principal

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: This response is for all the catagories referenced. Given the signifcance of this work, I ask for a filing date of Februrary versus the November date targeted for. There are a number of concerns as expressed by NJPSA and it would benefit all if there were opportunity for more input, feedback and inclusion of various stakeholders.

Thank you for your consideration.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Principal

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: I oppose waiver item 11. If the non-school hours requirement is lifted from learning centers this will siphon off funds from schools as othr institutions take funds to use during school hours of operation.

DEVELOP_RAS: I oppose waiver item 7 and support ESEA recognition and reward of schools that close the achievement gap. If other programs are rewarded funds will be siphoned away from a desperate need, closing the gap.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: I support waiver item 9 only to the extent that the 10% cap on transfers of funds in Title I is eased but not eliminated.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: I support waiver items 2 and 3 only to the extent that the waiver eliminates the restructuring required in ESEA. Other aspects of ESEA discussed in WAiver items 2 and 3 should remain in effect.

I oppose waiver item 6 which would reduce regulation of funding and allow funds to be diverted away from schools identified as in need of improvement.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: continued from below:
In conclusion, in Urban districts students need social services and teachers need help in the classroom. Students not classified or pulled out for services or receiving services in the classroom are disruptive factors in a classroom. Other students lose instructional time as a teacher struggles to deal with those students. Special Education is a huge cost to the district and unless we revisit some of those rules and regs districts with large special education populations will face failure.
In addition, in districts with large numbers of bilingual students the issues facing staff is enormous. Students entering school districts who are 13+ years old and having had no formal education impact test scores. No one is going to want to teach these students with your plan. How is growth measured when the kid can not read and not even know his mother's own name or his/her date of birth? Bilingual students exiting the program and going into the regular program pose additional challenges as well. The same Exiting criteria set up by federal and state regs.
Your task force may have some experience with these issues but you could have used more folks with specialties on that committee rather than ex mayors and commissioner. Again, as with the implementation of NCLB, people with no knowledge of special education, ELL were on the committee.

DEVELOP_RAS: After having read the Education Task Force Initiative and this draft some serious issues need to be addressed:
1. Rewarding teachers whose students have shown growth is admirable but don't penalize teachers with 30-32 kids in a room and no BSI, ELL support or Special Ed. Inclusion help. That is not fair. Similarly if there are students in the room in need of intervention/referrals/guidance/social worker support and not getting it then the teacher is not to blame. Teachers can be judged/evaluated/commended/rewarded only when all things are equal and there is a level playing field. Redirect Title I funds to those noncognitive services that will enable a child to show growth. Allowing all schools regardless of poverty to get Title funds should not be allowed. Having worked with Title I for 20 years it has always benefitted the neediest and most academically challenged and those students in schools not considered 'low income" were always funded through district funds. Is Title I being considered as circumventing the State's responsibility?
Also, a heavy emphasis is being placed on Charter Schools, their track record is yet to be applauded. When all else fails close the school and bring on board non-profit or for-profit organizations to run our schools?
That was the problem with SES, non profit providers suddenly became for- profict providers and their curricula are not the best.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Superintendent

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: There is a need to focus on truly attainable goals. Within this framework there needs to be a system of state dveloped benchmark assessments given evry six weeks so that true growth can be measured. Success needs to be determined by an individuals progress towards the goal.
It may also be the time for a state developed curriculum with approved texts to assist school districts financially and from making local decisions that impede growth toward the attainable goals.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: When measuring instructional success there is a need for rubrics that define and give examples of the behaviors you are looking for. Without these quantifiable measures it leads to very subjective judgement and the system being discussed will fail. Although decisions will be made locally there has to be consistency among the evaluators so the process can be fair and without specific definitions this cannot be accomplished.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: There are several needs in this area. Unfunded mandates particularly those that take away from classroom instructional time need to be immediately withdrawn. Have educators go through these mandates and than have the legislators withdraw/change the laws to relect what is educationally appropriate. QSAC is not an answer at all to Quality as it implies. Looking at ASQ and The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Concepts it is eveident that QSAC is an effort in paperwork and checking the boxes rather than improving education. That said developing a process improvement program gounded in Baldrige and SixSigma would eliminate a need for NCLB. QSAC creates more of a bureaucracy and does not improve quality.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: While I commend the state for adopting the CCCS in ELA and Mathematics, I have some grave concerns. As not only a veteran middle school language arts literacy teacher, but also a doctoral candidate (ABD) in Reading, Writing, Literacy at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, I urge the State of New Jersey to read the National Council of Teachers of English's (NCTE) position statement on Twenty-First Century Literacies as well as their stance on the CCCS. The CCCS has a very narrow view of reading and writing and the types of text students are expected to read and write. The text that is most heavily represented in the CCCS is that which is easiest to test. College and Career Readiness should mean that we graduate students who have critical and creative thinking abilities. Preparing them to take a standardized test does not do that. Furthermore, if we develop students with the ability to think not only critically but also creatively we are preparing them for a job market which looks nothing like the job market we adults prepared for. Thus, Secretary Duncan's plan to provide community centers which will function outside of school hours and the school year is not necessarily a bad plan - especially in our poorest communities. I also wonder why you have adopted WIDA's ELP Standards and not the NCTE/IRA standards. The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association turn out some of the best research in literacy education and base their positions on various issues in the field as well as their standards on research in the field of reading, writing, and literacy. Finally, while your inclusion of in-service development for all levels of school personnel is commendable, perhaps you should sit in on the in-service training since the Christie administration has taken office and cut our funding. The training, at least in my district, has become nothing more than how to prepare our children for a test. This is a far cry from the training I received in Understanding by Design (Grant Wiggins), multiple intelligences (Howard Gardner), Writers' Workshop (Lucy Calkins, Donald Graves, Nancie Atwell), Barin Based Learning (David Souza), and other research based pedagogy. Instead of building effective pedagogy, we now are learning to skill and drill. This is in-part due to fear that the school will be taken over, and it is also in-part due to budget cuts as the Christie administration not only cut our public school funding but also smeared the reputation of New Jersey's excellent public schools in the eyes of the public. I caution you not to be pennywise and pound foolish.

DEVELOP_RAS: A test score is a snapshot - one picture of an entire school year. Other items, such as portfolio assessment, should be used to determine whether a student is achieving. Furthermore, our current test, the NJASK, clearly states that scores from one year to the next are not to be compared. I teach 7th and 8th grade students. According to the test, I cannot compare the data from my 2010-2011 cohort of 7th graders to the data from my 2011-2012 cohort of 8th graders, which causes me to wonder what are the tests really telling us.

As I look at those "low-performing" schools, I notice two things. First, many of them are in impoverished areas. Students don't have access to adequate nutrition. Imagine going to work when the last meal you had was lunch at 11:15 the day before. Then you're given a 2.5 hour long math test. How well do you think you'd perform? Moreover, our students living in low-income areas often have parents who have received a high school diploma, at best. These same parents may work multiple jobs. The children are not living in a print rich environment, are not living in a situation where the family can sit down to dinner together every night and talk, and are not living in environments where their parents can help them with homework. Thus, how

are the children expected to compete with their upper middle class peers? Yes, the quality of school is important, but research has shown that family and home environment have a far bigger impact on a student's success.

Mathematica, a Princeton, NJ based firm, has done research on linking student test scores to teacher performance. They determined that it will take at a minimum 12 years of data to determine whether a teacher is effective. Additionally, I teach in a school with approximately 100 faculty members. Of the 100 on staff who teach, only 23 teach courses that are tested on the NJASK. Will all teachers be evaluated fairly? Will Physical Eduaction/Health teachers, Cooking teachers, Computer/Technology teachers, or World Language teachers get a pass? Or will a test be created to determine their effectiveness in the classroom?

I urge the State of New Jersey to look closely at the research coming out of institutions like The University of Pennsylvania about Charter Schools. Furthermore, I worry about institutions that are founded and run by alumni of programs like Teach for America (TFA). Many charter schools are founded by and run by people who do not have training in pedagogy.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: College costs need to be controlled in the state; otherwise, students that are college ready will not get the opportunity anymore. All students should be required to attend a two year college that focuses more on their strengths. The two year program cost should be placed upon the state, finishing (later two-three years) college costs should be born by family. Families should not be responsible for paying for basic skills classes if high school do not render the student proficient. Charter schools are not necessary because the focus should be placed on the student when they are older and more focused, younger grades should be filled more for. languages,social & mental skills, art, music, reading classics to form brain development. Also, getting over the hump of having kids coming from "broken families" will not have such a big impact on state tests. Even when these students become older they learn to deal with their problems more efficiently when in touch with the arts.

DEVELOP_RAS: They should be recognized like other employees, showing up on time to work, volunteering above and beyond, creativity in lesson planning, bulletin boards, classroom setup, best drama play, student competitions. Student attendance. Student volunteerism or going green, inventions. Like anyone else.

- I have not met a teacher that does not work hard everyday. Teachers are also very intelligent people, after all they did go to our schools and our colleges. I have found teachers to be one of the kindest group of people that are always donating money for causes and helping out families in need, buying kids coats and giving lunch money. I have not met one of your "bad" teachers that you talk about all the time.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: I think you should be focusing on coming up with universal curriculum. The third week in September students should be learning this...in third grade. There needs to be universal bench marks. Certain spelling words in each grade, certain classical level/books read during each school year etc. Each subject should correlate with the arts to enhance learning. Learning an instrument has been proven to use more parts of the brain and aid in learning other subjects. Art History is one very effective way to learn about the past. Compare and contrast art between countries/continents/ time periods/civilizations.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Grading and evaluations should be recorded in a central location using computer mainframes. Evaluating curriculum, attendance, progress can be recorded immediately and changes can be made if progress is not made. Teachers input data from learning results, the computer can monitor strengths in each student and graph results to point someone to a career that may be rewarding. Student can be placed in "high risk" or other categories etc. and placed on a sliding scale which will reflect their risk factor, to give a real indication of progress or dysfunctional family interference with progress.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Students need to be able to solve problems, work in teams, and be innovative. College reaady centers can be developed to train students in the expectations of college. Financial literacy programs can be developed for high schoolers as well as parents starting in 9th grade. Students should have a service learning component in their curruculum in high school, not just community service.

DEVELOP_RAS: The state should have a more active role in increasing accountability for supervisors, superintendents and principals, not just teachers. They should be assessed by someone besides the superintendent on an annual or bi-annual bases. Before there can be state recognition in certain areas ,the state needs to ensure districts are training people in what the state sees as key instructional methods first. Then districts should allow participants to engage in professional development with these strategies first and then specific to their teachers PIP secondly. The state should recognize districts that have developed effective diffrentiated practices and allow them to publish work for others to learn from and share.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Creating balanced programs in schools that not only align with core curriculum state standards, but address all the needs of students. Many instituted programs are missing many components, leaving students a step behind. Any curriculum needs not only to be complete, but to work to target the population it serves.

Teachers and administration should be required to use other means of data, not just test scores to drive instruction. Districts should be developing skill based benchmarks in subject areas in order to help ensure that students are learning and teachers are meeting all needs.

Supervisors and teachers should be required to be more active in modeling and evaluating teachers on a regular basis. They also should be required to have knowledge and expertise in the field they were hired in. In order to fo schools to be more effective, leaders should be held to a higher standard.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Before data collection burden is reduced on LEA's, someone actually needs to be hired to know how to properly analyze data. Curriculum jobs are nonextisitent in districts. Clear positions need to be held and created for data colllection and funding, not mixed in with master teacher/ facilitator/ supervisor job descriptions.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: too much emphasis on college acceptance. Not all children emotionally, academically, financially ready for college immediately after graduation. Many would benefit from working 1-2 years before college

DEVELOP_RAS: how can you expect differention in teaching, student grades and curriculum but show none on NJASK or other tests. Why is it not okay to accept that some children through physical, emotional, language problems cannot ever compare with naturally high achievers. It is human nature.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Effective instruction should be down by continuing tenure although making a wait period of five years. the public does not seem to understand that there is no upward mobility in teaching different than the private sector. for an effective teacher who wants to stay in the classroom and use their expertise of the last twenty years is to be commended. They should not be subject to local BOE or better yet superintendents looking to cut budgets and replace them by younger teachers at a lower step. What is the incentive to keep a teacher with 25 years of experience if you think effective instruction and especially leadership can be the same at a lower rate. Effective instruction should also have professional development supported by local BOE and included in their yearly budgets.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: YES YES YES Not all data is showing a true picture anyway. You are asking schools to self report violence and vandalism. Do you really believe they are reporting each case so that they have high numbers? Schools should also be reporting scores and success with students that have attended the same district from start to finish. A different report should be made for students that transfer from district to district. Student achievement can not be measured in the same way for these students

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: For severely disabled students, college is unrealistic. The most important skills they need to learn are self-care, behavioral, daily living, and rec and leisure. We need their needs recognized, and educational goals for them to be realistic.

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: It is not clear how the state will remove obstacles from aligning college and career ready expectations to the curriculum. It is essential students be prepared for their future; however "critical thinking, problem solving, and the application of knowledge" should be embedded within each of the subject areas. It is the implementation of the standards that should remove the obstacles. Attaching a high quality assessment is also very troublesome. Speaking in general, it has been my experience in education both as an educator and student that the test drives instruction and not the standards. Furthermore, again calling on my experience, students perceive the end of "the test" as the end of the school year.
Developing standards for English Learners is necessary as well as adequate funding to establish funding for programs to help transition these learners back into the mainstream of a general education class. Many times English Learners are exited from a specialized program and enter into a general education environment unsupported. Testing for college-and-career ready standards will only exacerbate the need for more support in the general education environment

DEVELOP_RAS: I agree annual measureable goals should be established at the district, school and subgroup level, driving and supporting improvement initiatives. I think all schools and students within the state who demonstrate progress should be publically recognized. I do not think we should label schools as "reward", "priority" or "focus" schools. I do not think schools should be publically identified as "failure" schools. We using the same system of labeling as with NCLB, negativity never create a positive outcome. Should struggling schools receive funding for interventions without question? If the school is labeled, all the stakeholders lose.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: I strongly disagree utilizing valid measures in determining performance levels, student, and parental interviews as a means to evaluate teachers and/or principals. Valid measures must be clearly defined and meet the true test of validity to ensure that performance and not some other variable is measured. I can think of no other field where one's job evaluation is directly related to public opinion. Patients die, cases are lost, unwise investments made, is the public asked to fill out a survey for an evaluation? I think not.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Reduction of regulation and paper work is always welcome.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: The document should include an action plan of implementing changes determined by the Task force report. Obviously, you won't know what the changes will be until the report is filed in late December, but the way the paragraph is presently structured, there does not seem to be any follow up and/or use of the Task Force's findings.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Public schools should prepare students for college and/or for careers. The college bound students can be divided into two tracks: those meeting minimum college requirements and those on the accelerated track (advanced math and science, and AP courses. For the non-college bound student, high schools should provide vocational and computer application skills training. This may mean that students graduate from high school with different diplomas signifying which program they have successfully completed.

If students do not show proficiency in their required programs then they should be retained or be offered extra remedial support during and after the school day and in the summer.

All programs should provide study on critical thinking, reasoning, and skills needed to lead a productive life (physically, mentally and financially).

DEVELOP_RAS: Implementing new programs will require financial resources and support. Additional classes and staff may be needed in some districts to provide the courses required to prepare students for college and career.

There should be different tests for the different programs. Proficiency in English, Science, Mathematics, History, etc. should be based on the students' program. The advanced student should be required to pass more rigorous tests while the non-college bound should be required to pass basic skills tests and tests for vocational/computer related skills.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: We known now that NCLB was based on a flawed model. Teachers in Texas were falsifying the results that made the program so attractive. So why haven't we scrapped it all together? Why don't we look to the nations that are already doing it right, namely Finland? This whole thing stinks and our children's education and our nation will continue to decline as long as we still use this grossly flawed program. The stupidity of this proposal is palpable!

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Superintendent

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: This should be the goal for every child. The definition of this needs to be clearly outlined by the NJDOE in order for districts to fully implement this important idea.

DEVELOP_RAS: The NJ ASK has been ineffective in providing direction for educators. Reliability from grade level to grade level does not exist. Comparing one group of students to the next does not make sense. Individual student growth should be measured with a reliable assessment that is closely aligned to the Standards and that is administered more frequently with a fast result in order for teachers to make adjustments to instruction. No standardized assessment should be used to judge teachers, schools or districts unless it is reliable between grade levels and is proven to be aligned to the Standards.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: It is time to elevate the profession of teaching to a place in our society that emphasizes its importance. Tenure reform is needed. The evaluation process suggested by the NJ DOE, while important in theory, will be impossible to implement with the current level of administration in my district. I believe that this will be the case in most districts. The NJDOE needs to recognize this and make appropriate adjustments in funding and administrative costs.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Regulatory and data collection is a major drain on personnel resources. This needs to be streamlined. Many reports and requirements are duplicative and rarely lead to improvement in what takes place in the classroom. The focus of a school and school district should be pointed at learning and teaching. Principals and district level administrators should spend a vast majority of their time on this single goal.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: I have a general concern with the state including items that still need to be legislated in the waiver application.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: I would like to read about the College and Career Ready Taskforce before actually writing these comments.
I do see the need for an alignment between K-College work, as they are on the same continuum.
Are college and career ready the same thing exactly?

DEVELOP_RAS: I like the closing of the gap between groups as a goal...except the holding of the higher group the same to make the gap easier to achieve...instead of looking for growth from them also. The difference between 50 and 80 can change over those 6 years? I like charter schools, as I also worked in one for a time. I like the differentiated pay idea, it is logical.
Should that 50% reduction be the same in all cases? Maybe that is not fair? The bottom of the barrel areas need to have a goal that is challenging yet attainable.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Being careful about how teacher evaluations will affect pay is something to carefully consider. Especially since differentiated pay is something do alien to NJ education.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: I like NJSMART and the Violence Reporting system we have in place. Review of current policy is always a good idea. It is a key to continued growth.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: How will regional high school districts be handled with only one test submission? How will a growth model be implemented and calculated?

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: It is impossible to effectively evaluate students who are classified as special education with the same accountability as the regular education student. This is true also for the special education teacher. Students who have IEP's that dictate they be taught at their ability level with many modifications and accomodations throughtout the school year can then not be asked to take a test that is not on their level. This in no way evaluates the student growth nor the ability of the teacher. If a child is reading at a 3rd grade level and receives instruction the entire year at that level they are not capable of doing well or showing adequate progress on a test that asks them to read 2 or 3 grade levels above this. There must be some type of modification or exemption for these students. Perhaps measuring their progress??? Example a 5th grade student who scores 135 on their 4th grade ASK test, but then scores 185 on the ASK in 5th grade.....That is a true story and the direct result of teacher, student and parent hard work...however according to the standards now....he is partially proficient and that is not good for the district....nor would it be good for me as a teacher being evaluated.... Thank you for the opportunity to provide some input.....I am saddened by the lack of working together that is happening within our state education and government...Perhaps this will change soon....

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: A statement or set of statements should be made regarding the 9 core curriculum standards that exist in New Jersey with an emphasis on Language Arts and Math. All other content areas, whether tested or non-tested, contribute to the academic success of all children in our schools.

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: The role of Supervisors in specific content areas is vague and unclear. While a strong emphasis is placed on Principal evaluation and accountability, the impact of supervisors on instruction as content area experts and primary evaluators far outweighs the suggestion for "master teachers". Master teachers should not replace Supervisors of content-specific curricula. Master teachers do not have the certification nor the experience of content supervisors.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: FL

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: I expect all my students to graduate college. Hopefully with the STEM instruction many of our students will be encouraged to careers involving science and engineering.

DEVELOP_RAS: The state provides the financial support to keep our after school programs running, enabling the children to be in a safe and fun learning environment.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: All of the teachers are required to attended training and behavior workshops to keep up with the growing technolgy.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: 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 Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (i.e., before and after school or during summer recess).

New Jersey requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day.
This is not to supplant 21st CCLC but is in addition to Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Schools should be geared in preparing all students for a post secondary education, but this accomplishment cannot be attained if the students are struggling with coursework and the affordability of a tutor is out of the question (low income districts). SES is a valuable tool that can aid the students in receiving the extra assistance that otherwise would not be available to them. SES providers, at least some of them like Mad About Science, Inc. is run and owned by teachers. The quality is high and the service outstanding. Also, we are the only provider in Southern New Jersey that provides an integrated science curriculum!

Math and Science programs are also a necessity in order to prepare out students for the 21st century. Programs geared toward this genre are especially needed. Hands on science works!! Not virtual labs!

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Without effective instruction and a strong leadership team, it is impossible to guide the students in preparation for success in college. Schools need to have more supervisors, coach's, professional development and a leadership that believes in the power of culture and climate in a school. If you want effective instruction then schools need to invest in the training and follow up training for the teachers and stop wasting money on technology or software if they are not going to put out the money to properly train teachers not once, but continually.

Also, make sure the technology head listens to staff concerns and needs and understand that the Internet is not new for students, it is THEIR life! There cannot be integration of technology if all the sites are blocked for foolish reasons! Do not try to solve a human issue with a technological solution! If Humans are the problem, address THE human !

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: All students should be prepared for college or a vocational/professional post-secondary experience.

DEVELOP_RAS: The ELLs should not be held to the same standard as the native speakers. Please consider a lower score passing grade for the HSPA. Also consider an alternate assessment or process for graduation requirements for the ELLs.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Please consider less focus on test and punish, and more emphasis on creating a supportive environment for ELLs. Let states develop, perhaps using federal funds that are used for testing, their own assessment for ELLs.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: #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. New Jersey 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.
This means that Title III funds will no longer be earmarked for ELLs. This is the only federal funding which supports our ELLs. It will be up to the district to decide how to spend that funding. Please write and state how important it its to have Title III funds for ELL programs!

The Department will set annual targets in equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the "all students" group and in each subgroup of a school that are not proficient within six years. For example, if 80 percent of the "all students" group is proficient, and 50 percent of low-income students are proficient, then one goal for that school will be to reduce the gap between those groups by half, or 15 percentage points, over the next 6 years. AMOs will be established for each school and each subgroup within a school and therefore will be particular to each school's current levels of achievement.
The EL population is ever changing so expecting that this subgroup will make incremental growth in six years is like trying to catch a moving target. Someone in state and federal government has to understand the dynamic composition of this subgroup and make VALID and REALISTIC expectations. These children can and do learn but the way we measure them does not provide accurate feedback.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: As NJ taxpayer and an educator for over 34 years in an ABBOT District I opposed to the proposal of reducing regulatory measures of federal funding and data collection. Allowing LEAS to blend federal funds without regulatory measures (check and balances)and without data of What?, How?, Why? Outcomes and measures is allowing LEAs to misused funds without meeting all students needs.

The NCLB Title III are the only federal funds earmark for ELL students and in many districts this is the only funding allocated to meet the needs of this group of students. Through the collection of data and the regulatory process district's are accountable to provide equal access and educational opportunities to all students in order to meet their educational needs. Approving this proposal will negatively impact the academic achievement of all ELL students .

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: The Department will set annual targets in equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup of a school that are not proficient within six years. For example, if 80 percent of the “all students” group is proficient, and 50 percent of low-income students are proficient, then one goal for that school will be to reduce the gap between those groups by half, or 15 percentage points, over the next 6 years. AMOs will be established for each school and each subgroup within a school and therefore will be particular to each school’s current levels of achievement.

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DEVELOP_RAS: The Department will set annual targets in equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup of a school that are not proficient within six years. For example, if 80 percent of the “all students” group is proficient, and 50 percent of low-income students are proficient, then one goal for that school will be to reduce the gap between those groups by half, or 15 percentage points, over the next 6 years. AMOs will be established for each school and each subgroup within a school and therefore will be particular to each school’s current levels of achievement.

The EL population is ever changing so expecting that this subgroup will make incremental growth in six years is like trying to catch a moving target. Someone in state and federal government has to understand the dynamic composition of this subgroup and make VALID and REALISTIC expectations. These children can and do learn but the way we measure them does not provide accurate feedback.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: #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. New Jersey 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.

This means that Title III funds will no longer be earmarked for ELLs. This is the only federal funding which supports our ELLs. It will be up to the district to decide how to spend that funding. Please write and state how important it its to have Title III funds for ELL programs!

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NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: We need a growth model that is not overly punitive. The tests need to be vertically aligned to support the growth model. The model needs to be expanded to allow for accountability in all grades, not just 4 through 8. Minimal growth is anticipated until tenure reform is in place.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Leaders of schools and districts that outperform peers in DFG using student growth percentiles should be recognized publicly and given discretionary grants for their achievements. Wouldn't it be nice to see the governor hold a reception for high achieving educators?

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Idea 1- have the state purchase a program for policy revision and compliance (i.e Strauss Esmay). There would be economies of scale, rather than having districts purchase individually.

Idea 2-continue to train state educators on uploading data into student management systems- the capacity is currently in place.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: It depends at what grade level and what proficiency level the English Language Learner (ELL)arrived in the school system. Time in the United States, the grade they entered, the level of education that they received in their home country all impact how quickly they are able to acquire the Common Core standards. States must factor in all of these conditions when establishing transitions. Our students come to us with interrupted education and are often pushed into a grade level simply based on their age.

NJ has successfully begun this process of professional development for all teachers through grants offered to several colleges on Sheltered Instruction. This initiative could be expanded to include the new standards, aligned materials and data from multiple sources. NJ already uses multiple criteria to enter and exit children from the language services program and should continue to do so.

Funding should exist to pay for translation of Alternate High School Assessment (AHSA) Performance Assessment Tasks (PATS) into languages other than Spanish.

Furthermore, the requirement that districts "translate back" students' responses to the PATS into English totally invalidates the integrity of the students' work. The State must fund the scoring of those assessments by qualified multi-lingual professionals.

DEVELOP_RAS: Progress towards college and career readiness is a much better model for documenting the successful growth that ELLs make. Connecting the progress to their English language proficiency level is critical. Therefore, the proposed model does not take into account the ever changing demographics of the ELL population.

The State should use English Language Development test scores to document growth for ELLs until they meet reach a realistic proficiency level at which time they could be validly tested using academic achievement tests.

Districts should be allowed to create portfolios of ELL student work.

There should be differentiated benchmark scores based on English Language Development levels. A cookie cutter approach does not work and is highly unfair.

Respected research shows that it takes a minimum of four to five full academic years for students to acquire cognitive academic language that enables them to perform at a level similar to their native English-speaking classmates. Districts needs to be funded to provide specialized newcomer classes, bilingual aides, tutoring, training in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) for mainstream teachers, summer enrichment programs, and the like.

More and more students are arriving in our districts with low literacy in their native language. We need the resources to be able to teach them and help them earn high school diplomas. We at the high school level are struggling to help some of them just graduate from high school in what is usually much less than four full years. We need resources.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:	Teacher evaluation based on students' scores is unfair and invalid especially when the student population includes a significant number of ELLs. Policies with regard to data collection on ELLs must have valid expectations based on second language acquisition research. ELLs make tremendous progress during a school year. However, often the evaluation systems are not discrete enough to capture their growth. Systems to evaluate teachers' or principals' effectiveness must take into consideration best practices for ELLs. Therefore, it is recommended that input on these evaluation models include those with expertise in this field.
REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:	Districts need to continue to have specific plans for their Bilingual/ESL Programs. Allowing all ESEA funds to be transferred to Title I Part A may also have a harmful effect on ELLs. Title III need to continue to be used for ELLs: summer enrichment programs, tutorials, professional development for general education and ESL/bilingual teachers, and parental involvement programs for bilingual parents. Districts should not be allowed to move these funds and deny services to ELLs.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: I agree.

DEVELOP_RAS: All ELL students learn but measurement tools need to be flexible to accommodate special needs & different learning styles,

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Yes by including ALL involved, gathering input especially from teachers.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Let teachers teach.
Keep Title Iii monies for ELL students.

Thank you

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: The attempt to pass laws without public input and discussion is outlandish. I have taught ESL students in NJ public schools for over 24 years. This idea of imposing a time limit for ELL students to pass state-mandated tests is ridiculous, especially when all current research suggests that average students in an ELL program will be working on grade level after 7-11 years of instruction. There are so many varying factors that determine how long it will take a student to exit an ESL program. Many of the children and teens come from situations where education in their native language was limited, prohibited, or impossible due to economic, political and/or sociological problems. We, as American citizens, must realize how our rights and opportunities have been very different from those immigrating from other parts of the world. Passing laws that impede their ability to learn and assimilate is a gross injustice to them and to ourselves. As a grandchild of immigrants, I can only wonder "What if.." these types of political blunders were made when my family came to the USA and passed through Ellis Island...
I urge you to open your minds and your hearts and allow public comment and hearings about this matter. I would like to be the first person to give testimony.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Do not tamper with the funding. Without proper funding through Title III, English Language Learners will be limited in their goals of becoming career ready. The more career ready students we prepare, the more productive citizens we create. Isn't that one of our most important educational goals?

DEVELOP_RAS: The EL population is ever changing so expecting that this subgroup will make incremental growth in six years is like trying to catch a moving target. Someone in state and federal government has to understand the dynamic composition of this subgroup and make VALID and REALISTIC expectations. These children can and do learn but the way we measure them does not provide accurate feedback

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: The English Language Leaners need to have important date collection remain. This points to the significance and value of the program itself. This population is ever growing. Please do not cut back on the collection of important information that demonstrates the importance of this population in our education programs.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Connected to the college and career ready standards should be recognition of the relationship between the Common Core standards and English Language Development standards (WIDA) for English learners. As English learners are in the process of developing academic English, differentiated pathways which document their acquisition of the content standard must be developed.In this way, ELs can demonstrate mastery of the content standard according to their appropriate level of English proficiency.

When discussing the same "schedule" as all students, it depends at what grade level and what proficiency level the EL arrived in the schools system. Time in US, grade of entry, level of education in first language all impact rate of acquisition of Common Core standards. States must factor in all of these conditions when establishing transitions.

NJ has successfully begun this process of professional development for all teachers through grants offered to several colleges on Sheltered Instruction. This initiative could be expanded to include the new standards, aligned materials and data from multiple sources. NJ already uses multiple criteria to enter and exit children from the language services program and should continue to do so.

DEVELOP_RAS: Progress towards college and career readiness is a much better model for documenting the successful growth that ELs make. Connecting the progress to their English language proficiency level is critical. Therefore, the proposed model does not take into account the ever changing demographics of the EL population.

The Department will set annual targets in equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the "all students" group and in each subgroup of a school that are not proficient within six years. For example, if 80 percent of the "all students" group is proficient, and 50 percent of low-income students are proficient, then one goal for that school will be to reduce the gap between those groups by half, or 15 percentage points, over the next 6 years. AMOs will be established for each school and each subgroup within a school and therefore will be particular to each school's current levels of achievement.

Options could include: 1) use of ELD test scores to document growth for ELs until they meet reach proficiency level 3 when they could then validly be assessed with academic achievement tests. 2) Districts could also create portfolios of student work. 3) differentiated benchmark scores based on ELD level.

University of Wisconsin now has years of data and analysis to document the patterns of growth across proficiency levels. These data should be considered when developing a growth model e.g. students at lower proficiency levels typically make greater growth in their proficiency levels than do ELs at the higher proficiency levels.

Dr. Hakuta from Stanford University completed a study of the growth patterns of ELs in California and found that it typically takes ELs four to five full academic years to move from proficiency level 1 to proficiency level 5 (usually the level when ELs can demonstrate mastery of academic English). He also noted that students' progress slows at Level 4. This information must be calculated into any growth model especially one with the high stakes that NJ is proposing.

I have a major concern about the new calculation of high school graduation rate. I am concerned that ELs may be discouraged from enrolling in schools if they do not arrive at grade 9 or if they have a history if educational gaps that would prevent them from being on course to graduate in four years.

Referring to the above mentioned research, it typically takes four to five full academic years to achieve mastery of academic English. Several districts have created newcomer classes or divided a one year course into two years to support both the academic and linguistic development of ELs. Those districts may be penalized for the "doing the right thing." Therefore, we suggest that there be flexibility in these special circumstances. Schools should be "rewarded" for addressing the specific needs of their student populations.

2D. Rigorous interventions in the Priority schools or the Focus schools should specifically address the differentiated needs of ELs, particularly students with interrupted formal education.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Teacher evaluation based on students' scores is risky at best, especially when your student population includes a significant number of ELs. Again, any policy dealing with data on ELs must have valid expectations. ELs make tremendous progress during a school year. However, often the evaluation systems are not discrete enough to capture their growth. Systems to evaluate teachers' or principals' effectiveness must take into consideration best practices for ELs. Therefore, it is recommended that input on these evaluation models include those with expertise in this field.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: The streamlined process for QSAC which calls for the superintendent to submit a Statement of Assurances to verify that the district is meeting 49 other standards is a major concern for me. Within those 49 standards are a few features which specifically address the services provided to ELs. Unfortunately, when specific expectations are not required, it is our experience that the needs of ELs are not appropriately addressed. Having to submit a three year plan which outlined what a district planned to do, ensured that districts did indeed have a plan. When a district or school principal chose not to adhere to the plan, there was at least a written document which could be used to support implementation of appropriate services outlined and approved by the Department of Education. Another feature is the fact that the ESL curriculum is aligned with the general education curriculum. New Jersey is one of the few states which has this requirement which contributed to the outcome that New Jersey has met AMAOs from Title III over the past few years.

I urge you to continue to support the positive outcomes and effects which are in place in N.J.A.C. to ensure effective instruction for ELs.

In addition, allowing all ESEA funds to be transferred to Title I Part A may also have a deleterious effect on ELs. Title III has ensured that funds are used specifically for ELs: summer enrichment programs, tutorials, professional development for general education and ESL/bilingual teachers, and parental involvement programs for bilingual parents. By allowing districts to move those funds, I fear a loss of services for this specialized population.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Proposal is excellent. Provide funds for training and resources (WIDA) for all teachers with ELLs
Maintain Title III funds for Ells ONLY>

DEVELOP_RAS: When providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement, make sure it reflects the language and culture of the commununity. Funds should be available for language assistance
Careful with the wording " firing the newest-often the best teachers during a layoff" That is too much of a generality. It does not take into account other aspects.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Teachers working with ELLs need to be recognized for the work they do. The outcomes for learning must be realistic and attainable.
Administrators need to be more knowledgeable and understanding.
Funding for ELLS must continue. Classroom teachers with Ells should decide on materials.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Maintain funding for Ells. They do not receive/cannot use standard materials such as textbooks, readers, reading books etc.
Online support, specific readers, picture dictionaries, culture based readings, laptops, smartboards, ipads are more suited for ELLs
TRaining, training and more training!
PD for teachers who find themselves in a classroom with 3 or 4 ELLs and don't know where to start.
The LEA should not be able to use these funds for other students.
The academic gap widens daily- the digital gap is more like an abyss!

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: I feel this will impact ELL's significantly. Without funding to support their learning, they will not make the gains necessary to get into good colleges. Please vote against this change in funding for ELL's.

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: #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. New Jersey 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.
Districts need to be given Title III fund earmarked for ELLs. This is the only federal funding which supports our ELLs. It should not be left to the discretion of the district.
New accountability measure would include the following:
The Department will set annual targets in equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup of a school that are not proficient within six years. For example, if 80 percent of the “all students” group is proficient, and 50 percent of low-income students are proficient, then one goal for that school will be to reduce the gap between those groups by half, or 15 percentage points, over the next 6 years. AMOs will be established for each school and each subgroup within a school and therefore will be particular to each school’s current levels of achievement.
The EL population is ever changing so expecting that this subgroup will make incremental growth in six years is like trying to catch a moving target. Someone in state and federal government has to understand the dynamic composition of this subgroup and make VALID and REALISTIC expectations. These children can and do learn but the way we measure them does not provide accurate feedback.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Title III funds make it possible for the ELL population to reach their potential through programs that are funded by Title iii monies. It is important to recognize the needs of these students to provide enrichment in their lives and to create an opportunities for them to be productive members of society.

DEVELOP_RAS: The ELL population is ever changing, unrealistic expectations will result in frustration and an increased drop-out rate. Let's work to create accountability that is fair and reasonable.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Principal

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: The ultimate goal for education is to prepare our students for life. Creating an instructional program that holds LEA's responsible for preparing our students for this goal is a principle I highly support.

DEVELOP_RAS: I agree with the State's proposal to modify the State's tenure laws to allow for differentiated pay. To ensure that we have qualified, efficient and effective teachers we must redirect our focus to the impact teacher instruction has on student learning and hold everyone accountable.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Creating a new evaluation system is important because we should not use one criteria to evaluate staff. The key here is to keep and attract the most qualified staff members who will utimately create a learning environment that fosters rigourous instruction for our students. We must remember that our ultimate goal will always be what is best for our students.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: It would be very helpful to streamline the data collection processes so that LEA's are not continuously inundated with reports and dufferent due dates for these reports.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: The home instruction I provide enhances my students' motivation in school, school performance and performance on the state test. The students I service are already years behind in their academic progress. But they have parents who have proactively sought help for their children. What hope do these children have of overcoming their deficiencies and even having the hope of being prepared for college or other opportunities in the future if they have no chance of remedial instruction? In addition, it only takes one person to leave a positive impact on a child that can inspire that child to become the best that they can be. The children I service, and all children with special needs deserve every opportunity to have the additional one on one home instruction, which does aid in bridging the gap between student performance and what is deemed proficient. Without it, they will fall through the cracks, like so many other children and potentially become another inner city statistic rather than a productive member of society.

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Our ELL learners need the chance to succeed. Title III funding supports the students and parents through summer enrichment programs,teacher/staff professional development,and parental invovlvement/outreach programs.
Our curriculum is aligned with the general education curriculum to ensure academic standards are equal for ELL learners. New Jersy is one of the few states which has this requirement and has success with meeting AMAO status.There are model Bilingual/ESL programs throughout the state of NJ.
Our ELL population is growing and NJ is always working on the cutting edge by implementing rigorous instruction and assessment.We need the ability to continue to working to make the positive strides and outcomes which are in place in NJAC.
Please support the continuation of Title III funding for English Language Learners and be part of the future success,not failure. As a teacher, I watch my students make progress everyday and work toward becoming productive members of their community.
Please continue to support Title III funding for ELL Learners.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: Ells need Title III funding dedicated to them. It should not be left up to the whims of individual school districts.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: I am an ELL Teacher and we need the Title III funding dedicated to our students. If left up to each district , the outcome is not sure and our students lose.The data collection for ELLs growth is inconsistent and does not provide reflect support that the ELLs need. Our population is unpredictable data needs to reflect our needs.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: On section #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. New Jersey 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.

As a bilingual teacher with 9 years of experience who wanted to make the difference to the most needed and disadvantaged children in the area of Newark or any place in New Jersey, I strongly believe leave Tittle III federal funds untouched for ELLs. Tittle III federal funds are so important and necessery for these ELL children because they benefit in thier learning process, as I did once, and a right to received an "equal and thourough education as it states in the law. Enough they have with the previous cuts, but if this fund is left to the district discretion whether the use it or not, morelikely ELL students will not benefit from it and children will be more "left behind". I reinstate, being there as a teacher and see how the system works, we as teachers are the voice of our ELL students. If we do not the courage and strength to say anything, our ELL will not be served and our ELLs children will left behind without any consideration. Please leave federal funding Title III for English Language Learners (ELLs) children, not to the use of the district discretion.

DEVELOP_RAS: The English Language population is ever changing so expecting that this subgroup will make incremental growth in six years is like trying to catch a moving target.

Someone in State and Federal government has to understand the dynamic composition of this subgroup (ELLS) English Language Learners children and make VALID and REALISTIC expectations.

These children can and do learn but the way we measure them does not provide accurate feedback.

As teachers, that we are in the classroom daily dealing with our ELLs, knowing their needs and challenge, we have the power to speak up for our students, because if we don't, no one else will.
I just hope that our voice is heard.
[redacted]Florida International University, Miami, FL
M.A.in Ed.: Administration and Supervision, St. Peters College, Jersey City- NJ
[redacted]@msn.com

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: Within the waiver, I would like to see a differentiated approach to the assessment and measurement of the growth of English Language Learners. While the ACCESS for ELLs is a test that is appropriate and designed to evaluate growth in English language proficiency, the NJASK and HSPA are not. ELLs by definition, are not proficient in English Language Arts or Mathematics as measured by the NJASK and HSPA. If they are proficient, their status as an ELL should be reevaluated. Assessing students for proficiency in a language in which they are not proficient is a contradiction. Growth on the WIDA ACCESS test should be sufficient to determine whether or not a student is progressing in his social and content area language. This test will be a more accurate reflection of good instruction and academic growth than the NJASK or HSPA. Subjecting our students to a test which measures their proficiency in language arts and math in a language in which we already know they are not proficient, seems a waste of time at best and a cruelty at worst. The fact that some students can take this test in their native language (Spanish) is, in my opinion and experience, not helpful because many of our Spanish speaking students come to us with a low or non-existent level of literacy in their native language due to educational experiences that have been interrupted or delayed.
This same argument could be made for the testing of all special education students with these state assessments. I have watched while special education students, identified with learning disabilities or very low academic ability, spent hours attempting to complete the NJASK and were reduced to tears in the process. This is unfair to our most fragile learners who may have made great progress within their classrooms, but during one week of testing, lose a great deal of self-esteem and are made to feel like failures because they cannot succeed on a test that is not appropriate for their academic level and/or ability.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: In reducing the regulatory and data collection burden on LEAs in regard to Title 1 and other funding sources, the spirit, as opposed to the letter of the law which is designed to support economically disadvantaged, struggling students, could be implemented. In a district such as ours, where more than three fourths of our students are identified as economically disadvantaged, with all of the academic and social disadvantages that come with that designation, it is virtually impossible to segregate those that should receive Title 1 services, from those that, according to the

letter of the law, should not. The goal of providing students with the best academic programs and opportunities possible has become secondary to the effort by administrators and teachers to try to maintain strict adherence to the Title 1 guidelines as they currently exist. A waiver from these burdensome regulations would enable us to focus our efforts on teaching children in the most effective ways possible. While the need for oversight of federal and state funding is understood, it should not be so stringent as to eliminate the possibility of the best use of the time and efforts of administrators and teachers in supporting and implementing best practices and accelerating the academic growth of our neediest students.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: already in place. Most go to college

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: data taking is time consuming and has yet to prove anything.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Sounds reasonable.

DEVELOP_RAS: This is my main area of concern. I am a 5th year teacher in a Title I high school (however, it is not a failing high school). For the previous four years of my career, I have taught primarily Title I students in low-level classes, many of which have included an in-class support teacher with a high population of special education students. Anyone who has spent time teaching these students understands that education is not a priority to many of the students or families those students come from. On back to school night, for a class of 25, I would be lucky to see three parents. Many come from households with a single parent, and often times that parent works multiple jobs. Attendance is a major problem - many times students must stay home because they must watch a sibling while their parent works, perhaps they missed the bus and do not have the money to call a cab to get a ride to school, or perhaps the parent doesn't even know their child has stayed home because they left for work before the school day and arrive back home after the student would normally be home from school. There are also behavioral problems to address in many of these classrooms. Students are often suspended from school. There are also behavioral distractions in the classroom, some of which are severe. There are students with learning disabilities who need modifications. Classrooms are cramped with many students making it difficult for a teacher to circulate the room to monitor student progress and be sure that each student is on task and attentive. Many students work jobs late to support their household and are sleepy in class. Others are sleepy because they don't have a bed time and stay up late playing video games or talking to or hanging out with friends. Some are malnourished. Some are worried about their family member in jail, in a gang, doing drugs, etc. Some are worried about their own drug addictions or who is out to get them. Some are worried DYFS is going to take them away from their home. There are many variables that contribute to a child's success that are out of the control of a teacher. It is incredibly difficult to be considered an effective teacher and show student progress in achievement when there are so many of these variables weighing in. Saying that teachers in the "Priority Schools" will be removed because they appear to be ineffective is worrisome to me - I am afraid it will deter successful teachers in good schools from considering working in the "Priority Schools" at risk of being ineffective due to the outside variables. Of course there are truly ineffective teachers in these schools - and all schools, for that matter - but teachers who may truly be effective in any other situation have a high risk of being deemed ineffective in a "Priority School". The constant revolving door of teachers and principals in those schools would make it difficult for the school to get better - those students have such uncertain, unstructured lives that school is their structure. They need to see the same adults in that building year to year to know they are there for them and that school is a constant structure they can rely on. It is difficult to change what has been instilled in their minds from birth - that an education is not important. It's not the teachers that need to be changed in these schools; what must be changed is the culture the

students are growing up in.

Other questions and concerns:
Charter schools are able to remove students who do not comply with what the charter is set to achieve. If failing public schools are turned into charters, and those students who are causing the school to fail are then removed from those charter schools because they are not complying, where do they go?

If charters are formed in the districts where there are many "Priority Schools", the students who are academically engaged and whose parents are involved will be removed from the public schools to attend these charters. Removing these students will decrease the school's performance level.

Teacher collaboration is incredibly important - for the success of students as well as teachers. Changing the way teachers are paid worries me - unless all teachers can earn the highest possible salary - because if a teacher has an amazing lesson for a particular topic, they are less likely to share if that teacher is competing for a higher salary.

I would like to also comment on the statement from the waiver:
"Two pending proposals would modify the State's tenure law...prohibit the practice of firing the newest – and often best – teachers first during a layoff..."
This is my fifth year teaching. I have earned my tenure through good reviews from my administrators and meeting my goals each year. I have not yet reached my peak. I am nowhere near the best teacher in my school. I am far too inexperienced to be the best teacher in my school or the best teacher I will ever be. This is true for all teachers with my level of experience. The best teachers are not the young, untenured teachers. Period.

Thank you for your time reading my suggestions in this area.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: For the same reasons listed above, I am reluctant to be on board with teachers being paid based on student performance. Again, it is difficult to show growth for students who do not attend school as often as they should, don't complete homework, don't come prepared to class, sleep in class, etc.

The rest of the suggestions seem reasonable and fair.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Sounds reasonable.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Title III Funds need to be earmarked for ELLs. This is the only federal funding that supports our ELLs. Because we did not receive the Title III Immigrant Funding this year like we did every year since the Year 2000, we have not been able to commence our annual 30 x 2 hour Family Literacy Evening Classes through which I have successfully prepared 22 adults for U. S. Citizenship.

DEVELOP_RAS: The State Department of Education's recognition and support of our successful programs are vital to our ESL studenta' success and achievement. The Township of Little Falls has benefitted from these new citizens' voting in the School Budget, and voting for Board of Education candidates, and local candidates for municipal and state positions.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: It is very important to have funding for the above-mentioned Family Literacy Program with parents and children learning together, and achieving, like 22 new U.S. Citizens who were prepared for Business as well. All the adults got better jobs and higher salaries.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: We have always met our ESL AMAO's and QSAC Monitoring in Little Falls Township, and we will continue to meet the high expectations of the New Jersey State Department of Education. PLEASE KEEP EARMARKING THE TITLE III FUNDS FOR OUR IMMIGRANTS IN THE LITTLE FALLS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOL FAMILY LITERACY EVENING PROGRAM, 32 STEVENS AVENUE, LITTLE FALLS, NJ 07424.

YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

[redacted]

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: There are districts within this state which are in dire need of financial and administrative support for our English language learners. They are lacking in the most basic support such as supplies, books, the most rudimentary items. We are suppose to be the greatest and most powerful nation on earth. People enter this country for a a better life for themselves and their children. THeir children have the right to come here and learn and grow in their own fashion. In my estimation that means to learn at their own pace. Please give them this opportunity.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: Many districts already have alternate professional evaluation systems. These are used in addition to the traditional observation and evaluation formats that are used as required by law. It might be a good idea to solicit input from these alternate evaluation templates.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: I read the mention of allowing districts to services schools with Title I funds following the school wide regulations. I heartily support this. It is difficult to raise student performance when only certain students are allowed to use materials and/or equipment purchased with Title I funds in a Targeted Assistance scenario.

I would also encourage working with the federal government to abolish the regulation that a district must receive at least $10,000 in Title III funds before it is permitted to use those funds. That makes no sense at all.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Right now we are not supporting our students who need to be career ready upon high school graduation. There used to be a rich tradition of technical and trade options that are not available now. As a mother and teacher I find it extremely arrogant for our education system to assume that every child will go to college and then punish those students (and their teachers) who need alternatives for not meeting that expectation. We are doing our students an injustice by expecting them all to go to college, to amass a staggering amount of debt by doing so, when so many could be working "tax-payers" with viable trade / technical experience.

DEVELOP_RAS: The state developed accountability is based upon a standard of testing that has driven our schools and districts down slowly for the last 30 years they have been used. Curriculum is narrower, critical thinking is not encouraged, and as a result students are not "college ready" upon graduation. By making test scores 35+ percent of a teacher's evaluation, it becomes 100 percent of the focus because in any grade book a 65% is failing. The turn over in high needs districts will increase dramatically as seen in Washington DC. So far the state has ignored the input and experience of highly effective teachers in favor of corporate and rich individuals. This must stop. The research and experience of educators is vitally important to the process of improving instruction, they know what is needed and have experience with the nuances of diverse learners with varied needs; this is something a corporate leader know nothing about. For example, just because I have a bank account and mortgage doesn't mean I'm an expert in banking reform although we all know it's needed.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: I do not understand how these things improve instruction:
-pension / benefit reform
-sick time reform
-testing (erodes instruction)
-evaluations based upon test scores
-merit pay (a failure in every instance of implementation)
-removal of tenure
-promoting less experienced teachers over seasoned teachers
-promoting a system that will favor more nepotism and cronyism
-not recognizing the value of advanced degrees
-creating public hostility towards educators

That being said, there are instructional techniques that are quite powerful and should be supported in the schools. However these are often pushed aside for professional development in how to increase test scores and techniques to teach the new "testing genre." The ever increasing reliance on test scores is the single most detrimental factor to overall success to hit schools and districts. The second is the complete loss of autonomy of teachers to decide what is needed and how to teach it. One size doesn't fit all. You would not want your child taught like the thousand widgets before them, lets not do this to the students of NJ.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Testing and data collection requirements cost districts millions of dollars a year. Money is spent on the test itself, on test prep, on test professional development, on test coordinators, and a variety of issues and mandates surrounding the constant data collection routine. It seems that real rigorous instruction is lost to weekly tests designed to gather data to drive instruction that doesn't really happen because there is not time left. Every week there is another test for another content area. I have to ask, why aren't private schools run this way? Why don't private schools have over 25 students per class (most private schools average 15). Why do people pay so much for less testing and smaller class sizes in private schools? If it is so successful and good enough for private schools for our country's richest citizens, it is then also good enough for our less fortunate public school populations. This is an important point to consider, private schools can afford more with out those kinds of mandates.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: It is hard to comment on this since the task force will not complete their report until December 31st.

DEVELOP_RAS: The proposed legislation found on pg. 8 has no place in a waiver; it is a political statement, not a policy one.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: I don't see much here in the way of community/parent partnerships.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: I have never seen a departmental initiative which reduced the data collection burden on school districts.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: Please take into consideration the needs of the English language learners (ELLs), especially the high school ELLs. Studies have shown that it takes about seven years to acquire the language.

It is inequitable to require the ELLs to meet the same standards as their native English speaking counterparts.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: It makes sense to vary the level of state intervention. District which are succeeding can continue to make progress - defined broadly - rather than take time on specific requirements they already meet.

I think the encouragement of charters is turning away from the public schools which educate most children, and is an attempt to assist a select few.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: I an concerned about how the evaluation will appropriately measure the student achievement factors. The New York Times article from 11/7/2011, In Tennessee, Following the Rules for Evaluation of a Cliff, discussed the difficulties they are having in Tennessee with the Race to the Top evaluation methods. Teachers in untested areas are being measured by student success in areas they do NOT teach. The reliance on state high-stakes test scores as the most important result has distorted the learning process over the fifteen years.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: I am STRONGLY opposed to the following section:

**The amendments to the current charter school law would allow the Department to expand the number of high-quality charter schools throughout the state and permit the Department to convert persistently failing schools to charter schools. While the Department's interventions are designed to provide Priority and Focus Schools with the supports necessary to turn themselves around, where they cannot, the Department must have the ability to partner with charter management organizations to convert those schools to charters.

I believe that if taxpayers are funding charters, they MUST have the opportunity to vote to approve the charter in their community. Additionally, the distribution of public funds to private charter management organizations is deplorable.

Please remove this from your application!

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: WIDA
The adoption of the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards is commendable,as this ensures that the growing population of ELLs are also provided with a framework to support college and career ready expectations for all students.

DEVELOP_RAS: SES
While there is limited research on the effectiveness of SES and its impact on student performance, there is a concern that students currently receiving free tutoring services will lose access to this intervention. The waiver should include the option for districts to maintain contracts with SES providers supported by Title I funds .

Parent and Family Engagement

The required reserve of Title I funds for parent engagement is imperative. Engaged parents and an engaged community contribute to a student's success.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Principal/Administrator Evaluation
The waiver should include more consideration of,or detail on, the principal, supervisor and director evaluation process,particulary in light of the significant consequences administrators have faced under NCLB and under the proposed waiver. Principal evaluation models should be piloted for a year prior to implementation.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Reports, plans an appllications related to NCLB are often redundant, a streamlined process will leave more time for DINI Teams, School Leadership Teams, Principals and Central Office Administators to support instruction in the classroom.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Please continue to support ESL students by allocating Title 111 funds for them seperately.
Thank you,
[redacted]

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: All students must be prepared for higher (post-secondary) education based on their interests and abilities. This does not mean that all students will be ready for AP classes provided in English during High School. We must differentiate to meet the academic needs of our students, and we must evaluate schools on how well they meet their studetns' needs to grow and learn. Test scores alone can not measure this.

DEVELOP_RAS: The state needs to find ways to acknowledge that a new entrant into the U.S. school system, especially one who does not speak English, requires 3-5 years to "catch up" to the academic English required to achieve on grade level. To fully reach their academic potential, such children may need 5-7 years. We need to find ways to allow for the fact that new children enter the system every year (and throughout the school year) and not to penalize school districts with English Language Learner communities.
This is not to say these districts, their teachers, and the studetns should not be held accountable for moving ahead - but the target needs to be relational, not absolute. If Johnny has only been here 1 year, Suzy was born here, and Ike has been here for 3 years, the expectations for each child should reflect the length of time they have been exposed to our ways of teaching and our curriculum. It should not be based on how well the speak, read or write English.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Encouraging districts to pressure teachers to exit children from ESL programs "before their time" is contrary to good educational practice and to the best interest of the district, the state, and the children.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Section 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. New Jersey 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.") would have a severe impact on English Language Learners and those who teach them. Whether these students are in Emergent classes (due to totla lack of knowledge of Englsih, and/or to interrupted or extremely limited prior education), they urgently need ESL support for at least 3 years after they enter the school system in the U.S. Research has shown that to achieve true academic competence in a new language takes 5-7 years; 3-5 years is a workable, although minimal, baseline expectation.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: My of my ESL students have gone on to study at community colleges and have been very successful. ESL students want to have opportunities to succeed in obtaining a good education so that they follow their American dream.

DEVELOP_RAS: Differentiated instruction is based on their level of ability in English. The accountaility is measured by New Jersey's access test as well as scores on NJASK. They receive various amounts of support based on the funds that are given to each district in the state of New Jersy.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: My of my ESL students have gone on to study at community colleges and have been very successful. ESL students want to have opportunities to succeed in obtaining a good education so that they follow their American dream.Please continue to provide your support.

DEVELOP_RAS: Differentiated instruction is based on their level of ability in English. The accountaility is measured by New Jersey's access test as well as scores on NJASK. They receive various amounts of support based on the funds that are given to each district in the state of New Jersy. Please continue the support that has been given to this population of students with the continuation of the waiver. Please continue to provide your support.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: The ability to have supporting effective instrction and leadership is by the programs we offer our students. We have to use up dated texts, technology. and constant support in achieving success for our students in their edcuation. Please continue to provide your support.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Please continue to support the education of all children...education should come first because these children are also the future of this great state. Please continue your support.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: In my opinino, lowering the standards regarding specific expectations for school districts will result in the elimination of the three year plan which currently, secures the assignment of funds and the implementation of services for the ELL students. Without a black and white paper many districts will make their own decision on how to best address the needs of these students. In many instances those determinations may be made unilaterally, without any input from those in the field of bilingual/ESL education.

The Three Year plan currently ensures the development and implementation of instructional programs such as the extended school year.It also makes possible access to supplemental materials and assessments developed based on research in the area of language aquisition,such as the ACCESS for ELLs and the W-APT tests. Districts are also able to utilize funds, as stipulated on this plan, for profesional development for bilingual ,ESL and mainstream teachers in a variety of areas essential for the success of the Ell students.Further more, embeded in this plan we also find opportunities to recognize and celebrate the cultures represented among the ELL students and effective ways in which to encourage parental involvement and a smooth transition from one culture to the other.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: One thing I can say is that those students that are participating whether it is in the inner city or the suburbs are generally making progress in language arts, reading and math. Taking away this opportunity for these students will have a devastating impact long term on the education of our ESL, Special Needs, and minority students, and longer term in the economic impact of the students and cities themselves. These students are in failing schools, with often poor services, unlike their counterparts not in SINI schools, whose parents can afford the "privilege" of paying for tutoring and the advantage of solid educators.

Giving the money to failing schools to offer programs, and doing away with SES, will end up in most cases to be misappropriating the funds. We need strong educational leadership, fresh new ideas, not the same old, same old that has been plaguing those schools for decades.

The face of public school education is continually changing given the growing population of lower income students, and immigrants entering the school system, and an even wider gap between the have and the have not's in test scores. Having SES available to the SINI schools helps bridge the gap giving students in disadvantaged students helps bring the balance back and even the playing field. SES providers come with a plethora of new and innovative ideas, manipulatives, computer programs, attacking the student's educational needs in new ways. How can that be a bad thing? We know children learn in many different ways, keeping the SES program will continue to offer the diversity paralleling the differences in each student.

Maybe what is necessary is a stricter entry in becoming an SES provider. Maybe a smaller number of providers that do a better job than the others based on a rating system.

Taking the money away from SES and putting it into an already "failing" school is like throwing good money on top of the bad. Many of these failing schools have already had government grants, and state funding, and has it made a difference? I think not, they are still "in need of improvement."

If we change this reform to early, we will not have a chance to see and reap the long term effects SES will have on the economic development of their communities due to the higher educational level of its residence.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: These expectations, and the corresponding assessmetns, do not differentiate for students with learning issues. Greater reflection and parity must be investigated and implemented to ensure that all students get the best individualized programming- not one size is right for all.

DEVELOP_RAS: While there may be merit to changes in these areas, the speed with which NJ is developing some of the programs in unnecessary and quite possible harmful to education. We won't receive clear notification about PAARC assessments and other areas until our school year is over, our budget completed and plans are already underway for a new school year. Support for these changes will be too late to effect significant change for the 2012-2013 school year.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: The idea of support coming from the NJDOE sounds wonderful. Given the current climate toward education,the refusal to acknowledge issues within the funding structure which adversely affects many students, and the politicizing of education in general, I do not see concepts in this plan that are clearly supportive of effective instruction and leadership. The federal government removed the teacher evaluation requirement from the ESEA reauthorization and yet New Jersey continue to force the issue while we are still piloting this concept. Data collection on the pilots won't even be available until June 30 at the earliest. How do you seriously expect districts to effectively implement the program without extensive state guidance (much like the HIB debacle)and a reasonable amount of time to review the data collected in order to make an informed decision.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: I have yet to see any significant regulatory and data collection release. Some of the proposed changes (teacher evaluation, principal evaluation, student assessment)will require additional implementation, not less.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: This is a long overdue, fantastic idea. Please keep the focus on BOTH college and career, as there are many viable careers out there for students who do not wish to attend college. Students who wish to pursue a career right out of high school need to be given proper support to reach their goals.

DEVELOP_RAS: This will also be a very positive program, as long as it is applied in the correct fashion. The focus must be on positivity, not punishment. Please consider the struggles of the teachers in urban areas, special education teachers, and teachers of ELL students. Those students may not progress at the same rate, yet, the progress is still there. It cannot be measured on one test. Multiple measures of progress must be looked at. In addition, holding educators "accountable" while not holding the student or family "accountable" would certainly not be a fair process. All the stakeholders should be involved in such changes.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Support is necessary to make this program a success. Training, professional development and opportunites to meet with DOE members would go a long way to reach this goal. In addition, the funding must be available, and continue to be available, to help this process along.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Superintendent

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS: The Montclair Board of Education and its administration believe that achievement target proposed by your department -- reducing by half, over a six year period, the percentage of students in the "all student" group and in each subgroup of a non-proficient students – is reasonable. This measure has the advantage of tailoring achievement targets to a school's baseline, and making visible the growth trend in a school's achievement scores. We agree that setting annual targets in equal increments over the six-year period is also fair, and is sufficient to motivate school districts to undertake efforts of continuous improvement for all subgroups.

We would ask you, however, to clarify the example that follows this statement:

For example, if 80 percent of the "all students" group is proficient, and 50 percent of low-income students are proficient, then one goal for that school will be to reduce the gap between those groups by half, or 15 percentage points, in the next 15 years. AMOs will be established for each school and each subgroup within a school.

The example above suggests that schools will be responsible for halving the achievement gap between the general population and underperforming subpopulations. It bears further clarification whether the Department of Education also intends to hold districts responsible for halving the gap to proficiency within each individual subgroup as well.

We think it would be important to specify with greater clarity which subgroups the Department will hold districts accountable for tracking and demonstrating improvement.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: The Montclair Board of Education and its administration agree that teachers should never be evaluated on a single measure, and agree with the general principle that administrators ought to inquire into a teacher's learning outcomes (using growth measures over time) as part of the assessment process. However, we have grave concerns about requiring that objective learning outcomes such as the NJ ASK comprise 50% of a teacher's evaluation. We believe that quantifying such a hard and high percentage will lead to unwelcome and unintended consequences in many districts: more "teaching to the test," unnecessary referral of lower-performing students to special education, undue suspension of lower-performing students with behavioral issues, and even attempts to manipulate data as seen recently in Atlanta Public Schools. These consequences are likely to retard, rather than advance, No Child Left Behind's goals of reducing racial and other disparities in performance.

The challenge of assessing student growth in related arts subjects also poses special problems both for measurement and teacher morale, as illustrated in an article in yesterday's New York Times, on Tennessee's efforts to implement a 50% learning

outcomes evaluation system. Any fair system for non-tested subjects would likely require a review of student and teacher portfolios, which will be time-consuming for administrators to conduct. In Montclair, we struggle with a lack of administrator capacity to meet current state requirements of one annual evaluation for all tenured staff (three for non-tenured staff). Administrators' capacity to conduct evaluation, as well as meaningful support for teacher growth and development, must be more fully considered in New Jersey's teacher evaluation proposal.

Finally, we fear that norm-based test data is not sufficiently reliable or equivalent over the last several years to allow a district to fairly ascribe student performance to an individual teacher. This especially true in a district like Montclair, where the cohort of pupils assigned to a given class are highly varied, as well as highly variable from year to year, in terms of students' socio-economic profile and depth of home supports.

We believe that the teacher evaluation pilot grant program currently underway in New Jersey bears further study and evaluation, beyond a one year period, to adequately assess whether use of a 50% student outcome growth measure in teacher evaluations: a) actually works to motivate better teaching (the goal of any formative assessment); b) actually works to identify, remove and/or remediate poor teaching (the goal of any summative evaluation); and c) can be administered fairly for teachers, and without inequitable consequences for our most vulnerable, high needs students.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: To whom it may concern,

I am an ESL teacher. I wish to address #9 of the Specific ESEA components to be waived: 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. New Jersey 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.

Title III funds must be be earmarked for ELLs. This is the only federal funding which supports our ELLs. Federally mandated programs must be federally funded; it should not be left up to districts It will be up to the district to decide how to spend federal funding. We need to have Title III funds for ELL programs.

The new accountability measure would include the following:
The Department will set annual targets in equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup of a school that are not proficient within six years. For example, if 80 percent of the “all students” group is proficient, and 50 percent of low-income students are proficient, then one goal for that school will be to reduce the gap between those groups by half, or 15 percentage points, over the next 6 years. AMOs will be established for each school and each subgroup within a school and therefore will be particular to each school’s current levels of achievement.

The ELL population is ever changing, so expecting that this subgroup will make incremental growth in six years is like trying to catch a moving target. Someone in state and federal government has to understand the dynamic composition of this subgroup and make VALID and REALISTIC expectations. These children can and do learn but the way we measure them does not provide accurate feedback. After all,transforming NCLB is based on the notion that it has failed to take in consideration student progress based on real achievement, and not inaccurate testing feedback; it would be ironic and unfair to continue stigmatizing one group using these mechanisms.

DEVELOP_RAS: To whom it may concern,

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REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: To whom it may concern,

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NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS:

DEVELOP_RAS:

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Four years ago we had a first grade class of only ESL students. The teacher of the class not only had many years of experience as a classroom teacher, but she also had years of experience as a reading specialist working with children, a professor of reading for current and future teachers, a special education teacher, etc. I was the ESL teacher who worked with this particular teacher and her students. After a few weeks, the teacher and I had a chat and she said that this class was different from any previous experience that she ever had. ESL students are a unique population whose needs are different from any other group of students and without Title III, districts or states may choose not to provide ESL services. They may mistakenly assume that ESL students can be served in the same way as children who need Title I services. Anyone who has worked with both of these populations comes to the realization that the needs of both of these groups of children are different. It is important that people at the top understand that ESL children have unique needs that must be met by appropiate staff. One size does not fit all when it comes to remedial services.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: School Administrator

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: The SCANS report issued over 10 years ago was a call to action for the discussion of "21st Century Skills" development. Yet, little has been done to effectively implement and actualize these skill into the school environment and curriculums other that mandated policies and directives on both the state and local levels. Layered on top of the many reform-model recommendations about learning environments is a growing awareness that the world of work has dramatically changed and that each student needs new skills to develop their own human capital potential in order to participate in this new workforce. Recommendations for workforce development suggest that it is time to develop new models for education delivery.

New concepts of schooling and organizational structure must start from basic 21st century assumptions of time, place, technology, and production if they hope to empower our young men and women to be successful in post-secondary education and the modern workplace.

One simple suggestion is to create an environment where students have a positive and personal connection with adults and schools and they are engaged in their own learning. What I have found is that many of my students are disengaged from the learning process and see no purpose for education since the benefits are not immediate. Secondly, these students have no sense of requirements other that their survival within their household, community.

Another suggestion is for school to build collaborative and professional growth paths for teachers that exists for their counterparts in highly effective corporations. I would suggest everyone read "Jumping the S-Curve" by Paul Nunez.

DEVELOP_RAS: Develop and use dynamic planning and analysis models investigate educational systems and their impact on policy development. Business Intelligence and Simulation models can track changes in educational policy and track their effect on the instructional setting. These effects may not be apparent, linear in effect, and equitable in distribution within the educational setting. Additionally, policy changes can be examined in advance on educational settings and determine their outcomes on student achievement. Understanding the interdependent role of student attributes, curriculum, instructional and physical environments, as well as the organization structure are fundamental factors that play a role in achievement. It is not enough to identify these roles but to understand why they matter in order to improve educational policy development.

Unfortunately, educational research at both the state and local levels are still tied to the factory style organizational structure that prevent real innovation and change. Too often policies and directives are actualized based on antiquated structures and rituals that have lost meaning and purpose. One such example is the non-departmentalization of elementary settings or lesson planning with generalized objectives based on textbooks rather than on student needs

I have already developed and presented models for this purpose but acceptance is nonexistent, and secondly many teachers are following procedures and practices blindly without thought since many districts implement policies and programs that are in vogue, or suggested by state and federal programs tied to educational dollars without regard for the nature and composition of the teacher/student body or the

instructional environment for delivery.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Leadership models in many schools are developed along the lines of traditional management and employee relationships. Often the models are top-down traditional information tracts that perform ritual rites of passage. Truly professional and collaborative structures cannot exist when the principals and district administrators dictates how, when and where instruction can take place. This traditional process impedes the growth of learning communities.

In addition, leadership development must take place on all levels of the instructional organization. The exercisement of leadership is not just a positional function but internal examination of individual abilities linked to external connections. Leadership encompasses the ability to apply effective practice based on research and theory, with a mix of resolve, motivation, confidence, collaboration, impact, and the ability to make complex issues simple to understand. If these attributes are not linked into leadership models what is left is just a positional figure head.

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Data collection is the favorite pass time of governmental and educational organizations. However, the ability to use this information to address change is less successful. Data needs to be used to specifically examine educational structures and governance that control education resources that can affect human capital development, reduce diversity issues and improve global communication within LEA's. Educators are not trained to look at data in this capacity. Furthermore within any governance structure, the politics of information exist. Who and how the information is used effects what is produced as a result of data analysis.

Regulatory structures need to streamline regulations to produce seamless organizational functionality. An example of this Agricultural Department runs a meal program separately from the National Lunch Program duplicating requirements and paperwork, while creating overlap of services and even preventing district from providing services to those in need because of operational barriers.

Another regulatory issue is state regulated purchasing structure which results in overpriced books and supplies.

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Please allow us to keep our funding (titleIII) for ELL sstudents so our sctudents will have a chance to catch Engish Speaking peers!!!!

DEVELOP_RAS: Please allow us to keep our funding (titleIII) for ELL sstudents so our sctudents will have a chance to catch Engish Speaking peers!!!!

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Please allow us to keep our funding (titleIII) for ELL sstudents so our sctudents will have a chance to catch Engish Speaking peers!!!!

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Please allow us to keep our funding (titleIII) for ELL sstudents so our sctudents will have a chance to catch Engish Speaking peers!!!!

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Findings of the college and career readiness task force will not be publicized until the end of the year. Rulings at this time concerning this area would be premature. Decisions should include information from the task force.

DEVELOP_RAS: The 6-year growth in proficiency is not a realistic estimate of ELL growth because it doesn't consider the transient nature of many ELL and at-risk students. Within that time frame, many students have attended several schools. Their learning may not progress on a continuum but rather with the interruptions of school transfers or non-attendance where previous material may need to be re-learned before moving forward. This slows down the progress.

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER:

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION:

NAME: [redacted]

CITY: [redacted] STATE: NJ

AFFILIATION: Teacher

COLLEGE_READY_STUDENTS: Please keep Title III funds for ELL programs!

DEVELOP_RAS: Please keep Title III funds for ELL programs!

EFFECTIVE_INSTRUCT_LEADER: Please keep Title III funds for ELL programs!

REDUCE_REGS_COLLECTION: Please keep Title III funds for ELL programs!

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Christie Administration Seeks Public Input on NCLB Waiver Centered on Increasing Flexibility and Strengthening Accountability

Waiver would provide flexibility to the increasing number of schools not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and focus on turning around State's lowest-performing schools

For Immediate Release

Date: November 3, 2011

Contact: Justin Barra
Allison Kobus
609-292-1126

Trenton, NJ – The Department of Education today released a draft outline of its waiver application to the US Department of Education for relief from certain provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The Department is soliciting comment from educators and the general public on the outline through its website through Wednesday, November 9. This comprehensive waiver would allow the Department to develop a new accountability system to replace the provisions of NCLB, centered on providing support and intervention to the State's lowest-performing schools and those with the largest in-school gaps between subgroups of students.

As part of the waiver application, the Department of Education will present a plan to act on four principles, as required in the US Department's application. Those principles include 1) College and career ready expectations for all students; 2) State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; 3) Supporting effective instruction and leadership; and 4) Reducing regulatory and data collection burden on districts.

"NCLB remains an important piece of legislation because it put a renewed focus on student achievement and accountability in K-12 education and highlighted the needs of typically underperforming student populations. However, the law suffers from some significant flaws, including its failure to give credit for progress and its one-size-fits-all approach to labeling schools as failing," said Acting Commissioner Chris Cerf. "Through our waiver application, we are developing a new accountability system that allows for differentiated supports and interventions of the schools with the most pervasive and persistent achievement problems. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to school improvement which is why we must focus our resources and most significant interventions on those schools with long standing history of low performance."

Under NCLB, a school is listed as "failing" if it does not make Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) for two years in a row. To make AYP a school must meet state benchmarks in language arts and math

for the total population and all subgroups. Missing the benchmark for any subgroup in any grade span causes a school to fail to make AYP. This year, 1,231 schools, or 55.5% of schools did not make AYP for one or more years. That number is an increase over the previous year, where 1,136 schools, or 51% of schools, did not make AYP. This jump is, in part, a result of an increase in the percentage of students that must be proficient in the 2010-11 school year, with a requirement under the law for 100% of students to be proficient by 2014.

Those schools failing to make AYP for two years in a row are identified under NCLB as a School in Need of Improvement (SINI). Title I SINI schools are subject to a tiered set of sanctions, including setting aside 20% of their Title I funds for Supplemental Educational Services (SES). For the 2010-11 school year, the number of schools designated as SINI increased to 862, or 38.8% of schools. This number is an increase over the previous year, where 656 schools, or 29.4% of schools, were designated as SINI.

In developing a new accountability system, the Department will create three tiers of schools, which will be identified using both growth and absolute proficiency:

- Priority Schools: The Department will identify the lowest-performing five percent of Title I schools across the state using proficiency, growth, and graduation rates. Any non-Title I school that would otherwise meet the same criteria will also be designated as a Priority School.

- Focus Schools: The Department will identify at least 10 percent of Title I schools as Focus Schools. These schools will be selected from Title I schools that are not categorized as Priority Schools and will be identified based upon achievement gaps between subgroups and low performance or graduation rates among particular subgroups. Any non-Title I school that would otherwise meet the same criteria will also be designated as a Focus School.

- Reward Schools: The Department will identify Reward Schools based on high proficiency levels or high levels of growth, including progress toward closing achievement gaps. This will allow for a range of schools from across the state to attain Reward status, regardless of their absolute starting point.

The Department will create customized interventions to turnaround Priority and Focus Schools, based on their individual needs. Among others, these interventions include a focus on improving instruction, using data to drive decision making, and expanding learning time. The Department will also develop financial bonuses for Reward Schools as well as opportunities to share best practices across the state.

In addition, the application also includes support for several pending bills centered on Governor Christie's previously announced reforms that, if passed, would expand the reach and efficacy of the Department's proposed interventions.

- Two pending proposals would modify the State's tenure law, allow for differentiated pay, prohibit the practice of firing the newest – and often best – teachers first during a layoff, and require that a teacher could not be placed in a school without his consent and that of the principal. These reforms are not only consistent with the federal turnaround principles endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education in the ESEA waiver application, but also necessary to strengthen the Department's proposed interventions.

- Proposed legislation around the current charter school law, Urban Hope Act, and Opportunity Scholarship Act will increase the number of high-quality options for students in Priority and Focus Schools.

For schools that do not fall into one of these three categories, the Department will create performance targets and publicly release new and detailed performance reports, but will provide districts flexibility on the supports and interventions to improve student performance.

"Accountability systems do not exist for their own sake, but as part of an overall strategy to advance student learning and ensure that children graduate from high school ready for college and career," said Acting Commissioner Cerf. "The plan we are developing in our waiver application will not only increase accountability for school performance, but also serve as a mechanism to improve student performance. It will do that by more accurately measuring school performance by including growth in addition to absolute performance, and by providing flexibility from overly bureaucratic regulations on how to support school improvement."

To develop this outline, the Department solicited feedback on its website from educators and community members for two weeks in October. The Department also held a series of meetings with educators and the leadership of teachers unions and associations and will hold additional meetings in the coming week to finalize its application.

A copy of the NCLB waiver outline can be found at the link below, along with a form to submit public comment. Comments will be accepted through that website through Wednesday, November 9. The first opportunity to submit an application to the US Department of Education is November 14.

https://education.state.nj.us/esea2

A list of schools that did not make AYP can be found below.

http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/ayp/1112/

An overview of the required interventions for SINI schools can be found at the link below.

http://education.state.nj.us/rc/nclb/ayp.html

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver – Request for Feedback/Input

Dear School Administrators,

On September 23, the US Department of Education announced that the federal government would invite states to apply for flexibility from the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). States would be granted flexibility in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction.

An overview of the federal guidance for this application can be found in the document below, located on the US Department of Education's website.

http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility

As outlined in this guidance, states would be required to submit a plan in the following three areas:

- Transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments
- Developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support
- Evaluating teacher and principal effectiveness and supporting improvement

Because such changes would have a major impact on our state's educators and families, we are soliciting input from K-12 stakeholders and the broader public on what elements should be included in New Jersey's application. Please visit the link below to submit comments to the Department.

https://education.state.nj.us/esea/

Submissions will be received from October 11 until October 21, 2011. We welcome feedback in any of the three areas outlined in the federal application. Please circulate this link to all interested parties.

Sincerely,

Christopher D. Cerf

Acting Commissioner of Education

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

New Jersey Department of Education
ESEA Waiver Application - Draft Outline
November 3, 2011

Public comment on this draft outline can be submitted at: https://education.state.nj.us/esea2

I. BACKGROUND

The No Child Left Behind ("NCLB") Act of 2001 (the current iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) remains a transformative piece of legislation that put a renewed focus on student achievement and accountability in K-12 education. Of particular importance, the law requires states, districts, and schools to disaggregate performance by socio-economic status and other subgroups so educators could address the needs of all students, especially those from historically underserved populations. By implementing a tiered series of interventions for underperformance, the law requires that schools' and districts' failures to advance student learning be met with meaningful consequences.

However, the law suffers from some important flaws, including its failure to give credit for progress (as opposed to absolute performance), the perverse incentive it has created for states to water down academic standards, and its one-size-fits-all approach to labeling schools as "failing." It is perhaps this last flaw that is most troubling. NCLB requires that all students in grades 3-8 in all schools be proficient in reading and mathematics by 2014. Ultimately, every school in New Jersey will be labeled "failing" and become subject to a number of federally-mandated reporting requirements and interventions unless 100 percent of its students are proficient. Currently, more than 50 percent of schools in New Jersey are not making Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) towards that goal. That number is expected to grow in the coming years. For LEAs that do not make AYP for two years in a row, the law requires a number of consequences. For example, LEAs are limited in how they can allocate Title I funds because of the requirements of Supplemental Educational Services (SES) and other interventions.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced in September that he will consider proposals from states seeking to waive provisions of NCLB if they indicate a strong commitment to improving student performance, reducing the achievement gap, and turning around underperforming schools. A waiver would allow LEAs and states additional flexibility in providing support and interventions to struggling schools. In exchange for this flexibility, a state's substitute accountability system must be both comprehensive and consequential, especially for schools that fall at the bottom of the achievement continuum or those characterized by significant gaps between the performance of, for example, economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students. State plans must also reflect an integrated approach to reform that includes high academic standards and clear strategies for evaluating and improving educator effectiveness.

Accountability systems do not exist for their own sake, but as part of an overall strategy to advance student learning and ensure that children graduate from high school ready for college and career. The plan we are developing in our ESEA waiver application will not only increase accountability for school performance, but also serve as a mechanism to improve student performance.

To inform our initial plan, we took two steps. First, we solicited feedback from educators and community members across the state through our website over a two-week period in October. Second, we met with the leadership of teachers unions and a number of professional associations, in addition to groups of educators and administrators, to provide specific recommendations.

In order to ensure that we continue to develop our application with the input of stakeholders across the state, we are presenting an outline of our draft application in this document for additional public comment. This outline presents the findings from our initial outreach and work done by the Department. A complete set of guidance on this application from the US Department of Education can be found here. (http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility)

II. SPECIFIC ESEA COMPONENTS TO BE WAIVED

Through the application, New Jersey will seek to waive the following provisions of ESEA.

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. New Jersey 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. New Jersey 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. New Jersey 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. New Jersey 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 schoolwide program. New Jersey 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, 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. New Jersey 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.

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. New Jersey 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.

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. New Jersey 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. New Jersey 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.

10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g)(4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements. New Jersey requests this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State's priority schools.

11. 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). New Jersey 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.

III. FOUR PRINCIPLES OF WAIVER APPLICATION

As required by the ESEA waiver application, the Department of Education will act on the following four principles:

1. College and career ready expectations for all students;
2. State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support;
3. Supporting effective instruction and leadership; and
4. Reduce regulatory and data collection burden on LEAs.

1. College and career ready expectations for all students

The State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in June 2010, which outline the knowledge and skills students need to be college and career ready in K-12 English language arts and math. LEAs are implementing these standards over the next three years on the following schedule.

- 2011-12: K-2 Math
- 2012-13: K-12 ELA, 3-5 and 9-12 Math
- 2013-14: 5-8 Math

In order to support LEAs in implementing the CCSS, the Department is taking, or has taken, the following actions:

- Developing model curricula for K-12 ELA and math, including unit level assessments, for optional use by LEAs.

- Providing high-quality professional development sessions designed to assist teachers and principals in fully implementing the CCSS.

- Providing principals with professional learning opportunities designed to develop the instructional leadership skills needed to effectively monitor and improve CCSS curriculum implementation.

- Working with LEAs to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, programs, and technology-based supports designed by external vendors, in order to inform all LEAs as they decide on the instructional materials or programs that will best meet the needs of the children they serve.

- Adopted the WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards. The Department is currently developing training and resources for LEAs to facilitate the implementation of the standards.

- Joined the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Consortium, which is developing K-12 ELA and math assessments tied to the CCSS.

In addition, on October 12, 2011, the Department formed a College and Career Readiness Taskforce consisting of K-12, higher education, and business leaders to answer the following questions:

- What does college and career readiness mean in the context of the Common Core State Standards?

- What is the appropriate way to assess this level of student achievement?

- What graduation requirements should be required including comprehensive examinations and end of course assessments?

- What process, benchmarks and timelines should be established to guide the transition from the current system to the new system?

The task force will issue a preliminary report by December 31, 2011.

2. **State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support**

The Department will develop a new statewide accountability system that maintains its focus on student performance as the primary measure of school success but measures student performance through both absolute performance and student growth. By waiving the interventions required by the federal government based on failure to meet yearly performance targets (AYP), such as SES, the Department will be able to provide more customized rewards, supports, and interventions for schools based on a nuanced understanding of school performance. This flexibility will also provide LEAs and schools more discretion in how to allocate their Title I funds to improve performance based on their individual needs.

The Department will use a combination of proficiency and growth on state exams to identify three categories of schools, as required by the waiver application – Reward, Focus, and Priority Schools. In addition to these categories, the Department will develop Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for the state and for each LEA, school, and individual subgroup within a school. The Department will set annual targets in equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the "all students" group and in each subgroup of a school that are not proficient within six years. For example, if 80 percent of the "all students" group is proficient, and 50 percent of low-income students are proficient, then one goal for that school will be to reduce the gap between those groups by half, or 15 percentage points, over the next 6 years. AMOs will be established for each school and each subgroup within a school and therefore will be particular to each school's current levels of achievement.

The Department will develop and publish new school performance reports for every school in New Jersey to replace our current bifurcated School Report Card and NCLB Report Card publications. The Department will convene a workgroup to determine the specific metrics to be included in the performance

report. Among others, the reports will include progress towards AMOs, comparison to "peer schools" with similar demographics, performance on state tests over time, and additional college and career readiness data points.

The categories required by the US Department of Education are:

A. **Priority Schools**: The lowest performing schools across the state with regard to absolute achievement or graduation outcomes and those that are persistently low achieving.
B. **Focus Schools**: Schools in which particular subgroups are demonstrating a lack of success in achievement or graduation outcomes, and schools in which within-school achievement gaps are the largest.
C. **Reward Schools**: Schools with high overall and subgroup achievement levels or those that are demonstrating great growth or progress.

A. Priority Schools

The Department will identify the lowest-performing five percent of Title I schools across the state using proficiency, growth, and graduation rates. Any non-Title I school that would otherwise meet the same criteria will also be designated as a Priority School.

The Department's new Regional Achievement Centers will work with LEAs to develop and implement customized improvement plans for each Priority School. As part of this waiver application, the US Department of Education requires states to intervene in Priority and Focus Schools based on the following federally defined turnaround principles. The Department will work with LEAs that have Priority Schools through the Regional Achievement Centers to develop customized school interventions based on these principles, and in compliance with all current state law and regulations.

- 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;

- 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;

- Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;

- 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;

- Using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;

- 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

- Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

The Department will also continue to utilize existing authority provided in statute, such as ensuring that all state aid is spent effectively and efficiently.

In addition to these interventions, the Department and the Administration support several pending bills that would increase the supports available to Priority and Focus Schools. Specifically, Governor Christie has introduced several bills that, if passed, would expand the reach and efficacy of the Department's proposed interventions.

- Two pending proposals would modify the State's tenure law, allow for differentiated pay, prohibit the practice of firing the newest – and often best – teachers first during a layoff, and require that a teacher could not be placed in a school without his consent and that of the principal. These reforms are not only consistent with the federal turnaround principles endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education in the ESEA waiver application, but also necessary to strengthen the Department's proposed interventions. For example, without passage of these reforms, it will be difficult for any district or the Department to pay the very best teachers more money to teach in Priority and Focus Schools.

- The amendments to the current charter school law would allow the Department to expand the number of high-quality charter schools throughout the state and permit the Department to convert persistently failing schools to charter schools. While the Department's interventions are designed to provide Priority and Focus Schools with the supports necessary to turn themselves around, where they cannot, the Department must have the ability to partner with charter management organizations to convert those schools to charters.

- Likewise, the Urban Hope Act allows for the creation of high-quality charter schools in the state's five lowest-performing districts. High-quality alternatives in those districts – where, in at least one case, as many as 80% of the district's schools are Priority and Focus Schools – would help to give all students immediate access to great school options.

- Finally, the Opportunity Scholarship Act authorizes privately funded scholarships for students in thirteen "chronically failing" districts in the state. While the Department is confident in the interventions it has outlined in its waiver application, even under the best of circumstances, Priority and Focus Schools will not be transformed overnight. The students in those schools need quality alternatives now; the Opportunity Scholarship Act would provide those alternatives.

B. Focus Schools

The Department will identify at least 10 percent of Title I schools as Focus Schools. These schools will be selected from Title I schools that are not categorized as Priority Schools and will be identified based upon achievement gaps between subgroups and low performance or graduation rates among particular subgroups. Any non-Title I school that would otherwise meet the same criteria will also be designated as a Focus School.

The Department's Regional Achievement Centers will work with LEAs to develop and implement customized improvement plans for Focus Schools, targeted specifically at the identified achievement gaps, and aligned to the federal turnaround principals listed above.

C. Reward Schools

The Department will identify Reward Schools based on high proficiency levels or high levels of growth, including progress toward closing achievement gaps. This will allow for a range of schools from across the state to attain Reward status, regardless of their absolute starting point.

The Department will provide financial incentives to Reward Schools to be used with input from the school community, and will work with partner organizations to help these schools share best practices with educators across the state.

D. Non-categorized Schools

The Department will develop school performance reports and AMOs for all schools in the state, regardless of whether they fall into one of the three categories above. For all non-categorized schools, LEAs will be required to hold public meetings to review the data and identify strategies to improve performance gaps. Non-categorized schools will have flexibility in the interventions they use to address achievement gaps and other performance challenges.

Non-categorized schools will be invited to attend regional trainings and professional development sessions offered for Focus and Priority Schools by the Regional Achievement Centers. Through these optional capacity building opportunities and through supports provided to all schools through the Department's website, non-categorized schools will be able to benefit from the supports offered to Focus and Priority Schools.

3. Supporting effective instruction and leadership

Based on the recommendations of the New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Task Force, the Department is currently undertaking a pilot with 11 districts and 19 SIG schools across the state to develop a new teacher evaluation system. The Department will use information from the pilot program to craft a statewide framework.

Pilot districts are working with their educators to create a new evaluation system containing the following core principles:

- Teachers should never be evaluated on the basis of a single consideration, such as test scores much less a single test, but on the basis of multiple measures that include both learning outcomes and effective practices, with approximately 50% associated with each.

- Where applicable, the component of the evaluation based on "learning outcomes" should include, but not be limited to, progress on objective assessments such as NJ ASK. In untested grades and subjects, for example, student achievement might include a focus on student work or locally determined criteria.

- To avoid penalizing teachers who work with our highest-need students, evaluations of "learning outcomes" should be based primarily on student progress (growth).

- To give teachers meaningful information to help them develop, the prior system of binary ratings (either "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory") will be replaced by a four-tiered system, with the following categories: "ineffective," "partially effective," "effective" and "highly effective."

- Districts should provide a direct link between the results of the evaluation and professional development opportunities to help teachers at all levels continuously improve.

- To ensure consistency and fairness, plans should address inter-rater reliability – solving for the problem of differences in how individual evaluators review teachers across schools and districts.

- Any personnel consequences connected with evaluations remain a matter of local decision and applicable state law and are not an element of the pilot program.

Additional details about the current teacher evaluation pilot and the recommendations of the New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Task Force can be found here. (http://www.state.nj.us/education/EE4NJ/)

Building on the New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Task Force, the Department is currently also working on draft guidelines and procedures for a principal evaluation system. As recommended in the report, the guidelines for principal evaluation will also include components of both professional practice and student achievement.

4. **Reduce regulatory and data collection burden on LEAs**

The waiver guidance requires that the State remove duplicative and burdensome administrative requirements that have little or no impact on student outcomes. New Jersey has undertaken three key, concurrent initiatives to reduce the administrative burden on its LEAs and schools.

First, the Governor established an Education Transformation Task Force charged with conducting a comprehensive review of all education-related statutes and regulations "to determine the extent to which they increase the quality of instruction for students, improve academic achievement of students, improve teaching effectiveness within schools or improve the safety and well being of students . . . or are overly prescriptive." The task force will issue its final report on December 31, 2011.

Second, the Department has proposed substantial revisions to the Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) to make the QSAC process more efficient and less time-consuming, thus allowing districts to more efficiently use limited resources and to focus attention on factors that directly impact student achievement and college and career readiness.

Third, the Department has worked to streamline our data collection processes, both to reduce redundant data collections and to improve data quality throughout the State. To that end, the Department has developed its statewide, student-level, longitudinal data system (called NJSMART) and is in the process of sunsetting a number of disparate data collections and systems.

State of New Jersey

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Adoption
June 16, 2010

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has adopted rigorous Core Curriculum Content Standards and associated cumulative progress indicators which establish the basis for local curriculum and instruction for all students, the Statewide assessment system, and the evaluation of local district boards of education; and

WHEREAS, the Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO); and

WHEREAS, the standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and experts, to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare our children for college and the workforce; and

WHEREAS, the standards are informed by the highest, most effective models from states across the country and countries around the world, and provide teachers and parents with a common understanding of what students are expected to learn; and

WHEREAS, consistent standards will provide appropriate benchmarks for all students, regardless of where they live; and

WHEREAS, these standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs; and

WHEREAS, the Department has elicited extensive public input through regional feedback sessions, written comments, and electronic feedback submitted through the its website; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State Board of Education hereby directs that school district curricula for all students be aligned with these revised K-12 standards in mathematics and English language arts & literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects, according to the attached timeline; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the adopted Common Core State Standards and accompanying indicators mathematics and English language arts & literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects, dated June 16, 2010, will serve as the basis for any state or local assessments deemed appropriate by the Department of Education and the State Board of Education; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the State Board of Education commends the individuals and organizations, both within the State and beyond its borders, who have contributed to the development and revision of the Common Core State Standards.

Bret Schundler, Commissioner
Secretary, NJ State Board of Education

Josephine E. Hernandez, President
NJ State Board of Education

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
For
Race To The Top – Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant

PARTNERSHIP FOR ASSESSMENT OF READINESS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS MEMBERS

April 7, 2011

I. Parties

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is made and effective as of this 7th day of April 2011, by and between the State of New Jersey and all other member states of the Partnership For Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers ("Consortium" or "PARCC") who have also executed this MOU.

II. Scope of MOU

This MOU constitutes an understanding between the Consortium member states to participate in the Consortium. This document describes the purpose and goals of the Consortium, presents its background, explains its organizational and governance structure, and defines the terms, responsibilities and benefits of participation in the Consortium.

III. Background – Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant

On April 9, 2010, the Department of Education ("ED") announced its intent to provide grant funding to consortia of States for two grant categories under the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: (a) Comprehensive Assessment Systems grants, and (b) High School Course Assessment grants. 75 Fed. Reg. 18171 (April 9, 2010) ("Notice").

The Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant will support the development of new assessment systems that measure student knowledge and skills against a common set of college- and career-ready standards in mathematics and English language arts in a way that covers the full range of those standards, elicits complex student demonstrations or applications of knowledge and skills as appropriate, and provides an accurate measure of student achievement across the full performance continuum and an accurate measure of student growth over a full academic year or course.

IV. Purpose and Goals

The states that are signatories to this MOU are members of a consortium (Partnership For Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) that have organized themselves to apply for and carry out the objectives of the Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant program.

Consortium states have identified the following major purposes and uses for the assessment system results:

- To measure and document students' college and career readiness by the end of high school and progress toward this target. Students meeting the college and career readiness standards will be eligible for placement into entry-level credit-bearing, rather than remedial, courses in public 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions in all participating states.

- To provide assessments and results that:
  - Are comparable across states at the student level;
  - Meet internationally rigorous benchmarks;
  - Allow valid measures of student longitudinal growth; and
  - Serve as a signal for good instructional practices.

- To support multiple levels and forms of accountability including:
  - Decisions about promotion and graduation for individual students;
  - Teacher and leader evaluations;
  - School accountability determinations;
  - Determinations of principal and teacher professional development and support needs; and
  - Teaching, learning, and program improvement.

- Assesses all students, including English learners and students with disabilities.

To further these goals, States that join the Consortium by signing this MOU mutually agree to support the work of the Consortium as described in the PARCC application for funding under the Race to the Top Assessment Program.

V. Definitions

This MOU incorporates and adopts the terms defined in the Department of Education's Notice, which is appended hereto as Addendum 1.

VI. Key Deadlines

The Consortium has established key deadlines and action items for all Consortium states, as specified in Table (A)(1)(b)(v) and Section (A)(1) of its proposal. The following milestones represent major junctures during the grant period when the direction of the Consortium's work will be clarified, when the Consortium must make key decisions, and when member states must make additional commitments to the Consortium and its work.

A. The Consortium shall develop procedures for the administration of its duties, set forth in By-Laws, which will be adopted at the first meeting of the Governing Board.

B. The Consortium shall adopt common assessment administration procedures no later than the spring of 2011.

C. The Consortium shall adopt a common set of item release policies no later than the spring of 2011.

D. The Consortium shall adopt a test security policy no later than the spring of 2011.

E. The Consortium shall adopt a common definition of "English learner" and common policies and procedures for student participation and accommodations for English learners no later than the spring of 2011.

F. The Consortium shall adopt common policies and procedures for student participation and accommodations for students with disabilities no later than the spring of 2011.

G. Each Consortium state shall adopt a common set of college- and career-ready standards no later than December 31, 2011.

H. The Consortium shall adopt a common set of common performance level descriptors no later than the summer of 2014.

I. The Consortium shall adopt a common set of achievement standards no later than the summer of 2015.

VII. Consortium Membership

A. Membership Types and Responsibilities

1. **Governing State:** A State becomes a Governing State if it meets the eligibility criteria in this section.

   a. The eligibility criteria for a Governing State are as follows:

      (i) A Governing State may not be a member of any other consortium that has applied for or receives grant funding from the Department of Education under the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program for the Comprehensive Course Assessment Systems grant category;

      (ii) A Governing State must be committed to statewide implementation and administration of the assessment system developed by the Consortium no later than the 2014-2015 school year, subject to availability of funds;

      (iii) A Governing State must be committed to using the assessment results in its accountability system, including for school accountability determinations;

teacher and leader evaluations; and teaching, learning and program improvement;

(iv) A Governing State must provide staff to the Consortium to support the activities of the Consortium as follows:

- Coordinate the state's overall participation in all aspects of the project, including:
  - ongoing communication within the state education agency, with local school systems, teachers and school leaders, higher education leaders;
  - communication to keep the state board of education, governor's office and appropriate legislative leaders and committees informed of the consortium's activities and progress on a regular basis;
  - participation by local schools and education agencies in pilot tests and field test of system components; and
  - identification of barriers to implementation.
- Participate in the management of the assessment development process on behalf of the Consortium;
- Represent the chief state school officer when necessary in Governing Board meetings and calls;
- Participate on Design Committees that will:
  - Develop the overall assessment design for the Consortium;
  - Develop content and test specifications;
  - Develop and review Requests for Proposals (RFPs);
  - Manage contract(s) for assessment system development;
  - Recommend common achievement levels;
  - Recommend common assessment policies; and
  - Other tasks as needed.

(v) A Governing State must identify and address the legal, statutory, regulatory and policy barriers it must change in order for the State to adopt and implement

the Consortium's assessment system components by the 2014-15 school year.

b. A Governing State has the following additional rights and responsibilities:

(i) A Governing State has authority to participate with other Governing States to determine and/or to modify the major policies and operational procedures of the Consortium, including the Consortium's work plan and theory of action;

(ii) A Governing State has authority to participate with other Governing States to provide direction to the Project Management Partner, the Fiscal Agent, and to any other contractors or advisors retained by or on behalf of the Consortium that are compensated with Grant funds;

(iii) A Governing State has authority to participate with other Governing States to approve the design of the assessment system that will be developed by the Consortium;

(iv) A Governing State must participate in the work of the Consortium's design and assessment committees;

(v) A Governing State must participate in pilot and field testing of the assessment systems and tools developed by the Consortium, in accordance with the Consortium's work plan;

(vi) A Governing State must develop a plan for the statewide implementation of the Consortium's assessment system by 2014-2015, including removing or resolving statutory, regulatory and policy barriers to implementation, and securing funding for implementation;

(vii) A Governing State may receive funding from the Consortium to defray the costs associated with staff time devoted to governance of the Consortium, if such funding is included in the Consortium budget;

(viii) A Governing State may receive funding from the Consortium to defray the costs associated with intra-State communications and engagements, if such funding is included in the Consortium budget.

(ix) A Governing State has authority to vote upon significant grant fund expenditures and disbursements (including awards of contracts and subgrants) made to and/or executed by the Fiscal Agent, Governing States, the Project Management Partner, and other contractors or subgrantees.

2. **Fiscal Agent:** The Fiscal Agent will be one of the Governing States in the Consortium.

(i) The Fiscal Agent will serve as the "Applicant" state for purposes of the grant application, applying as the member of the Consortium on behalf of the Consortium, pursuant to the Application Requirements of the Notice (Addendum 1) and 34 C.F.R. 75.128.

(ii) The Fiscal Agent shall have a fiduciary responsibility to the Consortium to manage and account for the grant funds provided by the Federal Government under the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems grants, including related administrative functions, subject to the direction and approval of the Governing Board regarding the expenditure and disbursement of all grant funds, and shall have no greater decision-making authority regarding the expenditure and disbursement of grant funds than any other Governing State;

(iii) The Fiscal Agent shall issue RFPs in order to procure goods and services on behalf of the Consortium;

(iv) The Fiscal Agent has the authority, with the Governing Board's approval, to designate another Governing State as the issuing entity of RFPs for procurements on behalf of the Consortium;

(v) The Fiscal Agent shall enter into a contract or subgrant with the organization selected to serve as the Consortium's Project Management Partner;

(vi) The Fiscal Agent may receive funding from the Consortium in the form of disbursements from Grant funding, as authorized by the Governing Board, to cover the costs associated with carrying out its

responsibilities as a Fiscal Agent, if such funding is included in the Consortium budget;

(vii) The Fiscal Agent may enter into significant contracts for services to assist the grantee to fulfill its obligation to the Federal Government to manage and account for grant funds;

(viii) Consortium member states will identify and report to the Fiscal Agent, and the Fiscal Agent will report to the Department of Education, pursuant to program requirement 11 identified in the Notice for Comprehensive Assessment System grantees, any current assessment requirements in Title I of the ESEA that would need to be waived in order for member States to fully implement the assessment system developed by the Consortium.

3. Participating State

a. The eligibility criteria for a Participating State are as follows:

(i) A Participating State commits to support and assist with the Consortium's execution of the program described in the PARCC application for a Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program grant, consistent with the rights and responsibilities detailed below, but does not at this time make the commitments of a Governing State;

(ii) A Participating State may be a member of more than one consortium that applies for or receives grant funds from ED for the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program for the Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant category.

b. The rights and responsibilities of a Participating State are as follows:

(i) A Participating State is encouraged to provide staff to participate on the Design Committees, Advisory Committees, Working Groups or other similar groups established by the Governing Board;

(ii) A Participating State shall review and provide feedback to the Design Committees and to the Governing Board regarding the design plans,

strategies and policies of the Consortium as they are being developed;

(iii) A Participating State must participate in pilot and field testing of the assessment systems and tools developed by the Consortium, in accordance with the Consortium's work plan; and

(iv) A Participating State is not eligible to receive reimbursement for the costs it may incur to participate in certain activities of the Consortium.

4. Proposed Project Management Partner:

Consistent with the requirements of ED's Notice, the PARCC Governing States are conducting a competitive procurement to select the consortium Project Management Partner. The PARCC Governing Board will direct and oversee the work of the organization selected to be the Project Management Partner.

B. Recommitment to the Consortium

In the event that that the governor or chief state school officer is replaced in a Consortium state, the successor in that office shall affirm in writing to the Governing Board Chair the State's continued commitment to participation in the Consortium and to the binding commitments made by that official's predecessor within five (5) months of taking office.

C. Application Process For New Members

1. A State that wishes to join the Consortium after submission of the grant application may apply for membership in the Consortium at any time, provided that the State meets the prevailing eligibility requirements associated with its desired membership classification in the Consortium. The state's Governor, Chief State School Officer, and President of the State Board of Education (if applicable) must sign a MOU with all of the commitments contained herein, and the appropriate state higher education leaders must sign a letter making the same commitments as those made by higher education leaders in the states that have signed this MOU.

2. A State that joins the Consortium after the grant application is submitted to the Department of Education is not authorized to re-open settled issues, nor may it participate in the review of proposals for Requests for Proposals that have already been issued.

D. Membership Opt-Out Process

At any time, a State may withdraw from the Consortium by providing written notice to the chair of the Governing Board, signed by the individuals holding the same positions that signed the MOU, at least ten (10) days prior to the effective date of the withdrawal, including an explanation of reasons for the withdrawal.

VIII. Consortium Governance

This section of the MOU details the process by which the Consortium shall conduct its business.

A. Governing Board

1. The Governing Board shall be comprised of the chief state school officer or designee from each Governing State;

2. The Governing Board shall make decisions regarding major policy, design, operational and organizational aspects of the Consortium's work, including:

   a. Overall design of the assessment system;

   b. Common achievement levels;

   c. Consortium procurement strategy;

   d. Modifications to governance structure and decision-making process;

   e. Policies and decisions regarding control and ownership of intellectual property developed or acquired by the Consortium (including without limitation, test specifications and blue prints, test forms, item banks, psychometric information, and other measurement theories/practices), provided that such policies and decisions:

      (i) will provide equivalent rights to such intellectual property to all states participating in the Consortium, regardless of membership type;

      (ii) will preserve the Consortium's flexibility to acquire intellectual property to the assessment systems as the Consortium may deem necessary and consistent with "best value" procurement principles, and with due regard for the Notice requirements regarding broad availability of such intellectual property except as otherwise protected by law or agreement as proprietary information.

3. The Governing Board shall form Design, Advisory and other committees, groups and teams ("committees") as it deems necessary and appropriate to carry out the Consortium's work, including those identified in the PARCC grant application.

   a. The Governing Board will define the charter for each committee, to include objectives, timeline, and anticipated work product, and will specify which design and policy decisions (if any) may be made by the committee and which must be elevated to the Governing Board for decision;

   b. When a committee is being formed, the Governing Board shall seek nominations for members from all states in the Consortium;

   c. Design Committees that were formed during the proposal development stage shall continue with their initial membership, though additional members may be added at the discretion of the Governing Board;

   d. In forming committees, the Governing Board will seek to maximize involvement across the Consortium, while keeping groups to manageable sizes in light of time and budget constraints;

   e. Committees shall share drafts of their work products, when appropriate, with all PARCC states for review and feedback; and

   f. Committees shall make decisions by consensus; but where consensus does not exist the committee shall provide the options developed to the Governing Board for decision (except as the charter for a committee may otherwise provide).

4. The Governing Board shall be chaired by a chief state school officer from one Governing State.

   a. The Governing Board Chair shall serve a one-year term, which may be renewed.

   b. The Governing States shall nominate candidates to serve as the Governing Board Chair, and the Governing Board Chair shall be selected by majority vote.

   c. The Governing Board Chair shall have the following responsibilities:

      (i) To provide leadership to the Governing Board to ensure that it operates in an efficient, effective, and

orderly manner. The tasks related to these responsibilities include:

(a) Ensure that the appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the effective management of the Governing Board and the Consortium;

(b) Assist in managing the affairs of the Governing Board, including chairing meetings of the Governing Board and ensure that each meeting has a set agenda, is planned effectively and is conducted according to the Consortium's policies and procedures and addresses the matters identified on the meeting agenda;

(c) Represent the Governing Board, and act as a spokesperson for the Governing Board if and when necessary;

(d) Ensure that the Governing Board is managed effectively by, among other actions, supervising the Project Management Partner; and

(e) Serve as in a leadership capacity by encouraging the work of the Consortium, and assist in resolving any conflicts.

5. The Consortium shall adhere to the timeline provided in the grant application for making major decisions regarding the Consortium's work plan.

   a. The timeline shall be updated and distributed by the Project Management Partner to all Consortium states on a quarterly basis.

6. Participating States may provide input for Governing Board decisions, as described below.

7. Governing Board decisions shall be made by consensus; where consensus is not achieved among Governing States, decisions shall be made by a vote of the Governing States. Each State has one vote. Votes of a supermajority of the Governing States are necessary for a decision to be reached.

   a. The supermajority of the Governing States is currently defined as a majority of Governing States plus one additional State;

   b. The Governing Board shall, from time to time as necessary, including as milestones are reached and additional States become

Governing States, evaluate the need to revise the votes that are required to reach a decision, and may revise the definition of supermajority, as appropriate. The Governing Board shall make the decision to revise the definition of supermajority by consensus, or if consensus is not achieved, by a vote of the supermajority as currently defined at the time of the vote.

8. The Governing Board shall meet quarterly to consider issues identified by the Board Chair, including but not limited to major policy decisions of the Consortium.

B. Design Committees

1. One or more Design Committees will be formed by the Governing Board to develop plans for key areas of Consortium work, such as recommending the assessment system design and development process, to oversee the assessment development work performed by one or more vendors, to recommend achievement levels and other assessment policies, and address other issues as needed. These committees will be comprised of state assessment directors and other key representatives from Governing States and Participating States.

2. Design Committees shall provide recommendations to the Governing Board regarding major decisions on issues such as those identified above, or as otherwise established in their charters.

   a. Recommendations are made on a consensus basis, with input from the Participating States.

   b. Where consensus is not achieved by a Design Committee, the Committee shall provide alternative recommendations to the Governing Board, and describe the strengths and weaknesses of each recommendation.

   c. Design Committees, with support from the Project Management Partner, shall make and keep records of decisions on behalf of the Consortium regarding assessment policies, operational matters and other aspects of the Consortium's work if a Design Committee's charter authorizes it to make decisions without input from or involvement of the Governing Board.

   d. Decisions reserved to Design Committees by their charters shall be made by consensus; but where consensus is not achieved decisions shall be made by a vote of Governing States on each Design Committee. Each Governing State on the committee has one vote. Votes of a majority of the Governing States on a Design Committee, plus one, are necessary for a decision to be reached.

3. The selection of successful bidders in response to RFPs issued on behalf of the Consortium shall be made in accordance with the procurement laws and regulations of the State that issues the RFP, as described more fully in Addendum 3 of this MOU.

   a. To the extent permitted by the procurement laws and regulations of the issuing State, appropriate staff of the Design Committees who were involved in the development of the RFP shall review the proposals, shall provide feedback to the issuing State on the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal, and shall identify the proposal believed to represent the best value for the Consortium members, including the rationale for this conclusion.

C. General Assembly of All Consortium States

1. There shall be two convenings of all Consortium states per year, for the purpose of reviewing the progress of the Consortium's work, discussing and providing input into upcoming decisions of the Governing Board and Design Committees, and addressing other issues of concern to the Consortium states.

   a. A leadership team (comprised of chief state school officers, and other officials from the state education agency, state board of education, governor's office, higher education leaders and others as appropriate) from each state shall be invited to participate in one annual meeting.

   b. Chief state school officers or their designees only shall be invited to the second annual convening.

2. In addition to the two annual convenings, Participating States shall also have the opportunity to provide input and advice to the Governing Board and to the Design Committees through a variety of means, including:

   a. Participation in conference calls and/or webinars;

   b. Written responses to draft documents; and

   c. Participation in Google groups that allow for quick response to documents under development.

IX. Benefits of Participation

Participation in the Consortium offers a number of benefits. For example, member States will have opportunities for:

A. Possible coordinated cooperative purchase discounts;

B. Possible discount software license agreements;

C. Access to a cooperative environment and knowledge-base to facilitate information-sharing for educational, administrative, planning, policy and decision-making purposes;

D. Shared expertise that can stimulate the development of higher quality assessments in an efficient and cost-effective manner;

E. Cooperation in the development of improved instructional materials, professional development and teacher preparation programs aligned to the States' standards and assessments; and

F. Obtaining comparable data that will enable policymakers and teachers to compare educational outcomes and to identify effective instructional practices and strategies.

X. Binding Commitments and Assurances

A. Binding Assurances Common To All States – Participating and Governing

Each State that joins the Consortium, whether as a Participating State or a Governing State, hereby certifies and represents that it:

1. Has all requisite power and authority necessary to execute this MOU;

2. Is familiar with the Consortium's Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant application under the ED's Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program and is supportive of and will work to implement the Consortium's plan, as defined by the Consortium and consistent with Addendum 1 (Notice);

3. Will cooperate fully with the Consortium and will carry out all of the responsibilities associated with its selected membership classification;

4. Will, as a condition of continued membership in the Consortium, adopt a common set of college- and career-ready standards no later than December 31, 2011, and common achievement standards no later than the 2014-2015 school year;

5. Will, as a condition of continued membership in the Consortium, ensure that the summative components of the assessment system (in both mathematics and English language arts) will be fully implemented statewide no later than the 2014-2015 school year, subject to the availability of funds;

6. Will conduct periodic reviews of its State laws, regulations and policies to identify any barriers to implementing the proposed assessment system and

address any such barriers prior to full implementation of the summative assessment components of the system:

a. The State will take the necessary steps to accomplish implementation as described in Addendum 2 of this MOU.

7. Will use the Consortium-developed assessment systems to meet the assessment requirements in Title I of the ESEA;

8. Will actively promote collaboration and alignment between the State and its public elementary and secondary education systems and their public Institutions of Higher Education ("IHE") or systems of IHEs. The State will endeavor to:

a. Maintain the commitments from participating public IHEs or IHE systems to participate in the design and development of the Consortium's high school summative assessments;

b. Obtain commitments from additional public IHEs or IHE systems to participate in the design and development of the Consortium's high school summative assessments;

c. Involve participating public IHEs or IHE systems in the Consortium's research-based process to establish common achievement standards on the new assessments that signal students' preparation for entry level, credit-bearing coursework; and

d. Obtain commitments from public IHEs or IHE systems to use the assessment in all partnership states' postsecondary institutions, along with any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system, as an indicator of students' readiness for placement in non-remedial, credit-bearing college-level coursework.

9. Will provide the required assurances regarding accountability, transparency, reporting, procurement and other assurances and certifications; and

10. Consents to be bound by every statement and assurance in the grant application.

B. Additional Binding Assurances By Governing States

In addition to the assurances and commitments required of all States in the Consortium, a Governing State is bound by the following additional assurances and commitments:

1. Provide personnel to the Consortium in sufficient number and qualifications and for sufficient time to support the activities of the Consortium as described in Section VII (A)(1)(a)(iv) of this MOU.

XI. Financial Arrangements

This MOU does not constitute a financial commitment on the part of the Parties. Any financial arrangements associated with the Consortium will be covered by separate project agreements between the Consortium members and other entities, and subject to ordinary budgetary and administrative procedures. It is understood that the ability of the Parties to carry out their obligations is subject to the availability of funds and personnel through their respective funding procedures.

XII. Personal Property

Title to any personal property, such as computers, computer equipment, office supplies, and office equipment furnished by a State to the Consortium under this MOU shall remain with the State furnishing the same. All parties agree to exercise due care in handling such property. However, each party agrees to be responsible for any damage to its property which occurs in the performance of its duties under this MOU, and to waive any claim against the other party for such damage, whether arising through negligence or otherwise.

XIII. Liability and Risk of Loss

A. To the extent permitted by law, with regard to activities undertaken pursuant to this MOU, none of the parties to this MOU shall make any claim against one another or their respective instrumentalities, agents or employees for any injury to or death of its own employees, or for damage to or loss of its own property, whether such injury, death, damage or loss arises through negligence or otherwise.

B. To the extent permitted by law, if a risk of damage or loss is not dealt with expressly in this MOU, such party's liability to another party, whether or not arising as the result of alleged breach of the MOU, shall be limited to direct damages only and shall not include loss of revenue or profits or other indirect or consequential damages.

XIV. Resolution of Conflicts

Conflicts which may arise regarding the interpretation of the clauses of this MOU will be resolved by the Governing Board, and that decision will be considered final and not subject to further appeal or to review by any outside court or other tribunal.

XV. Modifications

The content of this MOU may be reviewed periodically or amended at any time as agreed upon by vote of the Governing Board.

XVI. Duration, Renewal, Termination

A. This MOU will take effect upon execution of this MOU by at least five States as "Governing States" and will have a duration through calendar year 2015, unless otherwise extended by agreement of the Governing Board.

B. This MOU may be terminated by decision of the Governing Board, or by withdrawal or termination of a sufficient number of Governing States so that there are fewer than five Governing States.

C. Any member State of the Consortium may be involuntarily terminated by the Governing Board as a member for breach of any term of this MOU, or for breach of any term or condition that may be imposed by the Department of Education, the Consortium Governing Board, or of any applicable bylaws or regulations.

XVII. Points of Contact

Communications with the State regarding this MOU should be directed to:

Name: Jeffrey B. Hauger

Mailing Address: PO Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500

Telephone: (609) 984-7761

Fax: (609) 633-3707

E-mail: jeffrey.hauger@doe.state.nj.us

Or hereafter to such other individual as may be designated by the State in writing transmitted to the Chair of the Governing Board and/or to the PARCC Project Management Partner.

XVIII. Signatures and Intent To Join in the Consortium

The State of New Jersey hereby joins the Consortium as a Governing State, and agrees to be bound by all of the assurances and commitments associated with the Governing State membership classification. Further, the State of New Jersey agrees to perform the duties and carry out the responsibilities associated with the Governinig State membership classification.

Signatures required:

- Each State's Governor;
- Each State's chief school officer; and
- If applicable, the president of the State board of education.

STATE SIGNATURE BLOCK

[redacted]	
Signature of the Governor:	
Printed Name: Chris Christie	Date: 4/5/11
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:	
Printed Name: CHRISTOPHER M. CERF	Date: 3/23/11
Signature of the State Board of Education President (if applicable):	
Printed Name: Arcelio Aponte	Date: 4/1/11

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF
Acting Commissioner

April 5, 2011

TO: The Honorable Chris Christie
Governor

FROM: Christopher D. Cerf [redacted]
Acting Commissioner

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

New Jersey's transition to the Common Core State Standards over the next few years will be supported by a related transition to a next-generation assessments system. By selecting an assessment system now, New Jersey educators can contribute more substantially to the critical decisions in the development of the system and will have more time to create focused curriculum and instructional plans based on the assessment specifications. Following careful review of both next-generation systems, the New Jersey Department of Education has decided to become a Governing state in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC). The other Governing states in PARCC are Arizona, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida. Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts. New York, Rhode Island and Tennessee.

There is no cost to the state in making this decision. In fact, the state will receive a small amount of money for costs associated with time working on the assessment consortium.

In order for New Jersey to become a Governing state in PARCC, your signature is required. Attached is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Please contact me if you have any questions.

CDC/ltr:parcc
Attachment
c: Arcelio Aponte
Rochelle Hendricks
Andrew R. Smarick
Dave Corso
Jeffrey B. Hauger

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF
Acting Commissioner

March 30, 2011

Dr. Joe Willhoft, Executive Director
Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, Washington 98504-7200

Dear Dr. Willhoft:

From the beginning, New Jersey has been a participating state in Smarter Balance and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). New Jersey has been impressed with Smarter Balance's organization, thoughtfully developed assessment system, and interactions amongst states and WestEd. New Jersey has been equally impressed with PARCC. With all of the work currently been conducted in both consortia, New Jersey has a desire to have a more influential voice on the many important decisions yet to be made. In order to do that, New Jersey must commit to one assessment consortium and become a Governing state.

New Jersey has decided to become a Governing state in PARCC. This was a difficult decision but ultimately the best decision for New Jersey. As such, it is with the utmost respect that New Jersey is opting out of Smarter Balance assessment consortium effective immediately.

Sincerely,

Christopher D. Cerf
Acting Commissioner

CDC/JBH/ltr:jwillhoft
c: Rochelle Hendricks
Andrew Smarick
Jeffrey B. Hauger

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent

September 16, 2011

Dear SEA Contacts:

We recently received a communication from the US Department of Education regarding our application for the Enhanced Assessment Grant (EAG) for the development of the *Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems* (ASSETS) project. Per their request, we need to make a change in the MOU that your state signed when you joined this group. The US ED is requesting that the agreement be between the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (as the fiscal agent applying for the funds) and the state education agencies instead of with the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System on behalf of the Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER), the home of the WIDA Consortium.

This change in wording is only for the purpose of the grant document. It does not change the scope of the work for the grant or the relationships of the states, WIDA, and other partners. The project still involves creating an innovative technology-based assessment system that is (a) anchored in WIDA's established English language proficiency (ELP) standards that are aligned with the Common core State Standards; (b) informed by rigorous ongoing research; and (c) supported by comprehensive professional development and outreach, all of which will be developed within the framework of a multistate consortium referred to as the *ASSETS Group*.

We hope that you can work with us to facilitate a quick return on soliciting the appropriate signatures for the revised MOU. For your convenience, I have also attached a copy of the original MOU signed by your state. Please mail the new signed MOU to me at the address below by October 7 (earlier is better).

If you have any questions regarding this change, please feel free to contact me or Tim Boals tboals@wisc.edu.

Respectfully,

[redacted]

Phil Olsen, Assistant Director, Office of Educational Accountability
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
125 S. Webster Street
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
(608) 266-8779
philip.olsen@dpi.wi.gov

Attachments: Current signed MOU (copy)
New MOU (to be signed and returned)

Memorandum of Understanding

This memorandum of understanding ("MOU") is between the New Jersey Department of Education ("SEA") and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction ("DPI"); collectively the "Parties."

DPI and a consortium of state departments of education, including SEA, desire to work as a group (the 'ASSETS Group") using U.S. Department of Education ("ED") Enhanced Assessment Instrument Grant ("EAG") funding to be awarded under the EAG funding opportunity announced in the Federal Register, Vol. 76, No. 75, dated Tuesday April 19, 2011, at pages 21977 to 21984 (the "Project"). The purpose of the Project, among other objectives is to develop the next generation of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment ("WIDA") Consortium's ACCESS for ELLs English language proficiency test (the "Test") to ensure that the Test and WIDA's standards and assessment system correspond to a common set of college- and career-ready standards* in English language arts and mathematics (*as defined by the Project announcement).

The Parties therefore agree as follows:

1. The term of this MOU shall begin on the effective date of this MOU (as stated below) and end on the termination date of the Project.
2. SEA acknowledges that DPI is the designated ASSETS Group member that will apply for the Project funding.
3. SEA is joining the ASSETS Group solely for the purposes described in this MOU.
4. SEA hereby assures that it will adopt or utilize any instrument or assessments developed under the Project by a time no later than the end of the Project term.
5. SEA acknowledges that the Test is being developed on behalf of the WIDA Consortium and that it shall enter a separate WIDA Consortium MOU for the operational administration of any assessments or assessment-related instruments developed under the Project.
6. SEA shall comply with all EAG program requirements issued by ED.
7. In accordance with 34 C.F.R. 75.128, SEA, by entering this MOU, is bound by the terms, conditions, and statements made in the Project application.
8. The ASSETS Group members shall make the operational and policy decisions necessary to fulfill the Project and EAG program requirements according to the Project narrative.
9. The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, on behalf of the WIDA Consortium (the "Regents") has been selected by DPI to act as the Project management partner. The Regents will retain ownership of any assessments or assessment-related instruments developed under the Project within the terms of any EAG award and according to a subsequent agreement between the Regents and DPI. DPI shall include in said agreement with the Regents a provision to make any Project assessments or assessment-related instruments available to all ASSETS Group members and any other State Educational Agency according to the terms of any EAG award or EAG program requirements.

10. The Parties shall have the right to terminate this MOU without cause at any time during the term by giving notice in writing to the non-terminating party. However, SEA will not be able to remain in the ASSETS Group if SEA does not agree to adopt or use any instrument, including to the extent applicable, assessments developed under the Project by a time no later than the end of the Project term.
11. The Parties shall comply with all federal and state laws.

This MOU will become effective once SEA and DPI both sign it. The date of this MOU shall be the date on which it is signed by the last party to sign it.

For SEA

Name
Title
New Jersey Department of Education

9/23/11
Date

For DPI

Suzanne Linton
Director of Management Services

Date

Memorandum of Understanding

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) is between the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, on behalf of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER).

WCER is the organizational home of the WIDA Consortium, a multi-state consortium of state departments of education that acts in collaboration to research, design and implement a standards-based educational system that promotes equitable educational opportunities for English learners (ELs) in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve.

NJDOE, through a separate agreement with WCER, is an existing member of the WIDA Consortium.

WCER and the WIDA Consortium, including NJDOE, desire to work collaboratively using U.S. Department of Education ("ED") Enhanced Assessment Instrument Grant ("EAG") funding to be awarded under the EAG funding opportunity announced in the Federal Register / Vol. 76, No. 75 / Tuesday April 19, 2011 / 21977 to 21984 (the "Project"). The purpose of the Project, among other objectives is to develop the next generation of the ACCESS for ELLs® English language proficiency test to ensure that the ACCESS for ELLs® and WIDA's standards and assessment system correspond to a common set of college- and career-ready standards* in English language arts and mathematics (*as defined by the Project announcement).

NJDOE wishes to enter this MOU with WCER to provide an assurance that it will adopt or utilize any instrument or assessments developed under the Project by a time no later than the end of the Project period.

The Parties therefore agree as follows:

1. The term set forth within this MOU is hereby in effect from the effective date of this MOU through the end of Project period.
2. The parties will enter a separate MOU for the operational administration of any assessments or assessment related instruments developed under the Project.
3. NJDOE acknowledges that the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (the "Project Applicant") is the designated WIDA Consortium member that will apply for the Project funding.
4. WCER shall not, and hereby certifies that it will not, partner with any other eligible applicants applying for an award under the same competition.
5. This MOU does not supersede any existing agreements between the parties.
6. NJDOE hereby assures that it will adopt or utilize any instrument or assessments developed under the Project by a time no later than the end of the Project period. NJDOE shall enter a separate WIDA Consortium MOU for the operational administration of any assessments or assessment related instruments developed under the Project, whereby, the NJDOE shall adopt the Project assessments or assessment related instruments.

7. NJDOE hereby assures that it will comply with all Project program requirements issued by ED.
8. In accordance with 34 C.F.R. 75.128, NJDOE, by entering this MOU, is bound to every statement and assurance made by the Project Applicant in the Project application.
9. The parties shall amend their existing data use agreement to include research activities for prospective linking, validity and EAG program improvement studies based on student-level data that results from the use of any assessments or assessment related instruments developed under the Project.
10. The parties shall have the right to terminate this MOU without cause at any time during the term by giving sixty (60) days notice in writing. Termination of this MOU will not affect NJDOE's current agreement with WCER. However, NJDOE will not be able to remain in the WIDA Consortium at the end of the Project period if it does not adopt or use any instrument, including to the extent applicable, assessments developed under the Project.
11. WIDA Consortium members shall make the operational and policy decisions necessary to fulfill the Project and EAG program requirements according to the Project narrative.
12. WCER shall comply with all federal and state laws.

This memorandum of understanding will become effective once NJDOE and WCER both sign it. The date of this memorandum of understanding shall be the date on which it is signed by the last party to sign it.

For NJDOE

Elizanne Deale — 5/4/11

Name — Date
Title
New Jersey Department of Education

For WCER

[redacted] — 5/17/2011

~~Don Miner~~ M Ketterhagen
~~Assistant Vice Chancellor~~ Director, Purchasing Services — Date
University of Wisconsin-Madison

[redacted] — 5/13/2011

Tim Boals, Ph.D. — Date
Executive Director - WIDA Consortium
Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER)

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

BRET SCHUNDLER
Commissioner

July 16, 2010

Neal Kingston, Ph.D.
Center for Educationa Testing and Evaluation
Joseph R. Pearson Hall
1122 W. Campus Rd., Room 735
Lawrence, KS 66045

Dear Dr. Kingston:

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has a strong interest in being a member of the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System consortium, in application for the IDEA General Supervision Enhancement Grant - Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (CFDA 84.373.X). Staff members from the NJDOE Office of Student Learning Assessments and Office of Special Education Services and Schools have been actively involved in the preparation and review of this proposal. We therefore offer our support for the funding of this application.

This project will provide New Jersey educators with opportunities to further align instruction and assessment of students with significant disabilities with the academic content standards designed for all students in the state. The project will also give a voice to our teachers and curriculum experts in designing assessment tasks that are both meaningful and accessible to our students. It is our hope that participation in the application of dynamic learning maps to our alternate assessment will enable further refinement of our assessment system.

Additionally, we are excited to partner with the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (CETE) at the University of Kansas on this project. The CETE offers strong management, superb professionalism, excellent technical abilities, and thorough understanding of the needs of educators and learners. The CETE's proven ability to initiate and complete projects of this magnitude gives us complete confidence that the project's goals will be met.

Further, we commit to actively participating in the governance of this grant in order to ensure the results meet our needs for a high-quality alternate assessment system tied to the common core standards.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Barbara Gantwerk, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Student Services

BG/RW/pm
c: Roberta Wohle
Peggy McDonald

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF
Acting Commissioner

FAX TRANSMISSION COVER MEMO

DATE: 9/28/11

TO: Lorraine Rogers (ADDRESSEE) 633-3707 (FAX NUMBER)

(COMPANY/ORGANIZATION)

FROM: Peggy McDonald / Denise Williams (AUTHOR) (609) 984-8422 (FAX NUMBER)

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

609 / 633-6833
(AUTHOR'S TELEPHONE NUMBER)

SUBJECT: letters to Neal Kingston CETE for Jeff Haugher

THE DOCUMENT THAT FOLLOWS IS BEING TRANSMITTED THROUGH FACSIMILE BY THE NJ STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

THIS DOCUMENT CONSISTS OF 2 PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER MEMORANDUM.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, IF THE TRANSMISSION IS INCOMPLETE, OR IF IT IS NOT LEGIBLE, PLEASE CALL OUR MAIN PHONE NUMBER: (609) 633-6833.

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New Jersey Department of Education - Table 2 - List of Priority, Focus and Reward Schools

Counts	County	District	School	NCES ID#	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL	REWARD SCHOOL	TITLE I SCHOOL?
1	Camden	Camden City	Bonsall	340264001356	C			Yes
2	Camden	Camden City	Catto Demonstration Sch	340264000793	C			Yes
3	Camden	Camden City	Coopers Poynt	340264001364	C			Yes
4	Camden	Camden City	Davis Elem	340264001368	C			Yes
5	Camden	Camden City	Dudley Es	340264003065	C			Yes
6	Camden	Camden City	East Camden Middle	340264001350	C			Yes
7	Camden	Camden City	Forest Hill	340264001374	C			Yes
8	Camden	Camden City	Hatch Middle	340264001376	C			Yes
9	Camden	Camden City	Lanning Square	340264001378	C			Yes
10	Camden	Camden City	Mcgraw	340264001380	C			Yes
11	Camden	Camden City	Morgan Village Middle	340264001384	C			Yes
12	Camden	Camden City	Pyne Poynt Family School	340264001352	C			Yes
13	Camden	Camden City	R C Molina Elem School	340264001386	C			Yes
14	Camden	Camden City	Riletta Cream Elem School	340264006084	C			Yes
15	Camden	Camden City	Sumner	340264001398	C			Yes
16	Camden	Camden City	Veterans Memorial Middle	340264001354	C			Yes
17	Camden	Camden City	Whittier	340264001404	C			Yes
18	Camden	Camden City	Wilson	340264001406	C			Yes
19	Camden	Camden City	Yorkship	340264001408	C			Yes
20	Charter	Freedom Academy Charter School	Freedom Academy Cs	340008000566	C			Yes
21	Charter	Paul Robeson Charter School For T	Paul Robeson Charter School For The	340072303015	C			Yes
22	Charter	Schomburg Charter School	Schomburg Cs	340006700495	C			Yes
23	Cumberland	Millville	R D Wood	341032001884	C			Yes
24	Essex	East Orange	Patrick F Healy Middle	340423005931	C			Yes
25	Essex	Irvington Township	University Middle School	340768002120	C			Yes
26	Essex	Newark	Belmont Runyon	341134002234	C			Yes
27	Essex	Newark	Camden St	341134002252	C			Yes
28	Essex	Newark	George Washington Carver	341134005912	C			Yes
29	Essex	Newark	Hawthorne Ave	341134002288	C			Yes
30	Essex	Newark	Louise A Spencer	341134002304	C			Yes
31	Essex	Newark	Martin Luther King Jr	341134002316	C			Yes
32	Essex	Newark	Peshine Ave	341134002332	C			Yes
33	Essex	Newark	Quitman Community School	341134002334	C			Yes
34	Essex	Newark	Thirteenth Ave	341134002364	C			Yes
35	Hudson	Jersey City	Ezra L Nolan 40	340783002836	C			Yes
36	Hudson	Jersey City	Whitney M Young	340783002798	C			Yes
37	Mercer	Trenton	Cadwalader	341629003214	C			Yes
38	Mercer	Trenton	Columbus	341629003216	C			Yes
39	Mercer	Trenton	Grace A Dunn Middle Sch	341629003210	C			Yes
40	Mercer	Trenton	Grant	341629003220	C			Yes
41	Mercer	Trenton	Gregory	341629003222	C			Yes
42	Mercer	Trenton	Joyce Kilmer	341629003228	C			Yes
43	Mercer	Trenton	Monument	341629003232	C			Yes

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Counts	County	District	School	NCES ID#	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL	REWARD SCHOOL	TITLE I SCHOOL?
44	Mercer	Trenton	P J Hill	341629003236	C			Yes
45	Mercer	Trenton	Stokes	341629003244	C			No
46	Middlesex	New Brunswick	New Brunswick Middle	341122002936	C			Yes
47	Monmouth	Asbury Park	Asbury Park Middle School	340093003742	C			Yes
48	Passaic	Paterson	Number 13	341269004898	C			Yes
49	Passaic	Paterson	Number 15	341269004902	C			Yes
50	Passaic	Paterson	Number 28	341269004924	C			Yes
51	Passaic	Paterson	Number 6 Acad Of Perform Arts	341269004884	C			Yes
52	Union	Plainfield	Charles H Stillman	341314005626	C			Yes
53	Union	Plainfield	Hubbard	341314005606	C			Yes
54	Camden	Camden City	Woodrow Wilson High	340264001348	D			Yes
55	Cumberland	Vineland City	Cunningham	341680001914	D			No
56	Camden	Camden City	Camden High	340264001346	E			Yes
57	Camden	Camden City	Cramer	340264001366	E			Yes
58	Camden	Camden City	U S Wiggins	340264001400	E			Yes
59	Essex	East Orange	Cicely Tyson Sch Per Arts (Ms/Hs)	340423002064	E			Yes
60	Essex	Essex County Vocational S	Essex Cty Voc West Caldw	340480002080	E			Yes
61	Essex	Newark	Avon Ave	341134002232	E			Yes
62	Essex	Newark	Barringer	341134002190	E			Yes
63	Essex	Newark	Central	341134002192	E			Yes
64	Essex	Newark	Dayton St	341134002266	E			Yes
65	Essex	Newark	Malcolm X Shabazz High	341134002198	E			Yes
66	Essex	Newark	Newark Vocational H S	341134002196	E			Yes
67	Essex	Newark	West Side High	341134002208	E			Yes
68	Hudson	Jersey City	Fred W Martin No 41	340783002838	E			Yes
69	Hudson	Jersey City	Henry Snyder	340783002772	E			Yes
70	Hudson	Jersey City	Lincoln	340783002776	E			Yes
71	Ocean	Lakewood Township	Lakewood High	340822004636	E			Yes
72	Passaic	Paterson	Dr F Napier Jr School Of Tech	341269004880	E			Yes
73	Passaic	Paterson	Number 10	341269004892	E			Yes
74	Union	Roselle Borough	Abraham Clark High	341428005650	E			Yes
1	Atlantic	Buena Regional	Buena Regional High	340240000044		F		No
2	Atlantic	Egg Harbor Township	Alder Ave Middle Sch	340456002953		F		No
3	Atlantic	Egg Harbor Township	Egg Harbor Twp H S	340456005961		F		No
4	Atlantic	Hammonton Town	Hammonton High	340657000136		F		Yes
5	Bergen	Bogota	Bogota Jr Sr High Sch	340192000284		F		No
6	Bergen	Cliffside Park	Number 6	340327000312		F		No
7	Bergen	Hackensack	Hackensack High	340627000496		F		No
8	Bergen	Hillsdale	George G White	340726000526		F		No
9	Bergen	New Milford	David E Owens M S	341128000632		F		Yes
10	Bergen	Paramus	East Brook Middle	341242000692		F		No
11	Bergen	Rochelle Park	Midland No 1	341407000804		F		Yes

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Counts	County	District	School	NCES ID#	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL	REWARD SCHOOL	TITLE I SCHOOL?
12	Burlington	Maple Shade Township	Maple Shade High	340966001104		F		No
13	Burlington	Palmyra Borough	Palmyra High	341239001188		F		Yes
14	Camden	Collingswood Borough	Collingswood Sr High	340342001474		F		No
15	Camden	Stratford Borough	Samuel S Yellin	341587001670		F		Yes
16	Essex	Montclair	Glenfield Middle	341056002172		F		No
17	Essex	Newark	Mt Vernon	341134002326		F		Yes
18	Essex	Newark	Wilson Ave	341134002368		F		Yes
19	Gloucester	Deptford Township	Monongahela Middle School	340390002514		F		Yes
20	Gloucester	Harrison Township	Pleasant Valley School	340690000441		F		Yes
21	Gloucester	Kingsway Regional High	Kingsway Reg Middle	340798000093		F		No
22	Gloucester	Logan Township	Logan Elem School	340888002582		F		Yes
23	Gloucester	Washington Township	Bunker Hill Middle Sch	341707000185		F		No
24	Gloucester	West Deptford Township	West Deptford Middle	341743002676		F		Yes
25	Hudson	Jersey City	James J Ferris	340783002774		F		Yes
26	Hudson	Jersey City	Jotham W Wakeman 6	340783002848		F		Yes
27	Hudson	Jersey City	Nicolas Copernicus Num 25	340783002810		F		Yes
28	Hudson	Kearny	Franklin	340789002868		F		Yes
29	Hudson	West New York	Number 4	341758002946		F		Yes
30	Hudson	West New York	Number 5	341758002948		F		Yes
31	Hudson	West New York	West New York Ms	341758000547		F		No
32	Mercer	West Windsor-Plainsboro R	Millstone River School	341770006077		F		Yes
33	Middlesex	East Brunswick Township	Churchill Jr	340411003296		F		No
34	Middlesex	East Brunswick Township	Hammarskjold Middle	340411003298		F		No
35	Middlesex	Edison Township	John Adams Middle	340450003328		F		No
36	Middlesex	Highland Park	Highland Park Middle Sch	340717006118		F		Yes
37	Middlesex	Metuchen	Edgar	340999003396		F		No
38	Middlesex	Old Bridge Township	Old Bridge High	340927003496		F		No
39	Middlesex	Perth Amboy	Perth Amboy High	341293003530		F		Yes
40	Middlesex	South Brunswick Township	Crossroads North	341521000196		F		No
41	Middlesex	South Brunswick Township	Crossroads South	341521003618		F		No
42	Monmouth	Howell Township	Howell Twp M S South	340756000331		F		No
43	Monmouth	Manalapan-Englishtown Reg	Pine Brook	340939003932		F		No
44	Monmouth	Middletown Township	Bayshore Middle School	341011003980		F		Yes
45	Monmouth	Neptune City	Woodrow Wilson	341113004028		F		Yes
46	Monmouth	Ocean Township	Ocean Twp Intermediate	341206004060		F		Yes
47	Monmouth	Wall Township	Intermediate	341689004140		F		No
48	Morris	Randolph Township	Randolph Middle	341365004494		F		Yes
49	Ocean	Barnegat Township	Russell O Brackman M S	341647006074		F		Yes
50	Ocean	Plumsted Township	New Egypt Middle Sch	341323000167		F		Yes
51	Ocean	Toms River Regional	Toms River Intermediate S	341623000555		F		Yes
52	Passaic	Clifton	Christopher Columbus Mid	340330004764		F		Yes
53	Passaic	Paterson	Number 9	341269004890		F		Yes
54	Passaic	Wayne Township	Anthony Wayne Middle Sch	341728000558		F		No

New Jersey Department of Education - Table 2 - List of Priority, Focus and Reward Schools

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55	Salem	Alloway Township	Alloway Twp School	340081005028		F		Yes
56	Salem	Pittsgrove Township	Pittsgrove Twp Middle Sch	341311006056		F		Yes
57	Salem	Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regi	Woodstown Middle School	341833005118		F		Yes
58	Somerset	North Plainfield Borough	North Plainfield H	341164005258		F		No
59	Sussex	Hopatcong Borough	Hopatcong High	340744005362		F		Yes
60	Union	Elizabeth	Elizabeth High	340459005478		F		Yes
61	Union	Westfield	Thomas Edison Inter	341776005768		F		No
62	Warren	North Warren Regional Sch	N Warren Reg High School	340955005844		F		Yes
63	Atlantic	Atlantic City	Dr M L King Jr Sch Comp	340096000032		G		Yes
64	Atlantic	Atlantic City	Sovereign Ave School	340096000012		G		Yes
65	Atlantic	Atlantic City	Texas Avenue	340096000018		G		Yes
66	Atlantic	Pleasantville	Pleasantville Middle Sch	341320000219		G		Yes
67	Burlington	Beverly City	Beverly School	340174000952		G		Yes
68	Camden	Winslow Township	Winslow Twp Middle School	341806000439		G		Yes
69	Cape May	Wildwood City	Glenwood Ave Elementary	341794001770		G		Yes
70	Cumberland	Bridgeton	Broad Street Elem Sch	340225001786		G		Yes
71	Cumberland	Bridgeton	Cherry Street	340225001790		G		Yes
72	Cumberland	Bridgeton	Indian Ave	340225001794		G		Yes
73	Cumberland	Fairfield Township	Fairfield Township School	340504000811		G		Yes
74	Cumberland	Millville	Bacon Elem	341032001872		G		Yes
75	Cumberland	Millville	Holly Heights	341032001878		G		Yes
76	Cumberland	Millville	Lakeside Middle School	341032000271		G		Yes
77	Cumberland	Millville	Silver Run School	341032000061		G		Yes
78	Cumberland	Upper Deerfield Township	Woodruff School	341653001898		G		Yes
79	Cumberland	Vineland City	Landis Intermediate Sch (Middle Sc	341680001906		G		Yes
80	Essex	City Of Orange Township	Main Street School	341227006117		G		Yes
81	Essex	City Of Orange Township	Orange Middle	341227002410		G		Yes
82	Essex	East Orange	John L Costley Middle	340423005930		G		Yes
83	Essex	Irvington Township	Union Ave	340768002122		G		Yes
84	Essex	Newark	Burnet St	341134002250		G		Yes
85	Essex	Newark	Dr E Alma Flagg	341134005976		G		Yes
86	Essex	Newark	Dr William H Horton	341134002280		G		Yes
87	Essex	Newark	Ivy Hill	341134002937		G		Yes
88	Essex	Newark	Mckinley	341134002318		G		Yes
89	Essex	Newark	Miller St	341134002320		G		Yes
90	Essex	Newark	Rafael Hernandez School	341134000091		G		Yes
91	Essex	Newark	South Seventeenth St	341134002354		G		Yes
92	Essex	Newark	Sussex Ave	341134002360		G		Yes
93	Hudson	Guttenberg	Anna L Klein	340624002734		G		Yes
94	Hudson	Hoboken	Thomas G Connors	340735000065		G		Yes
95	Hudson	Jersey City	Alexander D Sullivan 30	340783002830		G		Yes
96	Hudson	Jersey City	Julia A Barnes No 12	340783002794		G		Yes
97	Hudson	Jersey City	Number 23	340783002806		G		Yes

New Jersey Department of Education - Table 2 - List of Priority, Focus and Reward Schools

Counts	County	District	School	NCES ID#	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL	REWARD SCHOOL	TITLE I SCHOOL?
98	Hudson	Jersey City	Number 24	340783002808		G		Yes
99	Mercer	Trenton	Franklin	341629003218		G		Yes
100	Mercer	Trenton	Hedgepeth Williams Sch	341629003206		G		Yes
101	Mercer	Trenton	Mott	341629003234		G		Yes
102	Mercer	Trenton	Robbins	341629003242		G		Yes
103	Mercer	Trenton	Washington	341629003246		G		Yes
104	Middlesex	New Brunswick	A Chester Redshaw	341122003456		G		Yes
105	Middlesex	New Brunswick	Livingston	341122003462		G		Yes
106	Middlesex	New Brunswick	Lord Stirling	341122003464		G		Yes
107	Middlesex	New Brunswick	Roosevelt Elem	341122003472		G		Yes
108	Middlesex	Perth Amboy	Mc Ginnis Middle School	341293003542		G		Yes
109	Middlesex	Perth Amboy	Samuel E Shull Middle	341293003548		G		Yes
110	Monmouth	Keansburg Borough	Joseph R Bolger Mid Sch	340786000027		G		Yes
111	Monmouth	Red Bank	Red Bank Middle	341374004078		G		Yes
112	Ocean	Lakewood Township	Clifton Ave Grade Sch	340822004638		G		Yes
113	Ocean	Lakewood Township	Ella G Clarke Elem School	340822004640		G		Yes
114	Ocean	Lakewood Township	Lakewood Middle	340822004642		G		Yes
115	Passaic	Clifton	Number 12	340330004784		G		Yes
116	Passaic	Passaic City	Etta Gero No 9	341254004850		G		Yes
117	Passaic	Passaic City	Number 1 Thomas Jefferson	341254004838		G		Yes
118	Passaic	Passaic City	Number 11 Cruise Memorial	341254004854		G		Yes
119	Passaic	Passaic City	Number 3 Mario J Drago	341254004840		G		Yes
120	Passaic	Passaic City	Number 4 Lincoln	341254004842		G		Yes
121	Passaic	Passaic City	Number 5	341254000168		G		Yes
122	Passaic	Passaic City	Number 6 Martin L King	341254004844		G		Yes
123	Passaic	Paterson	Edward W Kilpatrick	341269004872		G		Yes
124	Passaic	Paterson	Martin Luther King	341269005916		G		Yes
125	Passaic	Paterson	New Roberto Clemente	341269003003		G		Yes
126	Passaic	Paterson	Number 11	341269004894		G		Yes
127	Passaic	Paterson	Number 12	341269004896		G		Yes
128	Passaic	Paterson	Number 18	341269004908		G		Yes
129	Passaic	Paterson	Number 2	341269004876		G		Yes
130	Passaic	Paterson	Number 20	341269004912		G		Yes
131	Passaic	Paterson	Number 21	341269004914		G		Yes
132	Passaic	Paterson	Number 24	341269004916		G		Yes
133	Passaic	Paterson	Number 25	341269004918		G		Yes
134	Passaic	Paterson	Number 26	341269004920		G		Yes
135	Passaic	Paterson	Number 3	341269004878		G		Yes
136	Passaic	Paterson	Number 5	341269004882		G		Yes
137	Passaic	Paterson	Number 8	341269004888		G		Yes
138	Salem	Salem City	Salem Middle	341455005094		G		Yes
139	Union	Elizabeth	No 1 G Washington	340459005492		G		Yes
140	Union	Elizabeth	No 14 A Lincoln	340459005508		G		Yes

New Jersey Department of Education - Table 2 - List of Priority, Focus and Reward Schools

Counts	County	District	School	NCES ID#	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL	REWARD SCHOOL	TITLE I SCHOOL?
141	Union	Elizabeth	No 23 N M Butler	340459005526		G		Yes
142	Union	Elizabeth	No 25 Charles Hudson	340459000207		G		Yes
143	Union	Elizabeth	No 28 Duarte Marti	340459002983		G		Yes
144	Union	Elizabeth	No 3 Peterstown (No 3 Lacorte Peter	340459005962		G		Yes
145	Union	Elizabeth	No 5 Mabel Holmes Middle	340459000071		G		Yes
146	Union	Elizabeth	No 6 Lafayette (No 6 Louvere De Laf	340459005498		G		Yes
147	Union	Elizabeth	No 75 Battin Middle Sch (No 4 John	340459005482		G		Yes
148	Union	Plainfield	Jefferson	341314005622		G		Yes
149	Union	Plainfield	Maxson	341314005608		G		Yes
150	Union	Plainfield	Washington	341314005628		G		Yes
151	Union	Roselle Borough	Leonard V Moore	341428005656		G		Yes
152	Warren	Phillipsburg	Phillipsburg Middle	341296005862		G		No
153	Atlantic	Atlantic City	Atlantic City High	340096000010		H		Yes
154	Atlantic	Pleasantville	Pleasantville H S	341320000192		H		Yes
155	Bergen	Midland Park Borough	Midland Park High	341014000608		H		Yes
156	Burlington	Willingboro Township	Willingboro High	341800001264		H		Yes
157	Charter	Emily Fisher Charter School	Emily Fisher Cs Of Adv Studie	340003700314		H		Yes
158	Cumberland	Bridgeton	Bridgeton High	340225001784		H		Yes
159	Essex	City Of Orange Township	Orange High	341227002396		H		Yes
160	Essex	East Orange	East Orange Campus Hs	340423000494		H		No
161	Essex	Irvington Township	Irvington High School	340768002104		H		Yes
162	Gloucester	Paulsboro	Paulsboro High	341272002608		H		Yes
163	Hudson	Jersey City	William L Dickinson	340783002780		H		Yes
164	Hudson	West New York	Memorial High	341758002938		H		No
165	Mercer	Trenton	Trenton Central High	341629003200		H		No
166	Mercer	Trenton	Trenton Central Hs West	341629003072		H		No
167	Middlesex	New Brunswick	New Brunswick High	341122003454		H		Yes
168	Monmouth	Asbury Park	Asbury Park High	340093003732		H		Yes
169	Passaic	Passaic City	Passaic High	341254004836		H		Yes
170	Salem	Penns Grove-Carneys Point	Penns Grove High	341284005048		H		Yes
171	Salem	Salem City	Salem High	341455005090		H		Yes
172	Sussex	Sussex County Vocational	Sussex Cty Tech High	341593005416		H		Yes
173	Sussex	Vernon Township	Vernon Twp High	341671005422		H		No
174	Union	Elizabeth	Adm W F Halsey Leadership Acad	340459003039		H		Yes
175	Union	Elizabeth	John E Dwyer Tech Academy	340459003071		H		Yes
176	Union	Elizabeth	T A Edison Career Tech Acad	340459003045		H		Yes
177	Union	Elizabeth	T Jefferson Arts Academy	340459003049		H		Yes
178	Union	Hillside Township	Hillside High	340729005540		H		No
179	Union	Plainfield	Plainfield High	341314005604		H		No
1	Atlantic	Atlantic County Vocationa	Atlantic Cty Inst Of Tech	340099000034			A	Yes
2	Bergen	Bergen County Vocational	Bergen Acads Hackensack	340147000250			A	No
3	Bergen	Bergen County Vocational	Technical Sch Teterboro	340147000262			A	No
4	Bergen	Cresskill	Cresskill Jr Sr High Sch	340360000324			A	No

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Counts	County	District	School	NCES ID#	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL	REWARD SCHOOL	TITLE I SCHOOL?
5	Bergen	Franklin Lakes	High Mountain Road	340537000460			A	No
6	Bergen	Hasbrouck Heights	Hasbrouck Heights High	340693000512			A	No
7	Bergen	Northern Highlands Region	Northern Highlands Reg H	341173000646			A	No
8	Bergen	Northern Valley Regional	N Valley Reg H Demarest	341176000650			A	Yes
9	Bergen	Northern Valley Regional	N Valley Reg H Old Tappan	341176000652			A	No
10	Bergen	Park Ridge	Park Ridge High	341245000710			A	No
11	Bergen	Pascack Valley Regional H	Pascack Hills High	341251000718			A	No
12	Bergen	Pascack Valley Regional H	Pascack Valley High	341251000720			A	Yes
13	Bergen	Ramapo Indian Hills Regio	Indian Hills High	341356000724			A	No
14	Bergen	Ramapo Indian Hills Regio	Ramapo High	341356000726			A	No
15	Bergen	Ramsey	Mary A Hubbard	341359000736			A	No
16	Bergen	Ramsey	Ramsey High	341359000730			A	No
17	Bergen	Ramsey	Wesley D Tisdale	341359000738			A	Yes
18	Bergen	Ridgefield Park	Grant	341380000756			A	Yes
19	Bergen	Ridgefield Park	Roosevelt	341380000760			A	No
20	Bergen	Ridgewood Village	Ridge	341383000774			A	No
21	Bergen	Ridgewood Village	Ridgewood High	341383000764			A	No
22	Bergen	Rutherford	Rutherford High	341446000810			A	No
23	Bergen	Tenafly	Malcolm S Mackay	341611000868			A	No
24	Bergen	Tenafly	Tenafly High	341611000864			A	No
25	Bergen	Tenafly	Walter Stillman	341611000874			A	No
26	Bergen	Waldwick	Waldwick High	341686000888			A	No
27	Camden	Cherry Hill Township	Cherry Hill High East	340300001418			A	No
28	Camden	Haddon Township	Haddon Twp High	340636001540			A	No
29	Camden	Haddonfield Borough	Haddonfield Memorial High	340639001554			A	No
30	Cape May	Cape May County Vocationa	Cape May Co Tech H S	340273001712			A	Yes
31	Charter	Classical Academy Charter	Classical Academy Cs Of Clifto	340005200351			A	Yes
32	Charter	Princeton Charter School	Princeton Cs	340004300323			A	No
33	Charter	Riverbank Charter School Of Excell	Riverbank Charter School Of Excelle	340073103022			A	Yes
34	Charter	Robert Treat Academy Charter Sch	Robert Treat Academy Cs	340002500291			A	Yes
35	Essex	Essex County Vocational S	Essex Cty Voc Bloomfield	340480002068			A	Yes
36	Essex	Essex County Vocational S	West Market Street Center	340480000137			A	Yes
37	Essex	Livingston Township	Livingston Sr High	340882002126			A	Yes
38	Essex	Millburn Township	Millburn Sr High	341020002148			A	No
39	Essex	Montclair	Watchung	341056002184			A	No
40	Essex	Newark	Science High	341134002200			A	Yes
41	Essex	Newark	Technology High	341134000139			A	Yes
42	Essex	Newark	University High	341134002202			A	Yes
43	Hudson	Hudson County Vocational	High Tech High School	340757002766			A	Yes
44	Hudson	Jersey City	Dr Ronald Mc Nair Acad Hs	340783002778			A	Yes
45	Hunterdon	Hunterdon Central Regiona	Hunterdon Central High	340759003006			A	No
46	Hunterdon	North Hunterdon Voorhees	North Hunterdon Reg High	341161003024			A	No
47	Hunterdon	North Hunterdon Voorhees	Voorhees High	341161003026			A	No

New Jersey Department of Education - Table 2 - List of Priority, Focus and Reward Schools

Counts	County	District	School	NCES ID#	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL	REWARD SCHOOL	TITLE I SCHOOL?
48	Hunterdon	Stockton Borough	Stockton Boro	341578003038			A	No
49	Mercer	Washington Township	Robbinsville High School	341710000549			A	No
50	Mercer	West Windsor-Plainsboro R	Wwindsor Plainsboro North	341770000191			A	Yes
51	Mercer	West Windsor-Plainsboro R	Wwindsor Plainsboro South	341770003258			A	No
52	Middlesex	Middlesex County Vocation	Mdsx Co Voc Acd Sci Eng	341008000395			A	No
53	Middlesex	Spotswood	Spotswood High	341554003660			A	No
54	Monmouth	Freehold Regional High Sc	Freehold Twp High	340561003798			A	Yes
55	Monmouth	Freehold Regional High Sc	Howell High	340561003800			A	No
56	Monmouth	Freehold Regional High Sc	Manalapan High	340561003802			A	No
57	Monmouth	Holmdel Township	Holmdel High School	340741003850			A	No
58	Monmouth	Manasquan	Manasquan High	340942003940			A	No
59	Monmouth	Monmouth County Vocationa	Biotechnology H S	341750006121			A	No
60	Monmouth	Monmouth County Vocationa	Communications High Sch	341750000409			A	No
61	Monmouth	Monmouth County Vocationa	High Technology High Sch	341750006095			A	No
62	Monmouth	Monmouth County Vocationa	Marine Acad Sci & Tech	341750005989			A	No
63	Monmouth	Rumson-Fair Haven Regiona	Rumson Fair Haven Reg H	341440004094			A	No
64	Morris	Hanover Park Regional Hig	Whippany Park High	340666004246			A	No
65	Morris	Kinnelon Borough	Kinnelon High	340804004282			A	No
66	Morris	Madison	Kings Road	340924004304			A	No
67	Morris	Madison	Madison High	340924004300			A	Yes
68	Morris	Mendham Borough	Mountain View	340990004316			A	No
69	Morris	Mendham Township	Mendham Twp Middle	340993004322			A	No
70	Morris	Morris County Vocational	Law & Public Safety	341072000521			A	No
71	Morris	Morris County Vocational	Math Science&engineering	341072000522			A	No
72	Morris	Morris County Vocational	Morris Co Sch Of Tech	341072004348			A	Yes
73	Morris	Morris Hills Regional	Morris Hills High	341074004352			A	No
74	Morris	Mountain Lakes	Briarcliff	341101004418			A	No
75	Morris	Mountain Lakes	Mountain Lakes High	341101004416			A	No
76	Morris	Pequannock Township	Pequannock Twp High	341290004470			A	Yes
77	Morris	Sch Dist Of The Chathams	Chatham High	340000406014			A	No
78	Morris	Sch Dist Of The Chathams	Washington Ave	340000406018			A	No
79	Morris	West Morris Regional High	West Morris Central High	341755004550			A	No
80	Ocean	Beach Haven Borough	Beach Haven Elem	340129004570			A	No
81	Ocean	Ocean County Vocational S	M A T E S	341198000559			A	No
82	Ocean	Ocean County Vocational S	Performing Arts Academy	341198006122			A	No
83	Ocean	Point Pleasant Beach	Point Pleasant Bch High	341332004702			A	Yes
84	Passaic	Pompton Lakes	Pompton Lakes High	341335004930			A	No
85	Salem	Salem County Vocational S	Salem Co Career&tech H S	341458005098			A	Yes
86	Somerset	Bernards Township	Ridge High	340165005124			A	No
87	Somerset	Bridgewater-Raritan Regio	Brdgwtr Raritn High Sch	340228000173			A	No
88	Somerset	Montgomery Township	Montgomery High	341059005250			A	No
89	Somerset	Somerset County Vocationa	Somerset Co Voc Tech High	341506005278			A	Yes
90	Somerset	Somerset Hills Regional	Bernards High	340000900176			A	No

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91	Sussex	Lenape Valley Regional Hi	Lenape Val Regional High	340850005378			A	Yes
92	Union	Berkeley Heights	Governor Livingston H S	340153000201			A	No
93	Union	Clark Township	Arthur L Johnson H S	340315000205			A	No
94	Union	Elizabeth	No 22 William F Halloran	340459005524			A	No
95	Union	Elizabeth	No 76 Reilly Middle Sch (No 7 Heren	340459000013			A	Yes
96	Union	New Providence	New Providence High	341131005592			A	No
97	Union	Summit City	Lincoln Hubbard Elem Sch	341590005718			A	No
98	Union	Summit City	Summit Sr High	341590005708			A	Yes
99	Union	Union County Vocational S	Acad For Allied Hlth Sci	341804000584			A	No
100	Union	Union County Vocational S	Academy For Info Tech	341804006134			A	No
101	Union	Union County Vocational S	Union Cty Magnet High Sch	341804000214			A	No
102	Union	Union County Vocational S	Union Cty Voc Tech	341804005738			A	Yes
103	Bergen	Cresskill	Merritt Memorial	340360000328			B	No
104	Bergen	Fort Lee	Number 3	340531000448			B	No
105	Bergen	Fort Lee	Number 4	340531000450			B	No
106	Bergen	Glen Rock	Central	340597000488			B	No
107	Bergen	Paramus	Midland School	341242000400			B	Yes
108	Bergen	Ridgewood Village	Orchard	341383000780			B	Yes
109	Bergen	Tenafly	J Spencer Smith	341611000866			B	No
110	Bergen	Upper Saddle River	Edith A Bogert	341662000882			B	No
111	Bergen	Waldwick	Julia A Traphagen	341686000892			B	No
112	Burlington	Medford Township	Milton H Allen	340987001126			B	No
113	Burlington	Northern Burlington Count	N Burl Co Reg High School	341170001182			B	Yes
114	Camden	Cherry Hill Township	A Russell Knight	340300001422			B	No
115	Charter	Red Bank Charter School	The Red Bank Cs	340004900336			B	Yes
116	Essex	East Orange	Fourth Avenue School	340423000273			B	Yes
117	Essex	Millburn Township	South Mountain Elem Sch	341020000230			B	No
118	Essex	Newark	Roseville Ave School	341134006006			B	Yes
119	Hunterdon	Flemington-Raritan Region	Barley Sheaf	340519002984			B	No
120	Mercer	Hamilton Township	Yardville	340654003130			B	No
121	Mercer	Princeton Regional	Community Park	341341003192			B	Yes
122	Middlesex	Edison Township	James Madison Inter	340450003342			B	No
123	Middlesex	Edison Township	John Marshall	340450003348			B	Yes
124	Middlesex	Edison Township	Martin Luther King	340450003354			B	No
125	Middlesex	Monroe Township	Oak Tree Elem	341050002982			B	No
126	Middlesex	Monroe Township	Woodland	341050003444			B	No
127	Middlesex	Woodbridge Township	Ford Avenue	341812003692			B	No
128	Middlesex	Woodbridge Township	Kennedy Park	341812003702			B	No
129	Middlesex	Woodbridge Township	Mawbey Street	341812003710			B	No
130	Monmouth	Avon Borough	Avon Elem	340114003748			B	Yes
131	Monmouth	Eatontown	Woodmere	340441003774			B	No
132	Monmouth	Hazlet Township	Middle Road School	341368003834			B	Yes
133	Monmouth	Oceanport Borough	Wolf Hill	341212004074			B	Yes

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134	Morris	Long Hill Township	Central Middle	341266004462			B	No
135	Morris	Mendham Township	Mendham Twp Elem	340993004320			B	No
136	Morris	Parsippany-Troy Hills Tow	Northvail	341248004452			B	No
137	Morris	Randolph Township	Center Grove	341365004488			B	No
138	Somerset	Warren Township	Woodland School	341698000244			B	No