District of Columbia

ESEA Flexibility Request

Revised July 11, 2012

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

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INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is offering each State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs), and its schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity will provide educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) 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. This flexibility is intended to build on and support the significant State and local reform efforts already underway in critical areas such as transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness.

The Department invites interested SEAs to request this flexibility pursuant to the authority in section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which allows the Secretary to waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for an SEA that receives funds under a program authorized by the ESEA and requests a waiver. Under this flexibility, the Department would grant waivers through the 2013–2014 school year, after which time an SEA may request an extension of this flexibility.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF REQUESTS

The Department will use a review process that will include both external peer reviewers and staff reviewers to evaluate SEA requests for this flexibility. This review process will help ensure that each request for this flexibility approved by the Department is consistent with the principles described in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which are designed to support State efforts to improve student academic achievement and increase the quality of instruction, and is both educationally and technically sound. Reviewers will evaluate whether and how each request for this flexibility will support a comprehensive and coherent set of improvements in the areas of standards and assessments, accountability, and teacher and principal effectiveness that will lead to improved student outcomes. Each SEA will have an opportunity, if necessary, to clarify its plans for peer and staff reviewers and to answer any questions reviewers may have. The peer reviewers will then provide comments to the Department. Taking those comments into consideration, the Secretary will make a decision regarding each SEA's request for this flexibility. If an SEA's request for this flexibility is not granted, reviewers and the Department will provide feedback to the SEA about the components of the SEA's request that need additional development in order for the request to be approved.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

An SEA seeking approval to implement this flexibility must submit a high-quality request that addresses all aspects of the principles and waivers and, in each place where a plan is required, includes a high-quality plan. Consistent with ESEA section 9401(d)(1), the Secretary intends to grant waivers that are included in this flexibility through the end of the 2013–2014 school year. An SEA will be permitted to request an extension of the initial period of this flexibility prior to the start of the 2014–2015 school year unless this flexibility is superseded by reauthorization of the ESEA. The Department is asking SEAs to submit requests that include plans through the 2014–2015 school year in order to provide a complete picture of the SEA's reform efforts. The Department will not accept a request that meets only some of the principles of this flexibility.

This version of the *ESEA Flexibility Request* replaces the document originally issued on September 23, 2011 and revised on September 28, 2011. Through this revised version, the following section has been removed: 3.A, Option B (Option C has been renamed Option B). Additions have also been made to the following sections: Waivers and Assurances. Finally, this revised guidance modifies the following sections: Waivers; Assurances; 2.A.ii; 2.C.i; 2.D.i; 2.E.i; Table 2; 2.G; and 3.A, Options A and B.

High-Quality Request: A high-quality request for this flexibility is one that is comprehensive and coherent in its approach, and that clearly indicates how this flexibility will help an SEA and its LEAs improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students.

A high-quality request will (1) if an SEA has already met a principle, provide a description of how it has done so, including evidence as required; and (2) if an SEA has not yet met a principle, describe how it will meet the principle on the required timelines, including any progress to date. For example, an SEA that has not adopted minimum guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with Principle 3 by the time it submits its request for the flexibility will need to provide a plan demonstrating that it will do so by the end of the 2011–2012 school year. In each such case, an SEA's plan must include, at a minimum, the following elements for each principle that the SEA has not yet met:

1. Key milestones and activities: Significant milestones to be achieved in order to meet a given principle, and essential activities to be accomplished in order to reach the key milestones. The SEA should also include any essential activities that have already been completed or key milestones that have already been reached so that reviewers can understand the context for and fully evaluate the SEA's plan to meet a given principle.

2. Detailed timeline: A specific schedule setting forth the dates on which key activities will begin and be completed and milestones will be achieved so that the SEA can meet the principle by the required date.

3. Party or parties responsible: Identification of the SEA staff (*e.g.*, position, title, or office) and, as appropriate, others who will be responsible for ensuring that each key activity is accomplished.

4. Evidence: Where required, documentation to support the plan and demonstrate the SEA's progress in implementing the plan. This *ESEA Flexibility Request* indicates the specific evidence that the SEA must either include in its request or provide at a future reporting date.

5. Resources: Resources necessary to complete the key activities, including staff time and additional funding.

6. Significant obstacles: Any major obstacles that may hinder completion of key milestones and activities (*e.g.,* State laws that need to be changed) and a plan to overcome them.

Included on page 19 of this document is an example of a format for a table that an SEA may use to submit a plan that is required for any principle of this flexibility that the SEA has not already met. An SEA that elects to use this format may also supplement the table with text that provides an overview of the plan.

An SEA should keep in mind the required timelines for meeting each principle and develop credible plans that allow for completion of the activities necessary to meet each principle. Although the plan for each principle will reflect that particular principle, as discussed above, an SEA should look across all plans to make sure that it puts forward a comprehensive and coherent request for this flexibility.

Preparing the Request: To prepare a high-quality request, it is extremely important that an SEA refer to all of the provided resources, including the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which includes the principles, definitions, and timelines; the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance*, which includes the criteria that will be used by the peer reviewers to determine if the request meets the principles of this flexibility; and the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions,* which provides additional guidance for SEAs in preparing their requests.

As used in this request form, the following terms have the definitions set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*: (1) college- and career-ready standards, (2) focus school, (3) high-quality assessment, (4) priority school, (5) reward school, (6) standards that are common to a significant number of States, (7) State network of institutions of higher education, (8) student growth, and (9) turnaround principles.

Each request must include:

- A table of contents and a list of attachments, using the forms on pages 1 and 2.
- The cover sheet (p. 3), waivers requested (p. 4-6), and assurances (p. 7-8).
- A description of how the SEA has met the consultation requirements (p. 9).
- Evidence and plans to meet the principles (p. 10-18). An SEA will enter narrative text in the text boxes provided, complete the required tables, and provide other required evidence. An SEA may supplement the narrative text in a text box with attachments, which will be included in an appendix. Any supplemental attachments that are included in an appendix must be referenced in the related narrative text.

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

Process for Submitting the Request: An SEA must submit a request to the Department to receive the flexibility. This request form and other pertinent documents are available on the Department's Web site at: http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility.

Electronic Submission: The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA's request for the flexibility electronically. The SEA should submit it to the following address: ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

Paper Submission: In the alternative, an SEA may submit the original and two copies of its request for the flexibility to the following address:

Patricia McKee, Acting Director
Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W320
Washington, DC 20202-6132

Due to potential delays in processing mail sent through the U.S. Postal Service, SEAs are encouraged to use alternate carriers for paper submissions.

REQUEST SUBMISSION DEADLINE

SEAs have multiple opportunities to submit requests for the flexibility. The submission dates are November 14, 2011, February 28, 2012, and an additional opportunity following the conclusion of the 2011–2012 school year.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MEETING FOR SEAS

The Department has conducted a number of webinars to assist SEAs in preparing their requests and to respond to questions. Please visit the Department's Web site at: http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility for copies of previously conducted webinars and information on upcoming webinars.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact the Department by e-mail at ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Insert page numbers prior to submitting the request, and place the table of contents in front of the SEA's flexibility request.

CONTENTS		PAGE
Waivers		7
Assurances		10
Consultation		12
Evaluation		19
Overview of SEA's Request for the ESEA Flexibility		19
Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students		23
1.A	Adopt college- and career-ready standards	23
1.B	Transition to college- and career-ready standards	23
1.C	Develop and administer annual, statewide, aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth	45
Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support		46
2.A	Develop and implement a State-based system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support	46
2.B	Set ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives	62
2.C	Reward schools	70
2.D	Priority schools	73
2.E	Focus schools	86
2.F	Provide incentives and supports for other Title I schools	94
2.G	Build SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning	98
Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership		103
3.A	Develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	103
3.B	Ensure LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	119

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

☒ 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that

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

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

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

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

☒ 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 that meet the definition of "priority schools" set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

Optional Flexibilities:

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

☐ 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). 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.

☒ 12. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA's State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The

SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools that are not reward schools, priority schools, or focus schools.

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

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/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 as well as make public its lists of priority and focus schools if it chooses to update those lists. (Principle 2)

☒ 8. 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, all teachers of reading/Language Arts/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 than the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)

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

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

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

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

☒ 13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout this request.

☒ 14. It will report annually on its State report card, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the "all students" group and for each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State's annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. It will also annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively.

If the SEA selects Option A in section 3.A of its request, indicating that it has not yet developed and adopted all the 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.

In recent years, the District of Columbia has been hailed as a leader in many areas of school reform, including educator recruitment, retention, evaluation, and training; robust charter school options, innovation, and collaboration; and universal preschool. This strong reform agenda is backed by aligned leadership and support at all levels: the District of Columbia has both the experience and the political will to achieve exceptional outcomes. The list of factors that position the District of Columbia for success is extensive and includes a vibrant charter school sector that currently educates 41 percent of publicly educated pupils, a head start on transforming the traditional school system under mayoral control, improved state-level capacity, a supportive network of leading local and national partners, and District-wide interest and urgency around the work that remains to be done.

While the District of Columbia has made much progress, significant challenges remain. Despite the renewed focus on raising achievement, many schools and students still struggle. Statewide, only 45 percent of students are proficient in English/Language Arts and 47 percent are proficient in math, with stubbornly persistent performance gaps between subgroups. For students with special needs, only 16 percent are meeting proficiency in English/Language Arts and 19 percent in math. English language learners (ELLs) perform slightly better, with 25 percent meeting proficiency levels in English/Language Arts and 36 percent in math. With the District of Columbia's 2011 proficiency targets set between 70 and 74 percent, only 25 of 187 schools met adequate yearly progress (AYP) benchmarks in both English/Language Arts and mathematics last year, many because of the "safe harbor" provision that gives credit to schools able to reduce by 10 percent the number of students not meeting proficiency targets. Based on the graduation cohort calculation, which the District of Columbia calculated for the first time this year, the DC OSSE identified a graduation rate of 59 percent of students graduating within four years.

In addressing these challenges, it helps to understand the District of Columbia's unique context. Its 68 square miles of land, divided into eight wards, contain 54 local education agencies (LEAs): one large, traditional district, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), and 53 independently operated charter LEAs. Together, these 54 school districts educate 78,469 students mostly from low-income families of color. In 2011, the District of Columbia led the nation in post-secondary participation, with 71 percent of 17- to 24-year-old young adults either residing in or relocating to the District having a college degree or enrolled in a post-secondary institution. Yet, many are not graduates of the District of Columbia's elementary and

secondary education sector; instead they are transplants to the DC metro area. Furthermore, the District of Columbia has a stratified education gap among residents wherein income and educational attainment differ between the upper Northwest and most of the city east of Rock Creek Park.

For decades, DCPS served as both the state education agency (SEA) and an LEA. In 2007, after Congress amended the District of Columbia Home Rule specifically to permit mayoral takeover of public education, the Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA) was enacted and created the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (DC OSSE) to provide leadership in policy for all schools and act as the SEA for the District of Columbia. The same law established a State Board of Education (SBOE), with advisory, approval, and public-engagement mandates. As the DC OSSE continues to provide statewide leadership and support, it is committed to ensuring that all students in the capital of the world's most powerful nation have a fair shot at the American dream.

Pursuing ESEA flexibility is the right approach for improving education in the District of Columbia. This proposal seeks to reduce by half the number of students who do not meet proficiency within six years. At a minimum, the DC OSSE expects its students to reach proficiency at a rate of 73 percent in English/Language Arts and 74 percent in mathematics by 2017. Likewise, the DC OSSE expects the graduation rate to increase to 78 percent for students graduating within four years and to 90 percent for students graduating within six years by 2017 as an interim step to the state goal of an 85 percent graduation rate.

Flexibility will give the District of Columbia the opportunity to boost proficiency, narrow or close achievement gaps, reward successful schools, and support LEAs and schools to enable sustained and sustainable improvement. Toward that end, the DC OSSE plans to build upon the substantial work already undertaken as part of the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium leadership, and School Improvement Grant (SIG) turnaround efforts. Beginning in school year 2012–13, the District of Columbia's new accountability framework will include composition. Science will be added in school year 2013–14.

The DC OSSE will expand upon efforts to help LEAs and schools transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS); provide differentiated rewards, interventions, and supports by implementing a new accountability index that measures proficiency and growth; and assist LEAs in developing and implementing improved teacher and leader evaluation systems. The flexibility provided if this application is approved will free up resources—both time and funds—so that school communities can craft interventions and programs tailored to meet their students' unique needs as well as help parents make more informed school choices. To ensure effective implementation, the DC OSSE is committed to establishing annual benchmarks and monitoring LEA and school progress toward them.

Meaningful Engagement

Developing a high-quality, comprehensive ESEA flexibility application and ensuring its successful implementation necessitated an aggressive public-engagement campaign to solicit community and stakeholder input. The DC OSSE conducted extensive outreach for several months to meaningfully engage a critical and diverse group of education stakeholders. They ranged from classroom and special education teachers to parents, students, administrators, nonprofit partners, political and business leaders, early childhood educators, and residents. In addition to hosting focus groups, the DC OSSE worked in partnership with the State Board of Education to hold dozens of community meetings throughout the District of Columbia's eight wards.

All told, more than 600 individuals participated in over 55 public events. The DC OSSE also solicited public input via a variety of media and provided opportunities for stakeholders to readily access information about the District's ESEA flexibility proposal. Most crucially, stakeholders had multiple ways to convey comments or concerns, whether electronically, by mail, or in person at community forums and the State Board of Education's public meetings, which are televised and rebroadcast throughout the month. These opportunities generated a significant amount of public comments that strengthened this ESEA flexibility request.

The outreach plan centered on a commitment to keeping the District of Columbia's public-education community informed of and involved in the consideration and development of the ESEA flexibility request to ensure it addressed the needs and concerns of the District's stakeholders. A parallel goal of the DC OSSE's outreach and consultation efforts was to create and fortify partnerships with individuals and groups who will implement, support, develop, or are affected by the educational strategies identified in this application.

The DC OSSE's extensive stakeholder engagement not only helped shape the draft application made available for public comment, it also resulted in several changes to the final application for submission. While early group discussions provided information about commonly held concerns and perceptions, the public comment period centered on specific strategies proposed in the draft that demanded greater detail and clarity. In developing the final application, the DC OSSE staff drew on this input to ensure that the District's education plan identified strategies that address issues or problems brought forward by the community, such as how schools will be held accountable for educating all students and not given a "pass" to lower expectations for or to ignore certain populations. The final application was crafted to improve student achievement, increase graduation rates, close achievement gaps, and develop globally competitive citizens who are prepared for college and career success while creating a more robust accountability system that strengthens parental engagement and preserves autonomy and flexibility for LEAs and schools.

Engagement with Teachers, Principals, and Union Leaders

As noted above, the District of Columbia operates in an education landscape that includes one large, traditional LEA (the DCPS) and its public schools, as well as a charter authorizer (the Public Charter School Board or PCSB) and multiple public charter schools responsible for the oversight of teachers and school administrators. To ensure that District public school teachers and their representatives were partners in the development of the ESEA flexibility request, the DC OSSE facilitated open forums, extended office hours, and provided online opportunities for teachers to participate in the development of the ESEA flexibility request. The DC OSSE met with representatives of the Washington Teachers Union (WTU) and the Council of School Officers, which is the association for DCPS principals, assistant principals, and other school leaders. Additionally, teacher-centered focus groups were held to ensure that the ESEA flexibility request application addressed the needs and concerns of District of Columbia educators. Teachers also participated in several of the focus groups detailed in the community engagement efforts included in this application.

Throughout the development of the ESEA flexibility request and the revised application, the DC OSSE also chaired multiple meetings with the DCPS, the District of Columbia PCSB, and school administrators. Administrators expressed concern about which indicators were to be included in the new accountability system, particularly the inclusion of current science and composition assessments, and the supports and interventions to be provided. While amenable to increased accountability, charter school administrators cited the preservation of flexibility to implement innovative programs and strategies—an authority granted under local charter school laws—as critical. Participants also were concerned about the addition of indicators that would impose added data collection and reporting burdens on LEAs and schools without providing meaningful information to education stakeholders. These concerns are addressed in detail throughout this document.

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 inviting public comment via the state agency's website and at community meetings, the DC OSSE ensured that select stakeholders affected by the District of Columbia's education program had opportunities to participate in smaller focus groups to discuss their unique needs and perspectives. The DC OSSE worked to identify and leverage existing opportunities to obtain input, including consulting with existing advisory groups. Participants included experts and/or advocates representing specific wards (geographical regions) and groups, including homeless families, charter schools, delinquent students, youth leadership, faith and community-based organizations, parents, students, teachers, LEA administrators, institutes of higher learning, special education experts, local businesses, community liaisons, private schools, ELLs and elected representatives.

While initial efforts to seek input for the ESEA flexibility application from the larger community focused on town hall meetings, the engagement strategy was subsequently revised to ensure that appropriate forums and media were used for each critical stakeholder group to ensure maximum outreach and stakeholder participation. Some neighborhoods, for example, rely on flyers to receive notice about a public forum; others use e-mail alerts. To eliminate geographical, economic, or temporal barriers to participation, focus groups and forums were held in a variety of settings across the District of Columbia, including during evening Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings at schools and in neighborhood association meetings. This community-based approach resulted in transparent public forums in local settings that captured the ideas and concerns of hundreds of stakeholders who otherwise might not have had an opportunity to participate.

Information regarding the ESEA flexibility application was also made available to the public through a number of media outlets, including the DC OSSE website (accessed by more than 700 unique users), press releases, Facebook and other social networking sites (600+ tweets on Twitter), e-mail blasts, blogging, print media, public service announcements on the District of Columbia's public access channel, and extended open house and office hours. The DC OSSE newsletters published to address the ESEA flexibility option were widely distributed to more than 2,200 recipients. Stakeholders could participate by phone, through written or electronic mail, by webinar, by teleconference, and/or during in-person meetings. More than 55 meetings, town halls, and focus groups were held with stakeholders to discuss reforms related to the ESEA flexibility request. An open comment period on the resulting draft application began on January 18, 2012 and lasted until February 14, 2012 and again on May 23, 2012 through May 29, 2012 for the revised application. In addition, the DC OSSE provided further transparency by briefing the State Board of Education at its televised monthly public meeting on both the initial draft proposal and revisions suggested from these public feedback sessions.

The strategy of holding focus groups representing unique stakeholder communities produced critical feedback. Participants received an overview of the ESEA flexibility option and were advised that focus group results would be used to inform the application process. To facilitate and guide discussion, the DC OSSE facilitators asked open-ended questions that became increasingly specific. Participants were encouraged to share opinions, concerns, priorities, and perspectives relevant to the group and to the four principles of ESEA flexibility. Discussions addressed how proposed reforms will change the future of public education in the District of Columbia. Finally, participants were told how they could provide further input via e-mail, phone, or in person.

These outreach efforts resulted in significant, meaningful input from a diverse group of education stakeholders from across the District of Columbia. In the course of developing this application, the DC OSSE worked collaboratively with elected bodies, including the State Board of Education, the Council of the District of Columbia, and Advisory Neighborhood Commissions to solicit and encourage public input. Efforts to engage stakeholders and garner robust

discussion regarding the proposed plan continued until June 7, 2012. A summary of the critical feedback received from District of Columbia education stakeholders is described below.

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

Stakeholders supported this outcomes-based principle across groups and emphasized the importance of including these expectations at the elementary level. The need for reporting, resources, and supports to address the dropout problem, attendance, and college preparation from preschool through graduation was expressed by several stakeholders, who also mentioned a desire for data that provide information regarding the extent to which students will be nationally and internationally competitive. Parents encouraged the DC OSSE to empower parents by providing teaching and training from pre-kindergarten through graduation. Several stakeholders stressed the importance of a well-rounded education that includes universal music education, before- and after-school services in high-need schools, equitable opportunities (e.g., gifted and talented programs) in all eight wards, and greater emphasis on physical education. There was also concern about the lack of support and resources for high-quality science education.

PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

Focus groups generally agreed that current AYP targets had become unreachable and were no longer meaningful. Informal polls of multiple groups revealed a strong preference for setting annual targets to reduce achievement gaps by half within six years, with special provisions for students with special needs or who are ELLs. Participants advocated the development and implementation of accountability measures that reflect inequities related to unique challenges, school-level funding, school supports, and other resources at each public school. Stakeholders strongly encouraged leveraging existing reporting systems to create comparable information for parents and community stakeholders without placing undue reporting burdens on LEAs. Several parents and community advocates asked that the accountability plan address the need to provide stakeholders with transparent, meaningful, and *comparable* data for all LEAs. Although some stakeholders preferred an accountability system that does not extend beyond federally mandated elements, an equal number felt that items that reflect the capacity of District of Columbia students to be nationally and internationally competitive (e.g., writing, technology, etc.) should be included in the accountability plan. Parent and community representatives urged the inclusion of information regarding the distribution and availability of supports and resources for schools that would not be identified as priority or focus schools. Community advocates strongly expressed concern about how the District of Columbia could ensure that resources reached the neediest schools once federal funds were disbursed to LEAs.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

Several groups felt that tremendous focus had been placed on hiring teachers with subject area

expertise, while little attention had been given to the unique needs of a high poverty urban district and the skills that teachers need to succeed in these environments. Partnering with universities and LEAs to develop bachelors of education programs that prepare new teachers to succeed in a high poverty urban environment was suggested as one way the District of Columbia could support effective instruction. This effort is currently being undertaken by the University of the District of Columbia, which recently launched an urban teachers' residency program. There are also three teacher residency programs that the DC OSSE is supporting with Race to the Top funding. These programs are led by the following high performing charter LEAs working with four other charter LEAs in a consortium: KIPP and E.L. Haynes Public Charter School, Capital City Public Charter School, and Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools. There was a call for better data on factors known to affect school effectiveness, such as truancy and teacher retention. As noted above, the groups also emphasized the importance of developing strong leaders.

PRINCIPLE 4: REDUCING DUPLICATION AND UNNECESSARY BURDEN

In considering differentiated measures of accountability, stakeholders asked for diligence in ensuring that duplicative and burdensome reporting requirements that have little or no impact on student outcomes be avoided. Although most supported the inclusion of a growth measure, some stakeholders did not want to see new measures added to the system because of the implied burden on LEAs. Most groups felt strongly that the ESEA flexibility request should leverage the two existing systems of performance (DCPS's School Scorecard and the PCSB's Performance Management Framework) while working to address parent calls for comparable data across the public school system. Additionally, as noted previously, there were concerns about developing non-academic measures and the potential burden on LEAs to develop new data collection and reporting strategies. Stakeholders asked that the DC OSSE data system be used to reduce the administrative burden on LEAs in capturing information for students who did not complete the formal transfer process but have transferred to other District of Columbia, Maryland, or Virginia schools.

Summary

Efforts to develop a high-quality and comprehensive ESEA flexibility request and ensure successful implementation once approved by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) necessitated an aggressive community and stakeholder engagement strategy. Outreach efforts led to energetic and creative discussions regarding all four principles. In developing the final application, the DC OSSE staff drew on this feedback to ensure that that the District of Columbia's education plan as articulated in this application included strategies that address the challenges identified by a wide array of stakeholders.

In general, parents and other community-based stakeholders expressed support for many of the proposed elements of the ESEA flexibility request while stressing the importance of continuing and regular communication between the DC OSSE and District of Columbia

stakeholders. Several stakeholders requested clear statements about objectives, outcomes, timelines, responsible agencies, and staff. Continuing communication and collaboration were seen as a precursor to establishing trust and partnership with stakeholders, who spoke of the struggle to maintain ties with a system that has been restructured more than once in a short period. There was a call for greater clarity regarding the DC OSSE's role in monitoring and enforcing the implementation of federal requirements at local schools.

Outreach efforts also reaffirmed or resulted in partnerships that will be nurtured beyond the submission of the ESEA flexibility request. This is in keeping with the DC OSSE's vision of an educational system that recognizes the vital role of parents and community members as partners in achieving excellent outcomes for all students. The ESEA flexibility request plan represents a fresh opportunity for parents, students, teachers, schools, the DC OSSE, LEAs, community and business groups, and other District stakeholders to work collaboratively to reassess, redefine, and redress existing barriers. That information now will be used to ensure that all components of the District of Columbia's education system, including standards, assessments, and accountability, are aligned so that the District of Columbia's public schools serve as pipelines for preparing internationally competitive college- and career-ready adults.

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.

X 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.

In 2001, the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was a watershed moment for education in the United States. For the first time, SEAs were required to develop standards and assessments to measure student proficiency, enforce a system of accountability for schools, measure performance based on subgroups of students, identify underperforming schools, and implement prescribed interventions in those underperforming schools.

While the core tenets of NCLB are still relevant and important, the "one size fits all" approach did not effectively meet the needs of students in such a diverse and complex educational landscape as is found in the District. To meet the law's key requirement of having all students proficient in English/Language Arts and mathematics by 2014, the DC OSSE set proficiency targets between 70 percent and 74 percent in 2011. Only 25 of 187 schools met AYP benchmarks in both English/Language Arts and math. Of those 25 schools, over half made AYP due to the safe harbor provision that gave credit to schools able to reduce by 10 percent the number of students not meeting proficiency targets. Current NCLB accountability requirements do not account for schools making great strides in student growth "below the bar" or for demonstrating progress in other indicators that measure college- and career-readiness—and that admissions officers and employers value. Moreover, the prescribed interventions have not resulted in significant improvement in student outcomes.

The DC OSSE respects and supports the original intent of the federal law and wants to build upon it so that the DC OSSE can more effectively measure school success. As with NCLB, the DC OSSE expects 100 percent of its students will reach proficiency in the CCSS. In the proposed new accountability system, the DC OSSE now also expects that 100 percent of the District of Columbia's students will show growth each year.

The DC OSSE Approach

The DC OSSE believes that students come first, and what matters most is what happens in the classroom. The DC OSSE also believes that the teachers and school leaders are best qualified to affect student learning. By removing barriers to education and providing the necessary support to maximize student learning, school leaders and teachers, who are best qualified to provide solutions, can improve student outcomes. That is the fundamental premise behind this proposed action plan.

Flexibility from certain provisions of the ESEA will revitalize this current accountability system and set higher standards and expectations for teaching and learning. The improved accountability system will be based on a system of classification that will allow the DC OSSE, LEAs, and other education partners to target rewards and support based on academic achievement and needs. This improved accountability system will focus on creating incentives for continuous and sustainable improvement and supporting LEAs and schools that need assistance. LEAs and schools will have the flexibility to use federal funds to tailor programs and interventions, thus ensuring greater success in teacher and leader effectiveness and

student outcomes.

Recent Accomplishments

Over the last four years, the DC OSSE has demonstrated improvements in education and compliance with federal requirements. In several education areas, the DC OSSE has become a national leader in education in comparison to other states and urban centers. Last year, the District of Columbia led the nation in pre-kindergarten enrollment and ranked third nationally for child care center requirements and oversight. The District of Columbia also led the nation in providing school breakfast to children from low-income areas during the 2010–11 school year, increasing school breakfast participation for District public and charter school students by 35 percent and allowing Washington DC's national ranking to jump from 20th to 1st in one year.

The DC OSSE is the second SEA in the nation to align its English language arts (ELA) state assessments to college- and career-ready standards in its efforts to transition and implement the CCSS, with mathematics to be aligned in 2013. LEAs and schools will be able to tailor instruction and supports using student assessment results aligned to the CCSS.

Based on current improvements, the DC OSSE is seeking to exit federal High Risk status. Over the past year, the DC OSSE has worked diligently to resolve outstanding federal compliance issues. To date, the DC OSSE has addressed all 349 findings and has submitted the past three quarterly reports to the ED with zero open items.

Finally, the DC OSSE has made significant improvements in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). While the District has historically been characterized by noncompliance with IDEA, since the creation of the DC OSSE, the District has demonstrated accelerated improvement in key areas of IDEA performance. In 2011, the DC OSSE was released from the Blackman portion of the long-standing Blackman Jones Consent Decree as a result of establishing a high-functioning State Hearing Office and meeting the numerical benchmark of 90 percent timely issuance of hearing officer determinations over 12 months.

In addition, the DC OSSE has made significant gains on key IDEA compliance indicators. Specifically, the DC OSSE is pleased to report the following current data trends:

- 94 percent timeliness rate for initial evaluations and placements;
- 89 percent timeliness rate for reevaluations; and
- 95 percent timeliness rate for transition from Part C to Part B.

These results are the product of the DC OSSE's efforts to implement a robust special education monitoring framework, create key IDEA policies and guidance, develop accurate special education data systems, and provide ongoing training and technical assistance to improve practice and outcomes for students with disabilities. To date, the DC OSSE has also met 100 percent of the 34 court-ordered metrics for transportation of students with disabilities.

The District of Columbia's Future Work

Politically, the District of Columbia is unique. Its size, education governance, and reform structures enable aggressive change at the state level that is able to reach individual schools, classrooms, and students with great speed and impact. Roughly 78,469 students attend just over 220 schools, with 90 percent of enrollment represented by 30 of the 54 LEAs that have committed to RTTT.

The implementation and sustainability of the principles required in the ESEA flexibility request are underway as part of RTTT. In June 2010, the District of Columbia adopted the CCSS. This year, the state assessment—the District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS)—will be aligned to the CCSS in ELA, with the mathematics assessment being aligned for the 2013 test administration. The DC OSSE is also providing RTTT funding to the DCPS in its school turnaround work, applying one of four turnaround models to the persistently lowest-achieving five percent of schools as well as the broader lowest-achieving 20 percent of schools. As part of the RTTT grant, the DC OSSE plans to increase SEA capacity and provide additional support to the lowest-achieving 20 percent of schools through a newly formed Innovation and Improvement team within the RTTT department.

This year, teacher and leader evaluation systems will also be implemented in RTTT-participating schools. To achieve this outcome, the DC OSSE worked in partnership with various task forces consisting of school representatives and 1) established statewide guidelines and requirements for teacher and leader evaluation systems for schools participating in RTTT, 2) adopted a teacher value-added model to identify levels of teacher effectiveness, and 3) developed an innovative statewide growth model currently being used by both charter and traditional public schools to compare schools' ability to improve student performance.

To increase the quality of instruction and improve student achievement under this ESEA flexibility request, the DC OSSE will concurrently establish a new set of statewide guidelines for LEA and school evaluation and a support system. The DC OSSE will build on the requirements already developed as part of RTTT to make sure all new evaluation systems meet federal standards. RTTT-participating schools with evaluation systems already underway will have an opportunity to strengthen them to meet the new statewide guidelines while non-RTTT schools can start anew.

At the same time, additional effort will be put into providing support, training, and technical assistance around job-embedded professional development and exemplars of best practice as well as aligning state assessments and teacher/leader evaluation systems with the CCSS. This work, described throughout this document will be carried out by the Division of Specialized Education Training and Technical Assistance unit within the Division of Specialized Education in coordination with the Department of Standards, Assessment and Accountability, which is part of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Pursuing ESEA flexibility is the right approach for education in the District of Columbia. Flexibility will provide the opportunity to increase proficiency, close achievement gaps, reward schools, and support LEAs and schools to assure continuous, sustainable improvement and improved student outcomes. The request for flexibility in certain ESEA provisions will free up both time and money so that school communities can focus on their unique needs and provide information to help parents make better school choices.

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 post-secondary 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.

In 2010, the DC OSSE adopted CCSS and has subsequently expanded its efforts to align statewide assessments and create high quality professional development to assist in the transition of college- and career-ready standards in classroom instruction. This puts the DC OSSE is in a unique position to use the CCSS to launch the next level of reform for all students in the District of Columbia, both in traditional public schools and those served by public charter schools. This governance structure in combination with the autonomy of charter LEAs creates an opportunity for the District of Columbia to serve as a model of school choice while maintaining the quality and rigor of instruction that the CCSS demand.

The DC OSSE's ultimate goal for the adoption of the CCSS is a District-wide understanding on a deep, internalized, and instructional level that benefits all learners by preparing them to succeed in college and careers. This aligns with the DC OSSE's belief that students come first and what matters most is what is happening in the classroom. The DC OSSE has the great opportunity to have a positive, direct impact on all teachers through state-level support and professional development. Also, the District of Columbia's size allows it to comprehensively implement the standards sooner than most states and begin the alignment of the statewide assessment to the CCSS.

Already, students have reaped benefits from the District of Columbia's commitment to the CCSS implementation. By removing barriers and providing the necessary supports to teachers, including holding information and professional development sessions for instructional coaches and principals, students began receiving instruction aligned to the CCSS at the beginning of School Year 2011–12, which will improve student outcomes now and in the future. At this point, the DC OSSE has adopted David Conley's definition of college- and career-readiness as "the level of preparation a student needs in order to enroll and succeed—without remediation—in a credit bearing course at a postsecondary institution that offers a baccalaureate degree or transfer to a baccalaureate program, or in a high-quality certificate program that enables students to enter a career pathway with potential future advancement."

Public engagement has been a crucial part of the entire CCSS adoption process. Stakeholders, including educators and national experts, were invited from the very beginning to review the standards and provide the DC OSSE with guidance on adoption. The DC State Board of Education held numerous public meetings, and several members attended Gates Foundation-sponsored CCSS study sessions with their National Association of State Boards of Education peers. LEA and school leaders were consulted on the implementation plan and transition to the assessment. At each decision point throughout the process, the DC OSSE turned to the District of Columbia's education community for input and guidance.

The DC OSSE's vision is to ensure all students graduate college- and career-ready. The CCSS focuses the District's efforts to realize that vision by better preparing all students to

participate fully in today's global, Information Age economy.

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

The DC OSSE began the analysis of alignment starting in 2009, adopted college- and career-ready CCSS in 2010, and is now focused on ensuring effective transition of CCSS into classroom instruction.

Adoption Process

Directly after the National Governors Association's Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers released the draft of college- and career-readiness standards on September 21, 2009, the District of Columbia proactively began the process of adopting the CCSS. Communication with stakeholders began immediately.

On October 1, 2009, the DC OSSE released a memo inviting public comment on both the ELA and mathematics standards. Two public surveys were designed and made available to stakeholders via the Internet, with a request for feedback by October 15, 2009. A joint public hearing of the DC State Board of Education and the DC OSSE was held on October 7, 2009 to elicit public comment from the community.

Soon after the initial period for public comment, a joint letter was issued from former State Superintendent Kerri Briggs and former State Board of Education President Lisa Raymond to Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) on October 21, 2009, indicating the continued support of both the DC OSSE and the State Board of Education for the common standards.

Once the newly drafted standards for kindergarten through grade 12 were made available to SEAs in March 2010, the DC OSSE staff created a comprehensive crosswalk of the District of Columbia's existing content standards with the proposed draft standards. The crosswalk compared the alignment of the CCSS with the District of Columbia's current standards to identify content gaps. The DC OSSE staff brought in over 50 stakeholders to review the crosswalk and collect feedback. The stakeholders included school leaders, instructional coaches, educators (including science and social studies teachers), parents, members of the business community, higher education faculty, and elected officials. Several public meetings were held to discuss the new standards, the changes those standards would bring, and to gather feedback on whether the new standards should be adopted.

The combined feedback was used to propose the adoption of the CCSS to the State Board of Education, which it approved on July 21, 2010. Then the more difficult job of implementation began.

Implementation Plan

Since June 2011, support has been provided to educators and administrators through statewide professional development with a goal to assist them in moving to the CCSS. At the same time, the DC OSSE has been conducting outreach to various stakeholders to solicit input on the process as well as the goals. Between the summer and the fall of last year, a number of activities have taken place, including the release of a blueprint that reinforces where District of Columbia's standards are strong and where new standards will strengthen the system and the administration of a survey identifying students' and educators' needs in terms of support and professional development.

Beginning with the 2012 state assessment system in English/Language Arts and composition, the DC CAS has been aligned to the CCSS. Mathematics instruction will transition to the CCSS in 2012–13. Currently, mathematics instruction focuses on priority standards—those current District of Columbia mathematics standards that will most prepare students to be successful in CCSS. These standards were identified in consultation with Student Achievement Partners and are indicated on the 2012 DC CAS mathematics blueprint published in June 2011. In conjunction with the priority standards, teachers are encouraged to incorporate the Standards for Mathematical Practice into instruction. These practices are also included on the 2012 DC CAS blueprint.

Following is a summary of the District of Columbia's plan for the adoption of the CCSS, as illustrated by a list of key milestones and the corresponding goals the DC OSSE aims to achieve. Please see the appendix for the detailed plan document:

- **Starting in June 2011—Statewide CCSS Professional Development**: Supports educators with instructional shifts required by the CCSS.
- **Starting in June 2011—Community Outreach**: Involves all stakeholders to have a voice and mutually benefit from the District of Columbia's goal and vision.
- **June 2011—DC CAS Aligned to Common Core—Blueprint Released:** Clarifies strength of the District of Columbia's standards and supports transition to new standards.
- **July 2011—Crosswalk English/Language Arts Standards to Special Education (SPED) Entry Points**: Assists SPED educators with transition and alignment of the District of Columbia's standards to the CCSS.
- **August 2011—Conduct Professional Development Needs Survey**: Identifies and documents student and educator needs.
- **August 2011—Distribute Printed CCSS in Mathematics and ELA**: Increases awareness of the CCSS to all stakeholders.
- **Starting in November 2011—Develop New Composition Prompts Aligned to the CCSS and Offer Professional Development on the Transition**: Aligns writing assessment to the CCSS and supports educators in transition to expectations of the CCSS.
- **Starting in February 2012—Review Graduation Requirements for Math**: Ensures the District of Columbia's students are prepared for college and careers.
- **Starting in February 2012—Publish Historical Writing Data**: Documents growth per AMOs.
- **Starting in February 2012—Conduct Gap Analysis**: Provides instructional and curricular

feedback.

- **May 2012—Created State Team to Review Draft of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)**: Assessed current status of science to be able to provide educators with the best support to improve student learning.
- **June 2012—Create Transition Units in Math:** Supports educators in CCSS transition.
- **June 2012—Distribute PARCC/SBAC Technology Survey**: Assesses technology resources in preparation for PARCC assessment.
- **July 2012—Transition Special Education Data System (SEDS) to Align to the CCSS**: Supports SPED educators and ensures individualized education plan (IEP) goals are aligned with the CCSS.
- **July 2012—Analyze Composition Data and Provide Additional Professional Development**: Educators will be better prepared to teach writing; students will be prepared to meet college- and career-ready writing demands.
- **July 2012—Analyze Science Data**: Informs blueprint decisions and message to stakeholders.
- **July 2012—Engage Stakeholders on Science Blueprint Decisions:** Educators will understand the alignment of the assessment to science standards.
- **Starting in July 2012—Professional Development for Science**: Educators will receive tools to improve integrated science instruction.
- **Starting in July–August 2012—CCSS Interactive Website launched**: Creates a forum for District of Columbia-based Community of Learning around "real world" CCSS implementation.
- **Starting in July–August 2012—CCSS Assessment Item Development**: Integrates core knowledge of the CCSS into assessments.
- **July–August 2012—Common Core Parent Institute**: Increases awareness of the CCSS and alignment with home and school expectations.
- **July–August 2012—Summer Workshop for 21st Century Parents and After-School Providers**: Increases awareness of the CCSS and alignment with home, after-school, and school expectations.
- **June 2013—Include DC CAS composition in Accountability Plan**: By including composition, the District of Columbia will signal CCSS driven instructional shifts in writing, thereby encouraging high-caliber writing instruction.
- **July 2014—DC CAS Science included in Accountability Plan**: By including science, the DC OSSE will broaden the curriculum and promote scientific and critical thinking.

Timeline for Implementation

After the adoption of college- and career-ready standards, the DC OSSE collaborated with all LEAs to move toward implementation. In a joint decision by the DCPS and other charter LEAs, it was decided that the District of Columbia would target an aggressive implementation timeline, starting with the 2011–12 school year. Beginning in 2011–12, instruction has focused on the CCSS for all students, particularly for ELLs and students with disabilities in ELA and mathematics in grades K through 2. For grades 3 through 12, ELA instruction would focus

on the CCSS with a transition to informational text and writing to a text.

This aggressive timeline for implementation is critical to student success in the District of Columbia because it will begin to prepare them for the skills and knowledge required by the CCSS and lay the foundation for success on the PARCC assessment in 2014–15.

The timeline for DC CAS **alignment to the CCSS** appears in Table 1.B.i.

Table 1.B.i. Timeline for DC CAS Alignment to the CCSS

School Years	Instruction	Assessment
2011–12	K–12 Mathematics(aligned to the CCSS) K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics(DC Priority Standards)	English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10—Priority Standards Composition: 4, 7, 10 *Optional Grades 2 and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2012–13	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS)	English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10 Composition: 4, 7, 10 *Optional Grades 2 and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2013–14	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS)	English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10 Composition: 4, 7, 10 *Optional Grades 2 and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2014–15	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS)	PARCC Assessment

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA propose to develop and disseminate high-quality instructional materials aligned with the new standards? If so, are the instructional materials designed (or will they be designed) to support the teaching and learning of all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students?*

The DC OSSE has begun developing and disseminating high quality instructional materials aligned to CCSS, primarily as part of its RTTT initiatives.

Each LEA develops its own curriculum with support and evaluation by the DC OSSE on a

request basis only. This is primarily because the District's charter law (SRA) grants charter schools exclusive control over their instructional methods. However, since September 2011, the DC OSSE has provided professional development and exemplar lessons as resources to inform curriculum development at the LEA level.

Additional information on effective teaching and learning along with high quality instructional materials is available as part of the Professional Learning Communities of Effectiveness (PLaCEs) grant through RTTT, which provides funds to LEAs on a competitive basis to develop exemplar lessons aligned to the CCSS. The Transforming Instruction through Lesson Study (TITLeS) project provides teachers with the opportunity to work with their peers across the District to develop expertise in delivering exceptional lessons based on the CCSS. This professional learning community has created an online library of 50 CCSS video lessons per grade in both mathematics and English/Language Arts for grades 3 through 9 to support every teacher in the adoption of the CCSS, regardless of participation in RTTT. To date, 350 videos have been created with another 40 videos to be completed by the end of the school year. Additionally, the DC OSSE will look to curate exemplar lessons already developed and used by other states.

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

The DC OSSE has and continues to conduct outreach and dissemination of CCSS to reach various stakeholders and increase awareness of the college and career ready CCSS.

Outreach and Dissemination

Outreach to stakeholders was the first action step in the implementation process. Because the District of Columbia has varying governing structures, the DC OSSE knew that for implementation to be successful its outreach had to be wide and deep and that much guidance and direction would be needed. To do so, the DC OSSE is leveraging all partnerships to be sure stakeholders, especially parents and teachers, have a full understanding of the shifts to the CCSS so that students will receive the necessary skills.

As a governing state of PARCC, the District of Columbia is prepared to provide the necessary guidance and direction to assist LEAs in preparing students for success in college and in the workforce. Additionally, the DC OSSE's continuing partnerships with the University of the District of Columbia, Achieve, the American Diploma Project (ADP), the CCSSO, and the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) provide guidance and information to support this transition to the CCSS and assessments.

In addition to these partnerships, the DC OSSE has accomplished the following:

- The original crosswalk of the District of Columbia's standards to the CCSS was posted on the DC OSSE website for teachers to use in their instructional planning.

The DC OSSE then invited teachers to complete this work using the Achieve online tool and sent the analysis to a third party for the next iteration. The final version was reviewed and approved by selected teachers in the District of Columbia. This crosswalk was used to drive the blueprint for the 2012 DC CAS assessment.

- In June 2011, the 2012 DC CAS blueprint with the CCSS alignment was distributed to all LEAs and posted on the DC OSSE website.

- In August 2011, each teacher for mathematics and/or ELA in the District of Columbia received a printed copy of the standards. These standards were sent to each school site where each building leader distributed them to educators.

- The DC OSSE distributed printed PTA guides in English and Spanish to schools for each student to have a brochure introducing the CCSS to take home to parents. These were created for ELA and mathematics by grade and demonstrate to parents the importance of this shift and what they can expect in the classroom with the new standards.

- The DC OSSE held meetings for LEA leaders and educators to explain the shift to the CCSS and how this will translate in the classroom. These meetings discussed the changes to the assessment, changes in instruction, and what these changes look like in the classroom. Several experts spoke at these meetings, including David Coleman, one of the writers of the CCSS.

- Through RTTT, the DC OSSE created a Common Core Task Force with members representing over 20 of 30 participating LEAs. This task force helped to drive decision making around the implementation plan and became the CCSS experts for their LEAs to deliver updates and information. This Task Force was also asked to create a statewide message around the CCSS and to identify the shifts in instruction.

- The DC OSSE will be working with a contractor to create an interactive website with professional development units, sample test items aligned to the CCSS, information about the PARCC assessment, curriculum guidance, sample lesson plans, exemplar teaching units, student work, and teacher-created videos. A Request for Application (RFA) was submitted to the Office of Contracts and Procurement (OCP) for processing with the award tentatively scheduled to be determined by summer 2012. The DC OSSE will maintain control of this site to ensure high-quality materials aligned to the standards are posted.

- The DC OSSE sends out monthly newsletters and regular Twitter updates and has plans for future public meetings.

- The District of Columbia is currently planning an instructional and curriculum

summit for summer 2012 that will further support teachers in understanding the essential shifts in practice, curriculum, and assessment needed for full CCSS implementation. This summit will also bring together educators from all public schools to collaborate and share best practices for evaluating and developing curriculum and creating exemplar materials.

- The DC OSSE is collaborating with the University of the District of Columbia to examine the impact of the CCSS on K–12 instruction in preparation for PARCC. The goal is that students who graduate from an LEA in the District of Columbia are college- and career-ready and will not be required to enroll in developmental or remedial courses.

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

The DC OSSE has analyzed the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure students with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve CCSS including using results to facilitate accessibility at the same schedule as all students.

The DC OSSE realizes the challenges implementation of the CCSS will present to special populations of students. The CCSS are for all students and implementation requires making the standards accessible to all students.

To support students with disabilities, the DC OSSE is committed to high quality professional development of special education teachers. As part of the DC OSSE's CORE professional development series offered by the Training and Technical Assistance Division, the DC OSSE has engaged in a comprehensive professional development model to support access to the CCSS for students with disabilities and to ensure that instruction and assessment for this population is rigorous and relevant. Professional development work includes collaboration with nationally recognized experts on differentiation and curriculum mapping. In addition, the DC OSSE is using RTTT funds to conduct a special education quality review project, which will result in a self-assessment tool for schools and LEAs to use to assess their practices against key indicators of quality for special education practices and identify effective interventions to accelerate progress. Concurrently, the DC OSSE is updating its Special Education Data System (SEDS) to ensure that Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals are aligned with the CCSS and are standards driven.

At the operational level, the DC OSSE will continue to implement a number of key strategies to help LEAs ensure that students with disabilities are well positioned for a successful post-secondary transition to career and college. The DC OSSE continues to conduct quarterly monitoring of secondary transition requirements as required by the ED's Office of Special Education Programs. The DC OSSE's review of a sample of 100 IEPs for required secondary transition content is followed by LEA notification of the findings of each review via written

reports. These reports provide written notification to LEAs to correct identified noncompliance as soon as possible and no later than one year from identification.

In collaboration with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Division of Specialized Education has created a comprehensive strategic core professional development plan to support teachers with the implementation of the CCSS. District of Columbia LEAs received professional development trainings on effective IEP goal writing using the CCSS, authentic performance tasks, differentiated instruction, common formative assessments, and response to intervention tiered instruction to transition students from the District of Columbia's standards-based curriculum and instruction to the new CCSS to ensure that all students' academic needs are addressed.

To support teachers and leaders, the DC OSSE provides comprehensive training programs and continuous support through leadership of a State Secondary Transition Community of Practice (SSTCoP). Specifically, the DC OSSE has implemented a cohort training model with a local institute of higher education, George Washington University, to provide turnkey training at a local high school through a series of sessions and workshops throughout the year. This work will be expanded upon in the coming year. Under the leadership of the Division of Specialized Education's Director of Training and Technical Assistance, the SSTCoP meets monthly to implement a state plan that ensures cross-system support for students with disabilities transitioning from high school into adulthood. In collaboration with the SSTCoP, the DC OSSE has built a dedicated state secondary transition webpage (http://www.DCOSSEsecondarytransition.org/) for the District of Columbia where it publishes key information and tools for all education stakeholders, including parents and students.

The DC OSSE continues to strengthen partnerships with the Department on Disability Services and in particular the Rehabilitative Services Administration as it implements its agreement on shared obligations related to supporting the successful transition of secondary students with disabilities.

Finally, the DC OSSE's successful enhancement of the statewide special education data system, SEDS, in October 2011 included key updates to its secondary transition section. These updates encourage best practices, improve compliance, and support better student outcomes.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to analyze the factors that need to be addressed in preparing teachers of students with disabilities participating in a State's alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards (AA-MAAS) in order to ensure these students can participate in the assessments that will be aligned with college and career-ready standards?*

The DC OSSE has and will continue to analyze the factors needing to be addressed to prepare teachers of students with disabilities participating in the alternate assessment with the goal of successfully preparing these students for participation in assessments aligned to CCSS.

For special education students in the 1 percent group (students taking the DC CAS Alternate test), it is most important that current entry points are aligned to the CCSS so that teachers

can differentiate instruction according to an individual student's starting point and allow students to set challenging but achievable academic goals. These entry points are used to guide the evidence-based portfolio assessment the DC OSSE uses for these students. The DC OSSE has currently aligned the DC CAS Alt Entry Points to the CCSS for ELA in preparation for this year's administration.

The DC OSSE has joined the assessment consortium with the NCSC and is a member of the Workgroup One Community of Practice. Through this partnership, the DC OSSE will continue to develop performance-level descriptors, claims, focal knowledge, skills, and abilities for mathematics to provide information and guidance about the CCSS. The goal of NCSC is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities achieve higher academic outcomes to prepare them for post-secondary options. The DC OSSE believes in this goal and is excited to be involved with this work.

Once New Century Learning Consortiums (NCLC) releases the Learning Progressions, the DC OSSE will work to adopt these progressions; it also plans to facilitate teacher and educator professional development that will show IEP teams how to link curriculum and intervention resources to ensure standards progression throughout the school year for all students. Additionally, through this consortium, the DC OSSE is examining how the definition of college- and career-readiness applies to special-needs populations.

The District of Columbia currently has a Learning Progressions Community of Practice (LPCoP) consisting of approximately 20 individuals. They include general and special education teachers as well as technical assistance providers to ensure that curricular, instructional, and professional development modules developed by NCSC are practical and feasible. The LPCoP receives training on the CCSS, the relationship between content and achievement standards, curriculum, assessment, and universal access to the general curriculum. The LPCoP will implement model curricula and help to refine and clarify materials and resources.

Finally, SEDS will be upgraded to align with the CCSS and Learning Progressions. SEDS will contain a drop-down menu listing the CCSS to inform IEP writers. This functionality will allow educators to use the database to track IDEA compliance, develop IEP goals aligned with the CCSS, and monitor student progress toward those goals. The DC OSSE will provide training and support to all LEAs throughout this process, with this system ready for School Year 2012–13.

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

The DC OSSE has and will continue to analyze the linguistic demands of CCSS to inform the development of English Language Proficiency standards, including the use of results to inform revisions and instruction so that English Learners can access CCSS on the same schedule as all

students.

For ELLs, the DC OSSE has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) to align the current language acquisition standards and assessment with the CCSS. The DC OSSE convened a group of school leaders to discuss ESEA flexibility and provide input on the proposed application, AMOs, and interventions as well as how to best support dual-language programs.

The District of Columbia also participates in the Assessment Services Supporting ELLs through Technology System (ASSETS) consortium, a four-year project launched earlier this year to build a comprehensive and balanced technology-based assessment system for ELLs. The assessment system will be anchored in WIDA's English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards, which are aligned with the CCSS, informed by current and ongoing research, and supported by comprehensive professional development.

The system will include a computer-based language proficiency test, screener, benchmark assessment, and formative resources to support teachers in implementing data-driven instruction for ELLs. The consortium will build on the foundation of standards, assessment, professional development, and research already developed by the managing partner, WIDA, to ensure that tools help ELLs succeed in becoming college- and career-ready. The consortium also assists in the development of online summative, benchmark, and screener assessments in addition to formative assessment resources for use in the classroom.

For ELL teachers to transition successfully into teaching the CCSS, they must understand the correlation between academic standards and English language development (ELD) standards. The District of Columbia teachers are currently using the 2012 Edition of the WIDA ELD standards, which is heavily influenced by the CCSS. Being a part of the WIDA Consortium gives teachers access to these new ELD standards, resource guides, online training, and support in synchronizing developing students' English language skills with their academic achievement.

Student performance data has shown that ELLs have demonstrated the most growth across the District of Columbia. The DC OSSE will look to those successes to continue the growth in ELL performance and will bring together leaders in the ELL community to evaluate how to meet the needs of the District of Columbia's ELL population while meeting the expectations of the CCSS. The District of Columbia will continue to provide professional development on ELD standards, language differentiation during content instruction and assessment, and ways to effectively use assessment results to increase student achievement.

Several professional development sessions are planned for summer 2012 for ELL educators. The Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), for example, is a hands-on, practical course that focuses on strategies for making content area instruction comprehensible and meaningful for ELLs in grades 2 through 12. Strategies that participants will learn include cooperative learning, adapting text for ELLs, building on prior knowledge, offering multiple ways to engage, providing comprehensible input, and making a

home/school connection. This training will also be provided with a focus on early childhood for grades pre-kindergarten through first.

The DC OSSE continues to provide ongoing professional development for teachers, allowing them to obtain continuing education graduate credits, meet English as a Second Language (ESL) licensure and certification requirements, take advantage of the District of Columbia's free Special Education Praxis preparation materials, and build their capacities to meet the needs of diverse learners.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA plan to evaluate its current assessments and increase the rigor of those assessments and their alignment with the State's college- and career-ready standards, in order to better prepare students and teachers for the new assessments. If so, is this activity likely to result in an increase in the rigor of the State's current assessments and their alignment with college- and career-ready standards?*

The DC OSSE has and continues to evaluate its current assessments. In an effort to prepare students for the new PARCC assessments, the DC OSSE began the alignment of assessments to CCSS with English/Language Arts and Composition for the 2012 statewide assessment. The mathematics statewide assessment will be aligned to CCSS in 2013.

Preparing for the Next Generation of Assessments

District of Columbia educators decided to transition the statewide assessment to align to the CCSS as the best way to signal to the field the shifts in instruction. Starting in the summer of 2010, the DC OSSE worked with its test contractor to modify the current DC CAS. All field test items on the 2011 DC CAS were aligned to the CCSS, and in 2012, all items on the DC CAS English/Language Arts were aligned to the CCSS with a shift in the blueprint to include more informational text. District of Columbia educators also felt this would be the best training for its schools, educators, and students in preparation for the shift to the PARCC assessment to begin instruction in the CCSS as quickly as possible and give students a head start on success.

This will alert the field to the text complexity and genre selections found in the CCSS. The swift incorporation was possible because of the close alignment the DC OSSE found in the initial mapping of the District of Columbia's standards to the CCSS and the CCSS to the District of Columbia-owned English/Language Arts items. The 2012 DC CAS mathematics focused on priority standards to better prepare students for the transition to the mathematics CCSS in 2012–13. These mathematics standards were identified as the critical skills and knowledge students need to know to succeed on the CCSS and represent one or two essential skill sets in each grade for teachers to focus their instruction.

In addition, the DC OSSE will field test/operationalize new composition prompts that are aligned to the CCSS and focus on the essential skill of writing in response to a text. This is an answer to the indications in the PARCC Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) that demonstrates writing to a text will be crucial for students to be successful on the assessment and to address the shift from the old writing standards to the new standards.

Both the English/Language Arts and the composition DC CAS results will report on the CCSS

by student, school, LEA, and state levels to give schools, educators, students, and parents an indication of how students are performing on the CCSS. The DC OSSE worked with its Technical Advisory Council, consisting of local and national experts in the field of assessments, and test vendor to ensure that this transition maintains the achievement standards and does not disrupt trend lines in achievement. A cut score review will be conducted in the fall to ensure alignment.

The District's transition to a fully aligned DC CAS mathematics assessment to the CCSS will begin in 2012–13. Within the Department of Standards, Assessment and Accountability, the DC OSSE has formed an Assessment Task Force consisting of teachers, assessment coordinators, and other stakeholders to guide the development of the mathematics assessments and to address any instructional gaps. This allows the District of Columbia the best opportunity to have all students exposed to and instructed in the CCSS in preparation for the PARCC assessment in 2014–15.

The District of Columbia is one of the original governing states of PARCC and has been involved with the work from the beginning. Today, the DC OSSE is leading the work with 17 other states to develop and design the next generation of assessments aligned to the CCSS. The DC OSSE is a member of the Governing Board, Leadership Team, and Higher Education Leadership Team, and it serves as the chair for the Common Core Implementation and Educator Engagement working group. It also has representation on the PARCC Advisory Committee on College Readiness. The District of Columbia has attended design meetings, Common Core Implementation Institutes, and all other multistate meetings.

Currently, the District of Columbia is using the Model Content Frameworks to guide LEAs through their creation of curriculum plans aligned to the new standards and will take a team to participate in the Educator Leader Cadres preparatory meetings to develop experts in the field. The DC OSSE is actively involved in all decision making and reviews. Being a governing state allows the District of Columbia to lead the nation in this reform and to inform stakeholders on the coming shifts through extensive work with the CCSS and the goals of the new assessment. This gives the District a clear advantage in preparing schools, educators, and students for the next generation of assessments that will measure college- and career-readiness.

Increased Rigor

As the CCSS are more rigorous than the District of Columbia's previous standards, the DC OSSE recognizes the need to find ways to immediately increase the rigor of instruction in the classroom for successful implementation of the CCSS. The District is currently working in collaboration with the State Board of Education to review and revise graduation requirements to include more focus on college- and career-readiness. Also, a bill was recently passed and funded by the City Council that will require all students to take either the SAT or ACT and apply to college as part of the graduation requirements.

Through this application, the DC OSSE is reviewing its reporting requirements and plans to

include Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate participation and proficiency, grade point average, dual enrollment, ACT and SAT participation and performance, and other indicators of college- and career-readiness. Through the State Longitudinal Data System, the DC OSSE also is beginning to collect data on post-secondary acceptance, attendance, and graduation. All these data points work together to signal to students, teachers, and parents the shift to more rigor in the classroom.

This public reporting will show the continuum of readiness across years and will indicate to schools, parents, and students the progress toward college- and career-readiness while allowing adjustments to be made along the way to ensure success for all students. The DC OSSE's continued partnership with DCPS, charter LEAs, the PCSB, and several advocacy groups will continue to push the level of rigor in all classrooms for all students. Through these partnerships, the DC OSSE can align its expectations for college- and career-readiness, work to promote higher-level courses, and share data to gauge student performance.

Other Assessments: Composition and Science

The composition assessment in 2013 will be included in the accountability plan detailed in Principle 2. This is a crucial step to signal to educators and families the importance of students being able to write to a text. This is a major instructional shift found in the standards and one where data suggest school leaders, teachers, and students will need additional support. The DC OSSE first shared this information in June 2011 as part of the initial outreach to introduce school leaders to the CCSS and the shifts in instruction and assessments.

Over the summer, a panel of teachers reviewed and approved the prompts through content and bias review. In October 2011, the DC OSSE held an initial training for LEAs to explain the shift, describe the new rubric, and release a sample prompt. Additional training and outreach took place at the start of 2012. Once the DC OSSE receives the results of the 2012 assessments, results will be analyzed and used to guide more professional development for School Year 2012–13.

The District of Columbia's science standards were recently awarded an "A" by the Fordham Institute. Despite the high ranking on statewide science standards, an overwhelming number of students are not proficient. Based on 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) science assessment, only 8 percent of students was proficient. For this reason, and in response to requests from parents, teachers, and other education stakeholders to increase the number of subjects included in the accountability plan, the DC OSSE will include a DC CAS science assessment beginning in 2014 as detailed in Principle 2.

The staggered timeline to include composition and science in our new accountability framework will allow more educators to be involved with blueprint development, item review, and data analysis. This also will create a positive transition plan for including new subjects while supporting schools and educators through the transition.

Table 1.B.ii is a timeline for **inclusion of assessments** to accountability framework.

Table 1.B.ii: Timeline for Inclusion of Assessments

School Years	Instruction	Assessment
2011–12	K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (DC Priority Standards) K–12 DC Science Standards	English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10—Priority standards Composition: 4, 7, 10—Field test Science: 5, 8, and biology—Not included in accountability *Optional Grades 2 and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2012–13	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 DC Science Standards	English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10 Composition: 4, 7, 10—Included in accountability Science: 5, 8, and biology—Not included in accountability *Optional Grades 2 and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2013–14	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 DC Science Standards	English/Language Arts: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10 Composition: 4, 7, 10 Science: 5, 8, and biology—Included in accountability *Optional Grades 2 and 9: English/Language Arts and Math*
2014–15	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Mathematics (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 NGSS	PARCC Assessment

As with all other assessment development, educators will approve field test items through content and bias review; the DC OSSE will provide a strand-level blueprint to support schools

and teachers in preparing students for the assessment. This will also signal to the field the importance of science and give the DC OSSE an opportunity to begin the discussions on the NGSS expected to be completed this summer.

For the first time in 2012, the DC OSSE administered the DC CAS assessments in English/Language Arts and mathematics for grade 2 and English/Language Arts for grade 9 aligned to the CCSS. Originally, these second and ninth grade assessments were only for the DCPS, the District of Columbia's largest LEA. However, after several charter LEAs also requested the assessments, the DC OSSE assumed the DCPS's test contract and made the assessment available for no charge to charter LEAs as an option.

At this time, the DC OSSE does not plan to require these second and ninth grade assessments or to use the data at the statewide accountability level. However, that decision may change depending on input from stakeholders and the need for inclusion in the accountability framework. The benefit to offering these assessments is that it gives LEAs another data point to determine whether students are on track to succeed. The second and ninth grade assessments give LEAs an early indicator of students' achievement and instructional competencies aligned to the CCSS.

Through RTTT, participating LEAs have agreed to adopt interim assessments aligned with the CCSS in all schools. All other LEAs are encouraged to follow the same practice. The DC OSSE assists LEAs in choosing quality vendors by providing an "Interim Assessment Provider List." LEAs adopting paced-interim assessments have developed a supportive professional development plan designed to build teacher capacity around using student data to drive instruction.

To ensure consistent improvement, each LEA works with its vendor to collect data in a timely manner so the information can be analyzed during professional development to enhance teacher practice and inform future instruction. As the DC OSSE moves closer to the PARCC assessment, its goal is to have a robust DC CAS item pool aligned to the CCSS for LEAs to use as part of the interim assessment system.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and other supports to prepare teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new standards? If so, will the planned professional development and supports prepare teachers 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 inform instruction?*

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and supports to prepare principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership based on the new standards? If so, will this plan prepare principals to do so?*

Supporting Educators

To promote the overall goal of statewide understanding of the CCSS and to ensure successful implementation, the DC OSSE is providing ongoing state-level training to LEA staff in the

areas of ELA, math, pedagogy, and assessment. The professional development will be provided for both educators and school leaders and will disseminate the state-level message as well as assist those LEAs with greater needs around curriculum planning. Lead authors of the CCSS have identified six instructional shifts in both ELA and math. The ELA shifts include balancing nonfiction and fiction text, building knowledge in the disciplines, and increasing text complexity with grade advancement, text-based answers, writing from sources, and academic vocabulary. Mathematics instructional shifts include focus, coherence, fluency, deep understanding, applications, and dual intensity of practicing and understanding.

The DC OSSE will provide schools with a specified level of professional development based on how they are classified, as detailed in Principles 2 and 3. For example, to ensure the District of Columbia meets the needs of teachers in the lowest-performing schools or teachers who are not rated effective or highly effective, preference will be given to them to attend live professional development sessions that fill up quickly. The DC OSSE will also be available to provide more on-site trainings at focus and priority schools. For educators and school leaders in other school categories, the DC OSSE will make available more webinars and online tools and will focus in-person trainings on specialized topics.

Rather than offer professional development that simply makes educators and school leaders familiar with a set of standards, the trainings the DC OSSE offers are delivered through the lens of the instructional shifts, thus promoting and supporting a deep and internalized understanding of the new standards' teaching and learning principles. This approach allows teachers and school leaders to become familiar with the CCSS, compare former District of Columbia standards to the CCSS, and develop an understanding of how teaching, learning, and instructional materials will need to evolve to meet the demand of the new standards' increased rigor.

Two specific examples of trainings the DC OSSE offers through the Department of Standards, Assessment and Accountability to teachers and administrators addressing these instructional shifts include *Instructional Routines for Effective Small Group Instruction and Intervention* and *Authentic Performance Tasks*.

The *Instructional Routines for Effective Small Group Instruction and Intervention* training is designed to support teachers across the District of Columbia, where approximately 55 percent of students (elementary and secondary) are scoring below proficient in English/Language Arts. Based on the "gradual release of responsibility" model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) and targeted to address specific English/Language Arts (ELA) needs (comprehension, fluency, phonics, vocabulary), the training aims to teach participants six explicit and systematic instructional routines. These routines provide precise teaching moves to accelerate students' learning and boost their ability to understand complex text.

The *Authentic Performance Tasks* training answers the call for building knowledge in the disciplines so that students develop deep understanding of text through intense practice and providing text-based answers. Having a collection of motivating, authentic performance assessments with corresponding tasks and rubrics aligned to the CCSS across grade levels and

content areas is a key strategy to differentiate instruction. Using these tools effectively also will motivate students, increase achievement, and save teachers' time. The seminar provides step-by-step procedures that will help educators make differentiated instruction happen in the classroom.

Specifically, to address and promote school leadership for implementation of the CCSS, the DC OSSE is offering a weeklong Summer Leadership Institute open to all schools willing to commit to a year-long, classroom based lesson study of CCSS implementation. The DC OSSE is collaborating with Achieve, the project management partner for PARCC, for additional support for principals, and principals, assistant principals, and others will participate in the Educator Leader Cadres.

To effectively implement the CCSS for mathematics, the DC OSSE will concentrate on addressing the instructional shifts between the District of Columbia's standards and the CCSS while incorporating the Standards for Mathematical Practice. In 2011, the DC OSSE conducted a crosswalk comparing the District of Columbia's standards and the CCSS. This analysis revealed major areas of difference, and those shifts are now driving the effort to tailor instruction aligned to the CCSS that ultimately will move student achievement upward.

The DC OSSE will provide opportunities for all LEAs to build their instructional capacity through various mediums, such as trainings, accessing videos that model exemplar lessons on the DC OSSE's Common Core website, reviewing exemplar tasks and lessons specifically aligned to the CCSS-M, and examining sample assessment items that provide students with consistent exposure to higher-level questions expected in instruction and parallels what will be seen on PARCC.

As part of the DC OSSE's commitment to continuous and sustainable improvement, participant feedback is solicited and analyzed after each professional development session. The feedback is, and will continue to be, used to inform both stakeholder understanding and future professional development sessions.

For the District of Columbia to be successful in improving student achievement, LEAs must be integrally involved in supporting teachers and school leaders as they bring the CCSS to the classroom. Through RTTT, each LEA created an implementation plan to include professional development, curriculum alignment, program evaluation, and analysis of quality material that was reviewed and approved by the Common Core Task Force. Each year, LEAs must revisit and revise their implementation plan and include in their statement of work how they will support the transition to the CCSS.

The 2011 PLaCEs grant supported a consortium of RTTT-participating charter LEAs and DCPS schools in developing a professional learning community that has created an online library of 50 CCSS video lessons per grade in both mathematics and English/Language Arts for grades 3 through 9 to support every teacher in the adoption of the CCSS, regardless of participation in RTTT. To date, 350 videos have been created with another 40 videos to be completed by the end of the school year. The consortium uses the internationally recognized technique of

lesson study: a collaborative approach in which teachers develop pedagogical content knowledge to research, evaluate, and refine the teaching of the CCSS. The consortium's lesson study teams are creating and refining exemplar lessons to add to the video lesson library. In an embedded "each one, teach one" approach, the consortium's first cohort of 12 schools will mentor a set of schools in year one that will become the consortium's second cohort in year two.

As a governing state of PARCC, the District of Columbia will make available all resources provided by the consortium, including, but not limited to, the principle of Universal Design for Learning. Currently, the District of Columbia serves as the chair for the Common Core Implementation and Educator Engagement working group. This group was integral in releasing the PARCC Model Content Frameworks and creation of Educator Leader Cadres. The District has disseminated the Model Content Frameworks and invited educators to take part in informational webinars.

The DC OSSE will also participate in the Educator Leader Cadres with members from both the DCPS and the charter schools to build expertise in the field by assembling a cohort of dedicated District of Columbia Educators to join the DC PARCC Educator Leader Cadre. These select individuals are experts in ELA and/or mathematics and will serve all of DC in leading the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. Cadre members will engage in professional development with other educators, from participating PARCC states. Through face-to-face meetings and virtual convening, the educator leaders will share best practices regarding implementation and use of PARCC materials, engage in reviewing PARCC and PARCC state developed instructional materials, and become active leaders in state and local implementation efforts. This work will be aligned with the District of Columbia's implementation plans and is expected to continue and grow through 2014-2015 and beyond.

A gap analysis conducted by an independent assessment contractor will also determine areas of improvement and/or need as determined by DC CAS scores and the grade correlation between the District of Columbia's current standards and the CCSS. This analysis will be completed by August 2012. Transition units will also be developed to help LEAs improve their instruction to the CCSS.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question – *Does the SEA intend to work with the State's IHEs and other teacher and principal preparation programs to better prepare: 1) incoming teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new college- and career-ready standards; and 2) incoming principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership on teaching to the new standards? If so, will the implementation of the plan likely improve the preparation of incoming teachers and principals?*

Through partnerships with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), the DC OSSE is actively addressing teacher preparation courses focusing on the CCSS. Specifically, mathematics and ELA courses will be designed to give aspiring teachers greater exposure and interaction with the CCSS with considerations for all student populations, including English language learners and students with disabilities. The DC OSSE collectively recognizes that to have successful students who are ready for college and careers, it must have teachers who

are more than capable to prepare them. The DC OSSE and UDC are looking at ways that the CCSS can be infused into teacher preparation courses so that aspiring educators are competent and confident about implementing them in their daily instruction.

The DC OSSE will explore how teacher licensure criteria will change based on the CCSS, especially in the area of literacy. Because of the literacy standards for science, social studies, and other technical subjects in grades 6 through 12, the DC OSSE must determine whether all teachers in those subjects would be required to have some type of formal literacy training, since teachers in those subjects would also be teachers of English/Language Arts and writing skills. In addition, the DC OSSE will tailor professional development based on school designation described in Principle 2 and the tiered teacher effectiveness plan in Principle 3 to meet the needs of all teachers. The DC OSSE will provide guidance on how teacher effectiveness plans can be aligned to the CCSS.

Through partnerships with research institutions of higher education, the DC OSSE will address continuous teacher and principal improvement and development across all aspects of instruction related to the CCSS and educational leadership. Leader Preparation Report Cards will be developed and implemented through The DC OSSE's RTTT project to identify principal and school leadership professional development needs and develop aligned, relevant and timely professional development aligned to the CCSS. Combined with the DC OSSE's licensure process with state-approved programs, these efforts will serve as venues for leadership collaboration and capacity building to increase academic rigor for all students through the CCSS.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA plan to expand access to college-level courses or their prerequisites, dual enrollment courses, or accelerated learning opportunities? If so, will this plan lead to more students having access to courses that prepare them for college and a career?*

Currently, the DC OSSE is reviewing the graduation requirements in partnership with the State Board of Education to explore dual enrollment and competency-based opportunities for students.

In addition, the DC OSSE's Postsecondary Division in collaboration with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education is developing regulations to guide dual enrollment course offerings throughout the District. A dual enrollment program enables high school students to enroll in approved college courses, taken on a college campus, and to simultaneously earn high school and college credit. Dual enrollment allows students to experience the college environment, the academic rigor of college courses, and allows them to better understand what is required of them to succeed in college. Dual enrollment course opportunities also increase students' engagement by giving them access to more academic courses and incentivize their pursuit of postsecondary enrollment by reducing the time to complete a postsecondary degree. Finally, dual enrollment provides an opportunity for high schools and postsecondary institutions to collaboratively strengthen their institutional and curricular partnerships.

The DC OSSE is on track to submit Proposed Regulations by September 2012, and submit the Final Regulations, Guidance, and FAQs by October 1, 2012. The DC OSSE has been collaborating closely with both DCPS and the PCSB on the regulations. All LEAs interested in offering dual enrollment opportunities to their students will begin collaborating with the District's postsecondary institutions shortly thereafter to create Dual Enrollment Partnership Agreements. If funds are available, the DC OSSE will support a financial aid and college preparation boot camp program for dual enrollment students with the first boot camp program by January 2013.

The DC OSSE provides access to rigorous career preparation for DC high school students through the Office of Career and Technical Education. This office provides guidance and funding to DCPS and other local education agencies, including charter schools, in support of high quality career and technical education. Using both local and federal funding streams, the Office supports programs in 16 career clusters representing high skill/ high wage employment opportunities, particularly in STEM fields.

Located in 20 of the 32 District high schools, these programs reach over 5000 students annually. With guidance from the DC OSSE, these high schools offer a sequence of career and technical education courses that combine rigorous academics and advanced technical knowledge. The course sequences are organized around industry-based standards, assessments, and curricula. In addition the courses provide high school students with the opportunity to participate in internships, gain early college credit though dual enrollment, and earn certificates or industry-recognized credentials. Examples of successful programs include whole-school reform initiatives such as the six high schools involved in Project Lead the Way and the two high schools involved in High Schools that Work.

Other notable programs include STEM-based programs such as the pre-engineering programs at Cardozo and Dunbar Senior High Schools, and the science and technology programs at Wilson and McKinley. The DC OSSE also supports the Microsoft Academy at Woodson High School, an intensive information technology program, and Prime Movers Media, a rigorous multi-media journalism program operating in seven schools across the District. Through these programs, the DC OSSE's Office of Career and Technical Education is exposing District of Columbia high school students to diverse career pathways and increasing their opportunities for educational and career success.

Summary

The District of Columbia's size and proximity makes it nimble, which provides a great advantage in the implementation of the CCSS and transition to aligned assessments. From the very start of the process, there has been stakeholder buy-in, support, and a desire for an aggressive time frame for implementation. This timeline will allow the District of Columbia to get a head start in providing schools and educators the necessary resources and support so that the standards can be implemented with fidelity by 2014–15. This will give students the

best opportunity to show success through the PARCC assessment and to demonstrate college- and career-readiness.

For additional information, see Attachment 12: Principle 1 Documents

Key Milestones Chart (All Principles)

2012 DC CAS Blueprints for English/Language Arts and Math

Grade 4, 7, and 10 Common Core Aligned Prompts–Composition

The DC OSSE CORE Professional Development

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**
X 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	☐ 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)

	grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.	

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

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

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

The District of Columbia application for flexibility proposes a system of school recognition, accountability, and support-based interventions that will focus on enhancing student growth and enhanced achievement. These goals will be achieved through clear expectations, targeted supports, and leveraging a wide array of District resources. This proposal capitalizes on the distinct functions within our system, differentiating the DC OSSE's role as State education agency (SEA), the Public Charter School Board's (PCSB), role as the charter authorizer, and the variety of public schools, with one geographical, traditional LEA and 53 charter schools. This model relies upon in-depth and accurate data collection to support decisions targeted at student achievement and growth including identified subgroups, and accountability and support to schools and education professionals.

In recent years, LEAs have spent considerable time designing and implementing frameworks for school evaluations. The PCSB created the Performance Management Framework (PMF) for charter schools, and the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) adopted the School Scorecard system. Both unveiled recently, the systems provide valuable insight with an array of comparable data points for the evaluation of school effectiveness on student learning. (See Attachment 13 for more information on the PMF and the School Scorecard system.) The District's proposal for flexibility will build on this work for the statewide accountability system.

This proposal is based on the belief that educators and professionals in schools are in the best position to identify and respond to student needs. The DC OSSE is committed to the autonomous school bargain, which provides LEAs with autonomy in exchange for performance

and results in student achievement and growth for all students and subgroups. Our ESEA waiver request extends this philosophy by establishing ambitious and achievable goals to improve student achievement.

Through the implementation of the new accountability framework, the DC OSSE expects to see a number of educational improvements. During School Year (SY) 2010–11, 45 percent of District of Columbia students were proficient in English/Language Arts and 47 percent tested proficient in math. Using strategies outlined in this ESEA flexibility request, proficiency rates are expected to improve statewide to 73 percent in English/Language Arts and 74 percent in mathematics by 2017. Additionally, the District expects to see graduation rates improve substantially. For SY 2010–11, the cohort graduation rate is 59 percent. The goal is to have a graduation rate of 85 percent. The District seeks to achieve this goal by setting targets that reduce the number of non-graduates by 10 percent each year.

Commitment to Educational Excellence

The District of Columbia has made tremendous efforts to drive academic achievement in schools through policy changes and support, including a commitment to charter schools, mayoral control, universal high-quality early childhood education, rigorous programs enacted under Race to the Top (RTTT), and a strong tradition of school choice.

In 2007 the District revamped its educational system with the passage of the Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA). This Act brought about major shifts in management, accountability, and oversight. PERAA turned over control of the DCPS to the Mayor, which set the stage for reinvigorated efforts to improve public schools, including closing low-performing or under-enrolled schools, creating the IMPACT teacher and staff evaluation system, providing bonuses for highly effective teachers, and increasing momentum around improvement. Additionally, PERAA eliminated the DC Board of Education as a charter school authorizer, placed former Board of Education charter schools under the oversight authority of the PCSB, transferred the Board's state-level authority to a new SEA (the DC OSSE), and created the State Board of Education (SBOE) to provide leadership in policy for all publicly-funded DC schools.

In 2012, the Center for Education Reform ranked the District of Columbia first in the nation in its charter school law. Over the past 15 years, the Districts' robust charter schools have grown to serve 41 percent of District public school students, making the District of Columbia the state with the largest share of publicly-educated pupils enrolled in charter schools. New charters open each year, and existing charter schools consistently add grades each year.

Mayor Vincent Gray continues to focus support on universal, high-quality pre-K for District of Columbia three- and four-year-olds. This initiative has been exceptionally successful. According to the *Education Week for Quality Counts* report released in January 2011, the District has the highest participation rates for early childhood education in the nation, with more than 65 percent of three- and four-year-olds enrolled in academic programs, and 87 percent of kindergarten students enrolled in academic programs.

For elementary and secondary education, the District has an established effort around school

improvement that includes a vast majority of DC students—RTTT. The significant work that has been done under this grant provides a unique opportunity to expand collaboration, share best practices across DCPS and public charter schools, and provide effective recognition and professional development.

The RTTT framework provides opportunities to buttress the support system for the bottom 20 percent schools through the development of LEA and state-level data systems to support instructional improvement, and the expansion of new teacher evaluation systems based on student performance that have been implemented in 30 RTTT LEAs serving over 90 percent of pre-K–12 students.

One example of the District's ability to quickly enact reforms is our common core state standard (CCSS) adoption and transition efforts. The DC OSSE was the second SEA in the nation to align its English/Language Arts (ELA) state assessments to college- and career-ready standards and will align mathematics by 2013. This allows LEAs and schools to tailor instruction and supports using student assessment results aligned to the CCSS.

NCLB laudably focused on student performance and increased accountability for high-need students. However, it has resulted in unintended consequences, such as narrowing the scope of school curriculum. The focus on test scores to the exclusion of student growth and gains has inadvertently lowered rather than raised school standards. Interventions under this system continue to be a "one size fits all" approach, limiting LEAs and schools from tailoring services to more individualized student and school needs.

Under the status quo, the DC OSSE capacity and support for LEAs and schools is spread thin given the number of LEAs and schools under the current system that must be identified as "failing" schools. With this application, the DC OSSE broadens the scope of rewards and recognition to include schools that show significant student progress, and tailors state-level supports based on need.

The District of Columbia's application for ESEA flexibility is a commitment to smarter decisions based on innovative, research-based strategies to support dramatic improvements at low-performing schools and sustained improvement for all schools.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

The DC OSSE proposes two AMOs for the District: proficiency in ELA and proficiency in mathematics. Proficiency AMOs will be reported annually at the state, LEA, and school levels for all students and all subgroups, and will be used to guide interventions in LEAs and schools identified as needing additional support. AMOs will initially be set at the school level based on school year 2010-11 performance; trajectories will be set to decrease by half the percentage of non-proficient students by 2017 through interim school-based targets.

The proficiency AMO seeks to reduce by half at the school level the number of students who are not proficient within six years. This trajectory will result in an average 4.5% annual growth in each school, which is projected to include approximately 1,450 additional students that will

be identified as proficient each year, or an average increase at each school of eight additional students achieving proficiency each year. The following charts show how these targets are projected under the waiver.

Figure 2.A.i.1: English/Language Arts State Targets

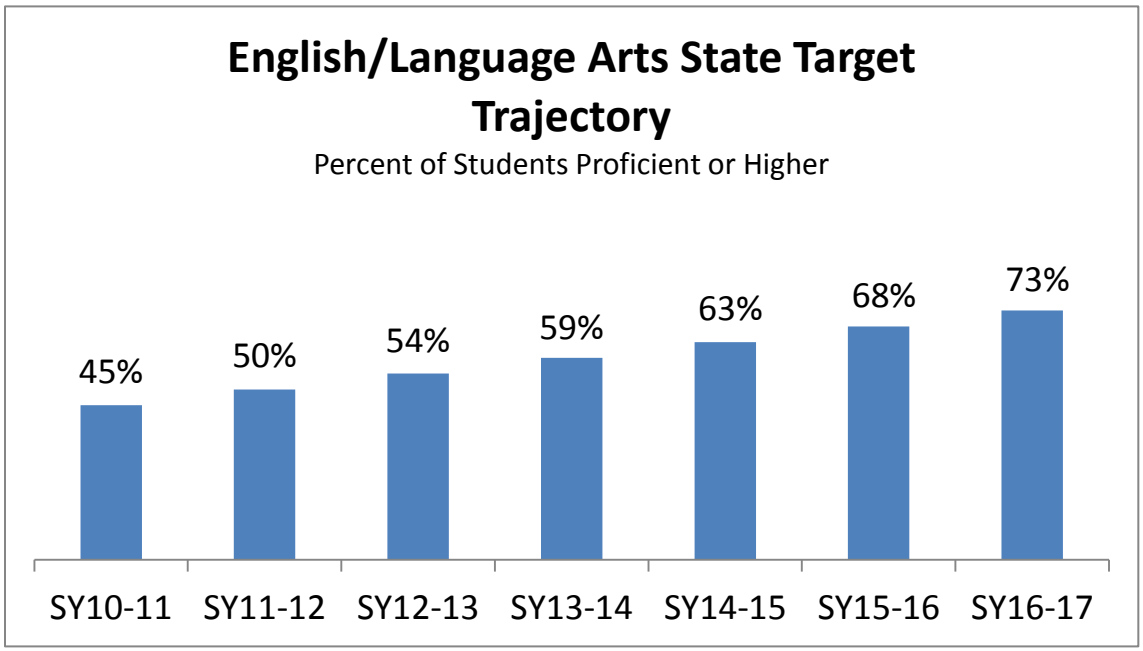
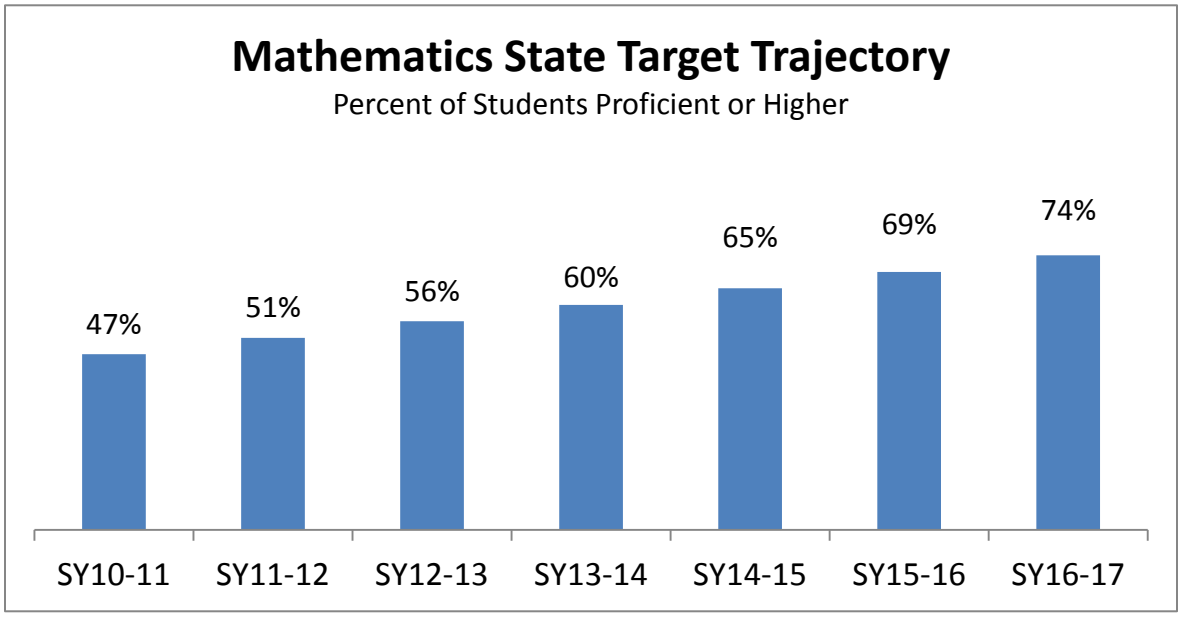


Figure 2.A.i.2: Mathematics State Targets



A more in-depth discussion of AMOs, their significance, and how they are calculated can be found in Section 2B.

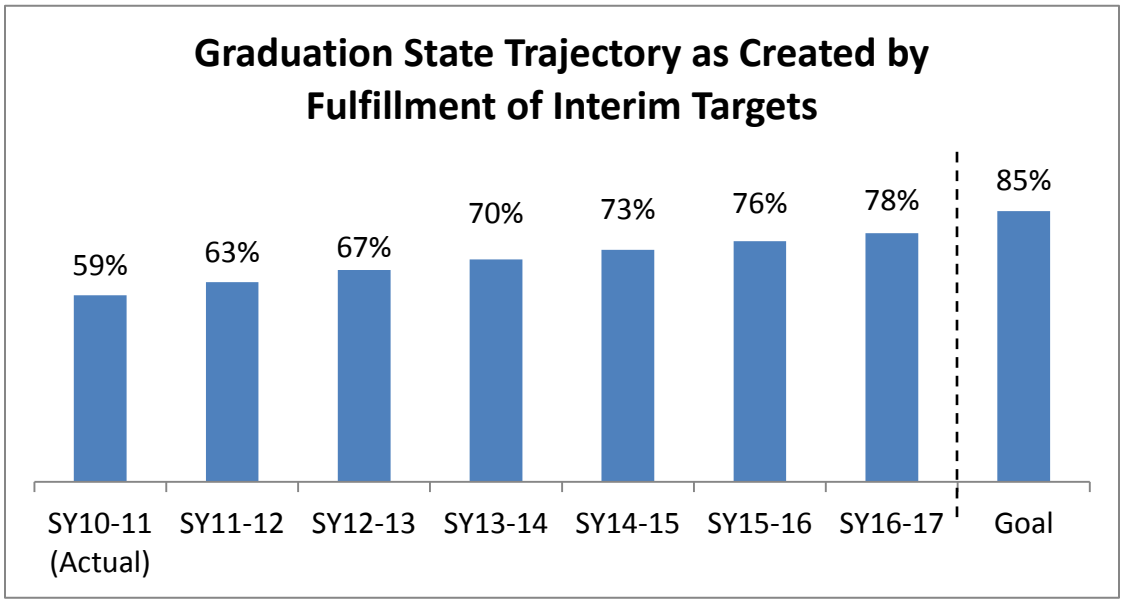
Graduation Rate

The District's plan to maintain its statewide adjusted cohort graduation rate goal of 85 percent is consistent with the current graduation rate goal as listed in the accountability workbook. To reach this goal, the District has set interim graduation rate targets based on annually reducing the number of non-graduating students by 10% from the prior year's rate. This progression with the interim targets is shown below in Tables 2.A.i.1 and Figure 2.A.i.3.

Table 2.A.i.1: Interim Graduation Targets

Year	Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Interim Target	Non-Graduates	Change in number of non-graduates
2010-11 Actual	58.6%	2095	
2011-12 Interim Target	62.7%	1886	209 (10%)
2012-13 Interim Target	66.5%	1697	189 (10%)
2013-14 Interim Target	69.8%	1527	170 (10%)
2014-15 Interim Target	72.8%	1374	153 (10%)
2015-16 Interim Target	75.5%	1237	137 (10%)
2016-17 Interim Target	78.0%	1113	124 (10%)
DC Goal	**85.0%**	**758**	

Figure 2.A.i.3: Interim Graduation Targets



SEA Accountability System: Identification and Classification

The accountability system proposed in this application includes a classification system that uses student proficiency and growth to provide each school with a school index score (covering all students), and a subgroup index scores for all subgroups for which the school is accountable. The index scores will be used to identify high-performing, high-progress, and struggling schools on an annual basis.

For the identification of schools, as described later in this request, the DC OSSE will determine a school index score for each school. These school index scores are derived from student-level index values based on student performance of proficiency, advanced proficiency, or growth. There are two types of scores that will be created for each school. The first is an all students school index score, which represents all students the school is accountable for, and represents overall performance of the school. The second type of score is a subgroup index score for each subgroup for which that school is accountable, and it identifies any achievement gaps at the school. All students school index scores will be used annually to classify schools into five categories: reward, rising, developing, focus, and priority. "Subgroup" index scores will be used to classify schools as focus schools based on the achievement gaps. Both index scores are aspects of the overall accountability system, which also takes into account the adjusted cohort graduation rate, participation in School Improvement Grants, and assessment participation rates. These concepts are discussed further in Sections 2.B, 2.C, 2.D, 2.E, 2.F and 2.G.

Placement into the classifications based on the school index scores and other measures discussed herein will determine technical assistance, support, oversight, funding flexibility, and

recognition that a school will receive. Priority schools will receive intensive interventions, focus schools will receive targeted interventions, and developing/rising schools will receive guided interventions. Reward schools will receive maximum programmatic and fiscal flexibility. A more detailed and comprehensive explanation of the index scores, including how they are calculated, can be found in Section 2.B. Further discussion of implications of classifications can be found in Sections 2.C, 2.D, 2.E, and 2.F.

Report Cards

The development of this proposed accountability system has created an opportunity to engage the broad spectrum of stakeholders (LEAs, charter school authorizers, parents, elected officials, community members, and interested individuals) in the development, collection, and reporting of educational data. The District plans to leverage this capacity to begin reporting on critical factors that parents need to make informed decisions about selecting a well-suited school for their children. The DC OSSE will collaborate with community partners to develop a program to assist parents in the use of accountability information, enabling greater transparency and sound educational decisions. The DC OSSE will achieve this goal, first, by creating annual school report cards, and, second, by training parents to understand and use these report cards. Report cards will include graduation rates by subgroup, elementary and middle school attendance rates, DC CAS participation rate by subgroup, and the AMOs. Participation rate and AMOs will be reported separately for reading and mathematics. Report cards will be published each summer, and will provide the performance on targets as well as the resulting school classification.

In addition to school-level report cards, the DC OSSE will report performance on AMOs by subgroup at the LEA and state levels. Since the DCPS LEA report card covers all DCPS schools, the DC OSSE will also issue a report card that includes overall performance of all charter LEAs based on subgroup and all students AMOs to inform school choice and support the monitoring of PCSB's roles and responsibilities with regard to ESEA accountability. Additional, detailed information about robust school reports can be found in Section 2F.

Development and Dissemination of Additional Data

The DC OSSE will continue to report information required by federal law, including student progress on measurable objectives, test participation rates, graduation rates for adjusted cohort, and other academic indicators. In addition, ongoing federal grant awards around the State Longitudinal Education Data system (SLED) and RTTT will support the DC OSSE's implementation of an online data portal that will provide parents and stakeholders with a detailed view into the range of school performance data including enrollment, college-readiness, assessments, and the accountability information proposed in this ESEA flexibility request. This portal will be available to the public in August 2012.

Although school choice presumes that families have adequate information to make informed decisions, the recent report on school choice by Russ Whitehurst of the Brookings Institute found that even states and school districts that encourage school choice do not provide in-

depth, transparent information on school performance, which inhibits comparisons of schools and undermines meaningful school selection. The Districts agrees and supports parents' ability to make informed decisions by providing school information including student and teacher data, absentee rates, parental satisfaction, course offerings, and the ratio of applications to the number of available slots as suggested by Mr. Whitehurst. The waiver will provide an opportunity to address the kinds of data gaps outlined in the Brookings institution.[1]

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

Statewide Network of Tiered Recognition, Accountability, and Support

As the SEA, the DC OSSE is responsible for the statewide accountability system. This accountability system identifies and classifies schools into one of five categories based on relevant performance indicators. This tiered recognition system will be structured to provide schools with appropriate resources. The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (ELSEC) within the DC OSSE has recently established the Innovation and Improvement team (INI) as part of RTTT. The INI is responsible for managing the school improvement process for the DC OSSE, including:

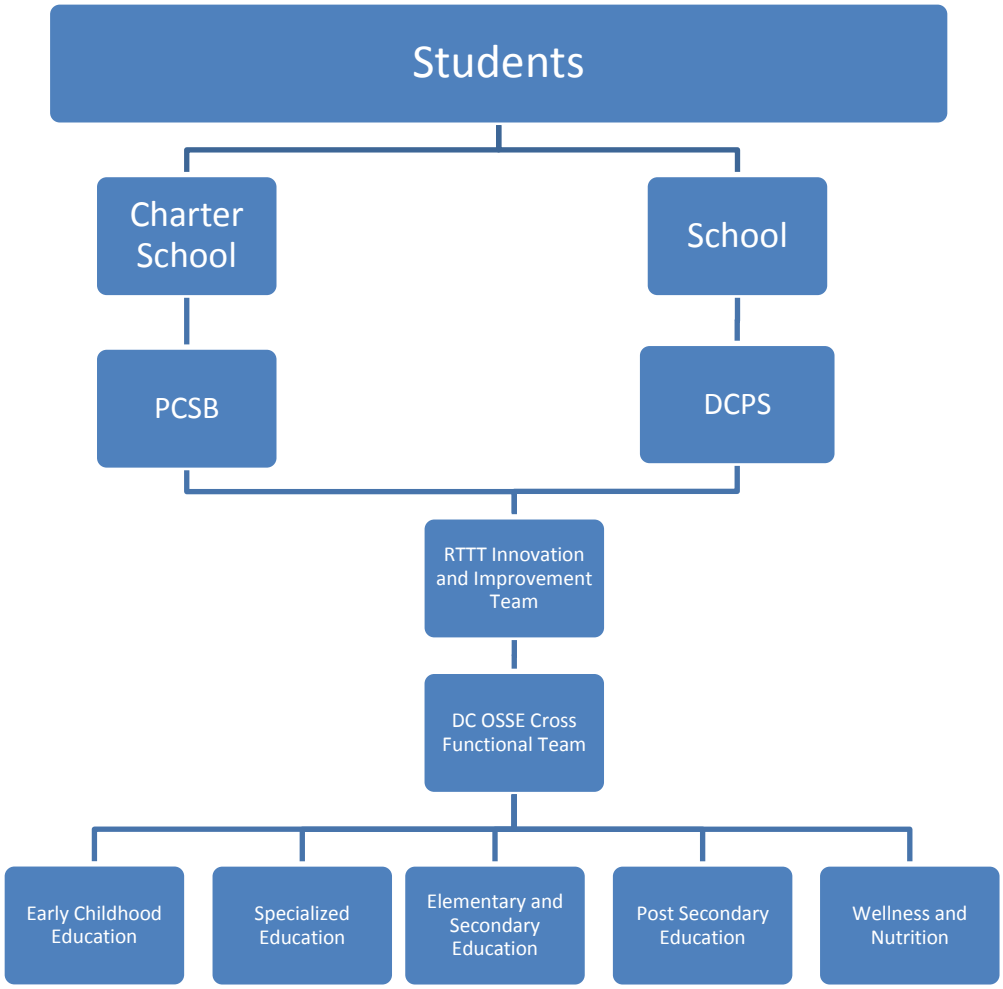
- Partnering with the DCPS and the PCSB to assist schools with their needs assessment, coordination, and development of programs and use of federal funds;
- Reviewing and providing recommendations to the DCPS and the PCSB regarding interventions for focus and priority schools;
- Providing on-going training, technical assistance and guidance to the DCPS and the PCSB regarding school improvement strategies;
- Developing, collecting, and disseminating progress reports through the DCPS and the PCSB on a bi-annual basis for focus and priority schools;
- Monitoring services provided by the DCPS and the PCSB as these entities implement interventions to focus and priority schools; and
- Convening a Cross-Functional Team (CFT) of key leadership from other divisions within the DC OSSE.

The role of the CFT is to advise the INI on how best to leverage state-level resources to assist school improvement efforts within focus and priority schools, and assist in the review of school plans submitted by the DCPS and the PCSB.

The chart below (Figure 2.A.i.4) provides an organizational representation of how the statewide level of tiered recognition, accountability, and support will be managed.

[1] Whitehurst, Russ. "The Education Choice and Competition Index: Background and Results 2011." The Brookings Institute, Washington, DC, Nov. 30, 2011.

Figure 2.A.i.4: Statewide Network of Tiered Support



Like other SEAs, the DC OSSE assumes responsibility for clarifying roles, responsibilities, processes, supports, and accountability, and will ensure that the statewide system of tiered recognition, accountability, and support can help LEAs and schools improve academic achievement and graduation rates and close achievement gaps lowest-performing subgroups. Under this system, the DCPS and the PCSB are held accountable for the implementation and success of interventions and supports to schools, with the DC OSSE through the INI acting in a supportive role. It is essential for the DC OSSE to provide well-coordinated services to LEAs and schools in order to maximize all available resources and minimize the burden on the DC OSSE departments, LEAs, and schools. More information about tiered accountability and support can be found in Section 2.B, 2.D, 2.E, 2.F and 2.G.

The DC OSSE and the PCSB intend to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding ("Agreement") for the purpose of establishing roles and oversight methods for implementing

the terms specified by the U.S. Department of Education (Department) invitation and guiding principles established by the Department for SEAs requesting ESEA flexibility. This Agreement will address responsibilities of the DC OSSE as the SEA and the PCSB as the District public charter school authorizer consistent with Federal and District law and Department guidance. The DC OSSE and the PCSB are dedicated to working collaboratively to improve student outcomes. Details regarding roles and responsibilities of the PCSB are included throughout Principle 2.

The DC OSSE will also coordinate with the external partners, including education advocacy groups, community-based organizations, parents, teachers, and school leaders to develop a strong statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability, and support. These entities will also provide assistance to the INI as appropriate to help identify statewide needs and support implementation including the realignment of federal resources, monitoring progress, and reporting to the public. A more detailed discussion of rewards and supports that are already developed and established with stakeholder input can be found in Section 2.C and 2. F.

As the SEA, the DC OSSE will help build capacity at the LEA and school level through guidance, technical assistance/support, and opportunities to participate in state-level trainings on: CCSS implementation; developing and implementing teacher and leader evaluation systems; understanding and using the state-level differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system to inform instruction; and maximizing coordination of federal resources to serve special populations (Title I, SIG, Title II, Title III, and others).

The INI will collect bi-annual progress reports and conduct semi-annual monitoring of the DCPS and PCSB to allow for feedback and course corrections as needed. Such monitoring shall include evaluation of the DCPS's and PCSB's effectiveness in implementing accountability interventions and achieving progress in improving school performance and closing achievement gaps. The INI will notify the DCPS and the PCSB of the results of its monitoring and any noted deficiencies. As needed, the DCPS and the PCSB will be required to reply with their corrective action plans within 60 days. The expectation is for DCPS and PCSB to be held to a high standard of accountability so that schools can receive technical assistance and ultimately demonstrate improved academic achievement, increased graduation rates, and decreased achievement gaps among subgroups.

The DC OSSE believes it will best support student achievement by providing schools and LEAs with information on academic outcomes and college success, setting high standards for achievement, and providing supports in identified areas of potential improvement. In turn, schools and LEAs will have the ability to effectively target their resources to areas of need, such as implementing effective curriculum based on strong college- and career-ready standards, preparing all students for college and careers, and creating an effectiveness-driven human capital system for teachers and leaders to benefit students throughout the District of Columbia.

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

The newly-developed, differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will become operational over the summer as described in the timeline below. The successful enhancements of multiple data systems make it possible for real-time student and school-level information to be analyzed to determine classification of schools and student needs. In addition, the work already underway as part of RTTT has provided a jump start on the interventions and supports necessary for improved school and student academic achievement.

The timeline for this plan is below:

- **June 2012** – Data analysis of 2012 DC CAS performance as well as roster confirmation and appeals for 2012 accountability data
- **June 2012** – Communication of updated accountability system and changes in the reporting, intervention, accountability, and recognition system
- **June 2012** - Reporting of school level targets for the 2012-13 school year
- **July 2012** – Reporting of 2012 DC CAS results for AMOs, proficiency, and growth
- **July 2012** – Revision of Title I grant guidelines and application required for schools that do not meet school level targets
- **August 2012** – Identification and distribution of school classifications to the public
- **August 2012** – Inventory and distribution of list of effective external partners and vendors providing services to LEAs
- **August 2012 and beyond –** On-going technical assistance and monitoring as appropriate
- **October 2012** – Improvement plans for focus schools due to INI for review and recommendations
- **October 2012** – Revision of school level Title I plans and use of Title I funds to be completed by LEAs and schools that miss the same AMO for two consecutive years
- **January 2013** - Improvement plans for priority schools due to INI for review and recommendations
- **January 2013** – Mid-year progress reports due to INI from DCPS and PCSB for focus and priority schools **June 2013** – Year-end progress reports due to INI from DCPS and PCSB for focus and priority schools

Summary

A statewide system of recognition, accountability, and support will address the broad spectrum of needs in the District of Columbia. The tiered accountability system envisioned in this application capitalizes on the roles and responsibilities of the SEA, the LEAs, and the charter authorizer for school accountability. Additionally, this system provides flexibility to LEAs and schools with respect to curriculum and programs to promote creative supports that have proven effective in growth and mastery of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) competencies and District–specific academic content standards. Finally, accountability will focus on subgroups, particularly English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, ensuring that results are reported for all subgroups. Subgroup performance data will be used to calculate subgroup index scores, which will allow identification of low performing subgroups (as compared to the state subgroup average), and within-school achievement gaps. The combined

efforts described in this application are specifically focused improving academic achievement, increasing graduation rates, and achieving mastery in the CCSS, while also avoiding unnecessary and counterproductive burdens on schools.

For additional information, see Attachment 13: Principle 2 Documents

- *DC CAS Performance Overview–Graphs*
- *AEI Journal Article: Choice without Options*
- *Why Is AYP a Poor School Performance Measure–FOCUS*
- *Letter from E. L. Haynes*
- *School Reporting Sample*
- *Article: A Closer Look at DC NAEP Scores*
- *DCPS and PCSB Accountability Systems*
- *The DC OSSE and PCSB Authority*
- *LEA and School-Level Recognition and Rewards*
- *LEA Accountability – Priority and Focus Schools*
- *Special Education – Trainings and Toolkits*

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

Option A	**Option B**
☐ The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.	X If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must: a. provide the percentage of students in the "all students" group that performed at the proficient level on the State's most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and

	b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.

During the DC OSSE's conversations with educators, the State Board of Education members, parents, and community leaders, a number of stakeholders expressed concern about focusing solely on ELA and math for assessing student proficiency. Through this ESEA flexibility request, the District will redefine what "counts" for students in the District of Columbia with the inclusion of composition and science assessments in the new accountability system.

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

Student performance on the DC CAS composition exam over the past four years has indicated that fewer than half of all students tested in grades 4, 7, and 10 perform at a proficient level. To address this finding, the DC OSSE will be including composition in the accountability system, to ensure a renewed focus on critical thinking and writing skills, so that students are prepared to compete successfully in colleges and careers. The following chart presents the percentage of the "all students" group proficient in composition at grades 4, 7, and 10.

Table 2.A.ii.1: District of Columbia Composition Proficiency Levels

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Grade 4	40.00%	38.29%	32.20%	34.01%
Grade 7	37.20%	42.07%	45.38%	33.32%
Grade 10	38.60%	24.59%	28.80%	31.01%

In 2012, the DC CAS composition assessment will be aligned to CCSS for ELA and will focus on responses to text. Students will be asked to analyze and compare contrasting texts, and to respond to questions by applying critical thinking skills, building upon skills taught in ELA and other subjects. The DC OSSE included the pilot composition assessment in the April 2012 DC CAS administration. The DC OSSE will analyze the results of the 2012 assessments and use this information to guide professional development in summer and fall 2012. The newly-aligned composition assessment will become a part of the accountability system starting with the 2013 test administration, allowing time for LEAs to become familiar with the assessment and to continue curriculum alterations in response to the adoption of the CCSS for statewide assessment.

Science assessments are important for promoting a comprehensive, well-rounded curriculum that is not limited to merely ELA and math. By including science in the accountability system, students will receive richer instruction across all content areas and become better lifelong learners through integration of mathematics and science skills. Supporting high-quality science

instruction bolsters efforts already underway at some LEAs and schools to engage students through hands-on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. The inclusion of science ensures attention to the subject's importance—underscored by President Obama's recent call to graduate 100,000 more scientists and engineers—and allows the DC OSSE to accelerate efforts to align to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which will be completed this summer.

The need to address science and enhance performance is clear from current science proficiency results, with fewer than 40 percent of the District's students in grades 5, 8, and high school proficient in science. Since science performance is closely tied to performance in ELA and math, the DC OSSE expects to see increases in student proficiency across all three subjects by integrating science into the accountability plan.

Table 2.A.ii.2: District of Columbia Science Proficiency Levels

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Grade 5	32.35%	34.78%	38.93%	37.84%
Grade 8	21.93%	29.89%	35.28%	36.90%
Biology	38.60%	24.59%	28.80%	31.01%

Recently, the District of Columbia's science content standards earned a grade of "A" by a Thomas Fordham Institute study. However, student performance on the DC CAS science assessment shows that the District's highly-ranked science standards are not resulting in increased student proficiency levels. The 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) measured students' knowledge and abilities in physical science, life science, and earth and space sciences;[2] The percentage of DC students that scored "proficient" was in single digits.

For these reasons, and in response to requests to increase the number of subjects included in the accountability plan, the DC OSSE will introduce a new DC CAS science assessment in 2014. The delayed inclusion is in response to LEA requests to allow time for more District educators to be involved in the blueprint development, item review, data analysis, and professional development related to teaching to the standards. This timeline will facilitate a positive transition plan for including new subjects while supporting schools and educators through the transition.

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

The District of Columbia's new accountability system will include science and composition in the accountability index, and these new assessments will be weighted based on the percentage of total students taking these at a school during a given year; ELA and mathematics are assessed in seven grade levels, while science and composition are assessed only in three

[2] Education Week. "2011 NAEP Science Scores, Achievement Levels, and Achievement Gaps." May 10, 2012. http://www.edweek.org/ew/section/infographics/naepscience_charts.html

grades. This means that science and composition will typically comprise half the weight of other assessments and those weights will be based on the grade configuration of the school in question. As with all other assessment development, educators will approve the field test items through content and bias review, and the DC OSSE will provide a strand-level blueprint to support schools and teachers in preparing students for the assessment. The timeline for this process is below.

Outreach and Dissemination

To facilitate the introduction of the composition and science assessments as part of the new accountability system, the DC OSSE will collaborate with the DCPS, the PCSB, and others to ensure schools, teachers, and students are prepared. Outreach to stakeholders will be the first action step in the implementation process. The DC OSSE is prepared to provide the necessary guidance and direction to its LEAs and schools to prepare students for success in composition and science. The DC OSSE will also leverage all partnerships to be sure stakeholders, especially parents and teachers, have a full understanding of the shift to the CCSS.

In addition to these partnerships, the DC OSSE is committed to the following:

- Establish a stakeholder working group to help develop an implementation plan that will identify deliverables focused on supports necessary to teachers, schools, and LEAs to ensure a successful transition;
- Review alignment between composition and science assessments to current standards and make adjustments as necessary;
- Provide training and support to LEAs and schools on implementation of composition and science standards in classroom instruction; and
- Provide timely access to composition and science data and supports in understanding results to inform teacher professional development, instruction, and student performance.

Composition Transition to Common Core Standards

- **April 2011** – The DC OSSE shared with the vendor the vision for new composition prompts to assess the CCSS that would allow student to read and write to a text. The DC OSSE selected the CCSS in English/Language Arts and writing for the development of the prompts and created a new rubric for English/Language Arts so that both an English/Language Arts and writing score could be reported.
- **May 2011** – The DC OSSE approved the English/Language Arts passages selected by the vendor.
- **June 2011** – The DC OSSE reviewed and approved the composition prompts developed by the vendor in collaboration with the DC OSSE.
- **August 2011** – The composition prompts were reviewed and approved by District of Columbia educators through content and bias review for field testing, and one prompt was selected from each grade level to be used and released as a sample.

- **October 2011** – The DC OSSE provided professional development to introduce the new prompts, discuss the changes from the previous prompts, and provide best practices for preparing students for the shift.
- **November 2011** – The DC OSSE posted sample prompts for each grade on the website.
- **April 2012** – The DC OSSE field tested the prompts during the DC CAS window.
- **July 2012** – The DC OSSE, with the vendors and District of Columbia educators, will participate in standard setting for the new prompts, write new performance-level descriptors, and select anchor papers for future scoring.
- **August 2012** – The DC OSSE will review the performance data and anchor papers of the prompts to develop professional development to be offered throughout the school year.
- **August 2012** – The vendor will do data analysis of the DC CAS composition performance with the DC CAS English/Language Arts performance to ensure comparability from year to year.
- **April 2013** – The DC CAS composition will be administered.
- **June 2013** – The results of the DC CAS composition will be used for accountability purposes.

Transition to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Assessments

- **May 2012** – The DC OSSE state team meets to review standards and provide commentary for a report on the first round of public feedback and review of the NGSS draft.
- **June 2012** – The DC OSSE will provide feedback from the state team to Achieve, and NGSS writing team reacts to the review.
- **August 2012** – The DC OSSE state team will meet and review standards for the second and final round of public feedback and commentary.
- **September 2012** – The NGSS writing team reacts to the review and Achieve edits the final document.
- **October 2012** – Achieve will release the final version of the NGSS for adoption.
- **December 2012** – The DC OSSE state team reviews final release of the NGSS, examines the crosswalk between the District of Columbia's science standards and the final NGSS, and prepares a presentation to deliver to the State Board of Education recommending adoption.
- **April 2013** – Begin field testing items that are aligned to the NGSS.
- **Summer 2013** – Provide professional development and summer institutes to support educators and school leaders in implementation.
- **Summer 2013** – To support schools in implementation, the DC OSSE state team will develop a suggested scope and sequence for instruction and write items to create interim assessments aligned to the NGSS. The DC OSSE will propose a plan to administer statewide interim assessments for all schools.
- **Summer 2013 –** The NGSS will be implemented in schools with support from the DC OSSE.
- **September 2013 –** Release the blueprint for the shift to begin alignment to the NGSS.
- **April 2014 –** Deliver DC CAS science with a shift to the NGSS and further field testing.

- **June 2014 –** Include modified assessment in the accountability purposes.
- **April 2015 –** DC CAS science fully aligned to the NGSS.

Summary

Feedback from focus groups clearly supports the decision to include additional assessments in the accountability plan. The DC OSSE will add composition to the accountability plan in 2013 and science in 2014. The goal is to promote student mastery in critical thinking and writing skills. Developing quality curriculum and instructional strategies that teach core skills necessary in a twenty-first century learning environment and creating aligned assessments can be a lengthy process. Thus, the District of Columbia will phase in new assessments with enough lead time for schools to adjust their curricula. The phase-in approach also provides teachers time to receive the technical assistance, resources and support they need. With improved data on student achievement outcomes, schools will have a greater opportunity to identify those who are on track for college- and career-readiness and those who may need additional help.

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 English/Language Arts/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA provide the new AMOs and the method used to set these AMOs? Did the SEA use current proficiency rates from the 2010–2011 school year as the base year? If the SEA set AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, do the AMOs require LEAs, schools, and subgroups that are further behind to make greater rates of annual progress?*

The DC OSSE recognizes the value in the original intent of the NCLB and will build upon it to enhance performance and effectively measure school and student success. As with NCLB, the DC OSSE still expects that 100 percent of students will meet proficiency in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). In the proposed new accountability system, the DC OSSE also expects that 100 percent of students will show educational growth each year.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

The DC OSSE will set two school-level AMOs:

- A proficiency-based AMO for English/Language Arts (ELA) by subgroup; and
- A proficiency-based AMO for mathematics by subgroup

The DC OSSE will establish AMOs at the state, LEA, school, and ESEA subgroup levels based on achieving the goal of reducing the number of non-proficient students by half over a six-year timeframe, using the 2010-11 school year as a baseline. Annual reporting will require schools to describe achievement outcomes.

Proficiency AMO

The proficiency AMO is established at the state, LEA, school, and subgroup levels with the goal of reducing by half the number of students who are not proficient within six years. Table 2.B.i. below is an example of the state-level subgroup targets in reading and math based on the 2011 assessment scores. The DC OSSE will calculate school-level targets in the same way based on reducing by half the percentage of students who are non-proficient over six years. Based on this logic and methodology, subgroups of students who are not proficient must make greater gains annually to meet the interim targets. Information about schools that fail to meet the AMO targets is found in section 2.F.

Table 2.B.i. State-Level Targets for Proficiency in Reading and Math

Subgroup	Reading						
	2011 – Baseline	2012 Target	2013 Target	2014 Target	2015 Target	2016 Target	2017 Target
Asian/Pacific Islanders	71.51%	73.88%	76.26%	78.63%	81.01%	83.38%	85.76%
Black/Non-Hispanic	41.28%	46.17%	51.07%	55.96%	60.85%	65.75%	70.64%
Hispanic	47.08%	51.49%	55.90%	60.31%	64.72%	69.13%	73.54%
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native	56.52%	60.14%	63.77%	67.39%	71.01%	74.64%	78.26%
White/Non-Hispanic	88.26%	89.24%	90.22%	91.20%	92.17%	93.15%	94.13%
Disabled	15.94%	22.95%	29.95%	36.96%	43.96%	50.97%	57.97%
LEP/NEP	24.77%	31.04%	37.31%	43.58%	49.85%	56.12%	62.39%
Econ. Disadvantaged	38.34%	43.48%	48.62%	53.76%	58.89%	64.03%	69.17%
All Students (State Total)	45.46%	50.01%	54.55%	59.10%	63.64%	68.19%	72.73%

Subgroup	Math						
	2011 - Baseline	2012 Target	2013 Target	2014 Target	2015 Target	2016 Target	2017 Target
Asian/Pacific Islanders	82.02%	83.52%	85.02%	86.52%	88.01%	89.51%	91.01%
Black/Non-Hispanic	42.05%	46.88%	51.71%	56.54%	61.37%	66.20%	71.03%
Hispanic	53.07%	56.98%	60.89%	64.80%	68.71%	72.62%	76.54%
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native	60.87%	64.13%	67.39%	70.65%	73.91%	77.17%	80.44%
White/Non-Hispanic	88.29%	89.27%	90.24%	91.22%	92.19%	93.17%	94.15%
Disabled	18.87%	25.63%	32.39%	39.15%	45.91%	52.67%	59.44%
LEP/NEP	35.95%	41.29%	46.63%	51.96%	57.30%	62.64%	67.98%
Econ. Disadvantaged	40.95%	45.87%	50.79%	55.71%	60.63%	65.55%	70.48%
All Students (State Total)	47.03%	51.44%	55.86%	60.27%	64.69%	69.10%	73.52%

SEA Accountability System: Identification and Classification

The DC OSSE's proposed accountability system is based on an index comprised of values calculated based on student growth and proficiency on statewide assessments, assessment participation rates, School Improvement Grant (SIG) status, and adjusted cohort graduation

rates.

Calculating Index Values

The cornerstone of the accountability index is the proficiency and growth index value, which is generated at the student level. A student's achievement level in year 1 and year 2 will be compared to Figure 2.B.i to determine how many points to award depending on the achieved level of growth and proficiency.

Figure 2.B.i. Table Points Awarded for Proficiency and Growth Index Values

Minimum N = 25		Current Score						
Prior Score		Below Basic		Basic			Proficient	Advanced
Level	Group	Low	High	Low	Middle	High	All	All
Below Basic	Low	0	20	40	60	80	100	110
	High	0	0	20	40	60	100	110
Basic	Low	0	0	0	20	40	100	110
	Middle	0	0	0	0	20	100	110
	High	0	0	0	0	0	100	110
Proficient	All	0	0	0	0	0	100	110
Advanced	All	0	0	0	0	0	100	110
No Prior Score		0	0	0	0	0	100	110
Alternate Assessment		0		0			100	110

Proficiency and growth index values will be used to calculate school and subgroup index scores.

Index Score Calculation Business Rules

The school and subgroups index score will be used by the DC OSSE to identify high-performing, high-progress, and struggling schools, and to provide corresponding recognition, support, and monitoring.

Table 2.B.ii. Calculating Index Scores: Methodology

Score	Description	Sample Calculation
School Index Score	The school index score is a weighted average of the value-table points assigned in reading and mathematics combined. This index identifies priority, reward, developing and rising schools.	(sum of all index scores for all students that are Full Academic Year/ number of FAY scores for tested grades and subjects = school index score)
Subgroup Index Scores	To identify focus schools, individual index scores for students within a subgroup, and for each subject, are averaged together to produce subgroup subject index scores.	(sum of subgroup subject index scores for all students that are Full Academic Year (FAY)) and belong to subgroup / number of FAY individual index scores that belong to subgroup = subgroup subject index score)

School and Subgroup Index Score

Index values for all full academic year students at each school will be averaged to produce each school's index score. Tested subject values will also be calculated for each subgroup to create subgroup index scores. These subgroup index scores by subject will be used to classify schools as focus schools. All of these index scores will be used as measures of school progress. Table 2.B.iii below provides an example calculation for a school that has a school index score in English/Language Arts of 75 and a school index score in mathematics of 71. The school also has subgroup index scores for ELL English/Language Arts of 89 and ELL mathematics of 82.

Table 2.B.iii. Step 2, Subject Index Scores (Example)

	School Index Scores (All Students), by Tested Subject		Subgroup Index Scores, by Tested Subject		
	Student English/Language Arts Index Value	Student Mathematics Index Value	Subgroup: ELL (check if student is ELL)	Student English/Language Arts Index Value for ELL Students	Student Mathematics Index f Value or ELL Students
Student A	100	100	√	100	100
Student B	110	100			
Student C	110	110	√	110	110
Student D	25	50			
Student E	25	50	√	25	50

Student F	100	100			
Student G	25	25			
Student H	25	0			
Student I	100	50	√	100	50
Student J	110	100	√	110	100
Student K	100	100			
Total Index Score	830	785		445	410
Number of Students	11	11		5	5
School or Subgroup Index Scores, by Tested Subject	830 / 11 = **75**	785 / 11 = **71**		445 / 5 = **89**	410 / 5 = **82**

Use of Index Scores for School Classification

The school index score will be used to classify the school as reward, rising, developing, and priority. This score is calculated by combining all index values that a school has earned in all tested subjects and then dividing by the total number of values.

The DC OSSE will also determine subgroups' index scores by subject (as shown in Table 2.B.iii) for the ESEA subgroups required to be used for accountability. These subgroup index scores by subject will be used to classify schools as focus schools based on the achievement gaps. Subsequent sections on priority and focus schools discuss how the school and subgroup index scores are used for school classifications.

Minimum *N* Size

Consistent with current practice, the DC OSSE will set the minimum subgroup *N* size for the accountability index and AMO reporting for accountability purposes at 25 but will produce non-accountability reports based on a minimum subgroup *N* size of 10.

Test Participation

The District of Columbia's accountability system will include test participation to ensure that schools are considering the performance of all students. Schools with a DC CAS test participation rate of less than 95 percent for two consecutive years for all students will be

classified as priority schools. Schools that have a DC CAS test participation rate of less than 95 percent for the same subgroup for two consecutive years will be classified as focus schools. The participation rate is calculated based on the number of test takers, minus any scores or classrooms invalidated due to test integrity, plus the number of medical exemptions, divided by the number of students enrolled on the first day of testing.

Graduation Rates

To determine the classification based on graduation rates of less than 60% for more than one year, the DC OSSE will use the leaver rate from 2010 and the adjusted cohort rate from 2011. This mixed methodology is being used since the DC OSSE only has one year of data available for the adjusted graduation rate calculation. Starting with determinations based on the 2012 graduates for the SY13-14 school year, the adjusted cohort graduation rate will be used for both years to determine whether a school must be classified as priority based on graduation rate. School year 2013-14 is used here because the graduation rate is a lagging indicator. Final calculations are not available in time for use in accountability determinations for the preceding year. Among other factors described in more detail in 2.D., a cohort graduation rate of below 60% for two consecutive years or more will classify a school as a priority school.

Cut Scores and Classification

The DC OSSE proposes a range of cut scores to determine the appropriate classification for each school under the proposed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. The proposed cut scores are established at levels that ensure that the categories for reward, priority, and focus schools meet the required definitions for performance and progress under ESEA flexibility. The following chart summarizes school classification and cut scores.

Table 2.B.vi. The DC OSSE School Classification and Cut Scores

Category	From	To	# of Schools	# of Title I Schools	% of All Schools	% of Title I Schools
Reward	80	100+	19	7	10%	4%
Rising	45	79	69	60	37%	36%
Developing	26	44	53	53	28%	32%
Priority	0	25	31	29	16%	17%
Focus (remaining schools with substantial achievement gaps)	0	100+	17	17	9%	10%
Total			**189**	**166**	**100%**	**100%**

The classification criteria and the order in which the business rules for classification will be

applied, is summarized below:

A. From the pool of "all schools," "Priority school" will be the classification for:

1. Any school that is a Tier I or Tier II SIG school improvement grant (SIG) school;
2. Any school with a graduation rate of 60% or below for two or more consecutive years;
3. Any school with a school index score of 25 points or below based on insufficient proficiency and growth; **or**
4. Any school with an all students participation rate of less than 95% for two or more years, even if the school index score is above 25.

B. From the pool of schools not identified as priority pursuant to Step A, "Focus school" will be the classification for:

1. Any school with a subgroup index score 20 points or more below the state subgroup index score for that subgroup, for each subject. The disproportionate subgroup performance index is calculated as follows: (statewide subgroup index score in subject – school subgroup index score in subject);
2. Any school with a within-school achievement gap that is among the largest gap between the highest and lowest performing subgroup index scores within a subject. This is calculated by rank ordering schools based on the difference between the highest subgroup index score and the lowest subgroup index score from each subject. Schools are selected from this list based on the largest difference until 10% of the schools in the District have been identified as focus; **or**
3. Any school with subgroup participation rate below 95% for two or more consecutive years in the same subgroup.

C. From the pool of remaining schools that have not been classified as priority or focus pursuant to Steps A and B, "Reward school" will be the classification for:

1. Any school with a school index score of 80 or above;
2. Any school with a participation rate of 95% or better;
3. Any school with a graduation rate above 60%; **or**
4. Any school ranked in the top 5% in annual growth, based on reading and math combined across all content areas, in the all students group.

D. All remaining schools not classified pursuant to Steps A-C will be classified as "Developing/Rising school," which is a single classification with an internal ranking system as either closer to Reward (Rising) or closer to Focus (Developing). Within this classification, schools will be classified as follows.

1. Schools with school index scores between 26-44 are identified as developing schools; **or**
2. Schools with school index scores at or above 45 are identified as rising schools;

Schools that are designated as priority or focus using this index-based, state-level accountability system will be required to implement differentiated interventions for subgroups, undergo

targeted monitoring, and increased planning and documentation around the use of Title I funds. Priority and focus schools will also receive intensive and/or targeted support from the DC OSSE, the DCPS and the PCSB. Further discussion of treatment for priority schools is found in Section 2.D, and further discussion of treatment for focus schools is found in Section 2.E.

LEA- and School-Level Accountability

LEAs will be held accountable based on the reading and math AMOs by subgroup. AMO targets will be set for each LEA in the same way that AMOs are set for schools—by reducing the percent of non-proficient students by half over six years, with all students LEA and subgroup specific targets. Each year OSSE will publish the targets and AMOs for each LEA on LEA report cards. LEAs that fail to achieve AMO targets for the same subgroup in the same subject for 2 consecutive years will be held accountable as described in 2G.

2.C Reward Schools

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

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

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

The accountability system incorporates both performance and progress in one overall school index score. However, within the reward school classification, schools that are classified as reward due to high-performance as opposed to those that are classified as reward due to high progress will be identified. A school will be classified as a *high-performing* reward school if it achieves a school index score of above 80 and is not currently classified as a priority or focus school. This annual identification approach will eliminate the possibility of classifying a school as a reward school while the school exhibits significant achievement gaps or low student graduation rate for multiple years. A school will be classified as a *high-progress* reward school if it achieves a school index score that is in the top 5% of annual improvement among all schools. This enables recognition of growth in ELA and mathematics for the number of students who have demonstrated growth from year to year.
Table 2.C.i.1 demonstrates that the list of schools in Table 2 is consistent with the definition for reward schools under the ED's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA

Flexibility Definitions" guidance document.

Table 2.C.i.1. Compliance with ESEA Flexibility Definitions

Category	Number
Total number of Title I schools	166
Number of reward schools identified by the DC OSSE	19
Total number of schools on list generated based on high performance	19
Total number of schools on list generated based on high progress	8[3]

The total number of high-progress schools will be identified based on the 2012 statewide assessment results, which will be validated and finalized in July 2012. The inclusion of this new data may result in the identification of additional 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.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the recognition and, if applicable, rewards proposed by the SEA for its highest-performing and high-progress schools likely to be considered meaningful by the schools? Has the SEA consulted with LEAs and schools in designing its recognition and, where applicable, rewards?*

SEA Recognition and Rewards

The DC OSSE has consulted with LEAs and schools to design a recognition process that recognizes and rewards highest-performing and high-progress schools in multiple ways. The DC OSSE developed its current Academic Achievement Awards policy, which is aligned with the current ESEA requirements, during School Year (SY) 2010–11 in consultation with its Title I Committee of Practitioners. The DC OSSE also reserves Title I funds, when available, to make financial rewards to Title I schools.

With 89 percent of publicly-funded District of Columbia schools receiving Title I funding, the Title I funding provides incentives for the majority of DC schools. The plan outlined below builds on the current award policy and leverages reserved funds that remain available. The most significant change is that the DC OSSE will be able to provide financial rewards from reserved Title I funds to highest-performing **and** high-progress Title I schools based upon the identification methodology described in 2.C.i, expanding the criteria to include growth.

[3] Eight is an estimated number; the number of schools identified based on high progress will be confirmed when 2012 data is finalized.

Red Ribbon School of Excellence Award

The DC OSSE will identify schools eligible to receive a Red Ribbon School of Excellence in two categories: proficiency and progress. A reward school may receive both awards in a single year if it meets the criteria for both awards. The types of recognition may include:

- Letter(s) of recognition from the State Superintendent, President of the State Board of Education, Deputy Mayor for Education, and/or the Mayor;
- School visit by the State Superintendent, President of the State Board of Education, Deputy Mayor for Education, and/or the Mayor;
- Certificate identifying the school as a recipient of the Red Ribbon School of Excellence Award for Proficiency and/or for Progress, presented to each school at a State Board of Education meeting;
- Press release announcing Red Ribbon Award recipients;
- Eligibility for the DC OSSE's nomination as National Title I Distinguished School and/or Blue Ribbon School (as a prerequisite; not all Red Ribbon award recipients will be nominated);
- Special invitation to nominate one staff person to compete for one of two new "Red Ribbon Award Recipient" positions (one for proficiency and one for progress) on the DC State Title I Committee of Practitioners;
- Invitation to participate in a Red Ribbon Award colloquium to present or discuss practices that drive proficiency and progress within Title I schools;
- Technical assistance from the DC OSSE to prepare a presentation for the next National Title I Conference;
- Invitation to nominate staff to mentor lower-performing and low-progress schools as Superintendent's Ambassadors;
- Eligibility for Title I schools to apply for financial awards, when funding is available and as described in more detail below.

Financial Award

While all reward schools that meet the criteria to receive a Red Ribbon School of Excellence Award for either proficiency or progress will receive the same non-monetary recognition, the DC OSSE may also identify certain award recipients as eligible to apply for a financial award in any year that funding is available from a reservation of Title I funds under Section 1117(c) of the ESEA (either from that fiscal year or carried over from a previous fiscal year) or from some other source. To clarify, Title I funds will not be used in any non-Title I schools identified as reward schools.

All award recipients that meet the following additional criteria during the school year for which they receive the Red Ribbon School of Excellence award will also be eligible to apply for a financial reward, as funds are available::

- Received a Title I allocation and operated a Title I program; and

- Enrolled students without a selective admission process.

To be eligible to apply for this award the school must also identify the practices that led to their high levels of proficiency and/or progress. The school must specify the proposed use of award funds that either: (1) ensures the continuation or expansion of those practices, and/or (2) supports other practices that are designed to build on previous success. The Title I Committee of Practitioners will serve as the review panel and advise the DC OSSE on the selection of schools to receive financial awards.

The DC OSSE will develop and distribute information on a methodology for determining reward amounts for schools selected to receive financial awards. Based on previous consultation with the Title I Committee of Practitioners, awards will take into consideration the size of a school's population, the number of consecutive years the school has met the criteria to receive a Red Ribbon School of Excellence Award, exact rates of proficiency for schools eligible based on high proficiency, and exact rates of progress for schools that are eligible based on high-progress.

Summary

Reward schools will be recognized and rewarded for demonstrated performance and progress. An accountability system that rewards success plays a critical role in supporting all schools to continue to progress.

2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

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

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

The DC OSSE has proposed a range of cut scores to identify priority schools based on the required definitions for performance and progress under ESEA flexibility described in Section 2.B.

To summarize, priority school identification criteria includes the following order of

operations:

1. Receives SIG funds as a Tier I or Tier II school; **or**
2. Has a graduation rate of 60 percent or less for two consecutive years or more; **or**
3. Has a school index score of 25 or less; **or**
4. Has a participation rate lower than 95 percent in the all students group for two consecutive years.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question -*Did the SEA identify a number of priority schools equal to at least five percent of its Title I schools? Did the SEA's methodology result in the identification of priority schools that are —*

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

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

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

Table 2.D.i.1 demonstrates that the list of schools in Table 2 is consistent with the definition for priority schools under the ED's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance document.

Table 2.D.i.1. Compliance with ESEA Flexibility Definitions

Category	Number
Total number of Title I schools	166
Minimum number of priority schools required to be identified	8
Number of priority schools identified by the DC OSSE	31
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are currently Tier I or Tier II SIG schools	14
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60 percent, based on the adjusted cohort graduation rate, over a number of years	1
Total number of schools on list generated based on all students participation rate of less than 95% for two consecutive years	0
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating among the lowest-achieving Title I schools (including the lowest 5%)	16

Because the leaver graduation rate used in 2011 is so much higher than the new adjusted cohort rate used in 2012, few schools are identified as priority based on graduation rate in

2011. Schools are identified and classified based on the order of operations shown above.

The DC OSSE's list of priority schools meets ESEA requirements for the minimum number of schools based on required criteria. In developing the final list of priority schools; however, based in part on input from stakeholder groups, the DC OSSE identified more than the minimum number of schools for support to ensure broader impact and sustained progress.

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

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

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the identified interventions to be implemented in priority schools likely to*

(i) increase the quality of instruction in priority schools;
(ii) improve the effectiveness of the leadership and the teaching in these schools; and
(iii) improve student achievement and, where applicable, graduation rates for all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest-achieving students?
(iv) Has the SEA indicated that it will ensure that each of its priority schools implements the selected intervention for at least three years?

The DC OSSE is committed to closing all achievement gaps and ensuring that all students in the District of Columbia graduate from high school and are college- and career-ready at graduation. To reach this goal, priority schools must make dramatic and rapid improvements that accelerate student achievement. The DC OSSE will provide tools for LEA and school-based improvement teams to assess their needs, develop a plan for improvement, and implement action steps to ensure student learning improves in each priority school. Through collaboration with the DCPS, the PCSB, the Human Capital Task Force, the Student Growth Task Force, the Deputy Mayor of Education's Office, State Board of Education, and other partners, the DC OSSE will enhance the effectiveness and coherence of district systems and the effective integration of external partners to support school improvement.

In addition, the DC OSSE will evaluate, support, and monitor schools through its oversight of the DCPS and the PCSB, as the charter authorizer, around instructional leadership, curriculum, professional development, instruction, assessments, staff evaluation, human capital, and financial/asset management. By doing so, the DC OSSE believes that the District's students will show annual academic growth, raise graduation rates, and close achievement gaps, particularly with regard to students with special needs and ELLs in priority schools.

SEA Support

The Innovation and Improvement team (INI) will use the Cross-Functional Team (CFT) staffed by various DC OSSE personnel from multiple divisions and external partners where appropriate to ensure simultaneous and effective implementation in each priority school of meaningful interventions aligned with all turnaround principles for a minimum of three years. The interventions include strong principal leadership; effective staffing practices and instruction;

curriculum, assessments, and interventions; effective use of time; effective use of data; school climate and culture; and effective family and community engagement. The INI will provide training to enable the CFT to recognize an LEA's successes—both in terms of results in student learning and universal application of effective practice—and its deficiencies, enhancing the motivation for change.

Resources developed by the DC OSSE and used in priority school interventions will include CCSS curriculum and assessments, professional development supporting improved instruction, data systems for improving teaching and learning, guidelines for identifying quality enhanced and extended learning opportunities, and innovative strategies to support special education students, ELLs, and under-performing students.

The CFT will be convened by the INI and will be staffed with experts from each department within the DC OSSE, including Specialized Services, Elementary & Secondary Education, Health & Wellness, Early Childhood Education, and Post-Secondary Education. The fully-staffed CFT will be prepared to start work at the start of School Year (SY) 2012–13.

The DC OSSE senior staff will prioritize the resource needs of the CFT and continually improve the DC OSSE resources based on CFT feedback concerning school-level implementation. This process will efficiently leverage the DC OSSE staff to develop, adopt, or identify resources that can be used across all LEAs while requiring CFT to help support interventions and provide feedback on implementation issues to the INI. Taking the recommendations and advice from the CFT, the INI will work with DCPS and PCSB turnaround experts to determine training needs and provide tailored services to all priority schools, including training on strategies aligned with the seven turnaround principles. This system will be supported by strong communication and accountability for all parties to improve student achievement in these lowest-performing schools. The CFT will also have the freedom and flexibility to look outside of the DC OSSE to adopt resources, materials, or programs it believes will best meet the specific needs of students in the priority schools under its direction.

Since most of the District of Columbia's schools are subject to ESEA, LEAs will have to incorporate the priority schools' individualized improvement plan in a Web-based tool such as Indistar (a system that enables continuous planning, implementation, monitoring, and course adjustment that empowers the DC OSSE senior staff to continually track implementation and make tailored recommendations to achieve desired results in student learning). As a condition of SIG funds, all SIG participating priority schools are required to use Indistar as their web-based tool for improvement plans and monitoring of continuous improvement.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the interventions that the SEA described aligned with the turnaround principles and are they likely to result in dramatic, systemic change in priority schools? Do the SEA's interventions include all of the following?*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priority schools will be required to implement all seven turnaround principles using intervention strategies that are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress. To ensure effective implementation of strategies addressing all seven turnaround principles, the INI will assign a team member to support the DCPS and the PCSB in creating a first-year plan that includes interventions and supports. All three parties (the DCPS, the PCSB, and the INI) will work to develop a communication plan that helps school staff and parents understand how the interventions are related and required to increase and sustain improved student achievement. This approach will enable staff and parents to better understand the plan and motivate them to put more support behind it.

The identified needs, specific interventions, and progress-monitoring goals will be included in individualized school improvement plans developed for each priority school and approved by the DCPS or the PCSB, as the charter authorizer. The INI, with advice from the CFT, will review plans and make recommendations as needed; at the same time, the INI will monitor the effectiveness of the DCPS's and PCSB's efforts using a common set of expectations.

Although all interventions will be implemented concurrently in priority schools, the interventions themselves are listed separately along with a set of strategies and expected outcomes so that the approach is clearly outlined and the effectiveness goals can be measured accordingly.

School Leadership

The priority school must develop a plan to implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Evaluate, in-depth, the performance of the current leadership;
- Implement changes in leadership, where appropriate;
- Focus on instructional leadership including the collection of data and feedback mechanisms for continually improving instruction;
- Partner with a Reward school or obtain a leadership mentor to analyze existing

leadership models and develop a revised leadership plan;
- Provide flexibility in the areas of scheduling, budget, staffing, and curriculum; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

To ensure that priority schools are able to implement the turnaround principles, the INI will monitor the DCPS's and the PCSB's effective oversight of intervention strategies that address school leadership. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instructional leadership behaviors of the principal, school, and classroom-level achievement as well as the quality of the improvement plan and implementation. Effectiveness will ultimately be measured by improved student achievement on state-level assessments.

Effective Staffing Practices and Instruction

The priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Review and retain effective staff that have the ability to be effective in a turnaround effort;
- Develop a recruitment plan that screens out ineffective teachers from transferring into these schools;
- Ensure that all administrators in the school have the skills to effectively evaluate instruction and give quality feedback to teachers;
- Develop an overall recruitment and retention plan for the principal and leadership team;
- Provide additional instruction time for all teachers focused on effective instruction;
- Partner with outside master educators to conduct observations as part of a comprehensive evaluation process that supports reliable observations; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

The INI will monitor the effective implementation of strategies by the DCPS and the PCSB to increase the recruitment, retention, and development of effective teachers and principals. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instruction (walkthrough data, formal/informal observations), the teacher evaluation system, and improved student achievement as measured by state-level assessment.

Effective Use of Time

The priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Increase instructional time for students who need more time to meet the rigorous goals of the CCSS;
- Provide additional time focused on learning strategies for effectively working with students with disabilities or ELLs;
- Provide additional time focused on teachers developing and using common assessment

data to inform and differentiate instruction;

- Focus on effective use of instructional time, including effective transitions and teacher collaborations; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

While the form of these interventions may include extended learning time during the school day, it may also include extended learning opportunities in the form of either before-school or after-school programs consistent with the CCSS. The DC OSSE 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 LEA, in consultation with the CFT, leaders, teachers, and parents of the priority school, determines that implementation of extended learning opportunities is necessary to help improve student achievement, the INI will work with the school to identify programs. To implement appropriate before-school or after-school tutoring or related supports, the school may provide these services directly or contract with an appropriate provider organization (either for-profit or not-for-profit) or school-based entity.

The INI will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by the DCPS and the PCSB that address use of time. The effectiveness of these interventions 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.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System

The priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Implement the CCSS and aligned model curriculum and unit assessments;
- Implement research-based interventions for all students two or more grade levels behind in ELA or mathematics; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

The INI will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by the DCPS and the PCSB to prepare all students, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and low-performing students, for college- and career-readiness. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instructional data (walkthroughs, formal/informal observations), curriculum implementation data (walkthroughs, formal/informal observations), classroom-level assessment data, intervention implementation and achievement data, and improved student achievement measured by state-level assessments.

Effective Use of Data

The priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Use data to inform instruction including, where appropriate, the placement of a full-time data specialist in the school focused on implementing a system for teachers to develop and use common assessment data funded by school-level Title I funds;
- Provide time for collaboration on the use of data to inform instruction;
- Use formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction;
- Build the principal's capacity 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;
- Develop or expand data collection systems to allow for customized, real-time data analysis; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

The INI will monitor the effective implementation of strategies by the DCPS and the PCSB to increase the effective use of data to improve instruction. 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.

School Climate and Culture

The priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Place, where appropriate, 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;
- Address other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs by way of additional counseling, access to additional ancillary services, or other supports;
- Build capacity for all staff and leadership to implement a comprehensive plan for creating a climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations;
- Use relevant data and to inform appropriate actions for continually improving the climate and culture of the school; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

The INI will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by the DCPS and the PCSB to support the development of a safe and healthy learning environment capable of meeting students' social, emotional, and health needs. 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.

Effective Family and Community Engagement

The priority school must implement one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Develop or expand functions of family and community engagement staff to focus engagement on academics;
- Build capacity for family and community engagement staff designed to increase their skill level in developing academically focused engagement opportunities for families and the community;
- Build capacity around development and implementation of effective, academically-focused family and community engagement, particularly for students with disabilities and ELLs and their families; or
- Other promising strategies that meet this turnaround principle and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

The INI will monitor the effective implementation of strategies by the DCPS and the PCSB to increase the engagement of families and the community. The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by the change in the number of family and community engagement opportunities, including academically-focused activities, as well as improvement on key indicators of the school climate survey. In addition, effectiveness will be measured by student achievement in state-level assessments. Finally, the INI will also monitor the extent to which the DCPS and the PCSB are accomplishing the implementation of the interventions aligned to the turnaround principles.

In addition to the turnaround principles described above, the DCPS and the PSCB may select one of the four SIG turnaround models (see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/2010-27313.pdf) after no fewer than six months and no more than a one-year planning period in each priority school. The four SIG models are as follows:

1. Turnaround: Replace the principal, rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff, and grant the new principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) to implement fully a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.
2. Restart: Convert the school or close and reopen it under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization selected through a rigorous review process.
3. Closure: Close the school and enroll the students who attended that school in other schools in the district that are higher achieving.
4. Transformation: Replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, institute comprehensive instructional reforms, increase learning time, create community-oriented schools, and provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

Schools identified by the DC OSSE as priority schools will have no less than half a year and no more than one year to plan for implementation of selected model and interventions. This time

frame will allow for sufficient collaboration between LEAs, schools, parents, and the school community.

Per ESEA flexibility request requirements for priority schools, the DC OSSE will require the development of a three-year improvement plan from the DCPS and the PCSB for each school identified as a priority school. To assist the school and LEA in development of the plan, a school-level needs assessment or quality school review will be conducted in each priority school by a visiting review team led by the DCPS Office of School Turnaround (for DCPS schools) or the PCSB (for public charter schools) that includes staff from the DC OSSE. Improvement plans for priority schools must incorporate an improvement plan that includes strategies and interventions addressing all seven turnaround principles or a SIG model.

Upon submission of the LEA improvement plan and performance targets for each school, the INI will review and make recommendations as needed. It will also approve the use of the LEA's and/or school's Title I funds to fund the LEA's improvement plan.

To ensure that the DC OSSE can provide effective guidance and support to LEAs and schools, each improvement plan will include annual performance targets set by the DCPS and the PCSB, in consultation with schools and parents, focusing on the more important aspects of each school's individual improvement plan. These ambitious and achievable performance metrics will be tailored to each school based on its data and needs assessment. The DCPS and schools will be allowed to use Title I reservations to support data management and reporting for the purposes of school improvement reporting. The DCPS and the PCSB (on behalf of charter schools) will submit to the DC OSSE mid-year and end-of-year reports for each priority school so that the DC OSSE can provide guidance and recommendations to ensure improvement. This reporting will support the DC OSSE's oversight of the statewide differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system.

SEA Monitoring

During the school's first year of implementation, and for each year thereafter until the school exits status, the INI will monitor the DCPS and the PCSB in their implementation of each school's improvement plan and each school's progress. The INI will then make recommendations that take into account the advice of the CFT to adjust implementation of the improvement plan. Throughout the school year, the INI will also provide support to LEAs and in each priority school as needed. At the end of the school year, the INI will analyze data and conduct monitoring reviews to assess the school's success in implementing the required interventions. The INI will then develop an annual progress report for all priority schools that will be publicly available.

Meaningful Consequences

To ensure meaningful consequences are implemented for priority schools that do not make progress after full implementation of interventions, the DC OSSE will hold the DCPS and the

PCSB, as the charter authorizer, accountable for making significant progress towards improving achievement and narrowing achievement gaps in each school under their jurisdiction. (see Table 2.D.iii.1).

The DCPS and the PCSB have the primary responsibility for developing and implementing an improvement plan in each school identified as priority. During the first two years of being in priority status, the INI will review the DCPS and PCSB improvement plans and make recommendations that take into account the advice of the CFT as needed. The DCPS and charter LEAs will be required to reserve 20 percent of Title I funds for school-level interventions and supports for priority, focus, and other Title I schools as described throughout Principle 2.

Table 2.D.iii.1: DCPS, PSCB, and the DC OSSE Roles

Year	DCPS and PCSB Role	The DC OSSE Role
1	Develop and implement plan	Review and make recommendations
2	Adjust plan as needed	Review and make recommendations
3	Implement plan approved by the DC OSSE; At end of school year, recommend for closure or alternative governance if school does not meet priority exit criteria after 3 years	Approve plan and prescribe use of funds
4	If school still open under current priority status, implement plan approved by DC OSSE; Consider school closure or alternative governance	If school still open under current priority status, approve plan and prescribe use of funds
5	If school still open under current priority status, implement plan approved by DC OSSE; Consider school closure or alternative governance	If school still open under current priority status, approve plan and prescribe use of funds; At end of school year, recommend for closure or alternative governance if school does not meet priority exit criteria 3 out of 5 years

If a priority school fails to meet the exit criteria after two years, the INI will assume approval authority of the improvement plans submitted by the DCPS and the PCSB for priority schools. The INI will adjust interventions including, but not limited to, the following: a restriction of the flexibility in the use of Title I funds; the requirement that Title I plans address activities that have a greater likelihood of school improvement, such as hiring a school improvement coach and forming partnerships with external organizations with evidence of effectiveness in the area of school improvement; and the implementation of other SIG requirements, such as using the Indistar tool, found at www.centerii.org/SchoolRestructuring/login.aspx, to manage the school improvement plan and activities. Indistar is the District of Columbia's online continuous school

improvement planning and monitoring tool developed by the Center on Innovation and Improvement. It allows schools to assess their implementation of indicators of effective practice, select priority objectives aligned to those indicators, plan action steps to address deficiencies related to those objectives, implement those action steps, and evaluate progress.

If a priority school does not meet the exit criteria for three out of five years, the DC OSSE will assess the school's likelihood of future progress and make a recommendation for closure or alternative governance based on that assessment.

Summary

Using the DC OSSE school accountability index, priority schools—evidenced by low growth, low achievement, and/or low graduation rates for all students—will require support to implement their program with fidelity. The DC OSSE expects that through intensive intervention and supports more students will be ready for college and careers. To reach this goal, priority schools must make dramatic and rapid improvements that accelerate achievement for all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs. The DC OSSE will provide tools for LEA and school-based improvement teams to assess their needs, develop a plan for improvement, and implement action steps to ensure student learning improves in each priority school.

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

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

All priority schools that were previously identified as persistently lowest-achieving schools and that are implementing SIG have already begun implementation of meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles and will complete their three-year SIG interventions by the end of the 2012–13 or 2013–14 school year. Schools are required to implement the interventions for the entire length of the three-year grant period. Having learned the importance of an extended planning period, the DC OSSE will require all newly-identified priority schools to spend at least half of one school year planning for the implementation of meaningful interventions that meet the turnaround principles.

Schools listed in 2.D.ii that were not previously identified as persistently lowest-achieving schools will initiate this planning in School Year (SY) 2012–13 and begin implementation of the selected model by the beginning of SY 2013–14. This means that all newly identified priority schools will be in year two of a three-year intervention model by SY 2014–15.

Table 2.D.iv.1. SIG Cohorts Timeline 2011 to 2015–16

Cohort	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16
Cohort 1 (8 schools)	Year 2 implementation	Year 3 implementation	Continued monitoring and support	Continued monitoring and support	Continued monitoring and support
Cohort 2 (6 schools)	Year 1 implementation	Year 2 implementation	Year 3 implementation	Continued monitoring and support	Continued monitoring and support
Additional priority schools (17 schools)		Planning year	Year 1 implementation	Year 2 implementation	Year 3 implementation

This timeline aggressively targets persistently low-performing schools for intensive intervention and support by identifying schools beyond the minimum number of schools the SEA is required to identify at this time. This timeline also provides sufficient time for planning by schools, LEAs, and the DC OSSE to ensure full, effective implementation that will lead to dramatic increases in student achievement within newly identified priority schools.

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

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA provide criteria to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status? Do the SEA's criteria ensure that schools that exit priority status have made significant progress in improving student achievement? Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit priority status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?*

Once a school is identified as a priority school, it will remain in the priority classification for a minimum of three years, and will be required to implement the seven turnaround principles within that three-year period of time. To exit priority status, schools must demonstrate significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps by meeting all of the following targets for three years, not necessarily consecutive years, within a five-year period:

- School Index Score: Exceed a school index score of 30;
- 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate: Exceed 60 percent; **and**
- Test participation: Exceed 95 percent participation for the "all students" subgroup.

At the end of each school year during the three-year implementation period, the INI will determine whether each priority school has made significant progress in each of these three areas and will make a summary determination of whether the school is on track to exit priority status.

If a priority school meets the exit criteria at the end of each of the originally planned three years of implementation, then the school will exit priority status at the end of the original

three-year implementation period. If, however, a school does not meet the exit criteria at the end of any year during its three-year implementation, it will be required to adjust its plan and add additional years to its overall intervention timeline until the exit criteria is achieved for three full years within a five-year period. The chart below shows several examples of exit timelines for priority schools; "Yes" indicates that sufficient progress was made, "No" indicates that sufficient progress was not made, and "Exit" indicates that the school exited priority status at the beginning of the school year.

Table 2.D.v.1. Exit Timeline for Priority Schools (Example)

School	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
School A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Exit		
School B	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Exit	
School C	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Exit

These criteria ensure that the lowest-performing schools in the District of Columbia are held to high standards for fully and effectively implementing selected intervention models to ensure that student achievement improves significantly over time. Three full years of meeting the exit criteria indicates that the school has built a sustainable foundation for academic achievement that justifies an exit from priority status.

2. E FOCUS SCHOOLS

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

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

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the SEA's methodology for identifying focus schools educationally sound and likely to ensure that schools are accountable for the performance of subgroups of students?*

Under its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, the DC OSSE will identify focus schools based on the performance of subgroups, both internally as compared to other student groups, and externally as compared to the state average. This approach

ensures that the category of focus schools meets the required definitions for performance and progress under ESEA flexibility.

Schools that meet any of the following criteria, and have not already been classified as priority schools, will be classified as focus schools:

1. **Disproportionate Subgroup Performance**: Has a subgroup that performs disproportionately lower than the state average in any tested subject. The threshold for this category is a school subgroup index score 20 points or more below the state subgroup index score. The disproportionate subgroup index score is calculated as follows: (statewide subgroup index score in subject – school subgroup index score in subject); **or**
2. **Within-School Achievement Gaps:** Has the largest gap between the highest and lowest performing subgroup index scores within a subject. This is calculated by rank ordering schools based on the difference between the highest subgroup index score and the lowest subgroup index score from each tested subject. Schools are selected from this list based on the largest difference until 10% of the schools in the District of Columbia have been identified as focus schools; **or**
3. **Participation Rate:** Has a subgroup with a participation rate lower than 95 percent for two consecutive years.

.**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question -** *Did the SEA identify a number of focus schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State's Title I schools? Did the SEA's methodology result in the identification of focus schools that have —*

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

Table 2.E.i.1 demonstrates that the list of schools in Table 2 is consistent with the definition for focus schools, as identified above, under the ED's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools Meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance document.

Table 2.E.i.1 Compliance with ESEA Flexibility Definitions for Focus Schools

Category	Number
Total number of Title I schools	166
Minimum number of focus schools required to be identified	17
Number of focus schools identified by the DC OSSE	17
Total number of schools on list generated that have had a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years	0
Total number of schools on list generated that have greatest within-school gaps (Within-School Achievement Gaps)	0

Total number of schools on list generated based on all students participation rate of less than 95% for two consecutive years	0
Total number of schools on list generated that have a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement (Disproportionate Subgroup Performance) or at the high school level low graduation rates	17

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA identify as focus schools all Title I-participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years that are not identified as priority schools?*
There are no schools identified as focus based on the graduation rate because schools with a graduation rate lower than 60 percent for two or more consecutive years will always be identified as priority schools in D.C.

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

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

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Has the SEA demonstrated that the interventions it has identified are effective at increasing student achievement in schools with similar characteristics, needs, and challenges as the schools the SEA has identified as focus schools? Has the SEA identified interventions that are appropriate for different levels of schools (elementary, middle, high) and that address different types of school needs (e.g., all students, targeted at the lowest-achieving students)?*

As part of its statewide network of tiered support, the DC OSSE will collaborate and coordinate with the DCPS and the PCSB in the process for supporting schools. Schools identified by the DC OSSE as focus schools will be required to plan for selected models and interventions, and begin implementation of interventions and supports no later than 60 days after the start of the school year. This will allow for sufficient collaborations among LEAs, schools, parents, and the school community, which have requested that the DC OSSE have a clearer oversight role.

The DC OSSE will require the DCPS and the PCSB to develop a two-year improvement plan for each focus school. To assist in the development process, a school-level needs assessment or quality school review will be conducted in each focus school by a visiting review team led by the DCPS Office of School Turnaround (for DCPS schools) or the PCSB (for public charter schools) that includes staff from the DC OSSE. Information gathered from the needs assessment will inform the selection of the targeted interventions and the school's two-year plan. As part of its quality monitoring function, the Innovation and Improvement team (INI) will then make recommendations taking into account the advice of the Cross-Functional Team (CFT) and provide guidance to the DCPS and PCSB around the development and implementation of its school improvement plan.

The identified needs, specific interventions, and progress-monitoring goals will be included in individualized school improvement plans developed for each focus school and approved by the DCPS or the PCSB, as the charter authorizer, taking into account that schools have different quantities and qualities of need. The INI and CFT will review plans and make recommendations as needed; at the same time, the INI will monitor the effectiveness of DCPS's and PCSB's work using a common set of expectations. In addition, the DC OSSE will evaluate, support, and monitor school effectiveness through the DCPS and the PCSB around instructional leadership, curriculum, professional development, instruction, assessments, staff evaluation, human capital and financial/asset management.

The INI will use the CFT as explained in Section 2.A (staffed by various DC OSSE personnel from multiple divisions including school experts and external partners where appropriate) in an advisory role to ensure simultaneous and effective implementation of meaningful interventions in each focus school for a minimum of two years. LEAs will have to incorporate the focus schools' individualized improvement plan in a Web-based tool such as Indistar (a system that enables continuous planning, implementation, monitoring, and course adjustment that empowers the DC OSSE senior staff to make recommendations about changes in practice to achieve desired results in student learning).

To ensure that the INI can provide effective guidance and support to LEAs and schools, each improvement plan will include annual performance targets set by the DCPS and the PCSB, in consultation with schools and parents, focusing on the aspects of each school's individual improvement plan. These ambitious and achievable performance metrics will be tailored to each school based on its data and needs assessment, and will be used by the DC OSSE in its guidance, support, and monitoring of the DCPS and the PCSB. The DCPS and schools will be allowed to use Title I reservation to support data management and reporting for the purposes of school improvement reporting. The DCPS and the PCSB will submit mid-year and end-of-year progress reports to the INI so that the INI can provide guidance and recommendations to the LEA and school. This reporting will support the DC OSSE's oversight of school improvement.

Upon submission by the LEAs of school improvement plans and performance targets for each focus school to the DC OSSE, the DC OSSE will approve the use of Title I funds based on the quality of the school's needs analysis, intervention selection, improvement plan, and the DCPS and the PCSB capacity to implement targeted interventions.

Differentiated Interventions for Subgroups

Focus schools that are identified as not meeting the needs of students based on subgroup performance will be required to implement intervention strategies similar to those research-based differentiated interventions discussed in section 2.D, but which are explicitly focused on the subgroups that placed the school in focus status. School leaders, the DCPS, and the PCSB will determine specific interventions to address the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs in Focus schools.

Focus schools that are identified as not meeting the needs of students with disabilities must include one or more of the following targeted intervention strategies:

- Align the curriculum to the CCSS;
- Increase collaboration among teachers;
- Improve use of data for differentiating instruction;
- Build capacity for all teachers, particularly for special education teachers to better understand the rigor of the CCSS; or
- Other promising strategies that differentiate interventions and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

Focus schools identified as not meeting the needs of ELLs must include one or more of the following targeted intervention strategies that:

- Include research-based strategies for teaching academic English;
- Improve the use of native language support;
- Scaffold learning to meet the rigorous requirements of the CCSS;
- Build capacity for all teachers to learn strategies for meeting the content learning needs of ELLs and to better understand the rigorous requirements of the CCSS; or
- Other promising strategies that differentiate interventions and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

To address the needs of other subgroups of students, the improvement plan must include one or more of the following intervention strategies:

- Build capacity for school leaders focused on instructional leadership including the collection of data and feedback mechanisms for continually improving instruction;
- Provide time for collaboration on the use of data to inform instruction;
- Use formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction;
- Address other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs by way of additional counseling, access to additional ancillary services, or other supports;
- Build capacity for all staff on the effective support of students with disabilities and ELLs and their families;
- Build capacity for all staff on the development and implementation of effective, academically-focused family and community engagement;
- Extend learning time before, during, and after school that is aligned to CCSS; or
- Other promising strategies that address the areas of deficiency that placed the school in focus status and are sufficient to achieve change and demonstrate progress.

The INI team will regularly monitor the DCPS and the PCSB in the implementation and impact of interventions strategies to ensure that all schools are making progress toward increasing student achievement. The CFT will be in constant communication with the DC OSSE

leadership to ensure that the agency is continually designing and providing the resources and guidance most effective to drive school improvement.

SEA Monitoring

The DCPS and the PCSB will be primarily responsible for the implementation of interventions and supports as part of turnaround plans that they have approved for their schools identified as focus and priority. The INI will monitor the progress of the DCPS and the PCSB and make recommendations and implement meaningful consequences, where appropriate.

During a school's implementation of the improvement plan and targeted interventions, the INI will monitor the DCPS's and/or the PCSB's implementation of the improvement plan as well as the school's progress. The INI will then make recommendations to the DCPS and the PCSB to adjust implementation of the improvement plan. Throughout the school year, the INI will also assign assistance liaisons and accountability monitors to provide support to LEAs and focus schools, as needed. At the end of the school year, the INI will analyze data and reports to assess these schools' progress in implementing the targeted interventions. The INI will then develop an annual progress report for all focus schools that will be publicly available.

To ensure effective implementation of strategies addressing the areas of deficiency that placed the school in focus status, the INI will assign a team member to support the DCPS and PCSB in creating a plan that includes appropriate, targeted interventions and supports. All three parties (the DCPS, the PCSB, and the INI) will work to develop a communication plan that helps school staff and parents understand how the interventions are related and required to increase and sustain improved student achievement. This approach will enable staff and parents to better understand the plan and motivate them to put more support behind it.

The INI will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by the DCPS and the PCSB to prepare all students for college- and career-readiness, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and low-performing students.

Meaningful Consequences

To ensure meaningful consequences are implemented for focus schools that do not make progress, the DC OSSE will hold the DCPS and the PCSB, as the charter authorizer, accountable for ensuring schools make significant progress in improving achievement and narrowing achievement gaps in each school under their jurisdiction (see Table 2.E.iii.1).

Similar to the model for priority schools, the DCPS and the PCSB have the primary responsibility of developing and implementing an intervention and support plan for schools identified as focus. During the first two years of being in focus status, the INI will review the DCPS and the PCSB intervention and supports plans and make recommendations that take into account the advice of the CFT as needed. A reservation of 20 percent of the total Title I allocation will be required at the LEA level for school interventions and supports.

Table 2.E.iii.1: DCPS, PSCB, and the DC OSSE Roles

Year	DCPS and PCSB Role	DC OSSE Role
1	Develop and implement plan	Review and make recommendations
2	Adjust plan as needed	Review and make recommendations
If a focus school is re-identified as focus after 2 years:		
3	Implement plan approved by the DC OSSE	Approve and prescribe use of funds
4	Consider school closure or alternative governance	Evaluate whether to recommend for closure or alternative governance

If a focus school fails to meet the exit criteria after two years, the INI will assume approval authority of the school-level plans for interventions and supports. The DCPS and the PCSB will make adjustments to interventions including, but not limited to, the following: a restriction of the flexibility in the use of Title I funds; the suggested redirecting of Title I funds to activities that have a greater likelihood of school improvement, such as hiring a school improvement coach; forming partnerships with external organizations with evidence of effectiveness in the area of school improvement; and the implementation of other SIG requirements such as using the Indistar tool, or a comparable tool to manage the school improvement plan and activities. If a school that was identified as a focus school remains a focus school for a fourth year, the INI will assess the school's likelihood of future progress and evaluate whether to recommend for closure or alternative governance.

Summary

Focus schools will be held to the same fundamental goals as priority schools for closing all achievement gaps and ensuring that all students in the District of Columbia graduate from high school college- and career-ready. To reach this goal, focus schools must make dramatic and rapid improvements that accelerate student achievement for all students and subgroups. The interventions for focus schools are similar to those for priority schools. The primary difference between the two is that focus school interventions target the subgroup that caused the school to be identified as a focus school. The INI will provide tools for LEA and school-based improvement teams to assess school and student needs, develop a plan for improvement, and implement action steps to ensure student subgroup learning improves in each focus school.

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

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Do the SEA's criteria ensure that schools that exit focus status have made significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps? Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit focus status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?*

At the end of the school year during the two-year implementation of a school improvement plan and targeted interventions, the DC OSSE will determine whether each focus school has made sufficient progress to exit focus school status.

In summary, a school will exit focus status if it meets all of the following criteria:

1. No longer meets the definition of a focus school for two consecutive years:
   - Disproportionate Subgroup Performance: Reduces the achievement gap for all subgroups to below 20 for one or more years
   - Within-school Achievement Gap Index: Reduces the within-school achievement gap so that the school would not be identified for a within-school achievement gap
   - Participation: Exceeds 95 percent participation for the subgroup leading to the initial identification; **and**
2. Its lowest-performing subgroups have met their AMOs for two years and/or have demonstrated high growth for two consecutive years as measured by the accountability index.

These criteria ensure that the lowest-performing schools in the District of Columbia are held to high standards for fully and effectively implementing selected intervention models to ensure that student achievement improves and achievement gaps decrease significantly over time. Evidence demonstrating the high standards for meeting the exit criteria indicates that the school has built a foundation for academic achievement that justifies exiting focus status. Only when this has been demonstrated will a school exit focus status.

Through collaboration with the DCPS, the PCSB, the Human Capital Task Force, the Student Growth Task Force, the Deputy Mayor of Education's Office, and other partners, the DC OSSE will enhance the effectiveness and coherence of district systems to support school improvement. In addition, the DC OSSE will evaluate, support, and monitor schools and LEAs around instructional leadership, curriculum, professional development, instruction, assessments, staff evaluation, human capital and financial/asset management. By doing so, the DC OSSE believes that the District of Columbia's students will show annual academic growth, raise graduation rates, and close achievement gaps, particularly with regard to students with special needs and ELLs in focus schools.

The INI will regularly monitor the DCPS's and the PCSB's implementations as well as the impact of the interventions to ensure that all schools are implementing interventions effectively and making progress toward increasing student achievement. The CFT will be in constant communication with the DC OSSE leadership to ensure that the agency is continually designing and providing the resources and guidance most effective to drive school improvement.

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.

In the District of Columbia, 89 percent of schools receive Title I funds. Therefore, the majority of incentives and interventions outlined in this section and in the preceding sections will apply to nearly all District of Columbia schools.

Educators and professionals in schools are in the best position to identify and respond to student needs. Therefore, the DC OSSE seeks to maximize flexibility at the LEA and school level so that school professionals can plan and implement the most appropriate activities. The DC OSSE's role is to provide the tools necessary for school-based teams to assess needs, develop effective Title I plans, and implement action steps to ensure that student learning improves.

The DC OSSE will provide opportunities and services to all LEAs and schools based on the statewide network of tiered support. The requirements of the ESEA flexibility request align with the DC OSSE's differentiated approach to serving schools and will yield maximum benefit to LEAs, schools, and students.

Differentiated Interventions and Supports

All schools that fail to meet the same AMO for two consecutive years and that are not already identified as priority or focus schools will be identified as schools requiring additional support. In partnership with the DCPS and the PCSB, these schools will be required to identify and respond to the needs of their students.

If a non-priority and non-focus school misses its performance on the same AMO for two consecutive years, the LEA will be required to expand their current Title I plan to describe the interventions and supports that address all students and/or subgroup(s) that missed the school AMOs. Additionally, as part of its Title I plan and Title I grant application, LEAs with schools that do not meet the same AMOs for two consecutive years must describe how the LEA will identify needs based on the school AMOs that were missed, select priority objectives and interventions aligned to those needs, plan action steps to address deficiencies related to those objectives, implement those action steps, and evaluate progress.

The LEA will be required to reserve 20 percent of Title I funds to implement interventions and supports necessary to improve student achievement on the school AMOs that were missed. Interventions and supports to address deficiencies in school-based practices may include one or more of the following options:

- Training to improve the quality of school leadership;
- High-quality curriculum aligned to the CCSS;
- Expansion of learning time before, during and after school to supplement instruction to school-selected students provided by external providers, schools, or LEAs;;
- Assistance in the analysis and use of data;
- Supplemental research-based and job-embedded professional development; or
- Any other activity that is specifically required by an action step included in the Title I plan of Title I grant application in support of an objective

The DC OSSE Department of Teaching and Learning (TAL) and the Innovation and Improvement team (INI) team will provide guidelines for updating Title I plans and Title I grant applications at the beginning of the 2012–13 school year.

Each school will be evaluated based on its achievement vis-à-vis targets, implementation of the interventions and supports as described in the revised Title I plan and in the Title I grant application, and the growth of its students as measured by the new accountability system. If the LEA does not meet targets or progress in the areas that were identified in need of improvement based on the school AMOs that were missed, the INI will make recommendations for the use of the 20 percent reservation of Title I funds and intensify guidance, technical assistance, and monitoring. The business rules for the 20 percent reservation and use of Title I funds is described in section 2G.

Additional Resources Available to All Schools

Beginning at the end of the 2012–13 school year, the INI will assess, review, and make recommendations to the interventions and supports plan as it relates to the use of the Title I reservation and alignment with the overall Title I program, offer technical assistance targeted to the struggling subgroup(s), and monitor school-level progress for future academic cycles and increase technical assistance when needed.

Schools will be invited and encouraged to attend regional trainings and professional development sessions designed around the DC OSSE interventions and school turnaround principles. The DC OSSE will place additional resources on the DC OSSE website for all schools to access. Online resources include, but are not limited to, webinars, online professional development courses, exemplar lessons aligned to CCSS, and toolkits.

SEA Level Engagement

The engagement of the DC OSSE with LEAs and schools is based on school classification (Table 2.F.i) and AMOs. The OSSE will use AMOs to identify schools that need support with particular subgroups and subjects, which will guide professional development offerings. The DC OSSE will use school classifications to determine levels of support that schools receive. Priority schools will receive intensive interventions, focus schools will receive targeted interventions, and developing and rising schools will receive guided interventions. Reward schools that make progress will receive maximum flexibility in their allocate decisions around Title I and other

federal funds. Many DC OSSE supports remain available to reward schools, including support around CCSS implementation and statewide professional development.

	SEA Engagement with DCPS/PCSB	LEA/School Autonomy over Activities	LEA/School Flexibility in Use of Federal Funds
Priority Schools	Very High	Lower	Lower
Focus Schools	High	Moderate	Moderate
Developing Schools	Moderate	High	High
Rising Schools	Moderate	High	High
Reward Schools	Low	Very High	Very High

Table 2.F.i. The DC OSSE Level of Engagement by School Classification

The DC OSSE will implement a system of incentives and interventions in all District of Columbia schools (Table 2.F.ii).

Table 2.F.ii. The DC OSSE Incentives and Interventions by School Classification

SCHOOL CATEGORY:	Reward School	Rising School	Developing School	Focus School	Priority School
Receive SEA Recognition	Yes	No	No	No	No
Eligible to Receive SEA Financial Reward	Yes	No	No	No	No
Flexibility in the Use of Funds	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Describe Continuous Improvement in Title I Grant Application	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Implement Interventions and Supports If Statewide AMOs Not Met	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Implement Turnaround Principles	No	No	No	No	Yes

The INI will monitor interventions and supports while working closely with the Cross-Functional team (CFT) and DC OSSE's senior leadership to ensure that all intervention and support initiatives are tightly coordinated and effective. The INI executes the process and ensures that LEAs comply with critical federal regulations and quality implementation related to school improvement.

LEA and School Performance Reports

The DC OSSE's primary way to hold LEAs and schools accountable for performance is through publicly-available, annual performance reports. Each of an LEA's schools will be evaluated by the CFT based on school achievement on DC CAS assessments and the growth of its students in proficiency level descriptor, information on whether the school met targets for all students and subgroups, assessment participation rates, graduation rates for high schools, and demographic information, and fiscal data. Proficiency and growth will be reported over time for English/Language Arts (ELA), math, science, and composition for all students and for each subgroup. Each of an LEA's school will be compared to all schools in the District as well as to individual schools with similar student demographics. High-performing schools with different demographic compositions will be profiled to identify best practices. These will form the core of exemplars gathered by the DC OSSE to share with all schools, particularly those schools that may have similar demographic profiles.

The DCPS and the PCSB, as the charter authorizer, will be responsible for making data available to staff, parents, and others to aid in the identification of areas in need of improvement and make recommendations for interventions and supports. They will be required to have public meetings to review the data and identify the areas that need improvement. LEAs, the DCPS, and the PCSB will also be required to address performance gaps among subgroups and to develop proposed targets for improvement using the 20 percent reservation of Title I funds. The INI, with input from the CFT, will annually review these goals and will provide targeted technical assistance, where necessary.

Schools not classified as focus or priority status that miss their school AMOs will receive input from the CFT based on review of performance reports to identify areas for improvement, and to identify the combination of state-level services and interventions that could improve student learning.

DCPS and PCSB School Reports

The DC OSSE recognizes that reports from the DCPS and the PCSB provide significant value to LEAs and schools. Both the DCPS School Scorecard and the PCSB PMF provide comprehensive information on school performance that goes beyond the data incorporated into the DC OSSE's system of classifying schools for recognition, accountability, and support. LEAs and schools can use this information to inform a needs assessment and planning for continuous school improvement. LEAs and schools retain the autonomy and responsibility for identifying and implementing strategies and activities that will most significantly and positively affect student achievement.

The DC OSSE's work supplements the work of both the DCPS and the PCSB, which have policies in place to ensure that schools that fail to improve over a significant number of years are closed. The DC OSSE will recommend school closure where appropriate, but the DC OSSE does not have and does not seek authority to require school closure.

Summary

The statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability, and support as described in this section will improve academic achievement, increase graduation rates, and close achievement gaps. Working in partnership with the DCPS, the PCSB, and charter LEAs will be critical to the successful implementation of the new accountability system.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Building capacity in the SEA, LEAs, and schools is critical for increasing student achievement, improving graduation rates, and closing achievement gaps. Throughout this document, examples of how the DC OSSE as the SEA, the DCPS, the PCSB as the charter authorizer, and charter LEAs will support the work already underway as part of Race to the Top (RTTT) and will be further enhanced to meet the requirements of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) implementation; differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system; and increased teacher effectiveness.

As part of its SEA responsibilities, the DC OSSE will build capacity at the LEA and school level by:

- Providing guidance, technical assistance/support, and opportunities to participate in state-level trainings on CCSS implementation and on anchor papers and other assessment preparation;
- Developing and implementing statewide guidelines for teacher and leader evaluation systems;
- Making information available that helps in the understanding the state-level differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system;
- Leveraging federal resources (Title I, SIG, Title II, Title III, and other federal) to maximize coordination and academic achievement;
- Developing websites and publications that help teachers align instruction to the

common core and share exemplary lessons;

- Providing high-quality data on DC CAS aligned to CCSS;
- Connecting schools struggling with external partners to ensure that students reap the maximum benefit from CCSS; and

The DC OSSE is committed to increasing academic achievement, closing achievement gaps and ensuring that all students in DC graduate from high school college- and career-ready.

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

Building DC OSSE Capacity

As described in Section 2.A, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (ELSEC) within the DC OSSE will create a statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability, and support to maximize resources both within and outside of the agency. In the ELSEC division, the Innovation and Improvement team (INI), currently part of RTTT department, will oversee the implementation of the supports provided to LEAs and schools. This department then works to establish the Cross-Functional team (CFT) that will partner and assist LEAs and schools with needs assessment, coordination, and development of federal grants programs, and use of federal funds. The INI will concentrate primarily on priority and focus schools, and will be committed solely to driving capacity for the DC OSSE to deliver support to LEAs to improve student outcomes.

The CFT will include experts from across multiple domains within the DC OSSE and external experts as appropriate. The CFT will participate along with the DCPS and the PCSB in reviews of under-performing schools, assist in diagnosing the causes of schools' challenges, and provide the support and interventions required for meaningful and lasting improvement.

CCSS and Educator Evaluation Supports

To build the capacity of LEAs, the DC OSSE will prioritize support in two critical areas: CCSS and teacher/leader evaluation.

The District of Columbia believes that the adoption and effective implementation of the CCSS will develop college- and career-ready learners. Due to the District of Columbia's small size and geographic footprint, the DC OSSE can comprehensively implement the standards sooner than most states and begin transitioning to aligned assessments. The DC OSSE aims to reach all teachers through state-level support and professional development.

To reach the District of Columbia's teachers of special education students, the Division of Specialized Education Training and Technical Assistance unit, in collaboration with other divisions within the DC OSSE, provides core professional development, training, and technical

assistance to all LEAs in the District. The core professional development program provides high-quality, evidenced-based training to all DC educators with a specific focus on improving the educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

The DC OSSE will help LEAs develop more rigorous teacher and leader evaluation and support systems by providing standards, guidance, and technical assistance. To advance this work, the DC OSSE has formed a teacher effectiveness team that will provide exemplars, technical assistance, and training to LEAs. The team will coordinate peer reviews of proposed LEA teacher and principal evaluation systems and other intra-district collaboration. Principle 3 of this flexibility request provides additional information on educator evaluation systems.

Monitoring of and Technical Assistance for Schools

As discussed throughout Principle 2, the INI will monitor, provide technical assistance to, support, and hold LEAs accountable for interventions in priority and focus schools and other classified schools by first increasing the amount of actionable information on student achievement available to schools, districts, and the public. The new structure within the DC OSSE will also provide improved supports and foster new, high-quality education models so students attending the lowest-performing schools have improved options. The DC OSSE's INI and CFT will be responsible for supporting LEAs and focus and priority schools. Finally, the DC OSSE will use other federal resources, where appropriate, to provide supports and interventions to priority and focus schools.

Title I Funds

Funds that were previously reserved under ESEA section 1116(b)(10) will be leveraged to support the implementation of interventions in schools that fail to meet the same AMOs for two consecutive years and in schools identified as focus or priority, as described throughout Principle 2. Although DC OSSE will not require LEAs to use the funds in a specific way, all decisions relating to the use of the 20 percent reservation must be made based on an LEA's careful analysis of local capacity and based on a comprehensive needs assessment. The LEA must demonstrate in its Title I Grant Application that resources have been allocated to support the interventions described for focus and priority schools and schools that miss the same AMOs for two consecutive years. If school AMOs are met, LEAs will no longer be required to reserve 20 percent of Title I funds in their grant application. Funds may then be used to support instructional programs at the district-level or by providing Title I funds in school allocations under ESEA section 1113(c).

Other Federal Funds

For focus and priority schools, LEAs may access RTTT and School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding to support the implementation of SIG models in schools that meet the federal criteria for receiving SIG funds. Additionally, the DC OSSE will make available other federal funds including Title I 1003(a), Title II, Title III, and funds from the Scholarships for Opportunities and Results (SOAR) Act to support school improvement.

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

The success of this ESEA flexibility request and its implementation is founded on the belief that the DC OSSE plays both an oversight role as it relates to the statewide differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, and a supportive role to LEAs and schools. For this reason, the DC OSSE believes in LEA flexibility, within the boundaries set by statute and regulations therein, in implementation of Title I programs and the use Title I funds. For this proposal to be successful, a strong belief in accountability is necessary to improve academic achievement and move students toward college- and career-readiness. As noted above, the PCSB and the DCPS have accountability systems that play a key role in statewide improvement, but they are not included in the waiver as they are not commitments of the SEA. A description of their accountability systems is included in this request as an attachment.

LEA Accountability

As part of its SEA responsibilities, the DC OSSE will report AMOs at the LEA level on an annual LEA report card. For AMO purposes, the LEA-level report card will include AMOs for the DCPS as an LEA (inclusive of all DCPS schools) and for each charter LEA. Any LEA that fails to meet the same LEA-level AMO for two consecutive years will be identified as an LEA requiring additional support. These LEAs will be required to identify low-performing student groups and implement targeted interventions that respond to the needs of those students, and to expand their current LEA Title I plan to describe the interventions and supports that address all students and/or subgroup(s) that missed the LEA AMOs. Additionally, as part of their Title I plans and applications, LEAs that miss the same AMOs for two consecutive years must describe how the LEA will identify needs based on the LEA AMOs that were missed, select priority objectives and interventions aligned to those needs, plan action steps to address deficiencies related to those objectives, implement those action steps, and evaluate progress. The LEAs will additionally be required to reserve a reasonable and necessary amount of Title I funds to implement interventions and supports described in the revised Title I plans to improve student achievement on the LEA AMOs that were missed.

Interventions and supports to address deficiencies in LEA-Level practices may include one or more of the following options:

- Focusing on learning and achievement that includes continuously guiding site-based leadership through performance management and addressing barriers to education goals;
- Recruiting, supporting, and retaining highly-effective staff to build capacity and meet organizational expectations;
- Guiding the implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that align to CCSS;
- Using data for planning and accountability, and distributing results to inform decision-

making;

- Engaging families and the community to promote positive student achievement and behavior;
- Addressing physical, social, and emotional needs of students to ensure safe and supportive learning environments;
- Ensuring equity and adequacy of fiscal and human resources to meet school and student needs; or
- Other strategies that are specifically required by an action step included in the Title I plan or Title I grant application in support of an objective.

The DC OSSE Department of Teaching and Learning and the INI team will provide guidelines for updating LEA Title I plans and Title I grant applications at the beginning of the 2012–13 school year. The DC OSSE Office of Data Management (ODM)—through the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLED) —will provide LEAs with a variety of data elements that can help guide instructional improvement. The ODM will provide LEAs with access to more comprehensive information on all state assessments, college attainment data, and college-readiness assessments. Over time, ODM will provide technical assistance to LEAs on how to better understand and make effective use of this data.

In addition to LEA level report cards, DC OSSE will issue a report card that includes overall performance of all charter LEAs based on subgroup and "all students" AMOs to gauge student performance and support the monitoring of the PCSB's roles and responsibilities with regard to Title I accountability.

SEA Monitoring of LEA Progress

Each LEA will be evaluated based on its achievement vis-à-vis targets, implementation of the interventions and supports as described in the revised Title I plan and in the Title I grant application, and the growth of its students as measured by the new accountability system. For charter LEAs, the INI will work with the PCSB to ensure that appropriate oversight of interventions and supports, and monitoring of progress takes place. Combined with the activities embedded in the statewide network of tiered support described throughout Principle 2, LEA progress will be monitored on a bi-annual basis by collecting information to gauge implementation of interventions and supports that address the LEA AMOs that were missed. If the LEA does not meet targets or progress in the areas that were identified in need of improvement based on the LEA AMOs that were missed, the INI will make recommendations with input from the CFT for the use of Title I funds and intensify guidance, technical assistance, and monitoring.

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

The DC OSSE will provide LEAs with information regarding effective external turnaround

service providers by the start of SY 2012-13. The DC OSSE will inventory its vendor database to compile a list of external partners that have a record of effectiveness in providing services to schools based on provision of research-based effectiveness models that have the greatest likelihood of increasing student academic achievement, alignment of services to needs of schools and LEAs, and timeliness of service delivery. To ensure that external providers used by LEAs have been rigorously reviewed and approved, the DC OSSE will collect information regarding effectiveness of external turnaround service providers by developing and implementing a performance matrix that takes into account the selection criteria listed above. This information will be made available to LEAs and schools as part of the DC OSSE's annual publication of school turnaround performance reports. External service providers that do not show a record of effectiveness will be given a probationary period not to exceed the next bi-annual review session to demonstrate effectiveness.

Summary

The District's proposed statewide system of recognition, accountability, and support will address the broad spectrum of needs in the District of Columbia. The tiered accountability system envisioned in this application capitalizes on the roles and responsibilities of the SEA and the LEAs for school accountability. All of these efforts combined are specifically focused on enhancing performance to improve academic achievement, increase graduation rates, and achieving mastery in the CCSS without creating unnecessary and counterproductive burdens on schools.

3.A Develop and Adopt Guidelines for Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

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

Option A	Option B
☒ If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide: i. the SEA's plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year; ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it	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

will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14).	involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.

Students come first, and the most effective way to improve student learning is to provide them with the most effective professionals, teachers, and school leaders. Effective teachers and school leaders have the skills and knowledge to remove barriers to education and provide the necessary support to maximize students' classroom experiences. Effective school leaders and teachers are those who are best qualified to provide solutions and to improve student outcomes.

The DC OSSE's theory of action with respect to supporting teachers and leaders is that providing exemplary standards, guidance, and technical assistance will help LEAs develop more rigorous teacher and leader evaluation and support systems. Rigorous and meaningful evaluation systems will help identify successful and unsuccessful instructional practices, resulting in increased teacher and leader effectiveness, greater student achievement, and higher graduation rates. Therefore, the DC OSSE's role is to develop policies that allow for local flexibility, provide guidance, disseminate best practices, and ensure effective monitoring by LEAs and the charter authorizer. The state evaluation guidelines and monitoring by the DC OSSE will ensure that teachers and leaders are prominently involved in the development of each LEA's new evaluation system.

The DC OSSE is in a unique position to allow for local flexibility with respect to teacher and principal evaluation systems due to the variety existing in the District's educational landscape. OSSE currently oversees 54 LEAs: one large traditional, school district LEA (DCPS) and 53 charter school LEAs. The DCPS and several of the charter LEAs have already implemented teacher and principal evaluation systems as a result of the DC OSSE's successful Race to the Top (RTTT) application. As described more fully below, each RTTT LEA has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the DC OSSE describing how the LEA will meet the RTTT requirements around teacher/principal evaluations. While there is considerable overlap between RTTT requirements and Principle 3 of ESEA flexibility, Principle 3 has three four particular requirements that are not found in RTTT. The DC OSSE will leverage the work that has already been done by enacting statewide guidelines for teacher/principal evaluations that include both RTTT requirements and the three four additional Principle 3 requirements. Accordingly, the DC OSSE has selected option A for this ESEA flexibility request.

With respect to public charter schools, the DC School Reform Act of 1995 provides charter schools with autonomy over personnel, including evaluation systems, hiring, and firing. ESEA likewise recognizes the autonomy of charter schools by allowing charter schools to adhere to the requirements of the State charter laws for the purposes of employing "highly-qualified teachers." According to the ED's ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions, if the SEA can demonstrate to the ED that all charter schools in the state are held to a high standard of accountability through a strong charter school authorizer system (consistent with the Department's Charter Schools Program (CSP) assurances for SEA grantees), the SEA may allow

its charter schools to develop and implement evaluation and support systems that meet all of the elements of Principle 3 but that do not necessarily adhere specifically to the SEA's guidelines.

Pursuant to a determination of the CSP Director at the U.S. Department of Education dated February 3, 2012, the PCSB is in compliance with assurances 3A and 3B of CSP. This means that the District is considered to have a strong charter school authorizer system. OSSE will, therefore, allow District public charter schools the flexibility to develop and implement evaluation and support systems that meet all of the elements of Principle 3, but that do not necessarily adhere to the DC OSSE-developed guidelines. Charter schools that already participate in RTTT will still be required to comply with those requirements as well as using their flexibility to fully implement the extra requirements of Principle 3 that are not covered by RTTT. The PCSB will ensure that the systems developed by charter schools meet the minimum requirements of Principle 3.

Table 3.A.1 below illustrates the types of LEAs and differences in the application of teacher and leader evaluation system requirements. LEAs are grouped into four categories, depending on their involvement in RTTT.

Table 3.A.1: Categorization of Types of LEAs for Teacher and Leader Evaluation Requirements

	DCPS	**Charters**
RTTT Participating LEAs	1 LEA (CATEGORY A)	29 LEAs (CATEGORY B)
LEAs Not Participating in RTTT	N/A (All DCPS schools participate in RTTT)	21 LEAs[4] (CATEGORY C)

Category A—All DCPS schools participate in RTTT and so have developed teacher and principal evaluation systems that comply with RTTT. The DCPS is the sole LEA that will be required to implement evaluation systems that comply with the statewide guidelines to be implemented by the DC OSSE. The DCPS will need to amend its teacher/leader systems to implement the aspects not currently existing in DCPS's systems developed under RTTT. The primary substantive difference between RTTT and Principle 3 is the use of student growth in non-tested grades and subjects. The DC OSSE has selected in the statewide guidelines a weight of at least 15 percent, which will apply only to DCPS.

[4] The District has a total of 54 LEAs. However, the numbers in this chart do not equal 54 because three charter LEAs are not subject to ESEA as they do not provide elementary or secondary education, but instead provide adult education services.

Category B—Charter LEAs currently participating in RTTT will need to amend their systems to incorporate the elements of Principle 3 that are not currently part of their RTTT-compliant teacher/principal evaluation systems, but will not be required to comply with the statewide guidelines developed by the DC OSSE. The primary substantive difference between RTTT and Principle 3 is the use of student growth in non-tested grades and subjects. RTTT participating charter LEAs will have flexibility in how they will incorporate student growth into their evaluation systems for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects and meet the requirements of Principle 3.

Category C—These charter schools do not participate in RTTT. They will have flexibility to develop, pilot, and implement teacher/leader evaluation systems that comply with the requirements of Principle 3, but will not be required to comply with the statewide guidelines developed by the DC OSSE or RTTT. They have flexibility in how they will incorporate student growth into their evaluation systems for teachers in both tested and non-tested grades and subjects and meet the requirements of Principle 3.

To support the implementation of high-quality teacher and leader evaluation systems, the DC OSSE will work closely with LEAs, schools, and other education partners. Specifically, the DC OSSE will develop state evaluation guidelines, develop voluntary professional standards for teachers and leaders, identify exemplary evaluation systems, and provide technical assistance around research and best practices. The DC OSSE will provide training and support for LEAs as they develop their systems, as detailed in the next section of this document, between October 2012 and March 2013. Schools will develop evaluation systems that meet the applicable requirements and will pilot these systems for one year before full implementation. The evaluation system developed by the DCPS will be approved by OSSE, while charter school systems will be approved by the PCSB.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the SEA's guidelines likely to result in support for all teachers, including teachers who are specialists working with students with disabilities and English Learners and general classroom teachers with these students in their classrooms that will enable them to improve their instructional practice?*

Building on Race to the Top (RTTT)

Increasing teacher and leader effectiveness was a primary goal of the District of Columbia's successful RTTT application. The District of Columbia understands that effective teachers and leaders are the foundation for a high-performing educational system. One of RTTT's primary strategies for increasing teacher and leader effectiveness is to improve the quality and rigor of educator evaluation systems. These systems should provide teachers and leaders with clear expectations, create a common vision of effective instruction for all students, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, offer meaningful feedback about how to improve practice, and inform teacher and leader professional development needs. RTTT staff worked with the Human Capital Task Force to develop evaluation requirements with a goal to improve instructional practice in RTTT-participating schools. The Human Capital Task Force consists of representatives from RTTT schools that work on human

capital issues.

As noted above, of OSSE's 54 LEAs, 30 are participating in RTTT. RTTT LEAs comprise about 57 percent of the District's LEAs, and these LEAs enroll approximately 90 percent of the District's students. In its successful RTTT application, the DC OSSE required every LEA to develop a rigorous teacher and leader evaluation system that incorporates student outcomes, includes multiple measures of performance, provides teachers with timely and constructive feedback, and informs human capital decisions. The DC OSSE will modify the RTTT requirements to address new Principle 3 requirements for teacher and leader evaluation systems in the DCPS. Charter RTTT LEAs in the District of Columbia will need to amend their systems to incorporate the elements of Principle 3 that are not currently part of their RTTT-compliant teacher/principal evaluation systems, but will not be required to comply with the statewide guidelines developed by the DC OSSE. Table 3.A.2 below describes the requirements that are met by the RTTT evaluation requirements and those that will need to be added.

Each RTTT LEA has an MOU with the DC OSSE committing the LEA to meet the SEA's RTTT teacher and principal evaluation requirements. While there is considerable overlap between RTTT and Principle 3 of ESEA flexibility, Principle 3 includes four additional elements not found in RTTT. Specifically, the requirements that are ***not*** currently addressed in the RTTT Teacher and Leader Evaluation requirements are the following:

- Including student achievement or growth measures for all teacher and leader evaluations;
- Requiring that LEAs take specific procedures to validate measures
- Including teachers and principals in reviewing and revising evaluation systems; and
- Providing training to teachers, evaluators, and other school staff on evaluation systems, including working towards inter-rater reliability

RTTT LEAs will only have to meet the new requirements that were not already included in the RTTT Teacher and Leader Evaluation requirements. For DCPS schools, this will mean ensuring their evaluation systems comply with the statewide guidelines and amending them if necessary. For charter schools that participate in RTTT this will mean amending their systems to address the additional requirements of Principle 3, but not necessarily to address them in the manner recommended by the DC OSSE in statewide guidelines. These RTTT LEAs may apply to the DC OSSE for a waiver to differentiate student achievement and growth measures if they would like to use measures in addition to the DC value-added model for teachers in tested grades and subjects.

Table 3.A.2: RTTT Requirements for Evaluation and Support System That Meet ESEA Flexibility Requirements and Those That Will Be Added to the New State Guidelines

ESEA Flexibility Requirement	Existing RTTT Requirement?	Will Be Included in State Guidelines?
Teacher and principal evaluation and support systems will be used for continual improvement of instruction	Yes	Yes
Differentiate performance meaningfully by using at least three performance levels	Yes	Yes
Use multiple valid measures in determining performance levels	Yes* (does not address validity)	Yes (State guidelines will also require LEAs to conduct or participate in a validity study)
Include as a significant factor data on student growth for all students (including ELLs and students with disabilities)	Yes* (does not specify a percent of growth data for non-tested grades and subjects)	Yes (State guidelines will require at least 15 percent growth for non-tested grades and subjects)
Include 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)	Yes	Yes
Evaluate teachers and principals on a regular basis	Yes	Yes
Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development	Yes	Yes
Use to inform personnel	Yes	Yes

decisions		
Include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising evaluation systems	No* (LEAs have instructional staff as part of RTTT Task Forces)	Yes
Provide training to teachers, evaluators, and other school staff on the evaluation system	No* (LEAs include PD on CCSS and other RTTT requirements in LEA RTTT plan)	Yes

Modifying State Requirements

As noted above, in developing guidelines for compliance with new evaluation and support system requirements under Principle 3, the DC OSSE will build on the RTTT evaluation requirements to address the ED's ESEA flexibility requirements and to reflect lessons learned from the first year of implementation of the RTTT requirements. These guidelines will ensure that the District of Columbia's new evaluation systems offer reliable, valid, and complete data to inform personnel decisions. They also provide leaders and managers with information and tools to offer support to teachers and create opportunities for them to pursue professional development and growth.

Prior to submission of this flexibility waiver request application, the DC OSSE took the following steps towards implementation of statewide evaluation system guidelines:

- **Step 1**: The DC OSSE revised the RTTT guidelines to meet the ED's requirements starting June 4, 2012.
- **Step 2**: The Title I Committee of Practitioners reviewed and commented on the guidelines at a meeting on June 13, 2012.
- **Step 3**: The DC OSSE held a conference call with school leaders, posted the guidelines on the OSSE web site, and shared them with LEA leaders to get feedback on them from all LEAs the week of June 11, 2012.
- **Step 4**: The DC OSSE obtained feedback from the Human Capital Task Force on June 15, 2012 and June 21, 2012.
- **Step 5**: The DC OSSE revised and finalized the guidelines and submitted the guidelines to the ED on June 25, 2012.

The implementation process for these statewide guidelines in the District of Columbia requires only adoption by the DC OSSE after vetting through the Deputy Mayor of Education. Once flexibility has been granted to the District, the DC OSSE will publish the final approved version of the document entitled, "Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support System Requirements," (Attachment 14) by posting the guidance on its website and distributing it to

LEAs.

Other RTTT Initiatives that Support Teacher and Leader Effectiveness

Additional RTTT initiatives that align with the goal of increasing teacher and leader effectiveness include the Charter School Teacher Pipelines Grant and the Teacher Preparation Scorecard. The DC OSSE's Charter School Teacher Pipelines Grant supports the development or expansion of teacher residency programs that recruit, train, evaluate, and place highly effective teachers into both traditional and charter public schools in the District of Columbia. This is a competitive grant that is part of the RTTT grant program.

The Teacher Preparation Scorecard is a part of the RTTT program that is intended to evaluate teacher preparation programs in the District of Columbia using a number of performance indicators, including evaluation data, which will measure program completers' impact on student achievement.

Finally, another competitive grant that is part of RTTT, the Professional Learning Communities of Effectiveness grant, focuses on developing professional learning communities that work together to address an educational challenge. Last year, a grant was awarded to a consortium of LEAs led by E. L. Haynes Public Charter School, a high-performing local charter school, to develop an online library of video lessons aligned to the CCSS. In addition, the DC OSSE's Educator Licensure and Accreditation unit plans to incorporate CCSS components in its elementary, English, and mathematics licensure requirements as the unit revamps it state accreditation and licensure requirements in coordination with the signing of a renewed state partnership agreement with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (formerly NCATE). The DC OSSE anticipates completing this work by the end of SY 2012–13.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that all measures that are included in determining performance levels are valid measures, meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA?*

For grades and subjects in which assessments are required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), does the SEA define a statewide approach for measuring student growth on these assessments?

For grades and subjects in which assessments are not required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), does the SEA either specify the measures of student growth that LEAs must use or select from or plan to provide guidance to LEAs on what measures of student growth are appropriate, and establish a system for ensuring that LEAs will use valid measures?

Evaluation systems submitted by RTTT LEAs will have to meet the following new criteria:

- Ensuring validity of measures: The DC OSSE will analyze the relationship between student achievement and teacher/leader evaluation ratings for RTTT LEAs by analyzing the correlation between teacher/leader evaluation ratings and student growth and proficiency in a school. PCSB will conduct validity analyses for non-RTTT charter LEAs,

and the DCPS will continue to conduct this analysis for its schools. The DC OSSE will provide exemplars of valid observation rubrics that LEAs can choose to adopt.

- Training for teachers, leaders, and evaluators: RTTT LEAs will be required to provide training to all of their evaluators and develop plans to work toward inter-rater reliability among evaluators within the LEA.

- Student growth measures: DCPS schools will be required to include a measure of student achievement as 50 percent of teacher evaluations in tested grades and subjects. Specifically, DCPS schools will be required to include a growth measure based on the DC CAS for at least 30 percent of the evaluation rating and may select another measure of achievement or growth for up to 20 percent of the evaluation rating. Schools will be required to include a measure of student growth as a significant component of principal evaluations. DCPS will have to explain how their student growth measures are consistent with their school mission, values, and goals. Charter RTTT LEAs will still be required to use the District of Columbia value-added model as 50 percent of the evaluation rating for teachers in tested grades and subjects unless they receive a student achievement waiver from the DC OSSE. For DCPS teachers in non-tested grades and subjects in grades K–12, schools will be required to select a measure of growth that will account for at least 15 percent of the evaluation rating. Charter RTTT LEAs will have flexibility in the weights assigned to student growth measures within teacher evaluation systems for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects. The DC OSSE will provide guidance and technical assistance to LEAs in using achievement measures within teacher evaluations.

- Include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising evaluation systems: LEAs will be required to describe how they include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising teacher and principal evaluation systems.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA incorporate student growth into its performance-level definitions with sufficient weighting to ensure that performance levels will differentiate among teachers and principals who have made significantly different contributions to student growth or closing achievement gaps?*

Student Growth in Teacher and Leader Evaluation Guidelines

To meet the requirements of ESEA flexibility, all schools subject to ESEA will have to incorporate student growth into teacher and leader evaluations. Student growth is defined as the change in student performance over a full school year. This could include a pre-test at the beginning of the year and a post-test at the end of the year, or a pre-test from the prior school year and post-test at the end of the current school year. For teachers in tested grades

and subjects, all LEAs must incorporate data from the state's ESEA required assessments.

All LEAs will have the following three options for including student growth data in teacher evaluations for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects:

- Use a measure of schoolwide growth that is based on the DC CAS in English/Language Arts and/or Mathematics. (The LEA may also include schoolwide growth results based on science and composition assessments when they are available);
- Develop a growth measure that is based on a standardized assessment that is aligned with or relevant to CCSS; or
- Develop student learning objectives for every classroom that are aligned with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or DC or Industry Standards where CCSS are not available. In grades or subjects in which pre-tests are not available, educators will use all available prior assessments to set appropriate objectives.

In defining achievement measures for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects, LEAs must set achievement objectives based on mastery of Common Core Standards or DC standards where Common Core standards do not exist. Student objectives must require students to demonstrate a particular level of skill and knowledge in that specific course content or subject area. In setting these objectives, educators must consider prior achievement data that is available on their students.

A majority of DC teachers teach in subjects covered by state standards. Of a total 5709 teachers, 96% (5480) of teachers are teaching in subjects where there are state-level student content standards. Of that 96%, 13% (761) of teachers that are ESL, Bilingual Ed & SPED are resource teachers providing pull-out/push-in and/or collaborative consultation to teachers of record. These are not teachers working with a self-contained classroom of SPED students, for example. These resource teachers are covered under the state-level content standards since they are providing support in the core content areas. The remaining 4% (233) of teachers are teaching in subjects where there are no state-level student content standards. Subjects include Home Economics, JRRTOC, Technology, Business and Career & Technical Occupations. Although there are no state-level student content standards, these courses follow established industry standards.

For school leaders in DCPS schools, student growth will be a significant component of an evaluation system consisting of multiple components. For DCPS teachers in tested grades and subjects, 50 percent will be based on student achievement. Specifically, at least 30 percent will have to be a growth measure based on the DC CAS, and the remaining percent will have to be an achievement or growth measure determined by the LEA to make up the 50 percent total required. For DCPS teachers in non-DC CAS grades and subjects, at least 15 percent will have to be based on an LEA-determined measure of student growth. The DCPS will have to explain how their student growth measures are consistent with their school mission, values, and goals, as evaluating school leadership is different than evaluating teacher effectiveness.

Charter LEAs will have to meet the requirements of Principle 3 for incorporating student growth into teacher and leader evaluations. Specifically, charter LEAs must incorporate "as a significant factor data on student growth for all students." DC OSSE will incorporate steps to ensure this requirement is met as part of the MOA between DC OSSE and PCSB.

The student growth requirements are slightly different for RTTT LEAs. RTTT LEAs must use the value-added model (DC CAS) as 50 percent of the evaluation rating for teachers in tested grades and subjects unless they receive a student achievement waiver from the DC OSSE. If their waiver is approved, the LEA must use the value-added model as at least 30 percent of the evaluation rating and can propose other measures of achievement for the remaining percentage to equal 50 percent. The DC OSSE will encourage all LEAs to consider how their evaluation systems are aligned with the CCSS by providing guidance, technical support, and training in thinking through this alignment.

The District would like to take advantage of the expertise of principal managers who will consider multiple components in making human capital decisions about principals. Moreover, most LEAs make decisions about re-appointing principals before student achievement data is available. Therefore, LEAs may use ratings from other components of the evaluation system to make re-appointment decisions and use historical student achievement data as part of that decision as well. Finally, different weights may be appropriate for principals of schools serving different grade levels.

Different weights are also assigned for teachers in tested versus non-tested grades and subjects since student achievement is much harder to measure when standardized assessments are not available, and therefore should be used judiciously in evaluating teachers. For context, the DCPS uses Teacher-Assessed Student Achievement Data (TAS) to measure student achievement in the non-tested grades. Essentially, this a process by which principals and teachers set a goal for student achievement at the beginning of the year, identify an assessment to measure that goal, and then track progress throughout the year. At the end of the year, teachers receive a score from their principal on the data that they present. While TAS is a meaningful measure of student achievement that allows teachers to capture student growth not reflected on the DC CAS, TAS student achievement goals and assessments are not standardized or administered securely. For this reason, DCPS initially assigned a 10 percent weight to the TAS component. They have now implemented TAS for three years and have made improvements each year.

The DC OSSE will provide support to LEAs in developing appropriate growth measures and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). The DC OSSE will develop guidelines during the 2012-2013 school year for Student Learning Objectives that LEAs can use if they intend to develop SLOs. The DC OSSE will also provide professional development and technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing SLOs and other growth measures into their evaluation systems. The DC OSSE has already begun the work of supporting LEAs in incorporating growth

measures into their evaluation systems by hiring an organization with expertise in this area to provide support to RTTT LEAs.

Effective implementation of the inclusion of student growth in teacher and leader evaluation systems will be monitored as part of the DC OSSE on-going monitoring cycle established through RTTT and other federal grant programs. The DC OSSE will monitor DCPS and PCSB to ensure appropriate student growth measures are being used and implemented effectively.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Will the SEA's guidelines ensure that evaluations occur with a frequency sufficient to ensure that feedback is provided in a timely manner to inform effective practice?*

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Will it [student growth] be used to inform personnel decisions?*

The DC OSSE's *Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support System Requirements* oblige that DCPS ensure teachers receive continuous and constructive feedback, since this feedback is critical to improving instructional practice. For teacher and principal evaluation systems for charter LEAs, the PCSB will review and provide feedback to ensure the requirements of Principle 3 are met. In addition to providing specific feedback, LEAs must ensure that schools provide targeted professional development based on evaluation findings to ensure that professional development focuses on the needs of educators in their schools. LEAs will gauge educator performance using a variety of measures to provide a holistic picture of educator performance. Finally, evaluation results are only meaningful if they are used to improve teacher practice and to inform personnel decisions. LEAs must ensure that schools use these results to inform personnel decisions, such as those about compensation, retention, and promotion.

Current Evaluation Systems in the District of Columbia

RTTT LEAs have developed a variety of unique evaluation models that meet RTTT requirements. With the exception of one charter school LEA participating in RTTT, every RTTT LEA has developed an evaluation system that is rigorous and meets the unique needs of the LEA. The DCPS's IMPACT evaluation system is one of the more established systems and has received national attention from researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. KIPP DC provides another model of a rigorous evaluation system that also provides continuous feedback and support to teachers. Below is a description of both of these systems. These examples demonstrate how the District of Columbia can support a variety of evaluation models that are unique yet effective.

District of Columbia Public Schools: IMPACT is the DCPS's system for assessing the performance of teachers and other school-based staff. IMPACT ratings for teachers are based on the following elements:

- **Student Achievement:** The DCPS believes that a teacher's most important responsibility is to ensure that her or his students learn and grow. For this reason, educators are held accountable for the growth their students make on the DC CAS or

on other assessments if they do not teach a DC CAS grade or subject.

- **Instructional Expertise:** This is assessed through up to five formal observations each year: three by teachers' administrators and two by independent, expert practitioners called master educators. Feedback and guidance for growth are provided in post-observation conferences.
- **Collaboration:** IMPACT factors in collaboration by measuring the extent to which educators work together.
- **Professionalism:** Teachers are also held accountable for key professional requirements, including following all school policies and procedures and interacting with colleagues, students, families, and community members in a respectful manner.

KIPP DC: KIPP DC has a system for evaluating teachers and supporting them in their professional growth through observation, coaching, and feedback. Teachers are evaluated on the basis of the following elements:

- **Student Achievement (50 percent):** This component includes value-added results for teachers in DC CAS tested grades and subjects and other measures of student achievement for other teachers.
- **School Outcomes Survey (5 percent):** KIPP DC administers a survey that assesses leading indicators of school health to students, parents, and faculty. These indicators assess school culture and climate and teaching and learning.
- **Teacher Performance on the Competency Model (35 percent):** KIPP DC has a rubric that assesses teachers' performance on six competencies: Planning, Teaching (instruction and delivery), Managing (behavior, culture, and systems), Assessing, Leadership and Professionalism, and Beliefs and Character.
- **School-Wide Achievement (10 percent):** All teachers are evaluated in part based on school-wide performance on the DC CAS and another standardized measure of school-wide performance.

Guidance and Technical Assistance

The DC OSSE will provide and facilitate technical assistance to LEAs and schools as they develop and implement evaluation and support systems. To ensure alignment with the CCSS, the DC OSSE will provide guidance and technical assistance in aligning the CCSS with teacher and principal evaluation systems and in evaluating teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities. The DC OSSE can use discretionary grant funds to provide technical assistance from national providers to LEAs in developing their systems.

Identifying exemplary evaluation systems is critical to this process. To that end, the DC OSSE will identify exemplary evaluation systems that national organizations have determined are

research-based and have evidence of validity during the winter of 2013. These exemplars will provide guidance to LEAs in developing or modifying their evaluation systems.

The DC OSSE will also develop a webpage that will be the source of information about teacher and principal evaluation requirements, standards, and evaluation systems during the winter of 2013. The webpage will include the DC OSSE policies, information about best practices, and presentation materials that LEAs and schools can use in their communications with teachers and principals. The DC OSSE will also create forums for LEAs and schools to share information about their challenges and successes in implementing teacher and principal evaluation systems.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the SEA's guidelines likely to result in differentiated professional development that meets the needs of teachers?*

Professional Development

The DC OSSE will provide professional development opportunities to support LEAs and schools in developing and implementing teacher and principal evaluation systems. During SY 2012–13, the DC OSSE will offer professional development sessions to LEAs on designing effective teacher evaluation systems. These sessions will focus on topics such as the components of effective evaluation systems, how to conduct observations and provide useful feedback, and how to ensure inter-rater reliability. Professional development sessions will also focus specifically on how teachers of students with disabilities and ELLs may be evaluated. Since LEAs will develop their own systems, they will be responsible for providing training on the systems themselves.

The DC OSSE will also continue to provide high-quality professional development offerings to teachers and principals throughout the District to help them effectively implement the CCSS and address areas of need identified through evaluations. The Office of Training and Technical Assistance Unit offers a variety of professional learning experiences for special and general educators that focus on the following areas:

- Compliance with federal and local requirements for special education and related services;
- Effective pedagogy and rigorous curriculum, including alignment to the CCSS;
- Implementation of differentiated instruction and behavioral support; and
- Appropriate use of accommodations, modifications, and assistive technologies.

In addition, there are several ways the DC OSSE will support the efforts of LEAs and schools to implement CCSS and to infuse CCSS into classroom teaching and evaluations. For example, the DC OSSE will provide professional development to LEAs and schools on methods for assessing the quality and complexity of texts and their ability to help students respond to text-based questions and write evidence-based responses. The DC OSSE will also assist LEAs and schools with infusing the CCSS in teacher evaluation systems by taking the following steps:

- Providing professional development around interpretation of the CCSS;
- Developing a voluntary competency exam that LEAs and teacher and principal preparation programs can use to assess teachers' knowledge of the CCSS; and
- Helping LEAs review their observation rubrics to ensure they are aligned with the CCSS.

The DC OSSE publishes a guide annually about its many professional development offerings. The Office of Standards, Assessments and Accountability also provides professional development sessions that focus on interpreting the CCSS and their inclusion on the new DC CAS. This office also provides professional development on understanding and interpreting the ACCESS assessment for ELLs and on providing appropriate instruction and assessment for ELLs.

The District of Columbia will also provide targeted professional development for ELL educators. Specifically, these sessions will focus on ELD standards, language differentiation during content instruction and assessment, and the effective use of assessment results to increase student achievement. Several professional development sessions are planned this summer for ELL educators. SDAIE, for example, is a hands-on, practical training that focuses on strategies for making content area instruction comprehensible and meaningful for ELLs in grades 2 through 12. Strategies that participants will learn include cooperative learning, adapting text for ELLs, building on prior knowledge, providing multiple ways to engage, providing comprehensible input, and making a home/school connection. This training will also be provided with a focus on early childhood for pre-kindergarten through first grade.

With stakeholder involvement, the DC OSSE will develop and adopt voluntary teacher, principal, and professional development performance standards by December 2012 as a way of providing guidance to LEAs and schools that are developing new and revising existing evaluation systems. The standards will reflect the skills that teachers are expected to have to teach the CCSS. The DC OSSE will develop teacher performance standards based on the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standards (InTASC), promising models from other states, the CCSS, and existing LEA standards. The DC OSSE will develop school leadership performance standards based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), New Leaders for New Schools, and promising models from other states as well as LEA standards. For the professional development standards, the DC OSSE will draw from Learning Forward's professional development standards, which articulate a vision of professional development that is continuous, job-embedded, and part of the school day.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA's plan include sufficient involvement of teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines?*

Stakeholder Input

The DC OSSE has received input from the RTTT Human Capital Task Force on revisions to the evaluation system guidelines and will also seek feedback from other key stakeholders.

Beginning in SY 2012–13, the Human Capital Task Force will be expanded to include non-RTTT LEA representatives. The DC OSSE will also create two new advisory groups—a group of teachers and a group of principals from both public charter schools and DCPS schools—that will provide input on the development of teacher, principal and professional development standards. These groups will meet to review drafts of these documents and provide feedback. They will reconvene any time major modifications to the documents are proposed. Finally, the DC OSSE will post the final requirements for all teacher and principal evaluation systems as soon as they are approved by the ED and will conduct webinars and meetings to educate LEAs about the new standards and requirements. LEAs will therefore be required to involve teachers and principals in the development of their evaluation systems and will need to demonstrate in their plans how they will do so.

Summary

By proposing a system of teacher and principal evaluation requirements that leverages the work being done through RTTT and provides flexibility to charter schools, the District is raising the bar for the quality of teacher and principal evaluation and support systems. The DC OSSE will support LEAs in developing rigorous evaluation systems by providing professional development and technical assistance, and by identifying high-quality resources and materials that provide teachers and principals with meaningful feedback.

For additional information, see Attachment 14: Principle 3 Documents

- *Definition of Teacher Value-Added Model*
- *Definition of School-Wide Growth Model*

3.B Ensure LEAs Implement Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

3.B Provide the SEA's process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA's adopted guidelines.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Are the SEA's guidelines likely to result in support for all teachers, including teachers who are specialists working with students with disabilities and English Learners and general classroom teachers with these students in their classrooms that will enable them to improve their instructional practice?*

The DC OSSE will coordinate with the DCPS and the PCSB to ensure that all schools subject to ESEA meet the new evaluation system requirements; DCPS schools through adherence to state-adopted guidelines, and charter schools through compliance with Principle 3 in the exercise of their flexibility to develop individual evaluation systems. These more rigorous evaluation systems will permit schools to better focus on teacher and principal needs and areas for improvement to maximize student learning and improve student outcomes. The DC OSSE will also require that schools demonstrate how they involve teachers and principals in the development of these systems.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA have a process for reviewing and approving an LEA's teacher and principal evaluation and support systems to ensure that they are consistent with the SEA's guidelines and will result in the successful implementation of such systems?*

The DCPS will have to ensure that its teacher and principal evaluation system addresses each of the state guidelines (which will meet the ED's ESEA flexibility requirements) and submit them to the DC OSSE by April 30, 2013. The DCPS will only have to provide evidence of meeting the four new criteria required by the ESEA flexibility request that were not already required by RTTT since all DCPS schools participate in RTTT. The DC OSSE staff will review and approve the plans, providing feedback where necessary. The DC OSSE review will focus on ensuring that the evaluation system meets state requirements.

All charter LEAs subject to ESEA will need to create, pilot, and implement teacher and principal evaluation systems that address ED's ESEA flexibility requirements and submit them to PCSB pursuant to the deadline established by the charter authorizer. RTTT charter LEAs will only have to provide evidence that they have addressed the four new criteria required by the ESEA flexibility request that were not already required by RTTT. The PCSB review will focus on ensuring that the evaluation systems meet Principle 3 requirements.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that teachers working with special populations of students, such as students with disabilities and English Learners, are included in the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation and support systems?*

LEAs will be required to evaluate all teachers, including those working with special

populations of students, such as students with disabilities and ELLs. The DC OSSE will collect data related to teacher evaluations only as sufficient to ensure that evaluation systems are implemented. Collected individually-identifiable information will not be publicly disclosed by the DC OSSE.

As part of this process, the PCSB will review charter LEA plans for including student achievement and growth measures in evaluations. The DCPS will continue to implement the existing DCPS plan for including student achievement and growth in teacher and principal evaluations. All LEAs will be required to pilot new evaluation systems.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Did the SEA describe the process it will use to ensure that all measures used in an LEA's evaluation and support systems are valid, meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA (i.e., process for ensuring inter-rater reliability)?*

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the pilot broad enough to gain sufficient feedback from a variety of types of educators, schools, and classrooms to inform full implementation of the LEA's evaluation and support systems?*

During stakeholder engagement, participants expressed concerns about the capacity of LEAs to conduct validity analyses of their schools' evaluation systems. The DC OSSE had already intended to work with an external research organization to conduct these analyses for RTTT charter LEAs by looking at the correlation between teacher and leader evaluation ratings and student achievement and growth in a school. The DCPS already conducts these analyses and PCSB will conduct the analyses for non-RTTT charter LEAs.

The DC OSSE will review the validity analyses conducted for RTTT LEAs and will provide that information to LEAs so they can make modifications to their systems. All LEAs will also be required to conduct training for evaluators on their evaluation systems to ensure inter-rater reliability.

The DC OSSE has put a plan in place identifying specific milestones, responsible parties, and resource allocation to ensure high-quality implementation of teacher and leader evaluation and support systems across all LEAs by school year 2014–15.

First, the DC OSSE has revised the RTTT guidelines to address the ED's ESEA flexibility guidelines in early June 2012 and will adopt these as the statewide guidelines. As mentioned earlier, there are four new aspects of the system that the guidelines will have to address.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that an LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems with the involvement of teachers and principals?*

With regard to the state guidelines, the DC OSSE solicited feedback on the guidelines from the Title I Committee of Practitioners, members of the Human Capital Task Force, and LEA leaders during webinars or conference calls in early June. The DC OSSE then compiled all of the stakeholder feedback and revised the guidelines. The DC OSSE submitted the guidelines to the ED by June 25, 2012. In the District of Columbia, evaluation guidelines are not required

to be part of collective bargaining negotiations and do not need to be formally approved by the State Board of Education. This means that the DC OSSE will be able to finalize and post the guidelines as soon as they are approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

In June 2012, the DC OSSE solicited members for two new advisory groups—a group of teachers and a group of leaders from both public charter schools and the DCPS—that will provide input on the development of educator performance standards, school leader performance standards, and professional development standards. The groups will meet to develop the standards during July and August 2012. The DC OSSE staff will finalize the standards in September 2012.

As mentioned at the beginning of Section 3.B, the DC OSSE will, upon receipt of the DCPS's evaluation system, review and provide recommendations to ensure that the systems were developed with input from teachers and principals. The PCSB will review and provide recommendations on systems developed by charter schools.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the SEA plan for providing adequate guidance and other technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems likely to lead to successful implementation?*

The DC OSSE staff will conduct trainings for LEAs and schools on the new evaluation requirements and standards from October 2012 through November 2012. The DC OSSE will then provide technical assistance to LEAs in designing or modifying effective evaluation systems that meet applicable requirements. The DC OSSE will also create a website that includes resources and exemplars related to teacher and leader evaluation during the winter of 2013.

LEAs will develop their evaluation systems based on the new requirements between January 2013 and April 2013. The DC OSSE will review DCPS evaluation documents in May and June 2013 to provide feedback and ensure that systems developed by local authorities meet the state requirements. The DC OSSE plans to provide final notice to the DCPS of approval by August 1, 2013. The PCSB will review and approve the teacher and principal evaluation plans of charter LEAs and provide evidence to OSSE that all of these LEAs have met the requirements of Principle 3 by August 1, 2013.

In SY 2013–14, non-RTTT schools will pilot evaluation systems that meet the requirements of the flexibility waiver, while RTTT schools will fully implement evaluation systems that meet flexibility waiver requirements since RTTT schools will have already had a pilot year of implementing rigorous evaluation systems. By the beginning of SY 2014–15, all schools subject to ESEA will be fully implementing evaluation systems that meet flexibility waiver requirements.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *Is the SEA's plan likely to be successful in ensuring that LEAs meet the timeline requirements by either (1) piloting evaluation and support systems no later than the 2013- 2014 school year and implementing evaluation and support systems consistent with the requirements described above no later than the 2014-2015 school year; or (2) implementing these systems no later than the 2013-2014 school year?*

Do timelines reflect a clear understanding of what steps will be necessary and reflect a logical sequencing and spacing of the key steps necessary to implement evaluation and support systems consistent with the required timelines?

Table 3.B.i presents key milestones for the implementation of the evaluation systems as discussed.

Table 3.B.i. Key Milestones for the Implementation of Evaluation Systems

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party(ies) Responsible	Evidence	Resources	Significant Obstacles
DC OSSE revises RTTT evaluation requirements to meet ESEA flexibility waiver requirements	June 2012	DC OSSE Staff	Draft evaluation guidelines	Two staff members	None
DC OSSE seeks feedback on evaluation guidelines from LEAs, Human Capital Task Force, and Title I Committee of Practitioners	June 2012	DC OSSE Staff	Feedback notes from LEAs, Human Capital Task Force, Title I COP and LEA leaders	Two staff members	None
Solicit members for advisory groups to develop voluntary teacher, leader, and professional development standards	June 2012	DC OSSE staff	List of members	One staff member to solicit volunteers	Finding effective educators who have the time to participate
Submit evaluation guidelines to ED for peer review	June 25, 2012	DC OSSE Staff	Proposed evaluation guidelines	Two staff members	None

Receive feedback from ED on the evaluation guidelines	June–July 2012	ED	Feedback from the ED	ED staff and peer reviewers	Need for prompt turnaround
Finalize, distribute, and post evaluation guidelines	As soon as they are approved by the ED	DC OSSE Staff	Final guidelines that have been distributed to all LEAs and posted on the DC OSSE's website	Two staff members	Need for prompt turnaround
Develop voluntary teacher, leader, and professional development standards	July–August 2012	DC OSSE staff, Teacher Task Force, Leader Task Force, Human Capital Task Force	Draft standards	Two staff members to review model standards and draft the DC OSSE standards and then manage the process for getting input and revising the standards	This will be a time-consuming process: the DC OSSE will have to find the staff capacity to do this or contract it out.
Adopt educator performance and professional development standards	September 2012	DC OSSE staff	Performance standards	One staff member to finalize performance standards	None
Conduct trainings on evaluation requirements and voluntary standards	October–November 2012	DC OSSE staff	Training materials and attendance lists	One staff member to conduct trainings	None

Develop and make available SLO guidelines	December 2012	DC OSSE staff	Distribution to LEAs, access on website	Two staff members to review model guidelines and draft the DC OSSE guidelines and then manage the process for getting input and revising the guidelines	None
Provide technical assistance as needed to LEAs creating or revising their evaluation systems	December 2012– March 2013	DC OSSE Staff	Technical assistance log of issues and responses	One staff member	None
Create website with resources on teacher and leader evaluation	December 2012– March 2013	DC OSSE staff (with contractor)	Website address	One staff member	Awarding a contract quickly or building on an existing contract vehicle
Charter LEAs submit evaluation system plans to PCSB for review and approval	By April-May, 2013	PCSB	LEA Evaluation System Plans	LEA staff	None

PCSB and DCPS submit evidence that their LEA systems comply with the applicable standards	July 2013	PCSB and DCPS	Evaluation Review Tracking Sheet	Two staff members to conduct the review process	Allocating staff time to this activity
DC OSSE sends approval notices to PCSB and DCPS regarding their evaluation systems/plans	By August 2013	DC OSSE staff	Approval notices to schools	One staff member	None
Non-RTTT LEAs pilot evaluation systems/full implementation for RTTT LEAs	School year 2013–14	Schools	Approved Evaluation Plans, Monitoring visits	Staff members to conduct monitoring visits	None
Full implementation of evaluation systems for all LEAs	School year 2014–15	LEAs	Monitoring visits	Staff members to conduct monitoring visits	None

Summary

By issuing new state guidelines, the DC OSSE will assist LEAs directly and indirectly via the PCSB and the DCPS with the implementation of rigorous teacher and leader evaluation systems. These systems will offer frequent and timely feedback and will be used to inform professional development needs and personnel decisions. With higher quality information about teacher and leader performance, schools will be better able to design strategies that increase teacher and leader effectiveness and ultimately increase student achievement, raise graduation rates, and close achievement gaps.