ESEA Flexibility

Request

Revised May 24, 2012

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

OMB Number: 1810-0581

Paperwork Burden Statement

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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. <u>Evidence</u>: 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. <u>Resources</u>: Resources necessary to complete the key activities, including staff time and additional funding.

6. <u>Significant obstacles</u>: 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.

<u>Preparing the Request</u>: To prepare a high-quality request, it is extremely important that an SEA refer to <u>all</u> 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.

<u>Process for Submitting the Request</u>: 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

☒ 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a 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 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 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)

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. The District of Columbia has both the experience and political will to achieve exceptional outcomes. This strong reform agenda is backed by aligned leadership and support at all levels. 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 reading and 47 percent in math, with stubbornly persistent performance gaps between subgroups. For students with special needs, only 16 percent are meeting proficiency in reading and 19 percent in math. English language learners (ELLs) perform slightly better, with 25 percent meeting proficiency levels in reading 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 reading and math 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 will employ for the first time this year, we expect a graduation rate of about 51 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. Furthermore, the District of Columbia has a stratified education gap among residents wherein income and educational attainment differs 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 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 (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, with advisory, approval, and public-engagement mandates. As 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 72.5 percent in reading and 73.5 percent in math 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 years by 2017 as an interim step to our 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 continue 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 request from certain ESEA provisions 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.

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 multiple 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 be 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, but 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, 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 students' 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, the DC OSSE also chaired multiple meetings with the DCPS; the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board (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 rules—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 also was 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. 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, 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 February 22, 2012. A summary of the critical of 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.

Participants also called for more opportunities for internships for all students in all geographic sections of the city to be inclusive of special education students. Some suggested that the current system of awarding Carnegie units as a graduation requirement be replaced by a competency-based concept of college and career readiness that would allow for alternate pathways to college and career readiness.

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.

Differentiated Recognition and Accountability: Groups generally agreed that 1) a rating system with multiple indicators would provide more meaningful data, 2) the present accountability model does not accurately document school effectiveness, and 3) growth measures need to be incorporated into the accountability system. Stakeholders strongly encouraged leveraging existing reporting systems to create comparable information for parents and community stakeholders without placing undue reporting burdens on LEAs.

Growth Measures: Some participants felt growth measures were appropriate but that LEAs should be provided with flexibility in defining student growth, given that LEAs have unique assessments, and suggested that, where possible, the DC OSSE could define and require LEAs to use standardized assessments. Conversely, 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.

Other Measures: 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. Most groups agreed on the importance of setting realistic, attainable goals, but many expressed strong concern that differentiated targets could be interpreted as an indication of student potential and could lower expectations for certain groups. Many participants were concerned about teacher retention and the impact on student achievement.

Parental Engagement: Parents and community advocates asked that the accountability plan clearly identify parent and community involvement as critical to the success of the new education plan. There was a call to provide stakeholders with transparent, meaningful, and comparable data for all schools, including the amount of local funding directly provided to each school.

Support and Interventions: 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. There were numerous calls to establish a common understanding that all schools must strive to meet the CCSS while ensuring that the autonomy of LEAs and charter schools was not impinged upon. The importance of developing strong school leaders was identified as critical, as was greater clarity regarding the role of the DC OSSE as the SEA in monitoring and enforcing the implementation of federal requirements at local schools. Parents called for clear statements about objectives, outcomes, and timelines. This information was seen as a catalyst for the empowerment of parents and as a critical component of partnerships between the DC OSSE and the community.

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 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 (DOE) 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, DC OSSE staff drew on this feedback to ensure that that the District of Columbia's education plan as articulated in this application includes 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.

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 needs revision. To meet the law's key requirement of having all students proficient in reading and math 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 reading 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 acknowledge schools for 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 rarely 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 it 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, then 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. 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 ELA state assessments to college- and career-ready standards in its efforts to transition and implement CCSS with mathematics 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 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 have submitted the past three quarterly

reports to the U.S. 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 standing up a high-functioning State Hearing Office and meeting the numerical benchmark of 90 percent timely issuance of hearing officer determinations over twelve 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

- 95 percent timeliness rate for transition from Part C to Part B

These results are the product of the DC OSSE's ability 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 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 participate in RTTT.

The implementation and sustainability of the principles required in the ESEA flexibility request are underway as part of RTTT starting in June 2010 wherein 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 math 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 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 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 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 will be carried out by the Department of Special Education Training and Technical Assistance unit within the Division of Special 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.

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. The District of Columbia has 54 LEAs, one being a traditional public school system under mayoral control and 53 charter LEAs that operate independently of the DCPS and each other. This governance structure and the charter LEAs autonomy create 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 the 2011-2012 school year, which will improve student outcomes now and in the future. At this point, the DC OSSE defines students as college- and career-ready when they are prepared to enter a post-secondary institution and be enrolled in credit-bearing courses and/or are able to qualify for entrance to a trade or training program, the military, or an entry-level career.

District of Columbia students have a tremendous opportunity to receive scholarship funds through the DC Tuition Assistance Grant program (DC TAG) to attend any state college in the country for close to in-state tuition. However, just over 30 percent of high school seniors earn a bachelor's degree. Research shows that even with this financial benefit, District of Columbia students are often required to take remedial courses when they enter college. Because of this experience, they can feel discouraged and unprepared, and they may eventually drop out. Aligning instruction with the CCSS will improve students' chances of graduating from high school ready for the rigors of college and with a better chance of earning a degree.

Public engagement has been a crucial part of the entire CCSS adoption process. Stakeholders representative of all students, 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.

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, 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 current DC standards to identify content gaps. 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 and 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.

Adoption 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 reading and composition, the DC CAS has been aligned to the CCSS. Mathematics instruction will focus on priority standards—those current DC mathematics standards that will most prepare students to be successful after the mathematics transition to the CCSS in 2012–13. 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 DC's goal and vision.

- **June 2011—DC CAS Aligned to Common Core—Blueprint Released:** Clarifies strength of DC standards and supports transition to new standards.

- **July 2011—Crosswalk Reading Standards to Special Education (SPED) Entry Points**: Assists SPED educators with transition and alignment of DC Standards to the CCSS.

- **August 2011—Conduct Professional Development Needs Survey**: Identifies and documents student and educator needs.

- **August 2011—Distribute Printed CCSS in Math 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 DC students are prepared to be college- and career-ready.

- **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**: Assessed current status of science to be able to provide educators with the best support to improve student learning.

- **June2012—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 DC-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, DC 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–2. For grades 3–12, 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** is below.

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

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

K–12 Math (aligned to the CCSS)	

The DC OSSE is not responsible for curriculum development. Each LEA develops its own curriculum with support and evaluation by the DC OSSE on a request basis only. However, since September 2011, the DC OSSE has provided professional development and exemplar lessons as resources to inform curriculum development at the LEA level.

A majority of this information 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 will create over 300 video lessons that will be available to all District teachers, 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?*

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 DC 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 is currently 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 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. Our 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?*

Special Populations

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.

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 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 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 USDE 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.

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 DC 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 (CoP). 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 Special Education's Director of Training and Technical Assistance, the CoP 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 CoP, the DC OSSE has built a dedicated state secondary transition webpage (http://www.DC [OSSEsecondarytransition.org/](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 version release of the statewide data system, SEDS, in October 2011 included key updates to its secondary transition section. These updates encourage best practices, improve compliance, and support improved student outcomes.

For special education students in the 1 percent group (students taking the DC CAS Alternative 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 National Center and State Collaborative (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 on their use, which will inform IEP teams on 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 CoP comprised 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 CoP receives training on the CCSS, the relationship between content and achievement standards, curriculum, assessment, and universal access to the general curriculum. The CoP 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 2012–13 school year.

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?*

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 also 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 shows that ELLs often record 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. Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (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 2–12. 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 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 ESL (English as a Second Language) 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?*

Preparing for the Next Generation of Assessments

DC 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 a CCSS, and in 2012, all items on the DC CAS Reading were aligned to a CCSS with a shift in the blueprint to include more informational text. DCDC 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 DC standards to the CCSS and the CCSS to DC-owned reading items. The 2012 DC CAS mathematics focused on priority standards to better prepare students for the transition to math CCSS in 2012–13. These math 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 for teachers to focus instruction on in each grade.

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 reading 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 new, more rigorous standards. The DC OSSE worked with its Technical Advisory Council, comprised 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 comprised of teachers, assessment coordinators, and other stakeholders to guide the development of the math 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.

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 the 2012–13 school year.

The District of Columbia's science standards were recently awarded an "A" by the Fordham Institute. 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 in 2014 as detailed in Principle 2. This staggered timeline 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.

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 Next Generation Science Standards expected to be completed this summer.

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 Math (aligned to the	Reading: 3–8, 10

	CCSS) K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Math (DC Priority Standards) K–12 DC Science Standards	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: Reading and Math*
2012–13	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Math (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 DC Science Standards	Reading: 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: Reading and Math*
2013–14	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Math (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 DC Science Standards	Reading: 3–8, 10 Math: 3–8, 10 Composition: 4, 7, 10 Science: 5, 8, and biology—Included in accountability *Optional Grades 2 and 9: Reading and Math*
2014–15	K–12 ELA (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Math (aligned to the CCSS) K–12 Next Generation Science Standards	PARCC Assessment

For the first time in 2012, the DC OSSE administered the DC CAS assessments in reading and math for grade 2 and reading for grade 9 aligned to the CCSS. Originally, these 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 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 benefits to offering these assessments are that LEAs have 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?*

Supporting Teachers

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 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. Math instructional shifts include focus, coherence, fluency, deep understanding, applications, and dual intensity of practicing and understanding.

Moving forward, how schools are tiered, as detailed in Principle 2 and 3, will affect the level of professional development the DC OSSE provides. For example, to ensure the District of Columbia meets the needs of teachers in the lowest-performing schools or teachers that 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 teachers 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 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 DC 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 reading. Based on the "gradual release of responsibility" model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) and targeted to address specific reading 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.

To effectively implement the CCSS for mathematics, the DC OSSE will concentrate on addressing the instructional shifts between the DC standards and the CCSS while incorporating the Standards for Mathematical Practice. In 2011, the DC OSSE conducted a crosswalk comparing the DC standards and 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 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 is in the process of creating an online library of 50 CCSS video lessons per grade in both math and reading for grades three through nine (total of 350) to support every teacher in the adoption of the CCSS. 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.

A gap analysis conducted by an independent assessment contractor will determine areas of improvement and/or need as determined by DC CAS scores and the grade correlation between current DC 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.

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. 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 6–12, 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 reading 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.

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, 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 District of Columbia Public Schools, 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.

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 timeframe 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*

- *2012 DC CAS Blueprints for Reading and Math*

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

- *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	☐ 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

	develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.	submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)

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

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?

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?

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 District of Columbia has extensive diversity among its LEAs. There is one traditional, geographic LEA—the DCPS—under mayoral control and 53 individual, independently administered charter schools, which can range from a single small school to multi-campus charter networks. The PCSB is currently the state's sole authorizer for charter schools, and has the necessary authority under State law to perform LEA oversight and accountability functions related to charter schools.

In the past few years, LEAs have spent considerable time designing and publishing frameworks for school evaluations. The PCSB has created the Performance Management Framework (PMF), and the DCPS has adopted the School Scorecard system. Both unveiled recently, the systems give valuable insight into how schools compare in the service of students. They provide an array of valuable data points for the evaluation of school effectiveness on student learning.

In the District of Columbia's special environment, the DC OSSE is committed to the autonomous school bargain, which provides LEAs with autonomy in exchange for accountability for student achievement results for all students and subgroups. This ESEA flexibility request naturally extends that approach by removing restrictions, addressing limitations in use of federal funds,

and replacing an ineffective federal accountability system in return for greater student outcomes from LEAs and schools.

Schools that fail to achieve ambitious but achievable goals will receive additional recommendations for improvement and may be required to allocate funds in a way that best supports academic achievements. Schools will be required to identify needs for improvement and develop and implement a plan. DCPS and PCSB will oversee and monitor plan implementation. However, every LEA in the District of Columbia will have the full ability to design its own system to complete school improvement tasks within a framework supported by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's RTTT Innovation and Improvement team.

Through the implementation of the new accountability framework, the DC OSSE expects to see a number of educational improvements. During the 2010–11 school year, 45 percent of District of Columbia students were proficient in reading and 47 percent tested proficient in math. Under the ESEA Flexibility Request, proficiency rates would improve to 72.5 percent in reading and 73.5 percent in math by 2017. Additionally, the DC OSSE expects to see graduation rates improve substantially. For the 2010–11 school year, the cohort graduation rate is 58.6 percent. Our goal is to have a graduation rate of 85 percent. We plan to achieve several interim targets along the way based on our commitment to reduce the number of non-graduates by 10 percent along the way. As a result our interim targets are:

Class	Rate	Additional Graduates
Class of 2011 Actual	58.60%	202
Class of 2012 Interim Target	62.7%	202
Class of 2013 Interim Target	66.5%	202
Class of 2014 Interim Target	69.8%	202
Class of 2015 Interim Target	72.8%	202
Class of 2016 Interim Target	75.6%	202
Class of 2017 Interim Target	78.0%	202
DC Goal	**85.00%**	

Educational Improvement Through Policy

The District of Columbia has made tremendous efforts to drive academic achievement in schools through policy changes and support. These efforts include a commitment to charter schools, mayoral control, a focus on providing high-quality early childhood education, rigorous programs enacted under RTTT, and a strong tradition of school choice.

The District of Columbia is ranked first in the nation in its charter school law in 2012 by the Center for education reform, based on the School Reform Act (SRA) enacted by Congress in 1995. In the past 15 years, charter schools have grown to serve 41 percent of 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 also add grades

each year.

The increase in the number of charter schools has had a significant impact on state-level educational policy. Twelve years after the enactment of the SRA, and after Congress amended the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to facilitate Mayoral control of public education, the Council of the District of Columbia passed PERAA. That 2007 law 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 in the DCPS, including closing low-performing or under-enrolled schools, the creation of the IMPACT teacher and staff evaluation system, bonuses for highly effective teachers, and new momentum around improvement within the DCPS. Additionally, PERAA eliminated the DCPS Board of Education as a charter school authorizer, placed charter schools under the oversight authority of the PCSB, and created the SEA (DC OSSE) and State Board of Education to provide leadership in policy for all schools.

When he was Council Chairman, current Mayor Vincent Gray spearheaded an effort to establish universal high-quality pre-K that would be available to any District of Columbia three- or four-year-old. This initiative has been exceptionally successful. According to the *Education Week* for *Quality Counts* report released in January 2011, the District of Columbia 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.

In 2010, the District of Columbia became a second-round winner of the RTTT grant. This provides a unique opportunity for collaboration, including sharing best practices across DCPS and public charter schools. The DC OSSE was the second SEA in the nation to align its ELA state assessments to college- and career-ready standards and will align mathematics by 2013. LEAs and schools will be able to tailor instruction and supports using student assessment results aligned to the CCSS.

The District of Columbia's participation in RTTT has enabled an enhanced support system for the bottom 20 percent of Title I schools, the development of LEA and state-level data systems to support instructional improvement, and the expansion of new systems of teacher evaluation using student performance to 30 LEAs serving over 90 percent of K–12 students.

Finally, 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 ED with zero open items. Based on current improvements, the DC OSSE is seeking to exit High Risk status.

These efforts have brought about tremendous reform within almost all aspects of state policy in the District of Columbia. Additionally, there have been new efforts to build accountability by the PCSB (through the PMF) and the DCPS (through School Scorecard). Both systems reframe school performance with strong schools no longer labeled "failing" for not making AYP and weak performers rewarded for making progress with struggling students.

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.

Under NCLB, there is a weak link to the DC OSSE's approach in respecting autonomy and allowing LEAs to make independent decisions while holding them accountable for strong results. The current AYP structure in the District of Columbia has become an effectively meaningless system. To reinforce this point, two critiques are attached to this ESEA Flexibility Request: one by Friends of Choice in Urban Schools (FOCUS), an educational advocacy organization, and another by E. L. Haynes Public Charter School, which is one of the highest-performing schools in the District of Columbia. They both illustrate the need to move to a more comprehensive accountability system to determine school effectiveness.

Although NCLB focused on achievement gaps and increased accountability for high-need students, there have been unintended consequences lowering educational standards and narrowing the curriculum, with a focus on absolute test scores instead of including student growth and gains. Interventions continue to be a "one size fits all" approach, limiting LEAs and schools from tailoring services to student and school needs. Under the status quo, DC OSSE LEA and school support is limited to similar services that have minimal room for adjustment, given the scale of LEAs and schools identified as "failing" schools. Furthermore, rewards and recognition will only be provided to high-performing schools, ignoring schools that show significant student growth progress. Title I funds continue to be limited to federally mandated activities that cannot be tailored to LEA and school needs.

The District of Columbia's application for ESEA Flexibility is not a retreat from accountability but a commitment to be smarter and more focused on how the District of Columbia requires low-performing schools and schools with achievement gaps to improve.

Parent-Based Accountability

The District of Columbia has both strengths and weaknesses in terms of parental choice. It has among the most extensive school-choice options available anywhere in the United States, including a robust tradition of out-of-boundary enrollment. Choice has allowed higher-performing charter schools to reach capacity and expand around the city, while higher-performing (often overenrolled) traditional schools continue to attract students and keep families in their own neighborhoods.

However, school choice presumes families have adequate information to make informed decisions. A recent report on school choice by Russ Whitehurst of the Brookings Institute found that even states and districts that encourage school choice do not provide clear information on school performance, which inhibits comparisons among schools and undermines the choice process. He encourages states and districts to support quality choices by providing information

on schools, including data on student and teacher absentee rates, parental satisfaction, course offerings, and the ratio of applications to slots.[1]

Over the past two years, the District of Columbia has seen a dramatic expansion in the amount of information available to the public on school performance. While helpful, it has not evolved to produce a consistent set of data that fulfills all the informational needs of parents.

As opposed to the NCLB AYP system, which simply shows failed schools, a more nuanced index that tiers schools by performance level and includes indicators useful to parents would bridge the current divide between charter and traditional schools and allow the District of Columbia to truly hold LEAs and schools accountable for student performance.

Robust School Reports

If the District of Columbia is granted ESEA Flexibility, the changes in the accountability system will provide an opportunity to pull all the stakeholders invested in educational data (LEAs, charter-school authorizers, parents, elected officials, community members, and interested individuals) together to work toward more consistent reports providing essential and comprehensive information that parents need to make the most informed decisions for their children. The DC OSSE will seek input from a wide array of stakeholders to create more meaningful school reports that include information families care about and could use for making informed decisions about school choice.

Providing parents with high-quality information is critical in a choice-friendly environment like in the District of Columbia. Parents can withdraw their children from a school that they perceive of negatively and potentially reduce or eliminate its funding. A recent DCPS school-closure announcement, for example, noted that a school was "severely under-enrolled, and as the smallest elementary school in the system is unable to sustain a viable" school. Similarly, most charter schools close for financial rather than performance reasons.

The DC OSSE will ensure the development of high-quality, consistent reports by working in collaboration with the PCSB, the DCPS, school leaders, parents, elected officials, community organizations, and interested individuals to empower all parents with the information they need to make sound educational decisions for their children.

In two previous grant applications (State Longitudinal Data System and RTTT), the DC OSSE committed to establishing an online data portal that provides 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 with school performance results for the 2012 DC CAS.

Parents also need additional support in interpreting the data. The DC OSSE will collaborate with

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

community partners to develop a program to help parents understand school and LEA reports and how to use the information to make sound educational decisions. We are pursuing partnerships and prepared to do the work internally to launch this.

The DC OSSE will continue to report information required by federal law, including student progress on AMOs, test participation rate, graduation rate for adjusted cohort, and other academic indicators.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

AMOs provide the high-level picture of proficiency in reading, math, and the graduation rate. AMOs are at the statewide level and will include a trajectory by year through 2017. Additionally, all schools will have achievement targets within ELA and mathematics to reduce by half their proficiency in all students and individual subgroups by 2017.

The DC OSSE will set targets that align to the statewide AMOs for each LEA, school, and ESEA subgroup. Annual reporting will describe whether schools have met each individual target. The measurement against targets does not determine the school classification; however, the same underlying data (graduation rate and DC CAS test scores including proficiency) are also combined in a way that includes annual growth to produce an overall classification.

The proficiency AMO is set at each level with the goal of reducing by half at the state level the number of students who are not proficient within six years. The District's statewide graduation rate goal is 85 percent, which is consistent with the current graduation rate goal. However, the statewide interim target by 2017 is to have a four-year graduation rate of 78 percent, which would require an annual improvement of four percentage points over the next five years to reduce the number of non-graduates by 10 percent.

SEA Accountability System: Identification and Classification

The District of Columbia's proposed accountability system also includes a simple school index that uses growth and proficiency to recognize the importance of serving all subgroups and identify high-performing, high-progress, and struggling schools. The three-step methodology will create individual student scores based on both proficiency and growth, all students and subgroup scores by subject, and a weighted averaged school score.

This school-level index will classify schools into five categories: Reward, Rising, Developing, Focus, and Priority. Schools that have not achieved a graduation rate of 60 percent for two consecutive years will be classified as priority schools; schools that receive SIG funds will be classified as priority schools; schools that have a test participation rate of less than 95 percent for all students for two consecutive years will also be classified as priority schools; and schools that have a test participation rate of less than 95 percent for subgroups will be classified as focus schools.

Statewide Network of Tiered Recognition, Accountability, and Support

The DC OSSE will have oversight as the SEA of the statewide accountability system. This oversight includes developing and overseeing an accountability system that identifies and exits schools in reward, priority, and focus status. Through its Cross-Functional Team (CFT), the DC OSSE will review and provide recommendations to school plans submitted by the DCPS and the PCSB acting as the LEA for public charter schools for the purpose of accountability. In this case, the DC OSSE will hold the DCPS and the PCSB accountable for the implementation and success of interventions and supports to schools.

As part of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (ELSEC) within the DC OSSE, the statewide network of tiered support will be structured in a way that maximizes resources both within and outside of the agency. In the ELSEC division, the Innovation and Improvement team, currently part of the RTTT department, will oversee the implementation of supports provided to LEAs and schools. This department will work with other divisions within the DC OSSE to establish a core team of cross-departmental DC OSSE staff that will partner with and assist LEAs and schools with their needs assessment, coordination, and development of federal grants programs and use of federal funds.

The DC OSSE will also work collaboratively and coordinate with the DCPS, the PCSB, schools, and external partners when appropriate, including education advocacy groups, community-based organizations, and parent groups, to develop a strong statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability, and support.

Led by ELSEC's RTTT Innovation and Improvement team, these entities will work together to help identify needs, assist in developing an effective improvement plan, support implementation including the realignment of federal resources, monitor progress, and report to the public.

Figure 2.A.i.2 provides an organizational representation of how the statewide level of tiered recognition, accountability, and support will be managed.

Figure 2.A.i.2: DC OSSE Organization to Support Proposed Accountability System

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                          │   Student    │
                          └──────┬───────┘
                    ┌────────────┴────────────┐
            ┌───────┴───────┐          ┌───────┴───────┐
            │   Charter     │          │   Schools     │
            │   Schools     │          │               │
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            ┌───────┴───────┐          ┌───────┴───────┐
            │ Public Charter│          │     DCPS      │
            │ School Board  │          │               │
            └───────────────┘          └───────────────┘
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OSSE Cross Functional Team
(Chaired by RTTT Innovation
and Improvement Team)

| Wellness and Nutrition | Specialized Education | Elementary and Secondary Education | Early Childhood Education | Post Secondary Education |
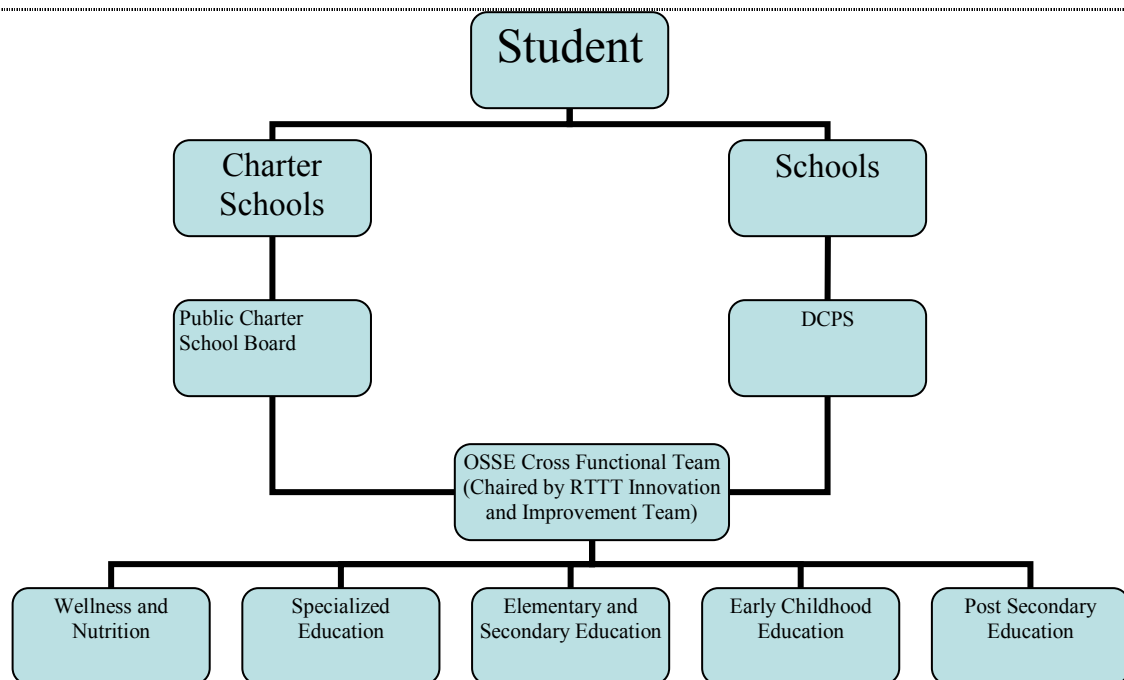
This shared ownership of process, support, and accountability within and outside of the DC OSSE will ensure a statewide system of tiered recognition, accountability, and support. This system is essential for the District to provide well-coordinated services to LEAs and schools that maximize all available resources; minimize burden to DC OSSE departments, LEAs, and schools; improve academic achievement and graduation rates; and close achievement gaps among the District of Columbia's lowest-performing subgroups and students in special populations.

As part of its SEA-level responsibilities, the DC OSSE will help build capacity at the LEA and school level through providing guidance, technical assistance/support, and opportunities to participate in state-level trainings on CCSS implementation; developing and implementing teacher and leader evaluation systems; providing training on the state-level differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system; and maximizing coordination of federal resources to serve special populations (Title I, SIG), Title II, Title III, and other federal). Combined with the activities embedded in the statewide network of tiered support as described throughout 2C, 2D, 2E, and 2F, timely and effective monitoring will take place, LEAs and schools will be held to a high standard of accountability, and schools will be supported as needed to increase academic achievement, improve graduation rates, and close achievement gaps among subgroups.

Summary

This statewide system of recognition, accountability, and support will help address current needs in the District of Columbia. The focus on proficiency and growth will recognize and support gains in academic achievement while eliminating the false labels of failure. A tiered accountability approach recognizes both the SEA and LEA role for school accountability. Additionally, this system will provide flexibility to LEAs and schools with respect to curriculum

and programs in a way that supports all of the education approaches that can effectively lead to growth and mastery of the CCSS competencies and other District of Columbia academic standards. Finally, this system recognizes the continued need to focus on subgroups, particularly ELLs and students with special needs, ensuring that the results are reported for all subgroups and the performance of a subgroup of student factors heavily in determining subject-level and overall index scores. All of these efforts combined are clearly focused on the DC OSSE's goals to improve academic achievement, graduation rates, and mastery in the CCSS without additional burdens to 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*

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 and focus groups with teachers and principals, the State Board of Education members, parents, and community leaders, it frequently heard the opinions that by only focusing on reading and math, NCLB sends a message to teachers and schools that skills such as writing, critical thinking, the arts, science, and extracurricular activities are not valued in education. The ESEA flexibility request process creates an opportunity to expand 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?*

Creating quality assessments and adjusting instruction and curriculum in schools to match 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. While the DC OSSE is currently planning to include science and composition in the accountability system, additional assessments will be evaluated as they become available, including alternative methods beyond multiple-choice tests, such as portfolio or performance-based assessments. Inclusion of these assessments will provide additional data on academic performance and in the reinforce efforts to move to stronger implementation of the CCSS. Moreover, it will address one of the largest concerns about college readiness: the ability of students to write convincing, elegant prose.

Student performance on the DC CAS Composition exam over the past four years has stagnated: fewer than half of students tested in grades 4, 7, and 10 are proficient. By including composition in the accountability system, the DC OSSE incentivizes a renewed focus on writing instruction so that students can be successful in colleges and careers that increasingly demand strong writers.

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 the CCSS for ELA and will focus on response to text. Students will be asked to engage with written material by analyzing, comparing, and contrasting texts and by applying critical thinking skills, which will build upon skills taught in ELA and other subjects.

The DC OSSE first shared that the DC CAS composition will be aligned to the common core standards in June 2011 as part of the initial outreach to school leaders to introduce the CCSS and the shifts in instruction and assessments. Throughout summer 2011, a panel of teachers

reviewed and approved the prompts through content and bias review. In October 2011, the DC OSSE conducted initial training for LEAs to explain the shift in the composition assessment, described the new rubric, and released a sample prompt. The DC OSSE provided additional training and outreach in the early months of 2012. The DC OSSE will analyze the results of the 2012 assessments and use that information to guide professional development in summer and fall 2012. As a result of LEA feedback, the 2012 test administration cycle will be the first time it is given. The newly aligned composition assessment will become a part of the statewide proficiency index starting with the 2013 administration, which will allow 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.

Including science in the accountability system is also important to promote a comprehensive, well-rounded curriculum not limited to just reading 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 math and science skills. Supporting high-quality science instruction also will bolster efforts underway at some LEAs and schools to engage students through hands-on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs. The inclusion of science will signal the subject's importance—underscored by President Obama's recent call to graduate 100,000 more scientists and engineers—and allow the DC OSSE to accelerate the discussions to align to the Next Generation Science Standards, which will be completed this summer.

Like composition, the current science proficiency results are not strong, with fewer than 40 percent of students in grades 5, 8, and high school proficient in science. Since science performance is closely tied to performance in reading and math, the DC OSSEs 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 standards earned an "A" in a Thomas Fordham Institute study of state science standards. However, student performance on the DC CAS science assessment shows that the District's highly ranked science standards are not translating to high student proficiency. The District of Columbia percent of students proficient in the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) science assessment was in the single digits, which measures students' knowledge and abilities in physical science, life science, and

earth and space sciences.[2] Including science standards in the accountability system will incentivize additional focus on science standards in the classroom.

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 responds to LEA feedback to allow time for more educators to be involved with blueprint development, item review, data analysis, and professional development around teaching to the standards. This will create 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 weighted based on student participation; reading and math are assessed in seven grades, while science and composition are assessed only in three grades. This means that science and composition will typically make up half the weight of other assessments. 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 transitioning 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 better 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 shifts 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 successful transition;

- Review alignment between composition and science assessments to current standards and make adjustments as necessary;

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[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

- Provide training and support to LEAs and schools on implementation of composition and science standards in classroom instruction;

- Provide timely access to composition and science data and supports in understanding results to inform teacher professional development, instruction, and student performance.

Summary of Project Plan

Composition Transition to Common Core Standards
- **April 2011** – DC OSSE shared with vendor the vision for a new composition prompts to assess the CCSS that would allow student to read and write to a text. DC OSSE selected the CCSS in reading and writing for the development of the prompts and created a new rubric for reading so that both a reading and writing score could be reported.

- **May 2011** – DC OSSE approved the reading passages selected by the vendor.

- **June 2011** – DC OSSE reviewed and approved the composition prompts developed by the vendor in collaboration with DC OSSE.

- **August 2011** – The composition prompts were reviewed and approved by DC educators through content and bias review for field testing and one prompt from each grade level to be used and released as a sample was selected.

- **October 2011** – 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** – DC OSSE posted on the website sample prompts for each grade.

- **April 2012** – DC OSSE field tested the prompts during the DC CAS window.

- **July 2012** – DC OSSE with the vendors and DC educators will participate in standard settings for the new prompts, write new performance level descriptors, and select anchor papers for future scoring.

- **August 2012** – 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 Reading performance to ensure comparability from year to year.

- **April 2013** – The DC CAS Composition will be administered.

- **June 2012** – The results of the DC CAS Composition will be used for accountability purposes.

Transition to Next Generation Science Standards
- **May 2012** - DC OSSE State Team meets to review standards and provide commentary for report for the first round of public feedback and review of NGSS Draft.

- **June 2012** – DC OSSE will provide Feedback from State Team to Achieve and NGSS Writing Team reacts to review.

- **August 2012** – DC OSSE state team will meet and review standards for the second and final round of public feedback and commentary.

- **September 2012** - NGSS Writing Team reacts to review and Achieve edits Final Document.

- **October 2012** – Achieve will release the final version of NGSS for adoption.

- **December 2012** - OSSE State Team reviews final release of NGSS, examines crosswalk between DC Science Standards and final NGSS, and prepares presentation to deliver to State BOE with recommendation for adoption.

- **April 2013** – Begin field testing items that are aligned to the NGSS.

- **Summer 2013** – Provide professional development and summer institutes to support schools in implementation.

- **Summer 2013** – To support schools in implementation, DC OSSE state team will develop a suggested scope and sequence for instruction and write items to create interim assessments aligned to NGSS. DC OSSE will propose a plan to administer state wide interim assessments for all schools.

- **Summer 2013** - NGSS will be implemented in schools with support from OSSE.

- **September 2013 –** Release blueprint with shift to begin alignment to NGSS

- **April 2014 –** Deliver DC CAS Science with shift to NGSS and further field testing

- **June 2014 –** Include modified assessment in the accountability purposes

- **April 2015 –** DC CAS Science fully aligned to NGSS

Summary

Feedback from focus groups clearly called for more assessments to be included in the accountability plan so that instead of narrowing the curriculum, instruction would include other subjects beyond ELA and mathematics. The DC OSSE will add composition to the accountability plan in 2013 and science in 2014. The goal is that students who graduate from an LEA in the District of Columbia will not be required to enroll in remediation courses and are ready for college and careers. The phase-in approach will allow time for teachers to receive the resources and support they need to provide quality instruction to all students. With more data on student achievement outcomes, schools will have a greater opportunity to identify those who are on track for college and career success 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 reading/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 respects the original intent of the federal law and will build upon it to more effectively measure school success. As with NCLB, the DC OSSE expects that 100 percent of students will meet proficiency in the CCSS. In the proposed new accountability system, the DC OSSE now expects that 100 percent of students will show growth each year.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

The DC OSSE will set two statewide AMOs:

- A proficiency-based AMO for reading and math achievement;

- A graduation-based AMO based on the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

The DC OSSE will set corresponding targets at the LEA, school, and ESEA subgroup levels. Annual reporting will describe whether schools have met each individual target. School classification with not be determined on whether or not the targets were met; instead schools will be classified based on the proficiency and growth data combined.

Proficiency AMO

The proficiency AMO is set at the state level with the goal of reducing by half the number of students who are not proficient within six years. The DC OSSE will set corresponding targets for each LEA, school, and ESEA subgroup. Below is an example of what these targets will look like for an individual school.

Table 2.B.i. School-Level Targets for Proficiency

	2010-11	2016-17	Expected Change (Annual Change)
Asian/Pacific Islanders	72%	86%	14 % (3%)
Black/Non-Hispanic	41%	71%	29 % (6%)
Hispanic	47%	73%	29% (5%)
White	88%	94%	6%

			(1%)
Special Education	16%	58%	42% (8%)
Lep/Nep	25%	62%	37% (7%)
Econ. Disadvantaged	38%	69%	31% (6%)
Statewide	45%	72%	27% (5%)

The lowest-performing subgroups are expected to grow the most, which will reduce the achievement gap over time.

Graduation AMO

The District of Columbia's statewide graduation rate goal is 85 percent, which is consistent with the current graduation rate goal. However, the statewide interim target by 2017 is to have a four-year graduation rate of 78 percent, which would require an annual improvement of four percentage points or 202 additional graduates a year. This requires each high school to graduate only 8 additional students a year.

SEA Accountability System: Identification and Classification

The DC OSSE's proposed accountability system is based on an index that rewards growth and proficiency. Stakeholders emphasized that simplicity should be a key principle of the new accountability system. For this reason, the statewide accountability identification will be based on only proficiency and growth on statewide assessments, participation rates, SIG school status, and graduation rates.

Index Score Calculation Business Rules

This index will better enable the DC OSSE to identify high-performing, high-progress, and struggling schools. This three-step methodology will create individual student scores based on both proficiency and growth, all students and subgroup scores by subject, and a weighted averaged school score (Table 2.B.iii).

Table 2.B.iii. Calculating School Scores: Methodology

Step	Score	Description	Calculation
Step 1	Student scores	Student receives a subject-score based on last year's test scores and this year's test scores, awarding points for both proficiency and growth	See Table 2.B.iii.

Step 2	All students and subgroup scores by subject	All students in a subject are averaged together to produce an all students subject score (e.g., all students math). All scores for students in a subgroup are averaged together (e.g., ELL math).	(sum of math scores for all students that are *Full Academic Year(FAY))/* number of FAY students = all students math score
Step 3	Weighted average school score	Each school subject score will be averaged together to create an overall school score. Science and composition will be combined at half the rate of math and reading.	Now: ((all school math index * number of math test takers) +(all school reading index * number of reading test takers))/ (number of reading test takers + number of math test takers) = school score 2013: ((all school math index * number of math test takers) +(all school reading index * number of reading test takers) + (all students composition index * composition test takers))/ (number of reading test takers + number of math test takers + composition test takers) = school score 2014: (all school math index * number of math test takers) +(all school reading index * number of reading test takers) + (all students composition index * composition test takers) +(all students science * science test takers/ (number of reading test takers + number of math test takers + composition test takers + science test takers) = school score

Step 1: Student Scores

A student's test results will be compared to the following chart to determine how many points to award depending on the achieved level of growth and proficiency (Table 2.B.iv).

Table 2.B.iv. Step 1: Student Scores

2011 Performance Level

Updated May 24, 2012

Points		Below Basic			Basic			Proficient			Advanced		
2010 Performance Level		Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High
Below Basic	Low	0	0	25	60	80	90	100	100	100	110	110	110
Below Basic	Middle	0	0	10	40	60	80	100	100	100	110	110	110
Below Basic	High	0	0	0	20	40	60	100	100	100	110	110	110
Basic	Low	0	0	0	0	20	40	100	100	100	110	110	110
Basic	Middle	0	0	0	0	0	20	100	100	100	110	110	110
Basic	High	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	110	110	110
Proficient	Low	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	110	110	110
Proficient	Middle	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	110	110	110
Proficient	High	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	110	110	110
Advanced	Low	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	110	110	110
Advanced	Middle	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	110	110	110
Advanced	High	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	110	110	110

Some students will lack growth information if they lack a prior score (e.g., a third-grade student) or took the alternative assessment. While the system will give credit based strictly on proficiency for those students, the DC OSSE will work with our vendor and DC CAS technical advisory committee to identify additional ways to calculate growth for all students.

Table 2.B.V: Step One Alternative – Student Scores

2011 Performance Level for Alt Test Takers & Those Without Prior Scores												
Below Basic			Basic			Proficient			Advanced		
Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High
0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	110	110	110

The goal is for every student to achieve proficiency, but since it is critically important to recognize growth in special needs students, the District of Columbia will investigate the process of creating a growth measure to use with alternative assessments. The District of Columbia expects all students to achieve academic growth every year.

Step 2: Subject Scores

The individual point values for students will be combined as a way to measure school progress. Based on their placement on the values table, each student will receive an independent score. All students will be averaged together to give the school an overall score in that subject. Subject scores will also be calculated by subgroup for reporting and classification purposes. Table 2.B.iii provides an example of how subject scores may be calculated at a school.

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

	Student Reading Index	Student Math Index	ELL	Student Reading Index for ELL Students	Student Math Index for ELL Students
Student A	100	100	x	100	100
Student B	110	100			
Student C	110	110	x	110	110
Student D	25	50			
Student E	25	50	x	25	50
Student F	100	100			
Student G	25	25			
Student H	25	0			
Student I	100	50	x	100	50
Student J	110	100	x	110	100
Student K	100	100			
Total Index Score	830	785		445	410
Number of Students	11	11		5	5
Average Subgroup or All Students Index	830 / 11 = **75**	785 / 11 = **71**		445 / 5 = **89**	410 / 5 = **82**

The example shows the school has an "all students" reading score of 75 and "all students" math score of 71. The school also has and subgroup scores for ELL reading of 89 and ELL math of 82.

Step 3: School Score

The "all students" subject scores will then be used to calculate an overall weighted school average. Math and reading (and composition and science are introduced in 2013 and 2014 respectively), will be combined and weighted by the number of students taking the assessment.

To continue the example above, the weighted school average score is 77 for "all students," and the weighted subgroup average score for ELL students is 85.5. Subsequent sections on priority and focus schools discuss how all students and subgroup scores are used for school classifications.

Table 2.B.vi. Step 3, Weighted School Average Scores

Subject and Group	All Students Subject Score	Number	School Score
Reading – All Students	80	11	(80*50 + 75*50) / 100 = **77**
Math – All Students	75	11	
Subject and Group	ELL Students Subject Score		School Score
Reading – ELL	89	5	(89*49 + 82*49) / 98 = **85.5**
Math – ELL	82	5	

Subgroups

To meet federal reporting requirements, the DC OSSE will report an index score on all subgroups (for example, male and female students) but only use subgroups required by ESEA for accountability purposes and to categorize schools. The DC OSSE will set annual targets for subgroups and will include subgroup scores in the overall index scores.

Minimum *N* Size

Consistent with current practice, the DC OSSE will set the minimum subgroup *N* size for accountability at 25 but will report on 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. Based on federal accountability requirements, schools with DC CAS test participation rate of less than 95 percent for two years

for the "all students" group will be classified as priority schools. Schools that have a DC CAS test participation rate of less than 95 percent for subgroups will be classified as focus schools.

Graduation

To calculate the Graduation AMO in 2012, we will use the leaver rate for 2010 and the cohort rate for 2011. In future years, we will only use the cohort rate.

LEA and School-Level Accountability

Most LEAs have their own accountability system in addition to the state accountability system. These systems typically complement the state accountability system but include provisions specific to local needs or policies. In the District of Columbia, the DCPS recently developed its own accountability system that provides school-level information based on student performance and other factors. The DCPS has particular policy concerns and structural aspects that make it beneficial for its internal management to run a school accountability system. Similarly, the PCSB makes use of an accountability system to deal with school improvement, closure, and key issues (e.g., discipline and services to students in special populations) within the sector.

As a result, the DC OSSE has partnered with the DCPS and the PCSB around the accountability structure to create a comprehensive statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability, and support both at the state level and within the sectors.

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

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *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)*

The DC OSSE has proposed a range of cut scores to determine the appropriate category for each school under its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. The proposed cut scores were 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. These cut scores will be reviewed annually and adjusted if needed to ensure that the categories reflect reward schools as within the top 10 percent of schools based on student growth and performance.

The DC OSSE has proposed a range of cut scores to determine the appropriate category for each school under its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. The proposed cut scores were 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. These cut scores will be revisited annually and adjusted over time to ensure that the categories continue to reflect reward schools as the top 10 percent of schools based on student growth and performance.

Table 2.C.i. 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+	17	7	9%	4%
Rising	45	79	67	56	36%	35%
Developing	26	44	49	48	26%	30%
Priority	0	25	25	23	13%	14%
Focus (schools with substantial achievement gaps)	0	100+	30	26	16%	16%
Total			188	170	100%	100%

A school will be identified as a reward school if it demonstrates proficiency and growth for all students, as indicated by an "all students" group proficiency/growth index score above 80 and has achievement gaps below the state average across all subgroups. Schools with an "all students" group index score over 80 represent the highest level of performance and progress. The DC OSSE will calculate a school's achievement gap using the lowest and highest subgroup index within a subject.

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?*

The goal of a quality accountability system is not to penalize schools but rather to recognize successes and areas of improvement. An enacted ESEA Flexibility Request will clearly identify schools that deserve recognition and provide them with all of the rewards identified herein as well as any additional rewards that can be funded or provided over time. The DCPS and the PCSB will also recognize and reward schools. The DC OSSE hopes that schools and the DC community will similarly recognize and reward highly effective educators, departments, and schools.

While the accountability system incorporates both performance and progress in one overall school index, the distinction between these accomplishments will be made in recognizing and rewarding schools as follows:

- **Highest-performing schools**: Schools will be ranked based on their overall school index.

- **High-progress schools**: Schools will be ranked based on improvement in overall school index from year to year, beginning in June 2012 when DC CAS results are available. These will be based on individual school target index scores.

To summarize, a school will be identified as a reward school if it demonstrates proficiency and growth for all students, as indicated by an overall proficiency/growth index score above 80 and has achievement gaps below the size of its "all students" group. Schools with an overall index score over 80 represent the highest performance and progress while limiting or closing achievement gaps. Additionally, any school identified as a focus school above will not be eligible for classification as a reward school.

SEA Level Recognition and Rewards

The DC OSSE will recognize and reward highest-performing and high-progress schools in multiple ways. The DC OSSE developed its current Academic Achievement Awards policy, aligned with the current ESEA requirements, during the 2010–11 school year in consultation with its Title I Committee of Practitioners. The DC OSSE also reserved Title I funds to make financial rewards to Title I schools that made AYP for two or more consecutive years. The plan outlined here builds on the current 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 according to the identification methodology described above. Under the current law, the DC OSSE can only use funds reserved for financial rewards for Title I schools that make AYP for two or more consecutive years.

The DC OSSE will identify schools eligible to receive a Superintendent's Award in two categories: Proficiency and Progress. A 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 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 substantially reduced SEA monitoring; and

- Eligibility for Title I schools to apply for financial rewards, as funding is available and as described in more detail below.

While all schools that meet the criteria to receive a Red Ribbon Award for either Proficiency or Progress will receive the same nonmonetary recognition, some Award recipients will also be eligible to apply for financial rewards 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.

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 met the Superintendent's Award criteria will be eligible to apply for a financial reward if they meet the following criteria:

- Had a poverty rate of at least 35 percent;

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

- Enrolled students without a selective admission process.

The application will require Award recipient schools to identify the practices that led to their high levels of proficiency and/or progress and to propose uses of funds that either (1) ensure the continuation or expansion of those practices and/or (2) address other practices that need to improve to build on previous success. The Committee of Practitioners will serve as the review panel and advise the DC OSSE on the selection of schools to receive financial rewards.

The DC OSSE will develop and distribute information on a methodology for determining reward amounts for schools selected to receive financial rewards. Based on previous consultation with the Committee of Practitioners, reward amounts will be differentiated based on the size of a school's population, the number of consecutive years the school met the criteria to receive a Superintendent's Award, the poverty rate of the school, exact rates of Proficiency for schools eligible based on Proficiency, and exact rates of Progress for schools eligible based on Progress.

Summary

Using the DC OSSE designated Accountability Index, reward schools will be recognized and rewarded for demonstrated performance and progress. An accountability system that rewards success—and is therefore not seen as only punitive—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?*

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?

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. These cut scores will be reviewed annually and adjusted if needed to ensure that the categories identify at least 5 percent of the lowest-performing Title I schools as priority schools.

A school will be identified as priority if it has an all students group index score below 25, it has a graduation rate lower than 60 percent for two consecutive years, or if it is still implementing a SIG grant. Schools with an all students group index score under 25 represent the lowest-performing schools based on student growth and performance and include schools previously identified as persistently lowest achieving that have not shown growth.

To summarize, priority school identification criteria includes:

1. Receiving SIG funds as a Tier I or Tier II school **or**

2. Graduation rate of 60 percent or less for two consecutive years or more **or**

3. Participation rate lower than 95 percent in the "all students" group for two consecutive years **or**

4. The all students index score is 25 or less.

Table 2.D.i.1 demonstrates that the list of schools in Table 2 is consistent with the definition for priority schools under the Department of Education'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	170
Minimum number of priority schools required to be identified	8
Number of priority schools identified by the DC OSSE	25
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are currently Tier I or Tier II SIG schools	10
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60 percent over a number of years	1
Total number of schools on list generate based on overall rating among the lowest-achieving five percent of title I schools	8
Additional low-performing schools in the all students subgroup	8

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

school meets the criteria but is also a Tier I or Tier II SIG school and so is counted in the row 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 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?*

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 DC 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, and 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 DCPS and PCSB, acting as the LEA for charter schools for accountability purposes around instructional leadership, curriculum, professional development, instruction, assessments, staff evaluation, human capital, and financial/asset management. By doing so, the DC OSSE believes that DC 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-Level Support

The DC OSSE will employ a CFT staffed by school experts to ensure simultaneous and effective implementation of meaningful interventions aligned with all the turnaround principles in each priority school for at least 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 DC OSSE 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 low-achieving students.

The CFT will be fully supported by DC OSSE 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 the 2012–13 school year work with DCPS and PCSB experts on turnaround, where appropriate to determine training needs and tailor services to all priority schools accepted in the waiver. The CFT will develop specific intervention strategies and will conduct training on the seven turnaround principles and data disaggregated by subgroups to ensure alignment.

DC OSSE senior staff will prioritize the resource needs of the CFT and continually improve DC OSSE resources based on CFT feedback concerning school-level implementation. This process

will efficiently leverage 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 DC OSSE. This system is 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 DC's schools are in a Title I status, LEAs will have to incorporate the schools' individualized improvement plan in a web-based tool comparable to Indistar (a system that enables the CFT's continuous planning, implementation, monitoring, and course adjustment that empowers DC OSSE senior staff to make recommendations about changes in practice to achieve desired results in student learning). or a comparable system

To ensure effective implementation of strategies addressing all seven turnaround principles, the CFT will assign a team member to support the DCPS and PCSB in creating a first-year plan that includes the concurrent implementation of all interventions. All three parties (DCPS, PCSB, and the CFT) 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 intervention plans, and progress monitoring goals will be included in individualized school improvement plans developed for each priority school and approved by DCPS or PCSB, acting as the LEA for charter schools for accountability purposes. In order to develop improvement plans for a given school, the CFT will review to determine the intervention strategies they will use from a list of possibilities (listed below) and make recommendations as needed; at the same time the CFT will monitor the effectiveness of the DCPS' and PCSB's work 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

In order ensure that the school leader is able to lead the turnaround effort, the CFT will oversee monitor DCPS's and PCSB's effective implementation of intervention strategies that may include those listed below. All interventions will be implemented consistent with federal and state statutes and regulations, as well as any DCPS collective bargaining agreement.

- Remove and reassign the school principal;

- Require professional development for the school leader focused on instructional leadership including the collection of data and feedback mechanisms for continually

improving instruction; or

- Provide flexibility in the areas of scheduling, budget, staffing, and curriculum.

The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instructional leadership behaviors of the principal, 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 CFT will monitor the effective implementation of strategies by the DCPS and PCSB to increase the recruitment, retention, and development of effective teachers, which may include:

- Require professional development to certify that all administrators in the school can effectively evaluate instruction and give quality feedback to teachers;

- Require professional development for the principal and leadership team on effective recruiting and retention practices; or

- Require outside master educators to conduct observations as part of a comprehensive evaluation process that supports reliable observations.

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 assessments.

The CFT will monitor the effective implementation of interventions by the DCPS and PCSB to continually improve the quality of instruction, which may include:

- Require mutual consent for up to 100 percent of staff;

- Require professional development for all teachers focused on effective instruction; or

- Require professional development for the principal focused on the skills necessary for improving instruction.

The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by improved instructional data (walkthroughs, formal/informal evaluations), a score of "highly effective" on the teacher evaluation system, and improved student achievement as measured by state-level assessments.

Effective Use of Time

The DCPS or PCSB may select one or more of the following strategies for implementation in any priority school that fails to effectively use time for improving instruction and achievement for all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs:

- Require a schedule change to increase instructional time for students who need more

time to meet the rigorous goals of the CCSS;

- Require additional time for professional development focused on all teachers learning strategies for effectively working with students with disabilities or ELLs;

- Require additional time for professional development focused on understanding the rigorous requirements of the CCSS for all teachers, including special education teachers and teachers supporting ELLs;

- Require additional time for professional development focused on teachers developing and using common assessment data to inform and differentiate instruction;

- Require professional development for all teachers on effective use of instructional time including effective transitions; or

- Require professional development for school leaders on effective scheduling to support learning for students and teachers.

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 CFT, in consultation with the leaders, teachers, and parents of the priority school, determines that implementation of extended learning opportunities is necessary to help in improving student achievement, it will work with the school to identify appropriate programs. To the extent the CFT identifies before-school or after-school tutoring or related supports as appropriate, the school may provide these services itself or contract with an appropriate provider organization (either for-profit or not-for-profit) or school-based entity.

The CFT will review these plans and make recommendations as appropriate. 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 CFT will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by the DCPS and PCSB to prepare all students, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and low-performing students, for college and career readiness, which may include:

- Implement the CCSS and aligned model curriculum and unit assessments; or

- Implement research-based interventions for all students two or more grade levels behind in reading or mathematics.

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 CFT will monitor the effective implementation of strategies by the DCPS and PCSB to increase the effective use of data to improve instruction, which may include:

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

- Require professional development for all teachers in formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction; or

- Require professional development to 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.

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 CFT will monitor the effective implementation of intervention strategies by the DCPS and PCSB to support the development of a safe and healthy learning environment capable of meeting students' social, emotional, and health needs, which may include:

- Place a climate and culture specialist in the school funded with school-level Title I funds to work with the leadership, staff, and families to develop or adopt a plan for creating a climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations;

- Require professional development for all staff and leadership to implement a comprehensive plan for creating a climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations; or

- Require professional development to build the capacity of the leadership team to collect and analyze appropriate data and take appropriate actions for continually improving the climate and culture of the school.

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

and state-level assessments.

Effective Family and Community Engagement

The CFT will oversee the effective implementation of strategies by the DCPS and PCSB to increase the engagement of families and the community, which may include:

- Revise the job description of the family and community engagement staff to focus engagement on academics;

- Require professional development for family and community engagement staff designed to increase their skill level in developing academically focused engagement opportunities for families and the community;

- Require professional development for all staff on the effective support of students with disabilities and ELLs and their families; or

- Require professional development for all staff on the development and implementation of effective academically focused family and community engagement.

The effectiveness of these interventions will be measured by an increase in the number of family and community engagement opportunities, including academically focused activities, as well as improvement on key indicators on the school climate survey. In addition, effectiveness will be measured by student achievement in state-level assessments.

Differentiated Interventions for Subgroups

School leaders, the DCPS, and the PCSB will determine specific interventions to address the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs in priority schools. The CFT will review and make recommendations, where appropriate.

Priority schools that are identified as not meeting the needs of students with disabilities will be required to implement a plan that addresses, at a minimum, the following:

- Curriculum aligned to the CCSS;

- Collaborative teaching model;

- Improved use of data for differentiating instruction;

- Professional development for special education teachers to better understand the rigor of the CCSS; or

- Professional development for all teachers to better meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Priority schools identified as not meeting the needs of ELLs will be required to implement

implement targeted strategies, which may include the following:

- Research-based strategies for teaching academic English;

- Strategies to improve the use of native language support;

- Strategies to scaffold learning to meet the rigorous requirements of the CCSS;

- Professional development for all teachers to learn strategies for meeting the content learning needs of ELLs; and

- Professional development for teachers supporting ELLs to better understand the rigorous requirements of the CCSS.

Effectiveness measures for both subgroups will be determined based on the interventions and will be required to include student achievement measures.

SEA-Level Monitoring

For all schools, the impact of the interventions will be regularly monitored by the Innovation and Improvement team in order to ensure that all schools are implementing interventions effectively and making progress towards increasing student achievement. The DC OSSE Innovation and Improvement team will focus primarily on the DCPS and PCSB and their schools identified as priority and focus and will be committed solely to driving capacity for the DC OSSE to deliver support to LEAs where needed to improve student outcomes. This team will monitor the DCPS and PCSB as they conduct reviews of underperforming schools, help to diagnose the causes of schools' challenges, and provide the support and interventions required for meaningful and lasting improvement.

The CFT will be in constant communication with DC OSSE leadership to ensure that the agency is continually designing and providing the resources and guidance most effective to drive school improvement.

In addition to measuring the degree to which a school meets the quantitative definition of the priority classification, the CFT will also monitor the extent to which DCPS and PCSB is accomplishing the implementation of the interventions aligned to the turnaround principles.

The DCPS and PSCB may also select one of the four SIG turnaround models (see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/2010-27313.pdf) after no less than six months and no more than a one-year planning period in each of its priority schools. 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 and create community-oriented schools, and provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

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 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 timeframe 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 from 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 that includes staff from the DC OSSE and the DCPS Office of School Turnaround (for DCPS schools) or the PCSB (for public charter schools). Improvement plans for priority schools must incorporate a turnaround plan that includes strategies and interventions addressing all seven turnaround principles.

Upon submission of the LEA turnaround plan and performance targets for each priority school, the DC OSSE will review and make recommendations as needed, and approve the use of the LEA's and/or school's Title I funds based on the quality of the school's needs analysis, intervention selection, turnaround plan, mid-year and annual targets; the proposed use of any external partners that can be strategically integrated into the school to help implement the key elements of the turnaround models; the use of data to inform instruction; the delivery of evidence-based targeted and school-wide interventions to improve student outcomes and enhance school climate; increased family engagement and the provision of additional opportunities for student learning that are aligned with lessons taught during the school day; and the LEA's capacity to implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles.

To ensure that the DC OSSE can provide effective guidance and support to LEAs and schools, each turnaround plan will include mid-year and annual performance targets set by the DCPS and PCSB, in consultation with schools and parents, across four areas: academic achievement, school climate, community and parent involvement, and resource management. These ambitious and achievable performance metrics will be tailored to each school based on its data and needs assessment. 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 (on behalf of chartercharter schools) will submit to the DC OSSE mid-year and end-of-year reports for each priority charter schools so that the DC OSSE can provide guidance and recommendations to ensure improvement. This reporting will support the DC OSSE's oversight of school improvement.

During the school's first year of implementation and each year thereafter until the school exits status, the DC OSSE will monitor the DCPS and the PCSB in their implementation of the school's turnaround plan and each school's progress in meeting its mid-year and year-end performance targets. The DC OSSE will then make recommendations to the DCPS and the PCSB to adjust implementation of the turnaround plan. Throughout the school year, the DC OSSE will also be available to LEAs and schools to provide support to LEAs and in each priority school as needed. At the end of the school year, the DC OSSE will analyze data and monitoring reviews to assess the school's progress in implementing the required interventions and its progress in meeting the mid-year and annual performance indicators. The DC OSSE will then develop an annual progress report for all priority schools that will be publicly available.

Meaningful Consequences

To ensure meaningful consequences are taken for priority schools that do not make progress after full implementation of interventions, DC OSSE will hold DCPS and PCSB, acting as the LEA for public charter schools for the purpose of accountability, accountable for making significant progress in improving achievement and narrowing achievement gaps in each school under their jurisdiction.

DCPS and PCSB have the primary responsibility of developing and implementing a turnaround plan for schools identified as priority. During the first two years of being in priority status, DC OSSE will review the DCPS and PCSB turnaround plan and make recommendations as needed and be required to ensure 20 percent of Title I funds are reserved for school level interventions and supports.

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
3	Implement plan approved by OSSE	Approve plan and proscribe use of funds
4	Consider school closure or alternative governance	Recommend for closure or alternative governance

If a priority school fails to meet its mid-year and annual performance targets after two years, DC OSSE will assume approval authority of the turnaround plans for submitted by DCPS and PCSB for priority schools. DC OSSE 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 redirecting of Title I funds to 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 that 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 school that was identified as a priority school is again identified as a priority school at the end of its three-year intervention implementation, 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. This aligns with an SEA's authority for state takeover in ESEA Section 1116(b)(8)(B)(iv).

LEA and School-Level Accountability

The success of this ESEA Flexibility Request and its upcoming implementation is founded on the belief that DC OSSE plays both an oversight and a supportive role to LEAs and schools. For this reason, the DC OSSE believes in LEA autonomy and with that flexibility, within the boundaries set by statute and regulations therein, in how they implement Title I programs and use Title I funds. For this to be successful, a strong belief in accountability is necessary to improve academic achievement and move students toward college and career readiness. Both the PCSB and the DCPS have local accountability systems that play a key role in statewide improvement, but are not included in the waiver as they are not commitments of the SEA.

Summary

Using the DC OSSE designated Accountability Index, priority schools—evidenced by low growth, low achievement, and/or low graduation for all students or for specific subgroups of their population—will require support to implement their program with fidelity. The DC OSSE strongly believes by supporting LEAs and schools in developing and implementing meaningful interventions that are tailored specifically to school/student needs, priority schools will have the greatest chance of improving academic achievement, increasing graduation rates, and closing achievement gaps. The DC OSSE expects that, as a result, more students will be college- and career-ready. To reach this goal, priority schools must make dramatic and rapid improvements that accelerate achievement for all students, including students with disabilities and ELL. 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 its LEAs that have one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA's choice of timeline.

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *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 the 2012–13 school year and begin implementation of the selected model by the beginning of the 2013–14 school year. This means that all newly identified priority schools will be in year two of a three-year intervention model by the 2014–15 school year.

Table 2.D.iv.1. SIG Cohorts Served 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		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*

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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?

A school will remain identified as a priority school until it demonstrates sufficient progress toward full implementation of its selected intervention model for three years within a five-year period (not necessarily consecutive). 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 within a five-year period (not necessarily consecutive):

- Overall School Index: Exceed the cut score for priority

- Graduation Rate: Exceed 60 percent

- Participation: Exceed 95 percent participation for the "all students" subgroup

At the end of each school year during the three-year implementation, the DC OSSE 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 school is deemed to be making sufficient progress 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 is deemed not to be making sufficient progress 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 sufficient progress is achieved for three full years within five years. 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 sufficient progress indicates that the school has built a foundation for academic achievement that justifies an exit from priority status and automatic move to focus school status. The automatic identification of a former priority school as a focus school ensures continued DC OSSE and LEA oversight and support.

If a school that was identified as a priority school is again identified as a priority school at the

end of its three-year intervention implementation, 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. This aligns with an SEA's authority for state takeover in ESEA Section 1116(b)(8)(B)(iv).

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

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

ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question - *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?

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?*

Under its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, the DC OSSE will identify focus schools based on the performance of subgroups, both within school and 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 one of the following criteria and have not already been identified as priority schools will be identified as focus schools:

1. **Statewide Achievement Gaps**: Has a subgroup that performs substantially lower than the state average on any subject. The threshold for this category is a school subgroup index 20 points or more below the state subgroup index. The statewide achievement gap index is calculated as follows: (statewide subgroup index – school subgroup index).

2. **Within-School Achievement Gaps**: Has a subgroup that performs substantially lower than the highest-performing subgroup within the school on any subject. The threshold for this category is a within-school achievement gap index of 1 or higher within a subject, indicating that the gap between the highest and lowest-performing subgroups is equal to or higher than the "all students" average score. The within-school achievement gap index is calculated as follows: (highest-performing subgroup index – lowest-performing subgroup index)/all students index.

The thresholds for each option will be reviewed annually and adjusted if needed to ensure that at least 10 percent of the lowest-performing Title I schools are identified as focus schools.

To summarize, focus school identification criteria includes:

1. Subgroup index is 20 or more points lower than the statewide index for that subgroup (20 points or lower will get the required 10 percent of Title I schools) **or**

2. Achievement gap between the highest-performing subgroup index and lowest-performing subgroup index is greater than the performance of the "all students" subgroup index (highest minus lowest divided by all is greater than 1.5) **or**

3. Participation rate for subgroup is lower than 95 percent for two consecutive years.

Table 2.E.i.2 demonstrates that the list of schools in Table 2 is consistent with the definition for focus schools under the Department of Education's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance document.

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

Category	Number
Total number of Title I schools	170
Minimum number of focus schools required to be identified	17
Number of focus schools identified by the DC OSSE	30
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are Title I that have had a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years	0
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are Title I that have greatest within school gaps	0
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating that are Title I that have a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or at the high school level low graduation rates	17
Additional schools with low subgroup performing in proficiency and growth	9

combined in one or more subgroups	

There are no schools identified as focus based on the graduation rate because the few schools with a graduation rate lower than 60 percent in 2011 were identified as priority schools.

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

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

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)?*

Similar to efforts to be undertaken with priority schools, the DC OSSE believes that partnering with DCPS and PCSB, acting as the LEA for charter school accountability, will be critical in moving further and faster in addressing persistent underperformance, including closing or consolidating schools. 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 and focus school. Through collaboration with the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Public Charter School Board (PCSB), human capital task force, 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 school effectiveness through the DCPS and PCSB around instructional leadership, curriculum, professional development, instruction, assessments, staff evaluation, human capital and financial/asset management. The DC OSSE will continue efforts that support significant action with 10 percent of the lower-achieving schools and implement rigorous intervention models to improve academic achievement, increase graduation rates, and close achievement gaps among subgroups, particularly students with disabilities and English language learners.

Differentiated Interventions for Subgroups

The DCPS and PCSB in consultation with school leaders 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 will be

required to implement intervention strategies that may include the following:

- Curriculum aligned to CCSS;

- Collaborative teaching model;

- Improved use of data for differentiating instruction;

- Professional development for special education teachers to better understand the rigor of the CCSS; or

- Professional development for all teachers to better meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Focus schools identified as not meeting the needs of ELLs will be required to implement intervention strategies that may include the following:

- Research-based strategies for teaching academic English;

- Strategies to improve the use of native language support;

- Strategies to scaffold learning to meet the rigorous requirements of CCSS;

- Professional development for all teachers to learn strategies for meeting the content learning needs of ELLs; and

- Professional development for teachers supporting ELLs to better understand the rigorous requirements of the CCSS.

Effectiveness measures for both subgroups will be determined based on the interventions and will be required to include student achievement measures. The Innovation and Improvement team will regularly monitor DCPS and PCSB in their implementation and impact of the interventions in order to ensure that all schools are implementing interventions effectively and making progress towards increasing student achievement. The CFT will be in constant communication with the DC OSSE leadership in order to ensure that the agency is continually designing and providing the resources and guidance most effective to drive school improvement.

SEA-Level Support

As part of its statewide network of tiered support, the DC OSSE will collaborate and coordinate with DCPS and 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 45 days after the start of the school year. This will allow for sufficient collaborations between LEAs, schools, parents and the school community – which has requested that the DC OSSE to have a stronger oversight role.

The DC OSSE will require DCPS and 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 that includes staff from the DC OSSE and the DCPS Office of School Turnaround (for DCPS schools) or the PCSB (for public charter schools). The DCPS and PCSB with focus schools will submit a two-year plan for the implementation of targeted interventions for each of its focus schools. 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 DC OSSE will then make recommendations and provide guidance to the DCPS and PCSB around the development and implementation of its school improvement plan.

Upon submission by the LEAs of its school improvement plan 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, mid-year and annual targets, and the DCPS and PCSB capacity to implement targeted interventions.

To ensure that the DC OSSE can provide effective guidance and support to schools, each school's improvement plan will include mid-year and annual performance targets set by the DCPS and PCSB, in consultation with schools and parents, across four areas: academic achievement, school climate, community and parent involvement, and resource management. These ambitious and achievable performance metrics will be tailored to each school based on its data and needs assessment for the DC OSSE to use in its guidance, support, and monitoring of the DCPS and PCSB. 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 PCSB will submit mid-year and end-of-year reports to the DC OSSE so that the DC OSSE can provide guidance and recommendations to the LEA and school. This reporting will support the DC OSSE's oversight of school improvement.

SEA-Level Monitoring

DCPS and PCSB, acting as the LEA for public charter schools for the purpose of accountability, are responsible implementation of interventions and supports as part of the LEA-approved plan for schools identified as focus and priority. The DC OSSE will monitor the progress of DCPS and PCSB and make recommendations and implement meaningful consequences, where appropriate.

During the school's implementation of the school improvement plan and targeted interventions, tthe DC OSSE will monitor DCPS's and PCSB's implementation of the improvement plan and the school's progress in meeting its mid-year performance targets. The DC OSSE will then make recommendations to the DCPS and PCSB to adjust implementation of the improvement plan. Throughout the school year, the DC OSSE 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 DC OSSE will analyze all data and monitoring reviews to assess the school's progress in implementing the targeted

interventions and its progress in meeting the mid-year and annual performance indicators. The DC OSSE will then develop an annual progress report for all focus schools that will be publicly available.

Meaningful Consequences

To ensure meaningful consequences are taken for focus schools that do not make progress, the DC OSSE will hold DCPS and PCSB, acting as the LEA for public charter schools for the purpose of accountability, accountable for making significant progress in improving achievement and narrowing achievement gaps in each school under their jurisdiction.

DCPS and PCSB have the primary responsibility of developing and implementing an interventions and support plan for schools identified as focus. During the first two years of being in focus status, the DC OSSE will review the DCPS and PCSB intervention and supports plan and make recommendations as needed. A reservation of 20 percent of the total Title I allocation will be required at the LEA level for school level interventions and supports.

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
3	Implement plan approved by OSSE	Approve and proscribe use of funds
4	Consider school closure or alternative governance	Recommend for closure or alternative governance

If a focus school fails to meet its mid-year and annual performance targets after two years, DC OSSE will assume approval authority of the school level plans for interventions and supports. DCPS and PCSB will make adjustments to interventions including, but not limited to: a restriction of the flexibility in the use of Title I funds; the 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, 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 that allows schools to assess the 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.

LEA- and School-Level Accountability

Using the DC OSSE designated Accountability Index, focus schools – evidenced by low growth, low achievement, and DC CAS participation rates for specific subgroups of their population – will require support to implement their program with fidelity. The success of this ESEA Flexibility Request and its upcoming implementation is founded on the belief that DC OSSE plays a supportive role to LEAs and schools. For this reason, we believe in LEA autonomy and with that flexibility, within the boundaries set by statute and regulations therein, in how they implement Title I programs and use Title I funds. For this to be successful, a strong belief in accountability is necessary to improve academic achievement and move students towards college- and career- readiness. Both PCSB and DCPS have local accountability systems that play a key role in statewide improvement, but 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.

Summary

DC OSSE will continue to commit to closing all achievement gaps and ensuring that all students in DC 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. 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 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, DC OSSE will determine if each focus school has made sufficient progress to exit focus school status.

In summary, a school can become eligible for exiting focus status if it:

1. No longer meets the definition of a focus school for two consecutive years:

- State-wide Achievement Gap Index – 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 for all subgroups to below 1 for two or more years

  - Participation – Exceeds 95 percent participation for the subgroup leading to the

initial identification ;

2. Has, as determined by the CFT, successfully implemented all interventions required through its Indistar or comparable web-based tool;

3. Its lowest performing subgroups have met their annual measurable objectives for three years; and/or has demonstrated high growth for two consecutive years as measured by Student Growth Proficiency.

The chart below shows several examples of exit timelines for focus schools; "Yes" indicates that sufficient progress was made, "No" indicates that sufficient progress was not made, and "Exit" indicates that the school exited focus status at the beginning of the school year.

Table 2.E.iv.1: Exit Timeline for Focus Schools (Example)

School	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
School A	Yes	Yes	Exit		
School B	No	No	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 and achievement gaps decrease significantly over time. Only when this has been demonstrated will a school exit focus status. That said, evidence of "sufficient progress" indicates that the school has built a foundation for academic achievement that justifies exiting focus status.

DC OSSE is committed to closing all achievement gaps and ensuring that all students in DC graduate from high school and are college- and career-ready. Through collaboration with DCPS, PCSB, human capital task force, student growth task force and the Deputy Mayor of Education's Office, and other partners, DC OSSE will enhance the effectiveness and coherence of district systems to support school improvement. In addition, 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, DC OSSE believes that DC students will show annual academic growth, raise graduation rates, and close achievement gaps, particularly with regard to students with special needs and English language learners in focus schools.

The DC OSSE Innovation and Improvement team will regularly monitor DCPS and PCSB's implementation and impact of the interventions in order to ensure that all schools are implementing interventions effectively and making progress towards increasing student achievement. The CFT will be in constant communication with the DC OSSE leadership in order to ensure that the agency is continually designing and providing the resources and

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 continuous school improvement plans, and implement action steps to ensure that student learning improves.

Differentiated Interventions and Supports

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.

The engagement of the DC OSSE with LEAs and schools is based on school classification (Table 2.F.i). Priority schools will receive intensive interventions, focus schools will receive targeted interventions, and developing schools will receive guided interventions. Reward schools and rising schools are making progress and will receive maximum flexibility to allocate Title I and other federal funds. Many DC OSSE supports remain available to reward and rising schools, including support around CCSS implementation and statewide professional development. The DC OSSE will implement a system of incentives and interventions in all District of Columbia schools (Table 2.F.ii).

The Department of Innovation and Improvement will drive and monitor interventions and support. The Department of Innovation and Improvement supports the CFT and works closely with the DC OSSE's senior leadership to ensure that all school improvement initiatives are tightly coordinated and effective. The CFT executes the process and ensures that LEAs comply with critical federal regulations and quality implementation.

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

	SEA Engagement	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	Low	Very High	Very High
Reward Schools	Very Low	Very High	Very High

Table 2.F.ii. 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 Self-Selected Interventions	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Receive Progress Monitoring to Inform Plan	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Implement Meaningful Interventions	No	No	No	No	Yes

DC OSSE Schools Reports

The DC OSSE's primary way to hold LEAs accountable for the performance of all schools is through a publicly available, annual school performance report. Each school will be evaluated by the CFT based on school achievement on DC CAS assessments and the growth of its students as measured by the student growth percentiles (SGP), information on whether the school met targets for all students and subgroups, and demographic information and financial data. Proficiency and growth will be reported over time for ELA, math, science, and composition for all students and for each subgroup. Each school will be compared to all schools in the District of Columbia as well as to schools with similar student demographics.

DCPS and PCSB, acting as the LEA for charter school accountability, will make available data for schools to share with staff, parents, and others to aid in the identification of areas in need of

improvement and make recommendations for interventions and supports. be required to have public meetings to review the data and identify the areas that need improvement. LEAs, DCPS, and PCSB will also be required to address performance gaps among subgroups and to develop proposed targets for improvement using the 20% reservation of Title I funds. The CFT will annually review these goals and will provide targeted technical assistance, where necessary.

For schools that have not been designated as Focus or Priority and do not meet state-level AMOs or school level targets, the CFT will review performance reports to identify areas for improvement and to identify the combination of state-level services and interventions that could improve student learning. These schools could include schools that do not meet targets, at-risk schools, and developing schools that are not at-risk.

Schools That Do Not Meet Targets

All schools that fail to meet the statewide AMOs 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 the statewide AMOs, the LEA will be required to develop an interventions and support plan that addresses school-approved school improvement plan that addresses the "all students" and/or subgroup that missed the performance AMOs as part of the Title I grant application. These plans must describe the alignment of Title I funds to address the deficiencies in performance identified for that school. Interventions and service supports may include training to improve the quality of school leadership, high-quality curriculum aligned to the CCSS, and assistance in the analysis and use of data. The Divisions of Teacher and Learning and the CFT team will provide guidelines for these plans at the beginning of the 2012–13 school year.

Specifically, implementation activities to address deficiencies in school-based practices may include supplemental research-based and job-embedded professional development; supplemental instruction to school-selected students provided by external providers, schools, or LEAs; any activity that is required within one of the SIG intervention models for priority schools, or any other activity that is specifically required by an action step included in the plan in support of an objective included by the leadership team.

As part of its Title I grant application, LEAs with schools that do not meet their targets must describe how the LEA will assess the District of Columbia's 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.

The CFT will devote the vast majority of their time to priority and focus schools; however, by monitoring other schools, they can ensure that non-identified schools do not regress and fall into priority or focus status and that schools' otherwise hidden areas of need are addressed. The CFT will continue to monitor their plans to identify areas for improvement and identify the

combination of services and interventions that could improve student learning. Such interventions and services may include training to improve the quality of school leadership, high-quality curriculum aligned to the CCSS, and assistance in the analysis and use of data.

Each school will be evaluated based on its achievement vis-à-vis targets, progress on the approved CFT's plan, and the growth of its students as measured by the new accountability system. If the LEA does not meet targets or progress, the CFT will make recommendations for prescriptive use of funds set aside at the beginning (20 percent reservation). Next, the CFT will intensify monitoring from twice a year to six times a year. Lastly, the remaining funds will carry over to the following year for prescriptive use by the DC OSSE.

Specifically, implementation activities to address deficiencies in school-based practices may include supplemental research-based and job-embedded professional development; supplemental instruction to school-selected students provided by external providers, schools, or LEAs; any activity that is required within one of the SIG intervention models for priority schools, or any other activity that is specifically required by an action step included in the plan in support of an objective included by the leadership team.

Developing Schools

Schools in the developing category will continue implementing their approved plan. These schools have met targets according to the approved plan, and their remaining Title I funds are released from reservation (20 percent). The CFT will continue to monitor their plans to identify areas for improvement and identify the combination of services and interventions that could improve student learning. Such interventions and services may include training to improve the quality of school leadership, high-quality curriculum aligned to the CCSS, and assistance in the analysis and use of data.

Additional Resources Available to all Schools

Beginning at the end of the 2012–13 school year, the DC OSSE Department of Innovation and Improvement will assess and review and make recommendations to the interventions and supports plan as it relates to the use of the Title I reservation, LEA's School Improvement Plan and case for Title I alignment, offer technical assistance targeted to the struggling subgroup(s), and monitor school-level progress for future academic cycles and increase technical assistance when needed.

Other Title I schools will be invited and encouraged to attend regional trainings and professional development sessions designed around the DC OSSE interventions and school turnaround principles. Furthermore, the model curriculum for District of Columbia will be available to all schools and districts, which will provide other Title I schools with access to many of the same supports offered to priority and focus schools.

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, and toolkits.

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. Both the PCSB and the DCPS 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.

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?*

Monitoring of and Technical Assistance for LEAs

The DC OSSE will monitor, provide technical assistance, support, and hold LEAs accountable for interventions in priority and focus schools and other Title I 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 develop, incubate, and support new, high-quality education models so students assigned to the lowest-performing schools have improved options. The DC OSSE will build a Cross-Functional Team (CFT) that will be responsible for supporting LEAs, and focus and priority schools. Finally, the DC OSSE will allow state Title I funds to be repurposed to provide supports and interventions to Title I priority and focus Schools.

As part of its SEA-level 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, developing and implementing teacher and leader evaluation systems, understanding the state-level differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, serving special populations, and how to leverage federal resources (Title I, SIG, Title II, Title III, and other federal) to maximize coordination and academic achievement. Combined with the activities embedded in the statewide network of tiered support as described in this document, timely and effective monitoring will take place, LEAs and schools will be held to a high standard of accountability, and schools will be supported as needed to increase academic achievement, improve graduation rates, and close achievement gaps among subgroups.

Reports

As mentioned in section 2.F, the DC OSSE's primary way to hold LEAs accountable for the performance of all schools is through a publically available, annual school performance report. Each school will be evaluated by the CFT based on its achievement on DC CAS assessments and the growth of its students as measured by the SGP; the report will also provide demographic information and financial data. Each school will be compared to all schools in the District of Columbia, as well as to schools with similar student demographics.

Beyond making school information public the DC OSSE can, among other things, recommend that schools reassign teaching staff; redirect spending to ensure funds are spent effectively and

efficiently; alter curriculum and programs; and recommend to close chronically failing schools.

DC OSSE Reorganization

As described previously, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (ELSEC) within the DC OSSE will create a statewide network of tiered recognition, accountability and support in order to maximize resources both within and outside of the agency. In the ELSEC division, the Innovation and Improvement team, currently part of the Race to the Top (RTTT) department, will oversee the implementation of the supports provided to LEAs and schools. This department then works collaboratively and cross-functionally with other divisions within DC OSSE to establish a core team of cross-departmental the DC OSSE staff – the Cross-Functional Team (CFT) – that will then partner and assist LEAs and schools with needs assessment, coordination and development of federal grants programs, and use of federal funds. The Department of Innovation and Improvement will focus 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 Cross-Functional Team (CFT) within the Department of Innovation and Improvement will include experts in turnaround and specialists in reading, math, special populations, and data. The CFT will participate along with DCPS and PCSB in reviews of underperforming schools; assist in diagnosing the causes of schools' challenges; and provide the support and interventions required for meaningful and lasting improvement. The Department of Innovation and Improvement's approach is to focus resources on schools, which are the true units of change.

Additionally, 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 support 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 in how to better understand and make effective use of data.

CCSS and Educator Evaluation Supports

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

CCSS

We believe that the adoption and effective implementation of the CCSS will enable all learners to be college- and career-ready. Due to the District of Columbia' 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 impact all teachers through state-level support and professional development.

The DC OSSE will build the capacity for LEAs and schools to:

- Implement the CCSS through technical assistance and training on the standards;

- Develop online resources and publications that help teachers align instruction to the CCSS, and share exemplary lessons;

- Provide training on anchor papers and other assessment preparation technical assistance;

- Provide high-quality data at the standard and strand level on DC CAS aligned to both the historical DC standards and to the CCSS; and

- Connect schools struggling with implementation to external partners.

To reach our teachers of special education students, the Department of Special Education Training and Technical Assistance unit within the Division of Special Education, in collaboration with other divisions within the DC OSSE, provides core professional development, trainings and technical assistance to all LEAs in the District of Columbia. The core professional development program provides high-quality, evidenced-based trainings to all educators in the District of Columbia with a specific focus on improving the educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

Teacher and Leader Evaluation Systems

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, DC OSSE has formed a teacher effectiveness team that will provide exemplars, technical assistance and training to LEAs, and will coordinate peer reviews and other intra-district collaboration. The Principle 3 section of this flexibility request provides additional information on educator evaluation systems.

Title I Funds

DC OSSE will leverage funds that were previously reserved under ESEA to support the implementation of interventions schools that do not meet the statewide AMOs. as described in 2.F., particularly for schools that are in priority and focus status.

As part of its Title I grant application, LEAs with schools that do not meet AMOs must describe how the LEA will assess the District of Columbia's 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. The DC OSSE Department of Teacher and Learning and the CFT team will provide guidelines for these plans at the beginning of the 2012–13 school year.

DC OSSE will require all LEAs that do not meet AMOs to continue to reserve 20% of Title I funds and submit a plan as part of their Title I grant application describing LEA determined interventions to meet student and school needs.

Each school will be evaluated based on meeting the statewide AMOs and its achievement vis-à-vis the school level targets, progress on the approved CFT's plan, and the growth of its students as measured by the new accountability system. If AMOs are met, LEAs will no longer be required to reserve 20% of Title I funds in their grant application and any remaining funds from the 20% reservation will be released the following year for LEA discretionary use for Title I purpose. If AMOs are not met and school level targets are met, LEAs will continue to be required to reserve 20% of Title I funds in their grant application and any remaining funds from the 20% reservation will be released the following year for LEA discretionary use for Title I purposes. If AMOs are not met and school level targets are not met, LEAs will continue to be required to reserve 20% of Title I funds in their grant application. DC OSSE, through its CFT will make recommendations for proscribing the use of Title I funds and will intensify monitoring. Remaining funds for LEAs that do not meet AMOs or school level targets will be carried over the following year for proscriptive use made by the CFT to be used in conjunction with the new 20% Title I reservation.

The table below summarizes business rules for reservation of Title I funds for interventions and supports (IS) for schools with low performance.

School Performance		DC OSSE Requirements		
AMO Met?	School Level Target Met?	IS Plan Required?	LEA 20% Title I Reservation for IS Required?	Carry-Over of Unused Reservation Required for IS?
No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

LEAs may also select one of the four School Improvement Grant (SIG) turnaround models after no less than six months and no more than a one year during the planning period in each of its priority schools.

LEAs may access RTTT and SIG funding to support the implementation of SIG models in schools that meet the federal criteria for receiving SIG funds. Additionally, DC OSSE will require an LEA with one or more priority schools to reserve a necessary and reasonable amount from its Title I allocation during the three-year implementation period. These funds must support the implementation of meaningful interventions that meet the Turnaround Principles or one of the SIG models in each priority school, and targeted interventions in each focus school.

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

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

Option A	**Option B**

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

Students come first, and the most effective way to improve student learning is to provide them with the best qualified professionals, teachers, and school leaders. Effective teachers and school leaders have the resources 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 improve instructional practices, resulting in increased teacher and leader effectiveness, greater student achievement, and higher graduation rates.

During the outreach efforts to obtain stakeholder input in the development of this ESEA flexibility request, teachers were apprehensive about assessment-based evaluations that are not aligned to schools' curricula and do not incorporate critical barriers such as chronic truancy. Teachers also expressed concerns that growth measures as currently defined may not capture improvement reported for students whose performance falls several grades below actual grade level or for students with special needs. Teachers and leaders also questioned growth measures for all grades and subjects in teacher evaluations when there are no valid or objective means of assessing performance in these subjects and grades.

Stakeholders discussed options such as end-of-year tests and a portfolio of several assessments and external assessments (e.g., ACT/SAT for high school) and suggested that growth measures be very lightly weighted in teacher evaluations given that assessments for

non-tested grades may be of questionable quality and validity. Considering the level of interest and the number of concerns raised by stakeholders, the DC OSSE will ensure that teachers and leaders are prominently involved in the development of new evaluation systems. The DC OSSE wants to ensure buy-in for the new process, but it is equally important to develop meaningful and valid measures that will help the recipients of the evaluations improve instructional practices.

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. Charter school administrators understand that the caliber of their teaching staff is a critical element in ensuring the success of their instructional programs, and they go to great lengths to attract and hire the absolute best professionals from across the nation. Still, it is not easy to find the right fit; therefore, teachers must be evaluated regularly, and lower-performing ones must be either supported or released. Therefore, like other SEAs, the DC OSSE's role is to develop policies that allow for local flexibility, provide guidance, disseminate best practices, and ensure effective monitoring to ensure LEAs meet state and federal guidelines.

According to the DOE's ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions (5.7.12), a charter school may develop and implement a teacher and principal evaluation and support system that is consistent with the guidelines developed and adopted by the SEA. Alternatively, 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 from FY 2010 onward, including the provision that charter school authorizers use increases in student academic achievement for all groups of students as the most important factor when determining to renew or revoke a school's charter), 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.
If the charter authorizer meets this high standard of accountability, charter schools and LEAs will have the opportunity to apply for a waiver from meeting state guidelines. If the charter authorizer does not meet these conditions, then charter LEAs will have to meet state guidelines.

The DC OSSE is therefore selecting Option A for this ESEA Flexibility Request and is leading an effort to develop guidelines for evaluation and support systems as well as monitoring the implementation of these systems across all Title I schools.

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 disseminate state evaluation requirements, develop voluntary professional standards for teachers and leaders, identify exemplary evaluation systems, provide technical assistance around research and best practices, and review and approve LEA evaluation systems.

Other strategies related to increasing teacher and leader effectiveness include the following:

supporting high-quality teacher and leader pipelines through a competitive grant with the first award in May 2011, improving teacher and leader preparation programs through the development of a new scorecard starting in August 2012, and revising teacher licensure regulations starting in October 2012 that take the CCSS into account. These strategies will improve teacher and leader preparation practices to better equip teachers and leaders to improve student learning and achievement. Projects related to these strategies are described below.

Building on Race to the Top (RTTT)

Since the DC OSSE has existing state teacher and leader evaluation requirements for RTTT-participating LEAs, the DC OSSE will modify those requirements further to address the U.S. DOE's guidelines for teacher and leader evaluation systems in Title I schools. So there will be one set of guidelines for all LEAs in DC that receive Title I funds. Table 3.A.i below describes the requirements that are met by the RTTT evaluation requirements and those that will need to be added.

RTTT LEAs comprise about 57 percent of the District's schools, and these schools enroll approximately 90 percent of District students. These RTTT schools will only have to meet the new requirements that were not already included in the RTTT teacher and leader evaluation requirements if they receive Title I funds. All RTTT schools receive Title I funds, except those solely serving preschool students. All other-schools receiving Title I funds will have to meet the new state requirements that meet the standards of this ESEA flexibility request. To reiterate, there will be one set of state guidelines that all Title I schools must meet, including RTTTschools. However, RTTT schools will only have to provide evidence of meeting the requirements that were not already included in the original RTTT requirements, and will be required to apply to OSSE for a waiver to differentiate student achievement and growth measures (more detail on p. 109)

Table 3.A.i: 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	Has This Been Included in the Existing RTTT Requirement?	Will This Be Included in State Guidelines for Title I Schools (includes both RTTT and non-RTTT)?
Teacher and principal evaluation and support systems will be used for continual improvement of instruction	Yes	Yes

Meaningfully differentiate performance using at least three performance levels	Yes	Yes
Use multiple valid measures in determining performance levels	Yes* (RTTT requires multiple measures, but does not address validity)	Yes (State guidelines will also require schools to participate in a validity study)
Including as a significant factor data on student growth for all students (including ELLs and students with disabilities)	(RTTT only requires value-added model for tested grades and subjects and does not specify a percent for non-tested grades and subjects)	Yes (State guidelines will require 50 percent for tested grades and subjects and 20 percent for non-tested grades and subjects)
Includes 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
Used to inform personnel decisions	Yes	Yes

Include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising evaluation systems	No	Yes

Teacher and Leader Evaluations under RTTT

Increasing teacher and leader effectiveness was a primary goal of DC's successful RTTT application. DC 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, 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.

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

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 the 2012–13 school year.

Student Growth Measures

The DC OSSE's RTTT grant requires that school leader evaluations include student growth to a significant extent and that teacher evaluations include student growth as 50 percent of the evaluation rating for teachers in English/Language Arts and mathematics in grades 4–8. Including student growth in educator evaluations ensures that educators are focused on improving student achievement. RTTT schools must also provide timely and specific feedback to educators about their performance.

Continuous and constructive feedback is critical to improving instructional practice, and feedback is most useful if it is immediate. In addition to providing specific feedback, schools are required to provide targeted professional development based on evaluation findings to ensure that professional development focuses on the needs of educators in their schools. Schools 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. The DC OSSE requires that schools use these results to inform personnel decisions, such as those about compensation, retention, and promotion.

The DC OSSE will modify the RTTT Teacher and Leader Evaluation requirements to meet the guidelines in the U.S. DOE's ESEA flexibility request and adopt them for all Title I schools. Specifically, the requirements that are *not* currently addressed in the RTTT Teacher and Leader Evaluation requirements are:

- Ensure validity of measures;

- Provide student achievement or growth measures for all teachers and leaders; and

- Include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising evaluation systems.

More detail about these requirements is provided in the next section.

To meet the requirements of ESEA Flexibility, all schools receiving Title I funds will have to incorporate student growth into teacher and leader evaluations. For school leaders and teachers in tested grades and subjects, 30 percent will have to be a growth measure based on the DC CAS and 20 percent will have to be an achievement or growth measure determined by the LEA. For teachers in non-DC CAS grades and subjects, 20 percent will have to be based on an LEA-determined measure of student achievement or growth. However, the student growth requirements are slightly different for RTTT schools. RTTT schools must use the value added model (DC CAS) as 50% of the evaluation rating for teachers in tested grades and subjects unless they receive a student achievement waiver from OSSE. If their waiver is approved, the school must use the value added model as at least 30% of the evaluation rating and can propose other measures of achievement for the remaining 20%. The DC OSSE will encourage all LEAs and schools to consider how their evaluation systems are aligned with the CCSS by providing guidance, technical support, and training in thinking through this alignment.

Current Evaluation Systems in DC

RTTT schools have developed a variety of unique evaluation models that meet RTTT requirements. Almost every RTTT school has developed an evaluation system that is rigorous and meets the unique needs of the school. District of Columbia Public Schools' 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 DC can support a variety of evaluation models that are unique yet effective.

District of Columbia Public Schools

IMPACT is the District of Columbia Public Schools' 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:** Education is very much a team effort. IMPACT factors 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.

Teachers set goals with one of their school leaders at the beginning and midpoint of the school year. Throughout the school year, school leaders engage in both formal and informal observations and coaching sessions that involve lesson plan feedback, lesson observation feedback, student work and achievement feedback, goal progress, and ongoing support. All teachers have at least two formal observations each year.

Modifying State Requirements

During stakeholder engagement, participants expressed concerns about the capacity of LEAs to conduct validity analyses of their school's evaluation systems. Therefore, the DC OSSE now proposes to conduct these analyses by looking at the correlation between teacher and leader evaluation ratings and student achievement and growth in a school. Stakeholders were also concerned about the ability of LEAs to identify student growth measures for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects. The DC OSSE has broadened its definition of student growth measures from student growth only to allow for both measures of growth and achievement for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects. Moreover, the DC OSSE has hired a contractor to provide support to LEAs in using student achievement measures within teacher and leader evaluations.

In developing guidelines for the new evaluation and support system for Title I schools, the DC OSSE will build on the RTTT evaluation requirements to address the U.S. DOE's ESEA Flexibility requirements, to reflect lessons learned from the first year of implementation of the requirements, and to allow maximum LEA flexibility for non-RTTT schools. These guidelines will ensure that DC'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.

To have the guidelines in place by June 25, 2012, the DC OSSE will take the following steps:

- **Step 1**: The DC OSSE will revise the RTTT guidelines to meet the DOE's requirements in starting June 4, 2012 for schools receiving Title I funds.

- **Step 2**: Title I Committee of Practitioners will review and comment on the guidelines by e-mail the week of June 11, 2012.

- **Step 3**: The DC OSSE will hold a conference calls with school leaders to get feedback on the guidelines the week of June 11, 2012.

- **Step 4**: The DC OSSE will revise and finalize the guidelines, and submit the guidelines to the U.S. ED by June 25, 2012.

The DC OSSE will provide training and support for LEAs and schools 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 these requirements and will pilot these systems for one year before full implementation.

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

- Ensuring validity of measures: The DC OSSE will analyze the relationship between student achievement and teacher and leader evaluation ratings by analyzing the correlation between teacher and leader evaluation ratings and student growth and proficiency in a school. Title I schools will be required to submit the data needed so the DC OSSE may conduct this analysis. The DC OSSE will share results with LEAs and schools so that modifications can be made to their evaluation systems. The DC OSSE will also provide exemplars of valid observation rubrics that LEAs and schools can choose to adopt.

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

- Student growth measures: Schools will be required to include a measure of student achievement as 50 percent of teacher and principal evaluations in tested grades and subjects. Specifically, schools will be required to include a growth measure based on DC CAS for 30 percent of the evaluation rating and may select another measure of achievement for the remaining 20 percent. Race to the Top LEAs will still be required to use the DC Value Added Model as 50% of the evaluation rating for teachers in tested grades and subjects unless they receive a student achievement waiver from OSSE. For teachers in non-tested grades and subjects in grades K–12, schools will be required to select a measure of achievement or growth that will account for 20 percent of the evaluation rating. The DC OSSE will provide guidance and technical assistance to schools in using achievement measures within teacher evaluations.

   Schools will use standardized measures, where available. Schools may pilot an assessment before using it for evaluation purposes. In the absence of standardized assessment results, The DC OSSE will grant LEAs and schools flexibility to propose their own assessments. For teachers in non-tested grades and subjects, schools may use end-of-course tests, objective performance-based assessments, student learning objectives, student performance on ELP assessments, and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across schools within an LEA. The SEA

will hire a contractor to develop a list of possible assessments that could be used for the various subject areas. Schools may also volunteer to participate in the statewide teacher value-added model. Finally, the DC OSSE will offer the DC school-wide growth measure as an option for teacher and/or principal evaluation. Schools may choose to use the school-wide growth measure as a portion of the evaluation rating of all teachers in a school, rather than having subject specific growth measures. The DC OSSE will review and approve plans for measuring student growth for use in teacher and leader evaluations.

- <u>Include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising evaluation systems</u>: Schools will be required to describe how they include teachers and principals in reviewing and revising teacher and principal evaluation systems and making revisions as needed.

In addition, there are several ways the DC OSSE will support 'LEA's and schools' efforts to implement the CCSS and to infuse the CCSS into classroom teaching and evaluations. For example, the DC OSSE will provide professional development to LEAs and schools in assessing the quality and complexity of texts teachers are teaching 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:

- Providing professional development around interpretation of the CCSS;

- Developing a voluntary competency exam that LEAs and teacher and leader preparation programs can use to assess teachers' knowledge of the CCSS; and

- Identifying observation rubrics that are aligned with the CCSS.

As part of this ESEA flexibility request application, the DC OSSE requests that the schools with evaluation systems approved by the DC OSSE be exempt from various Highly Qualified requirements under NCLB. Once a school has an approved evaluation system in place, it will no longer need to develop Highly Qualified Teacher improvement plans or set aside specific funds to ensure its teachers are Highly Qualified. However, the expectation remains that schools will continue to ensure teachers are Highly Qualified. The DC OSSE will shift from providing technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing their HQT improvement plans to developing and implementing high-quality teacher and leader evaluation systems.

With stakeholder involvement, the DC OSSE will also develop and adopt voluntary teacher, leader, and professional development performance standards by December 2012 as a way of providing guidance to the LEAs and schools that are developing new evaluation systems. The standards will reflect the skills that teachers are expected to have to teach 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, 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.

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 leader evaluation systems, and in evaluating teachers of ELLs and special education students. The DC OSSE can use discretionary grant funds to provide technical assistance from national providers to LEAs and schools 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 and schools in developing or modifying their evaluation systems.

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

Professional Development

The DC OSSE will provide professional development opportunities to support LEAs i and schools n developing and implementing teacher and leader evaluation systems. During the 2012–13 school year, the DC OSSE will offer professional development sessions to LEAs and schools 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 special education students and ELLs could be evaluated. Since schools 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 leaders throughout the District to help them effectively implement 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:

- 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.

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. . Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English 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 2–12. 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.

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.

Stakeholder Input

The DC OSSE has received input from the RTTT Human Capital Task Force on revisions to the evaluation system requirements and will also seek feedback from other key stakeholders. Beginning in the 2012–13 school year, the Human Capital Task Force will be expanded to include non-RTTT school representatives. The DC OSSE will also create 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 teacher, leader, 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 U.S. 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 leaders in the development of their evaluation systems and will need to demonstrate in their plans how they will do so.

Summary

By publishing and ensuring Title I schools meet state requirements, the DC OSSE is raising the bar for the quality of teacher and leader evaluation and support systems. The DC OSSE will support LEAs and schools in developing rigorous evaluation systems by providing professional development and technical assistance and by identifying high-quality resources and materials that provide teachers and leaders 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.

To ensure that Title I school meet the new evaluation system requirements, the DC OSSE will review and approve all new and modified teacher and leader evaluation systems. These more rigorous evaluation systems will permit school to better focus on teacher and leader needs and areas for improvement to maximize student learning and improve student outcomes.

Teacher and Leader Evaluation Review Process

All Title I school will have to create teacher and leader evaluation systems that address each of the state guidelines (which will meet the U.S. DOE's ESEA Flexibility requirements) and submit them to the DC OSSE by April 30, 2013. RTTT schools receiving Title I funds will only have to develop plans to address the three new criteria required by the ESEA Flexibility Request that were not already required by RTTT. The DC OSSE staff will review the plans and provide feedback where necessary. The DC OSSE review will focus on ensuring that the evaluation systems meet state requirements.

As part of this process, the DC OSSE will also review school's plans for including student achievement and growth measures in evaluations. Schools whose plans are not approved will have to make revisions based on DC OSSE feedback and resubmit them for review. The DC OSSE will approve all plans by August 1, 2013, so that schools are ready to implement the pilot year of their evaluation system (or second year of full implementation for RTTT LEAs) in

2013–14. Similar to the review process conducted for RTTT schools, if plans do not meet the requirements, the DC OSSE will provide specific feedback for these schools to revise their plans and resubmit for review and approval.

Finally, the DC OSSE will require the submission of individual teacher and leader ratings from all schools through the Employed Educator Report. Individual ratings will not be made public in any way, as the intent of this data collection is to track progress in improving teacher effectiveness and to respond to federal reporting requirements. Ratings will only be published in aggregate form with an explanation that acknowledges that the ratings are based on unique school evaluation systems. A data policy will be disseminated this spring that indicates that the DC OSSE will not report individual teacher data.

Timeline and Milestones

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

First, the DC OSSE will revise the RTTT guidelines to meet the U.S. DOE's ESEA Flexibility guidelines in early June 2012. As mentioned earlier, there are three new aspects of the system that the guidelines will have to address.

The DC OSSE will solicit feedback on the guidelines from the Title I Committee of Practitioners and LEA leaders during webinars or conference calls in early June. The DC OSSE will then compile all of the stakeholder feedback and revise the guidelines. The DC OSSE will submit the guidelines to the U.S. ED by June 2012. In the District of Columbia, evaluation guidelines are also not required to be part of collective bargaining negotiations. After receiving feedback from the U.S. DOE, the DC OSSE will finalize and post the guidelines by June 30, 2012.

In June 2012, the DC OSSE will solicit 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 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 of 2012. DC OSSE staff will finalize the standards in September 2012.

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 DC OSSE 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.

Schools will have between January 2013 and April 2013 to develop their evaluation systems based on the new requirements. The DC OSSE will review local evaluation systems in May and June of 2013 to provide feedback and ensure that systems developed by local authorities

meet the requirements. The DC OSSE plans to provide final notices to schools of approval by August 1, 2013.

In the 2013–14 school year, non-RTTT Title I schools will pilot evaluation systems that meet the requirements of the flexibility waiver, while RTTT Title I 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 school year 2014–15, all schools receiving Title I funds will be fully implementing evaluation systems that meet flexibility waiver requirements.

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
The DC OSSE revises RTTT evaluation requirements to meet ESEA Flexibility waiver requirements.	June 2012	DC OSSE Staff	Draft Evaluation Guidelines	Two staff members	None
The DC OSSE seeks feedback on Evaluation Guidelines from schools and Title I Committee of Practitioners	June 2012	DC OSSE Staff	Feedback notes from 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 USDE for peer review	June 25, 2012	DC OSSE Staff	Proposed evaluation guidelines	Two staff members	None
Receive feedback from U.S. ED on the evaluation guidelines	June–July 2012	ED	Feedback from the Department	ED Staff and Peer Reviewers	Need for prompt turnaround
Finalize, distribute, and post evaluation guidelines	As soon as they are approved by the U.S. DOE	DC OSSE Staff	Final guidelines that have been distributed to all Title I schools and posted on 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 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
Provide technical assistance as needed to schools 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
Schools submit evaluation system plans to the DC OSSE for review and approval	By April 30, 2013	Designated Title I schools staff	LEA Evaluation System Plans	LEA staff	None
The DC OSSE conducts review process of teacher and leader evaluation systems	May–June 2013	DC OSSE staff	Evaluation Review Tracking Sheet	Two staff members to conduct the review process	Allocating staff time to this activity
The DC OSSE sends approval notices to schools regarding their evaluation systems/plans	By August 1, 2013	DC OSSE staff	Approval notices to schools	One staff member	None

Non-RTTT schools pilot evaluation systems/full implementation for RTTT schools	School year 2013–14	Schools /DC OSSE staff	Approved Evaluation Plans, Title I monitoring visits	Staff members to conduct monitoring visits	None
Full implementation of evaluation systems for all Title I schools	School year 2014–15	LEAs/DC OSSE staff	Title I monitoring visits	Staff members to conduct monitoring visits	None

Summary

By issuing new state guidelines and instituting a review process, the DC OSSE will assist LEAs and schools 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.

This ESEA flexibility request in its entirety supports the DC OSSE's belief that students come first and qualified teachers and leaders directly impact student learning. This belief drives the DC OSSE's efforts to remove barriers to education by providing the necessary support to teachers and leaders.