ESEA Flexibility

Request

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Washington, DC 20202

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF REQUESTS

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

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Each request must include:

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

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

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

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

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

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

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

REQUEST SUBMISSION DEADLINE

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

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MEETING FOR SEAS

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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

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COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester:	Requester's Mailing Address:
Michael P. Flanagan Superintendent of Public Instruction	Michigan Department of Education PO Box 30008 Lansing, MI 48909

State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request

Venessa Keesler, Ph.D.
and
Joseph Martineau, Ph.D.

Position and Office:
Deputy Superintendent, Education Services
and
Deputy Superintendent, Accountability Services

Contact's Mailing Address:
Michigan Department of Education
PO Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909

Telephone: (517) 335-0011

Fax: (517) 335-4565

Email address: keeslerv@michigan.gov and martineauj@michigan.gov

Chief State School Officer (Printed Name):	Telephone:
Michael P. Flanagan	(517) 335-0011
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X Michael P. Flanagan	Date: 7-24-13

The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of the ESEA Flexibility.

WAIVERS

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

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

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

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

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

☒ 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a 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 (see Attachment 12). (Principle 4)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CONSULTATION

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

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

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.

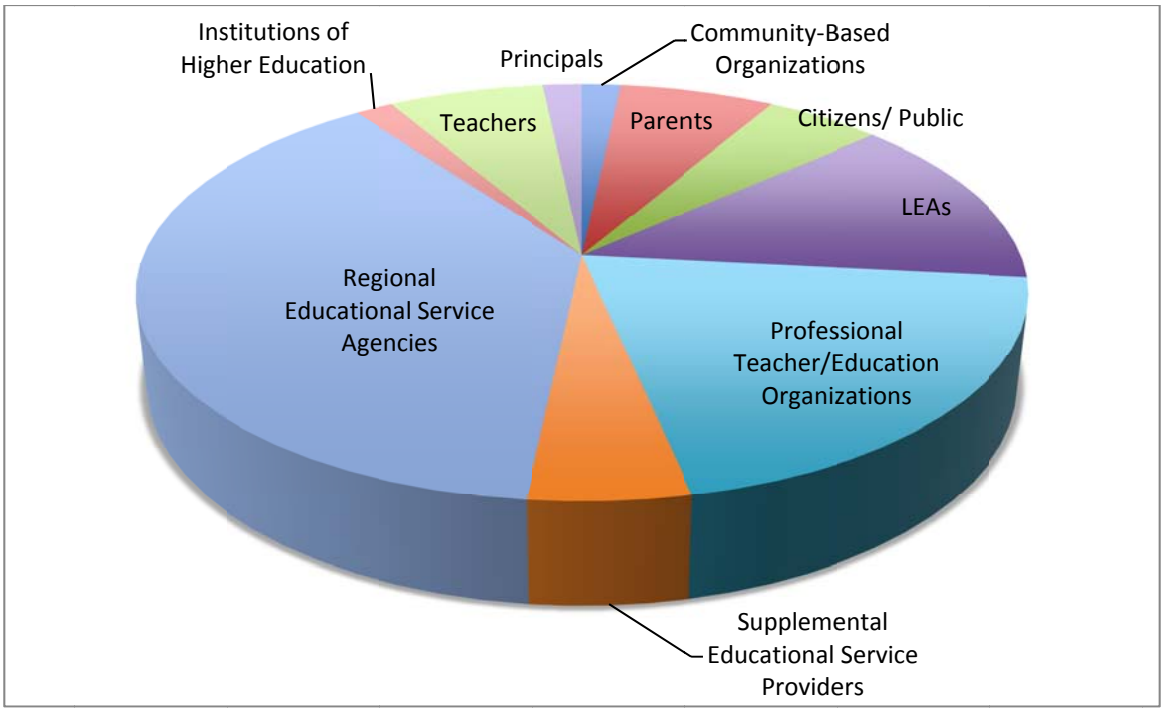
The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has had active stakeholder engagement on an ongoing basis, especially during the last several years of intensive education reform efforts. State officials work closely with organizations of teachers, administrators, higher education representatives, student advocacy groups, and others whose input continuously shapes and strengthens educational policy and practice. Throughout the waiver request, examples are provided of stakeholder input and support. At the time the waiver opportunity was announced, MDE contacted the leaders of the state's education stakeholder organizations with critical details and timelines for providing input. Engagement and input are outlined below by Principle. Examples are given, in this section and elsewhere, where stakeholder input changed the waiver request.

A complete list of organizations that provided input can be found in Attachment 2 along with a summary of the input received. Beginning in October, regular phone conversations and meetings were held with education organizations and others to ensure that all constituencies were involved to consider strategies and responses. We also conducted webinars and online surveys as a means of determining feedback across our state.

During our stakeholder engagement, we have considered the feedback of our education "customers" — parents, families, communities—as well as that of our teachers and practitioners. We reached out to seek the advice of parents, students, community members, and business leaders, taking care to pay special attention to traditionally under-represented communities such as minority groups and persons with disabilities.

MDE also collected and reviewed comments from the general public, which came through a specialized email account established for this purpose (ESEAFlexibility@michigan.gov).

A pie chart showing the array of stakeholders providing feedback —in all formats and sessions —is included below:



From November to January, we solidified and documented all input into the MDE's proposal. Initial drafts and concepts were shared and discussed in a large group facilitated by the American Institutes for Research, and through individual consultation with associations, institutions of higher education and others. Our staff met with the Committee of Practitioners, as well as special education, data, and a student advisory group. In total, input was gathered from hundreds of educators including teachers, principals, Title I coordinators, school board members, and specialists.

Feedback from these and other stakeholder organizations suggests that the MDE's waiver request is well aligned with visible opportunities in educational policy and practice. Representative comments are as follows:

- "Some details may need tuning, but overall it looks like a well-considered plan. I wish we had developed such a plan 10 years ago." - *Parent, local school board member*
- "I feel that this proposal provides the opportunity for many schools across the state to have their hard work validated...." - *Teacher*
- "I believe that this proposal will also allow teachers and administrators to think less about what consequences their school may face if they fall short of AYP and focus more on how to proactively close achievement gaps that is needed to beat the odds and restore American education to the global prominence it once had." - *Teacher*
- "(A)s a first-year curriculum director...and a parent of two school-aged children, I'd like to say thank you. Thank you for valuing education enough to raise the bar and hold all students to a higher standard... When my two young children graduate from high school and the diploma is

placed in their hands, I look forward to knowing that they have earned something great, something that will prepare them for postsecondary experiences." - *Educator, Parent*

- "I am ecstatic about the aggressive position that the State of Michigan is taking to raise the rigor and expectations for academic achievement of all students. I am re-energized by the recognition that higher academic standards and requirements of proficiency are needed at all levels in education. The proposed Flexibility Waivers will move us in the right direction toward closing gaps and improving the quality of public education." - *Educator*

- "MDE and Superintendent Flanagan should receive consistent thanks for continually pushing Michigan forward in an effort to provide all levels of learners the skills necessary to be college and career ready by the time they graduate." - *Educator*

We divided our stakeholder groups into 39 categories, and tracked their participation in each of the statewide, local and virtual opportunities provided for their feedback. These categories of participation — and the number of specific engagements we had with each — are listed below.

Organization/Group	Waiver Communications
21st Century Community Learning Center Providers	2
Accountability Stakeholder Group (Accountability Specialists from ISDs, MEA, LEAs, & Ed Trust)	1
Alternative Education Student Focus Group	3
American Federation of Teachers Michigan	8
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities	4
Bureau of Assessment and Accountability Advisory Council	3
Business Community	3
Committee of Practitioners (Title I)	4
Education Trust & Education Trust - Midwest	5
English Language Learners Advisory Committee	1
First Nations (American Indian)	1
Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan	2
Intermediate School District Advisory Council	3
MI Alma-Latino Education and Civic Engagement Summit	1
Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education	2
Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators	9
Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools	5
Michigan Association of Public School Academies	7
Michigan Association of School Administrators	7

Organization/Group	Waiver Communications
Michigan Association of School Boards	3
Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals	6
Michigan Association of State and Federal Program Specialists	5
Michigan Community College Association	4
Michigan Education Association	3
Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association	3
Michigan Legislature	1
Michigan Office of the Governor	1
Michigan PTA (Including Parent Members)	5
Michigan School Business Officers	6
Michigan State Board of Education	2
Michigan State University K-12 Outreach	4
Michigan Women's Commission	2
Middle Cities Education Association	8
Network of Michigan Educators (MI Teachers of the Year and Milken Award Winners)	4
Presidents Council, State Universities of Michigan	4
School Improvement Facilitators Network	3
Special Education Advisory Committee	3
The Superintendent of Public Instruction's Teacher Advisory Group	2
The Superintendent of Public Instruction's Student Advisory Group	2

In developing MDE's request for ESEA flexibility, MDE took the following actions to meaningfully engage diverse stakeholders:

- Conducted a webinar and survey of students in alternative high schools about the underlying principles of ESEA and the requested changes thereto. We believe that student voices are important to the conversation about what is working and what isn't working in terms of instruction, testing, and accountability – particularly the voices of those students for whom traditional instructional settings have not worked.
- Met with the English Language Learner Advisory Council (ELLAC), comprised of district and classroom level practitioners who are representative of both high- and low-incidence districts dealing with a multiplicity of languages and cultures. With this group, we discussed the impact of the CCSS, new state assessments, and school and district accountability measures on English

Language Learners. The ELLAC was one of several stakeholder groups who advocated to maintain the traditional subgroups for accountability reporting, while adding the lowest 30% subgroup.

- Met with the Title I Committee of Practitioners (COP), which also includes representatives of English Language Learners. The COP contributed to the development of the ESEA Request multiple times, influencing decisions made regarding state assessments and accountability requirements for schools and districts.
- Met with the Middle Cities Education Association (MCEA), a consortium of 30 urban school districts in Michigan and member of the Education Alliance. MCEA was one of the most active groups in participating in the various stakeholder meetings, webinars, and public comment periods. The MCEA represents a majority of those schools that have been identified in Michigan as persistently lowest performing as well as School Improvement Grant recipients.
- Met with administrators from the Detroit Public Schools at stakeholder meetings convened by MDE to provide thoughts, opinions, and recommendations from Michigan's largest school district – and district with the most schools on the states persistently lowest achieving schools list.
- Held multiple meetings and phone calls with staff from the Education Trust and Education Trust-Midwest, a leading advocate for underperforming schools and students, to discuss various aspects of the accountability and evaluation tools and metrics contained in the ESEA request.

MDE regularly collaborates with these groups and will continue to do so as ESEA flexibility is implemented and evaluated.

Consultation with Urban Districts and Subgroup Populations

The MDE consulted with a wide variety of groups and individuals in order to develop its ESEA Flexibility Request. Of the groups identified above, all were represented through multiple organizations. Urban districts are represented in our consultation process by the Detroit Public Schools and Middle Cities. Detroit Public Schools participated in two meetings for general stakeholder input and was also represented through several of the educational groups such as the Committee of Practitioners, the Special Education Advisory Committee, and the English Language Learner Advisory Council. Middle Cities represents urban centers and has as its stated purpose to serve as an advocate for member districts to insure quality educational programs for all urban students. The following districts are among the 33 member school districts: Benton Harbor, Dearborn, Flint, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Pontiac, and Saginaw. Middle Cities participated in four face to face or virtual meetings from October 2011 through February 2012 and provided comment in each situation. Both Detroit and Middle Cities represent member interests in African American and Middle Eastern students as well as English Language Learners.

Further consultation was sought through the English Language Learner Advisory Council in order to assure that the needs of students whose primary language is not English were being considered and

addressed. The Council suggested that there be a very strong role for parents in the formation and execution of the locally developed reform plans. The Council has representation from district and classroom level practitioners. These practitioners are representative of both high- and low-incidence districts dealing with a multiplicity of languages and cultures. The Council meets four times a year and has representation from Oakland and Wayne counties which make up the largest portion of Middle Eastern students in the state and the nation.

The Michigan Title I Committee of Practitioners served as another opportunity to gather input regarding the needs of urban, African American, Middle Eastern students, and English Language Learners. All facets of the Michigan student population are represented on the committee through parents, teachers, principals, central office, and superintendents. The Committee met twice and was generally supportive of the Waiver Request. There were concerns expressed about funding in order support the rapid turnaround necessary to achieve the learning targets for all students, teacher preparation, and ongoing professional development. There were no concerns specifically raised regarding any of the populations mentioned above.

The Michigan Parent Teacher Association organized a face-to-face meeting with parents from across the state in order to understand the components of the Waiver Request and to provide feedback. The membership of the group present at the meeting represented all ethnic and racial groups as well as a spectrum of ages. The feedback from the group included concerns about the ability of the school to address the specific needs of each child, behavior concerns and the involvement of parents at the local district level in both the planning and implementation of any reform plans. The parents also expressed a desire to set the learning targets at 100% proficiency rather than 85%.

Meetings with all groups mentioned above were face-to-face or virtual unless otherwise noted. These groups as well as others have memberships that work with students from urban settings, are African American and/or Middle Eastern, and/or are English Language Learners. Their input was insightful and assisted in the formation of the ESEA Flexibility Request.

Feedback

While stakeholder input shaped and informed many aspects of MDE's proposed ESEA Flexibility request, much of our public dialogue was focused on the fundamental tension between "ambitious" and "attainable" proficiency goals for schools. The distinguishing feature of MDE's proposal is its rigor; we are moving with determination toward the goal of career- and college-readiness for all students. The establishment of fair, appropriate performance targets has been a key outcome of our discussions with stakeholders.

Other critical stakeholder issues are described below, organized by principle.

Principle 1: Career- and College-Ready Standards for all Students

MDE was engaged in analysis, alignment and implementation of Career- and College- Ready Standards prior to the announcement of the flexibility request option. This was a collaborative endeavor among MDE, regional service agencies, teacher organizations, and others.

Implementation activities are detailed in Section I.B, and show that practitioners are deeply involved in aligning their own curricula with the Common Core. Through this work, which is occurring at the local level, they are building a stronger understanding of what career- and college-ready truly means for each of their students.

Stakeholders are also telling us what they need to do this work more effectively and efficiently. They have asked for more state-level dissemination of the Common Core at statewide conferences, and increased work with the higher education institutions to enhance focus on these standards. Teachers also have requested more professional learning to help support good classroom instruction related to the Common Core.

MDE has worked to address these concerns in this proposal. We have laid out action plans for dissemination at the state and local level, and will engage with partners to ensure professional learning is provided.

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

Because of the high-stakes nature of accountability systems and the need for intensive support for Priority schools, Principle 2 gathered the greatest level of input.

As mentioned previously, the tension between ambition and attainability framed many of our stakeholder discussions around Principle 2. MDE's proposed proficiency standards aim at 85% for all schools. Some stakeholders argued that anything less than 100% was not appropriate, while others argued it would be impossible for many schools to come up to the 85% standard within expected time frames.

MDE responded to these changes by introducing a new safe harbor methodology that recognizes growth in student performance, even if the absolute proficiency target isn't hit. We also introduced more careful, diagnostic supports to help schools achieve their aims more quickly. Our past interventions were of high quality, but they were not the only tools and resources that might work to turn around school performance at the local level. We began to discuss diagnostic, targeted interventions rather than "one-size-fits-all" approaches to school improvement.

Teacher and school administrator groups argued for simplicity and flexibility in light of the differentiated needs of schools in unique settings across the state. When stakeholder groups were given a series of written, face-to-face, and virtual opportunities for facilitated discussion, the following concerns were raised:

- Timely, accurate, useful information must be made available to all stakeholders

- Local communities must be engaged and activated to build school improvement
- Make it impossible for schools to mask subgroup performance
- Accommodate unique community needs and demands – all schools are different
- Make sure data are reported in ways that are easy to understand at the local level
- Early interventions are needed to support subgroups
- Improved teacher preparation is needed to ensure the needs of various subgroup populations are fully understood
- Educational dollars should be spent in ways that are targeted and maximize value

As a result of this detailed input, MDE revised and refined the methods for identifying Priority, Reward, and Focus schools and the interventions that will be provided. The depth of discussion and the high level of participation of stakeholders have resulted in support for the methods detailed in Section 2. This differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system provides the structure that weaves all three waiver Principles together.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

In 2009, Michigan passed legislation requiring annual educator evaluations that included student growth as a "significant part," the results of which are used to inform decisions about promotion, retention, placement and compensation. These evaluations were specified to begin during the 2011-2012 school year. Michigan's LEAs immediately began preparing to implement this legislation, and are now in the midst of the first year of implementing these locally-developed annual educator evaluations for all teachers and administrators. For the first time, every single one of Michigan's educators will be evaluated using measures of student growth, and the results of these evaluations will be reported into MDE's data systems.

One issue with the original legislation was that it did not provide much in the way of standardization across districts, in order to ensure both a standard of quality and continuity in ratings. To address this shortcoming, the Michigan legislature adopted Public Act 102 of 2011 to introduce more standardization and comparability into both the educator evaluation system and the ratings produced by this system. Stakeholders now have the opportunity to give testimony before the Michigan Council on Educator Effectiveness, a statutory panel working to support the statewide development and implementation of educator evaluation systems. The dean of the University of Michigan's College of Education, Dr. Deborah Loewenberg Ball, leads the Council, which consists of two school principals, data analysts from Michigan State University, a charter school management company, and MDE.

In the last two years, MDE convened a stakeholder group to develop new recommendations regarding professional learning. This group produced a new policy on professional learning, which the Michigan

State Board of Education adopted in January 2012. This policy is based on the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning, and the intent is to help districts, schools, and educators appropriately identify professional learning opportunities to support their work. We anticipate the field can leverage these standards when integrating professional learning into their evaluation systems, and we intend to produce interim guidelines to assist them with these efforts.

Michigan is one of few states implementing annual educator evaluations that include student growth as a significant portion in the 2011-2012 school year, due to our proactive and aggressive legislation. We believe this is a strength for us, even though the evaluations systems differ across districts. We do know, however, that districts have been having critical conversations with stakeholders, designing observation rubrics, looking for solutions to integrate growth, developing local assessments, partnering with foundations or other nonprofit enterprises in their area, and collaborating with each other as they work to develop a system that is fair and that meets the criteria of the original law. To support this, MDE hosted two statewide Educator Evaluation Best Practices conferences in 2011 and 2012 focused on student growth, in order to help the field come together and share their best practices with each other.

Next Steps

MDE plans several ongoing strategies to continuously engage teachers and their representatives:

- Starting in the summer/fall of 2012, MDE will partner with the Michigan Education Association, the state's largest teachers' union, to deliver regular webinars on instructional strategies for successful implementation of the CCSS.
- Develop, through direct email and social media, outlets for the regular communication with classroom teachers regarding instruction, assessment, evaluation, and accountability.
- Continue to convene, either in person or virtually, the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Panel, to provide insights and recommendations regarding statewide education and education reform efforts.
- Engage the Network of Michigan Educators, a consortium of Michigan's National Board Certified teachers, present and prior teachers of the year, Milken award winners, and others, in an ongoing conversation regarding and action planning for instructional excellence, professional learning, and other timely topics and statewide efforts.
- Work with the Michigan Education Alliance to facilitate ongoing dialogue with constituent groups, including intermediate school districts, teachers, school leaders, board members, and others. Already, this group has begun to provide written information about their ability to support our work in the months ahead.
- Finally, we will develop and issue periodic written communications in the form of newsletters, emails, and memoranda to ensure all educators in Michigan have access to up-to-the minute information about the progress of our work.

EVALUATION

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

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

OVERVIEW OF SEA'S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY

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

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

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

Our Theory of Action

If a school's challenges are accurately diagnosed through data analysis and professional dialogue at the building and district levels, then the implementation of a focused and customized set of interventions will result in school and student success. This approach will result in:

* Consistent implementation of career- and college-ready standards
* Rapid turnaround for schools not meeting annual measurable objectives (AMOs)
* Reduction in the achievement gap
* Reduction in systemic issues at the district level
* Improvements to the instructional core
* Better understanding/utilization of data
* Improved graduation and attendance rates
* Building of/support for effective teaching
* Building of/support for school leadership capacity
* Effective accomplishment of responsibilities by district leadership

Core Principles

Excellence and equity are the twin underpinnings of our work to improve student achievement in Michigan. We hold ourselves deeply accountable for providing rigorous, effective learning opportunities to all children, from infancy to adulthood. Student learning is the center and aim of all we do.

We believe:

* All means all. Every child has an innate capacity for learning, and we must meet the needs of each and every Michigan student with high-quality systems, tools and resources. Our expectations for all students must be consistently high.
* We must ensure our children are career- and college-ready. We define this as student preparation that is adequate to allow a student to pass first-year technical training and first-year college courses in core areas without remediation. Our state is preparing students not just for the opportunities we know about today, but also for the economic and intellectual challenges of the future.
* Our teachers and administrators are professionals whose talents are equal to the task before them. We must ensure our systems support their work effectively and allow them to innovate to meet the needs of their students.
* Our work with schools and districts must emphasize careful diagnosis and targeted support, to maximize all available resources, capitalize on the creativity and analysis of our front-line professionals, and effectively address the needs of all students.

Recent Changes

In recent years, our advancements relative to educational policy, practice and accountability have reflected the above-listed principles. Some highlights:

* We were among the first in adopting career- and college-ready standards to challenge our students, and we are extending this work through implementation of the Common Core State Standards developed through the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers.
* We already administer rigorous student assessments in grades 3-9, culminating with a high school assessment that includes the ACT in grade 11. This year, we have raised the cut scores for these tests, to better reflect how well schools are preparing their students to be on track for each step of their journey toward careers and/or college. In the coming years, we will transition to summative assessments being deployed through the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, using similarly rigorous cut scores to determine student performance.
* Our teachers and staff are being supported through a strong, coherent school improvement framework. In the coming year, we will revamp our state-level supports for Priority and Focus schools, to eliminate achievement gaps and ensure high-quality opportunities for all Michigan

children.

Taken together, we believe these changes —all of which are being carried out in partnership with teachers, policymakers and other stakeholders — create a tighter, more coherent system of accountability and performance for all Michigan schools and the students they serve.

We view this waiver request as an opportunity to leverage our work in these and other areas. Our proposed activities include:

- Alignment of our assessment system with new career-and college-ready standards;
- An accountability system that holds schools responsible for student learning of the standards, and that sharpens our collective focus on closing achievement gaps;
- Achievable but rigorous objectives that move students rapidly toward proficiency in the standards;
- Supports, incentives, and monitoring that help keep all schools on track to increased student learning and aid them in meeting the needs of student subgroups; and
- A teacher and administrator evaluation system that uses assessment data to keep the focus on student learning.

We are confident full implementation of the items specified in this waiver request will enhance our ability to continue building toward excellence and equity for all Michigan learners.

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

1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

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

Option A	**Option B**
☒ The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards. i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)	☐ The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards. i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4) ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)

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

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

The state will work with its education partners to ensure that career- and college-ready standards form the basis of teaching and learning for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities. As one of the governing states in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, Michigan will provide leadership to ensure robust, rigorous measurement of performance for all learners.

Our Theory of Action → Principle One[1]

If a school's challenges are accurately diagnosed through data analysis and professional dialogue at the building and district levels, then the implementation of a focused and customized set of interventions will result in school and student success. This approach will result in:

* **Consistent implementation of career- and college-ready standards**
* Rapid turnaround for schools not meeting annual measurable objectives (AMOs)
* Reduction in the achievement gap
* Reduction in systemic issues at the district level
* **Improvements to the instructional core**
* Better understanding/utilization of data
* Improved graduation and attendance rates
* **Building of/support for effective teaching**
* Building of/support for school leadership capacity
* Effective accomplishment of responsibilities by district leadership

Career and College Readiness Agenda

Our state took a major leap forward in 2004, with the release of new grade level content expectations in K-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. At the time of their release these expectations were considered some of the most rigorous in the nation. Two years later we adopted a rigorous new set of statewide graduation requirements designed to ensure that all students graduate from high school career- and college-ready. No longer is it acceptable to graduate high school with credit based on seat time. Instead, all Michigan students are required to demonstrate proficiency in required academic standards in order to receive a diploma.

By the end of 2008, MDE had K-12 content expectations in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies as well the visual and performing arts, physical education/health, and world languages. Subsequent adoption in June 2010 of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and ELA served to validate Michigan's already rigorous standards in these content areas, as evidenced by key crosswalk documents. Although in some cases content shifted grades, essentially the content required by the Common Core was already represented in MDE's content expectations. This past year, in a message to the Michigan Legislature, Governor Snyder proposed a new public school learning model: students should be able to learn "Any Time, Any Place, Any Way, Any Pace." These shifts have put a spotlight on the need for teaching rigorous content with multiple access points and opportunities for success. Our challenge now is to support schools with instituting systems of instruction that provide all students with opportunities to learn this content.

[1] At the beginning of each section, our Theory of Action is restated. We have bolded the elements that most directly relate to the Principle being addressed.

Organizing to Support Effective Teaching and Learning

Although curricular decisions, including implementation of the CCSS, are the responsibility of the local school districts, MDE is dedicated to promoting instructional systems that prepare all students to be career- and college-ready. The adoption of the Common Core has allowed Michigan to be a part of various multi-state conversations about implementation and assessment of a common set of standards. Our state's education agencies and partners have sought to leverage these opportunities by finding ways to break down silos created by funding sources and task demands. We also are working together to identify and use the resources, tools and information that best fit our state's educational opportunities.

To these ends, an MDE "Career- and College-Ready Core Team" has been developed with the purpose of developing common messages, complimentary and parallel activities, and the sharing of expertise. This work will be done through six workgroups:

- Effective Instruction and Interventions
- Effective Educators
- Balanced Assessment
- Accountability and Transparency
- Infrastructure
- P-20 Transitions

Workgroups will initially be used to organize work across MDE offices, but eventually other stakeholders will be added to groups as the work evolves. These workgroups are parallel to the State Implementation Elements outlined in Achieve's "A Strong State Role in Common Core State Standards Implementation: Rubric and Self-Assessment Tool." Currently the CCR Core Team is using this rubric to determine where the MDE is in terms of building the capacity of districts to successfully support students in becoming career- and college-ready.

The work of the MDE CCR Core Team runs parallel to the work of our state's **regional educational service agencies (RESAs)**, a network of 57 regional resource centers for local schools, which have helped deliver regional presentations on standards, curriculum and assessments. These agencies, represented by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA), have been vital in the work to unpack and crosswalk the Common Core with MDE's existing academic standards. In providing regional technical assistance and professional learning opportunities, these organizations continue as partners in moving forward with curricular and instructional resources for Michigan educators. Table 1 shows the alignment of the MDE CCR Core Team workgroups to the Achieve Rubric and Self-Assessment tool. This table is superimposed with the colors of MAISA's three areas of transition focus: competency, leadership and organization. More detail on MAISA's plans for supporting the LEAs in transitioning to the CCSS during the current year can be found in Table 2. Table 3 lists MDE initiatives designed to support implementation of the CCR standards and assessment. Table 4 provides a more detailed timeline with a summary of the type of activities expected to occur at the regional, district and building level. Together, MDE and MAISA plan to support the LEAs in

moving to systems that support the career and college readiness agenda (Table 4).

State affiliates of national organizations are also committed to supporting the dissemination of the career- and college-ready agenda. These partners include:

- The Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (MASCD)
- Teacher unions including the Michigan Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers-Michigan
- The Michigan Parent/Teacher Association (PTA), and
- Other professional organizations comprised of school leaders, board members, and school support staff.

Parents are key partners in the education of every Michigan child. To support and extend their engagement, MDE has developed the "Collaborating For Success" Parent Engagement Toolkit; a comprehensive, research-based resource that includes pertinent and practical information, proven strategies and tools to assist in enhancing parent engagement efforts and/or providing a simple yet powerful guide to jump start school programs. The toolkit is also available in Spanish and Arabic versions to ensure proper inclusion of all populations.

To significantly expand the capacity of Michigan's educational system to deliver high-quality, online professional development services to Michigan teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals on an "anytime/anywhere" basis, Michigan Virtual University (MVU) and MDE have created a statewide communication and professional development portal for use by Michigan's educators and members of the K-12 community (Learnport). These efforts continue with support from Title II—Improving Teacher Quality funds.

Other partners include:

- The **Education Alliance of Michigan**, an independent, non-profit organization made up of the executive directors of the statewide teacher unions, and administrator, parent, postsecondary and school business official associations. This alliance has established working relationships across stakeholder groups that enable it to exchange ideas and develop education policy recommendations that improve the design and delivery of education at all levels from infancy through adulthood.

With these programs and partners, MDE has planted a number of seeds for success in implementing the Common Core. We are actively working with our partners to encourage their growth, knowing that educators who are reached by one or more of these initiatives will realize greater success in improving the quality of the instructional core here in Michigan.

Table 1: MDE CCR Core Team - Organizing for Implementation

MDE CCR Core Team		Achieve's Rubric and Self-Assessment Tool		
Work Groups	**Activities**	**Implementation Elements**	**Tools**	
Effective Instruction and Interventions	Provide resources and guidance, for the implementation of effective, relevant instruction for all students based on rigorous academic standards	**Student Supports**	Targeted interventions Funding for student supports	**Outreach** Communications Stakeholder engagement
		Educator Supports	Teacher Professional development Curricular resources & instructional materials	
Effective Educators	Support multiple pathways to educator licensure and provide assistance to districts in ensuring that all students receive instruction from an effective teacher		Teacher evaluation systems Teacher preparation and advancement Principal instructional leadership and capacity	
Balanced Assessment	Develop a system of formative, interim, and summative assessments based on rigorous common content standards		Formative assessment	
Accountability and Transparency	Ensure that student achievement and progress are appropriately measured, reported, and used for continuous school improvement	**System alignment**	Summative assessments Accountability K-12 and higher education alignment with CCSS High school graduation requirements	
P-20 Transitions	Align early childhood programs and services and postsecondary education with standards for K12 content and instruction			
Infrastructure	Provide support, guidance, and statutory reform to help build the foundation for effective data systems, foundation, and technology support	**Infrastructure**	Technology infrastructure State funding alignment	

Table 2: Regional – Organizing for Implementation

Region/District Implementation

maisa

Intermediate School District
Career and College Readiness Standards Transition Guidance-2012

Career and College Readiness Standards transition forces us all to revisit the what, how and when. This document is intended to provide a tool for intermediate and local district planning and implementation to Career and College Readiness Standards. There are three areas of transition focus: competency, leadership and organization. These areas of consideration are critical for the fidelity of implementation.

Implementation Essential Elements	ISD/RESA	District
Competency/Knowledge – What skills do people need to implement this practice with accuracy and fidelity?		
• Career and College Readiness Standards depth of understanding • Implement effective instruction for all learners • Assessing (formative, universal, diagnostic and progress monitoring) • Technology integration skills	• All staff should have CCRS overview training • Review regional assessment plan • Assess region wide technology equipment, accessibility and competencies (student and staff) • Identify professional learning needs and set a professional learning plan and schedule.	• Support unpacking of CCRS standards • With local districts discuss and plan for instructional shifts • Discuss and identify Professional Learning needed –plan for implementation monitoring • Support district in aligning resource materials necessary to support instructional changes
Organization – What infrastructures and supports are needed to be in place to assure the practices can be implemented by the people?		
• Conduct crosswalk of current district and building curriculum with CCRS (curriculum maps, pacing guides, etc). • Develop a plan for addressing differences (gaps)between curriculum maps and CCRS • Identify the time and funds needed for the professional learning to take place for the transition to the CCRS • Discuss teacher and student access to technology	• Develop adjusted curriculum maps for distribution to LEA staff • Support and facilitate professional learning identified • Provide MAISA units and necessary professional learning for implementation.	• Support districts in conducting crosswalk work from current curriculum maps to CCRS and develop new curriculum maps that includes the changes • Support districts in identifying the concepts and skills that are taught in each grade level (I can statements, learning targets, etc) • Support districts in identifying the instructional changes needed
Leadership – What leadership capacity needs to exist to assure that the practices are implemented and maintained?		
• Identify and educate Board of Education, Parent and community members on the new CCRS expectations • Set up monitoring plan for implementation of CCRS • Review assessment data for evidence of implementation	• Conduct information sessions with identified groups • Develop a monitoring plan for the ISD/RESA implementation of CCRS • Review assessments for evidence of ISD/RESA/Regional implementation	• Support and/or facilitate information sessions with identified groups • Support districts in developing a monitoring plan for the building implementation of CCRS • Support for districts in reviewing assessment data for evidence of district implementation

Table 3. MDE Implementation Initiatives

Work Groups	Activities	Initiatives include:
Effective Instruction and Interventions	Provide resources and guidance, for the implementation of effective, relevant instruction for all students based on rigorous academic standards	• Career and College Ready Portal • Hiring additional instructional consultants • Partnering with MAISA to develop model instructional units • Connecting the Dots model academic goals project • Michigan Online Professional Learning (MOPLS)modules • SIOP training for ELL and General Ed teachers • Reaching and Teaching Struggling Learners • Title II funded grant projects
Effective Educators	Support multiple pathways to educator licensure and provide assistance to districts in ensuring that all students receive instruction from an effective teacher	• Deciding whether to continue to use the PSMTs (Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers) or move to INTASC. • Revised its endorsement program approval process to reflect outcome measures, instead of inputs. • Plan to revise the ESL and bilingual endorsement standards to reflect the needs of the field and CCSS. • An EL/Special Education Core Team has begun discussing how/ what it would look like to include EL aspects into the Special Education endorsement, as well as EL and Special Education aspects into all endorsement standards. • Considering incorporating aspects cultural competence, EL, Special Education and instructional technology within all endorsement standards. • MI began discussion of CCSS and the relationship with educator preparation in the Fall of 2011. • Revising all ELA related endorsement to include CCSS/CCR • Plan to revise the elementary endorsement standards to reflect Math and ELA CCSS, as well as the elementary and secondary mathematics endorsement standards. • Michigan Council on Educator Effectiveness
Balanced Assessment	Develop a system of formative, interim, and summative assessments based on rigorous common content standards	• Michigan Assessment Consortium • Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium • Dynamic Learning Maps • English Language Proficiency Assessment
Accountability and Transparency	Ensure that student achievement and progress are appropriately measured, reported, and used for continuous school improvement	• School Improvement Plans • Connecting the Dots academic goals project • AdvancED partnership
P-20 Transitions	Align early childhood programs and services and postsecondary education with standards for K12 content and instruction	• Office of Great Start • CTE/Academic standards alignment • Dual enrollment • Seat time waivers • Early colleges • Michigan Merit Exam • Michigan Transition Outcomes Project (MI-TOP)
Infrastructure	Provide support, guidance, and statutory reform to help build the foundation for effective data systems, foundation, and technology support	• Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium • Regional Educational Media Centers (REMC) • Data warehouses • Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI)

Table 4. Timeline for Implementing New Standards and Assessments

Workgroups	Who	2011-2012 Prepare for Implementation	2012-2013 Implementation	2013-2014 Evaluate/Revise	2014-2015 Test
Effective Instruction and Interventions	MDE	*Provide resources and guidance, for the implementation of effective, relevant instruction for all students based on rigorous academic standards*			
	ISD/RESA	• Support unpacking of CCSS standards and alignment of resources • Provide guidance in implementing a multi-tiered model of instruction and intervention	• Support piloting of new resources • Provide technical assistance to districts implementing a multi-tiered model of instruction and intervention	• Monitor/support multi-tiered models of instruction and intervention	• Monitor/support in multi-tiered models of instruction and intervention
	District	• Support unpacking of CCSS standards and alignment of resources • Align district resources • Work with buildings to design a multi-tiered model of instruction and intervention	• Support schools in piloting new resources • Provide technical assistance to schools in implementing a multi-tiered model of instruction and intervention	• Evaluate/revise as necessary implementation of new resources • Evaluate/revise as necessary multi-tiered models of instruction and intervention	• Monitor/support implementation of instructional resources • Monitor/support in multi-tiered models of instruction and intervention
	Building	• Unpack CCSS standards • Align current resources and identify needed resources • Work with district to design a multi-tiered model of instruction and intervention	• Pilot new resources • Implement a multi-tiered system of instruction and intervention	• Evaluate/revise as necessary implementation of new resources • Evaluate/revise as necessary multi-tiered models of instruction and intervention	• Continue to evaluate/revise as necessary implementation of instructional resources • Continue to evaluate/revise as necessary multi-tiered models of instruction
Effective Educators	MDE	*Support multiple pathways to educator licensure and provide assistance to districts in ensuring that all students receive instruction from an effective teacher*			
	ISD/RESA	• Prepare for professional learning needs of districts • Support development of and/or training in educator evaluation tools and processes	• Provide/support professional learning opportunities for all educators, including principals and teachers of SWD and ELL students (i.e. SIOP, effective Tier 1 instruction, intervention strategies, coaching) • Support implementation of educator evaluation systems	• Provide/support professional learning opportunities for all educators, including teachers of SWD and ELL students (i.e. SIOP, effective Tier 1 instruction, intervention strategies, coaching) • Monitor/support implementation of educator evaluation systems	• Continue to provide professional learning opportunities for all educators, including teachers of SWD and ELL students • Monitor/support implementation of educator evaluation systems
	District	• Plan for professional learning needs of buildings • Develop and/or train principals to use educator evaluation tools and processes	• Provide/support professional learning opportunities for all educators, including principals and teachers of SWD and ELL students (i.e. SIOP, effective Tier 1 instruction, intervention strategies, coaching, mentoring new	• Evaluate/revise as necessary professional learning opportunities for all educators, including principals and teachers of SWD and ELL students • Monitor/support implementation of educator evaluations	• Evaluate/revise as necessary professional learning opportunities for all educators, including principals and teachers of SWD and ELL students • Monitor/support implementation of educator evaluations

			educators) • Support implementation of educator evaluations		
	Building	• Identify professional learning needs of teachers • Learn to use educator evaluation tools	• Implement/support professional learning opportunities for all educators, including principals and teachers of SWD and ELL students • Implement educator evaluations	• Evaluate/revise as necessary professional learning opportunities • Monitor/support implementation of educator evaluations	• Evaluate/revise as necessary professional learning opportunities • Monitor/support implementation of educator evaluations
Balanced Assessment	**MDE**	*Develop a system of formative, interim, and summative assessments based on rigorous common content standards*			
	ISD/RESA	• Review regional assessment plan	• Support implementation of interim and formative assessments • Provide summative assessments information [Smarter Balanced (SBAC)/Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)/English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)]	• Monitor/support implementation of interim and formative assessments • Provide SBAC summative assessments information	• Monitor/support implementation of interim /formative assessments • Support SBAC summative assessment administration
	District	• Review district assessment plan	• Support building implementation of interim and formative assessments • Stay informed about SBAC/DLM/ELPA summative assessments	• Monitor/support building implementation of interim and formative assessments • Stay informed about SBAC/DLM/ELPA summative assessments	• Monitor/support building implementation of interim /formative assessments • Support SBAC/DLM/ELPA summative assessments administration
	Building	• Review building assessment plan	• Begin using interim and formative assessments • Stay informed about SBAC/DLM/ELPA summative assessments • Continue to administer current summative assessments	• Monitor/revise as necessary interim/formative assessments • Stay informed about SBAC/DLM/ELPA summative assessments • Continue to administer current summative assessments	• Monitor/revise as necessary interim/formative assessments • Administer the SBAC/DLM/ELPA summative assessments
Accountability and Transparency	**MDE**	*Ensure that student achievement and progress are appropriately measured, reported, and used for continuous school improvement*			
	ISD/RESA	• Plan for implementation monitoring • Provide support for developing effective school improvement plans	• Monitor/support CCR implementation activities • Provide support for developing effective school improvement plans	• Monitor/support CCR implementation activities • Monitor/support implementation of school improvement plans	• Monitor/support CCR implementation activities • Monitor/support implementation of school improvement plans
	District	• Develop district improvement plans, including academic goals based on CCSS and gap analysis	• Implement district improvement plans, including academic goals based on CCSS and gap analysis • Monitor/support implementation of school improvement	• Evaluate/revise as necessary district improvement plans, including academic goals based on CCSS and gap analysis • Monitor/support implementation of	• Evaluate/revise as necessary district improvement plans, including academic goals based on CCSS and gap analysis • Monitor/support implementation of

			plans	school improvement plans	school improvement plans
	Building	• Develop school improvement plans, including academic goals based on CCSS and gap analysis	• Implement school improvement plans	• Evaluate/revise as necessary school improvement plans	• Evaluate/revise as necessary school improvement plans
P-20 Transitions	**MDE**	*Align early childhood programs and services and postsecondary education with standards for K12 content and instruction*			
	ISD/RESA	• Support alignment of early childhood programs and services and postsecondary education with standards for K12 content and instruction	• Support implementation of early childhood programs and services • Support district CCR implementation/ Postsecondary articulation	• Monitor/support implementation of early childhood programs and services • Monitor/support district CCR implementation/ Postsecondary articulation	• Monitor/support implementation of early childhood programs and services • Monitor/support district CCR implementation/ Postsecondary articulation
	District	• Align early childhood programs and services and postsecondary education with standards for K12 content and instruction	• Implement early childhood programs and services • Implement CCR programs and services	• Evaluate/revise as necessary early childhood programs and services • Evaluate/revise as necessary CCR programs and services	• Evaluate/revise as necessary early childhood programs and services • Evaluate/revise as necessary CCR programs and services
	Building	• Align early childhood programs and services and postsecondary education with standards for K12 content and instruction	• Implement early childhood programs and services • Implement CCR programs and services	• Evaluate/revise as necessary early childhood programs and services • Evaluate/revise as necessary CCR programs and services	• Evaluate/revise as necessary early childhood programs and services • Evaluate/revise as necessary CCR programs and services
Infrastructure	**MDE**	*Provide support, guidance, and statutory reform to help build the foundation for effective data systems, foundation, and technology support*			
	ISD/RESA	• Assess region-wide technology equipment, accessibility and competencies	• Implement regional technology upgrades • Support district technology upgrades	• Monitor/support regional technology upgrades • Support district technology upgrades	• Monitor/support regional technology • Support district technology upgrades
	District	• Assess district-wide technology equipment, accessibility and competencies	• Implement district technology upgrades • Support school and classroom technology upgrades	• Evaluate/revise as necessary district technology upgrades • Monitor/support school/ classroom technology upgrades	• Evaluate/revise as necessary district technology • Monitor/support school/ classroom technology
	Building	• Assess school-wide technology equipment, accessibility and competencies	• Implement school/classroom technology upgrades	• Evaluate/revise as necessary school/classroom technology upgrades	• Evaluate/revise as necessary school/classroom technology upgrades

Rolling Out the Standards

The Common Core State Standards have been cross-walked with the Michigan Merit Curriculum standards and expectations, and incorporated in to our current guidance documents (i.e. course descriptions, grade-level descriptors). To reiterate, the CCSS themselves do not represent a significant

change in the content compared to the content expectations they replace. Instead, MDE is taking this opportunity to message more strongly regarding good Tier I instruction for all students. The first indication of this substantial change is within MDE. We are in the process of hiring four consultants whose role will be to work with Priority, Focus, low achieving schools and others in the areas of instruction. The foci of their work will be on intervention, integration, and instructional design for low socio-economic students, and literacy. Linking the instructional shifts necessary in the classroom with the work of Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA), the organization representing our ISDs/RESAs, and the work of the Smarter Balance Consortium around formative, interim and summative assessments, will lead to a complete series of models for administrators and teachers to learn from as they implement the Career and College Ready Standards.

One of the first projects initiated after the adoption of the CCSS was the initiation of the Career and College Readiness Model Curriculum Unit project. These plans are designed to be used for professional development to support the instructional shifts necessary for successful implementation of the CCSS. The MDE Curriculum and Instruction consultants are actively involved in the development and piloting of these units. At the same time, the MDE is working with experts from the ISDs/RESAs to provide guidance and support around Multi-tiered systems of Support (RtI-MTSS) through guidance and technical assistance to be shared with LEAs. Similarly, the MDE Curriculum and Instruction consultants are working with School Improvement experts at the regional level, and engaging in cross-office work within MDE, to develop model academic goals that provide strategies for implementing the CCSS based on targeted areas of instruction. This project is titled "Connecting the Dots" and is designed to help schools and their instructional staff incorporate the CCSS and appropriate Tier 1 instruction[2] into the planning work they already are required to do through the School Improvement process. Finally, the MDE staff meets with MAISA leadership regularly at their leadership meetings to discuss issues related to promoting the state's CCR agenda, including resources for professional development, communications support, etc. The MDEs goals with the above initiatives are to promote instructional systems that support all students. In order to support students struggling due to disabilities or language barriers, MDE has worked with partners to develop resources for schools to use in supporting Tier II and beyond instruction.

Boosting STEM Instruction

MDE's support for Science and Math instruction has been augmented by the work of our education partners. Teachers who need support in these subject areas have ample tools and strategies at their disposal. MDE works closely with a newly formed statewide STEM Partnership, a network of regional hubs linking together STEM stakeholders across the state.

The Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning (MACUL), and Michigan Virtual University

[2] "Tier 1 instruction" is a term used in Response to Intervention programs, where multi-tiered levels of instruction and intervention are used to reach learners. Tier 1 instruction refers to instruction that is focused on the core curriculum, with instruction and intervention targeted at all students. Tier 2 instruction commonly focuses on small groups of students, and Tier 3 is most intense and often one-on-one.

(MVU) are using Title IID funds for the STEM MI Champions Project, a statewide project designed to provide Michigan's middle school teachers with the instructional strategies and resources they need to ensure that all students develop the 21st century skills necessary for career and college. STEM MI Champions Project participants learn how to work across disciplines to build project-based learning units that focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

State dollars are also currently being used to fund the Science and Mathematics Misconceptions Management (SAM^3), a statewide project designed and delivered by the Math/Science Center Network, (a system of 33 centers, which bring together STEM professionals from Michigan's institutions of higher education, talented faculty members, and other state and regional supports to transmit effective practices). The project provides sustained, job-embedded professional development for teams of teachers from high-priority and persistently low achieving schools to support the implementation of math and science standards required of all students.

In addition, MDE has implemented a statewide Algebra for All project. This important initiative was designed to support the state's mathematics standards. The effort was started with Title IID funds and, following significant expansion, was recently awarded Title IIB funds for another two years.

Support for Literacy Standards

The **Regional Literacy Training Centers (RLTC)** have worked to support the development of online and other resources to support ELA achievement. Recently federal Striving Reader funds were used to develop the Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Literacy Plan (MiLit Plan), which provides a platform for educators to coordinate efforts with community members for the increased and sustained literacy achievement of all Michigan students. The MiLit Network was created as a website that regional teams can use for collaboration.

Workgroup Progress and Aims

Effective Instruction and Intervention

Keeping in mind that curricular and instructional decisions are in the realm of the districts, and consistent with our Theory of Action, MDE plans to support districts in their use of the required school improvement process to analyze multiple sources of data, identify gaps and then develop a plan to close those gaps.

In furtherance of this work, we have adopted an initiative entitled "Connecting the Dots – Preparing All Students to be Career- and College-Ready", the first component of which provides for the *development of model academic goals* that schools can use as they develop their annual school improvement plans. The idea is to leverage schools' required improvement activities by providing examples of focused, coherent instructional strategies that successfully implement the Common Core for all students. In doing so, the work of MDE is coalesced and focused on promoting systems that are connected and coherent in supporting all students to be career- and college-ready.

It is important to note that MDE believes strongly that districts need to have a system of tiered support. The model academic goals operate at the Tier 1 level in that they make visible the types of instructional strategies that need to occur to support the majority of students in the classroom. MDE has recently developed guidance to districts for implementing a multi-tiered system of support (commonly referred to as Response to Intervention systems or RtI). This guidance includes information on the essential elements of an effective tiered support system and an annotated list of resources to support implementation. Consultants from the offices of Educational Improvement and Innovation, Special Education, and Field Services were active participants in creating this guidance. Furthermore, the State Board of Education recently approved the revised Professional Learning Policy and the Standards for Professional Learning. These documents will support the first component of the "Connecting the Dots" work described above.

The following graphic shows the connections among a multi- tiered system of support, the School Improvement Plan, and MDE initiatives that support district and school implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Table 5. Connecting the Dots—Preparing All Students to Be Career and College Ready

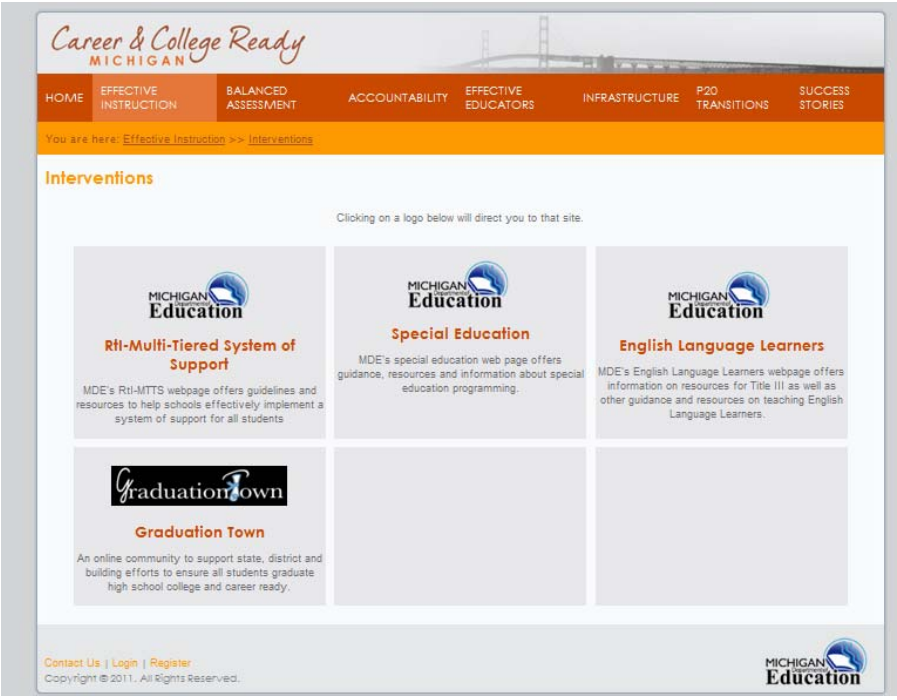
Tiered Intervention System		*School Improvement Framework Standards and Questions*		
Essential Elements		**Classroom**	**School/District**	**MDE Support**
1. *Implement effective instruction for all learners* 2. *Intervene early* 3. *Provide a multi-tiered model of instruction and intervention* 4. *Utilize a collaborative problem solving model* 5. *Assure a research-based Core Curriculum (aligned with Michigan's state standards)* 6. *Implement research/ evidence-based, scientifically validated, instruction/ interventions* 7. *Monitor student progress to inform instruction* 8. *Use data to make instructional decisions* 9. *Use assessments for three purposes: universal screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring* 10. *Implement with fidelity* 11. *Engage parents and community*	Strand 1: Teaching for Learning	**Standard 1: Curriculum** Schools/districts have a cohesive plan for instruction and learning that serves as the basis for teachers' and students' active involvement in the construction and application of knowledge.		
		• *How is the curriculum design modified/differentiated to support the needs of all students?* • *In what ways is the curriculum clear, concise, and discussed by staff?*	• *How does the school curriculum align with, and reference Michigan's standards?* • *How does the school curriculum align with, and reference, the benchmarks and Content Expectations for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, …?*	*Crosswalk documents* *CTE alignment* *MORE Portal* *Mitt Plan*
		Standard 2: Instruction Intentional processes and practices are used by schools and teachers to facilitate high levels of student learning.		
		• *How are the planned instructional processes and practices appropriate for the levels and needs of all students?* • *In what ways is the curriculum clear, concise, and discussed by staff?* • *How is instruction differentiated to meet the needs of individual learners?*	• *How are classroom lessons aligned to the school's/district's written curriculum?* • *How is research-based instruction practice being used across the curriculum?* • *How does staff integrate technology into curriculum instruction and assessment?*	*MAISA Instructional Units* *"Connecting the Dots" SIP academic goals project* *MOPLS* *Teaching for Learning Framework*
		Standard 3: Assessment Schools/districts systematically gather and use multiple sources of evidence to monitor student achievement.		
		• *How are assessments aligned with the curricula and instruction (written and enacted)?* • *How are multiple measures used to evaluate student learning (classroom assessments, district assessments, MEAP, student portfolios, behavioral, measures other than achievement, etc.)?* • *How is data used to determine/improve student learning?*	• *How are students enrolled in Prekindergarten through 12th grade assessed?* • *In what ways are assessment results used to identify needs and assist students?*	*Michigan Assessment Consortium (MAC)* *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)* *Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)*

Districts' interpretation of their own data will guide them in deciding where to focus their improvement efforts, whether for all students or for a particular subgroup. Technical assistance around data analysis and these model goals will be provided through multiple channels, from MDE and regional educational service agency field staff to our partnering practitioner organizations.

All this implies that all teachers have access to the professional learning and resources they need to better deliver this type of instruction. This leads to the second component of this "Connecting the Dots" initiative: *supporting implementation of activities outlined in the academic goals*. To that end, MDE is developing a Career and College Ready Portal. This portal is designed to quickly and easily connect teachers, administrators, instructional coaches and others to information and resources for implementing a local career- and college-ready agenda. The portal is organized around the CCR workgroups (see Table 1). The portal is still in development, but as this screen shot shows, MDE is intent on providing assistance that helps students with disabilities, English language learners, and other subgroups in need of performance support.

As noted, one of the advantages of the CCSS is that high quality instructional expertise, grounded in research, is being harnessed by foundations, universities, and others to create high quality instructional materials and professional development opportunities that all states can use. This includes the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC – MDE's CCSS assessment provider) proposed digital clearinghouse. Therefore, MDE is working closely with its partners to organize the maze of resources and structure the portal so that once schools have created their academic goals, they have a place to go to systematically connect with the human and/or material resources they need to implement their goals.

Figure 1. Screen Shot of Career and College Ready Portal



MDE is also working with the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) on its Collaborative Career and College Readiness Standards project. The goal of the project is to design model curricular units in mathematics and ELA (based on the Common Core) that will serve as a basis

for curriculum development at the local level. These units also will serve as a professional development tool to help teachers respond to the instructional implications of the Common Core. The Dynamic Learning Maps Consortium's professional development consultants have offered to adapt some of the curricular units for students with the most severe disabilities to show how all students can access the common core standards.

Other resources available to Michigan educators (and thoroughly vetted for coherence, consistency, and rigor) include:

- The Michigan Online Resources for Educators (MORE) portal, a collection of standards-based free curricular resources for districts and regional educational service agencies to use to help deliver innovative instruction.

- The Teaching for Learning Framework (TLF): created to support effective instruction in challenging content across all grade levels and content areas.

Through a number of other initiatives, the state will continue to guide school districts in the analysis of student data in order to provide appropriate levels of student assistance and ensure timely acquisition in meeting the standards. Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi), for example, coaches school district personnel on the collection and analysis of academic and behavioral data, and the implementation of a school-wide tired intervention system. Additionally, an MDE multi-office team has provided materials and trainings on tiered intervention to districts not involved in MiBLSi. The core elements of a tiered intervention system have been integrated into the school improvement process to ensure that any student who is not progressing toward the standards will receive additional assistance.

Another mandated activities project from the Office of Special Education, Reaching and Teaching Struggling Learners, strives to ensure positive outcomes for all learners by exploring effective secondary school practices and their impact on all students. The initiative is designed to reduce the risk of dropout. Teams support students during their high school experience and foster a culture of high expectations for all students in the school. The teams share data, observations, and ideas with each other and their staff as each team works to create positive outcomes for students by addressing school improvement practices.

The Michigan Transition Outcomes Project (MI-TOP) project facilitates the development of effective systems that help students with disabilities as they work to achieve postsecondary outcomes. The project supports effective transition practices to ensure all students with disabilities are prepared for postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. MI-TOP provides mandatory professional development to transition coordinators around the state on an ongoing basis.

Title IIA—Improving Teacher Quality funds also provide professional development for special education/ELL teachers with priority given to English language arts and mathematics projects that are focused on the Common Core.

While the Connecting the Dots project and others as described above are designed to help priority and focus schools focus in on instructional strategies that will close the achievement gap, it should be noted that in recent years, MDE has sought to pioneer new approaches to accelerated and innovative learning. Not only has MDE initiated the concept of credit that is based on proficiency with the Michigan Merit Curriculum, but it also has implemented seat time waivers, which allow schools to provide instruction at any time and at any location, with individual attention to students working at their own pace. These opportunities are provided through online education programs and/or work experience that integrates the content standards.

MDE has also implemented the early/middle college concept with great success. The number of early/middle colleges and students enrolled in early/middle colleges has dramatically increased over the past three years. The state is considering strategies for boosting the number of early/middle college programs working in the state. Currently, early/middle colleges must undergo a fairly rigorous review process before enrolling pupils and commencing operation. This process is based solely on past practice rather than any statutory foundation; state leaders are considering ways to reduce or eliminate the burden of this process in a way that incentivizes growth in the number of Michigan's early/middle colleges.

Nearly 13,500 — or more than 7 percent of eligible Michigan students —are participating in dual enrollment opportunities, a number that we estimate to increase as the state legislature works to loosen student eligibility requirements. Recent statutory amendments eliminate grade level and test score requirements that serve as barriers to dual enrollment for many students, and allow non-public and home-schooled students to take part in these types of opportunities.

Michigan also has nearly 64,500 students participating in advanced and accelerated learning opportunities, including more than 770 International Baccalaureate program students.

Balanced Assessment

Districts are expected to have the Common Core fully implemented by the fall of 2012. This timeline ensures schools can adjust their curricula based on student data from interim assessments and from pilot items for the new assessments. More importantly however, this implementation timeline gives students nearly 2 full years of instruction based on the Common Core before they encounter the new assessment.

As shown above, MDE's corollary professional development and school improvement activities are on track to meet those deadlines and support student achievement. The next major order of business in our state will then be the adoption of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium summative assessments, which are scheduled to replace the state's current reading and mathematics state tests in the spring of 2015. Through these assessments, MDE will ensure robust measurement of Common Core implementation statewide. As the new assessment is being developed, MDE is modifying current state summative assessments (Michigan Educational Assessment Program and Michigan Merit

Examination) to support the transition to the Common Core.

- Prior to implementation of the new assessments, MDE will work through its partners to build awareness and understanding of the demands of the new assessments. Teachers and administrators will have an opportunity to experience the new assessment items, discuss what changes may be needed in their instruction and redesign their lesson plans utilizing the model lessons created through the MAISA work. Likewise, working with our partners, MDE will support work with building and district leaders about the initiatives necessary to support good classroom instruction. MDE will update and conduct further professional learning as necessary to support schools in meeting these expectations. In addition to the supports provided by the SBAC, the **Michigan Assessment Consortium (MAC)** will continue to provide training in the development and use of formative assessment. The MAC consists of individuals and organizations that work together to promote the use of balanced assessment systems in Michigan schools, so that students learn, grow and flourish. MAC is the only statewide organization helping educators, and their organizations improve student learning and achievement through aligning systems of coherent curriculum, balanced assessment and effective instruction.

Through the implementation of the Common Core and the adoption of challenging assessment measures, Michigan is able to deliver — with rigor— on its promise of excellence and equity for its learners. Consistent with our commitment to learning for all students, we are cognizant there are special populations that require additional achievement support: English language learners, students with disabilities, and other traditionally underserved subgroup populations. How we'll deliver on our commitment to these students in particular is a significant part of our story.

Support for Students with Disabilities (SWD)

MDE offers assessment alternatives for students with disabilities. MI-Access is Michigan's alternate assessment system, designed for students with severe cognitive impairments whose IEP (Individualized Educational Program) Team has determined that MEAP or MEAP-Access assessment, even with accommodations, would not be appropriate. MI-Access satisfies federal law requiring that all students with disabilities be assessed at the state level. Looking ahead to assessments based on the CCSS, MDE has joined the Dynamic Learning Maps Consortium which is developing an assessment based on the Common Core Essential Elements (CCEEs). The CCEEs were created by the member states in the DLM Consortium. Special education teachers are currently transitioning from MDE's extended grade level expectations to the CCEEs.

It should be noted here that MDE offers an additional alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards. MEAP-Access is administered in the fall of each year and is intended to bridge the gap between the MI-Access assessments and the Michigan Educational Assessment Program for students with disabilities. MEAP-Access assesses students on grade level content expectations in the core content areas of reading and mathematics for students in grades 3 - 8, and writing at grades 4

and 7. Accommodations such as scribes, tape recorders and Braillewriters are available.

Cut scores for MEAP-Access were set and were utilized in the fall 2011 testing, and will continue to be utilized in fall 2012 and fall 2013. When MDE adopts the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium assessments, all MEAP-Access students will be transitioned to those assessments. Professional learning and technical assistance will be provided to teachers in order to help them prepare their students for this transition, and this training will also be included in teacher preparation institutions.

Currently students with disabilities in Michigan have multiple choices of assessments to demonstrate what that know and can do. It is expected that the majority of students with disabilities will be assessed on the general assessment and that only a small percentage of SWDs be assessed on an alternate assessment. Therefore, teachers of SWDs should be included in all professional development of CCSSs and CCEEs in order to ensure that all students are progressing on their individual goals and meet the state proficiency standards. In the past, special educators were not invited to the robust curriculum professional development opportunities. With the new teacher effectiveness requirements and clear expectations, special educators need to be active participants in curricular PD activities. MDE will be supporting teachers to not only understand the standards but be able to teach to the standards through PD activities provided through the ISDs, professional development modules offered through Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), and the Michigan Online Professional Learning System (MOPLS). MOPLS is described in more detail below.

For all assessments, individual education program teams must determine and document which assessments are appropriate for students with disabilities. IEP teams are encouraged to use the "Decision Making Worksheet for Statewide Assessments" to ensure students with disabilities are participating in the most appropriate statewide assessment. The Michigan Statewide Assessment Selection Guidelines and accompanying online professional learning module direct IEP Teams to consider the MEAP/MME first with accommodations as needed. The guidelines support data-based decision making when determining appropriate assessments for students with disabilities.

MDE will provide specific support to students with disabilities in Priority schools. Each school will be required to incorporate specific programming decisions for supporting these students through components of the reform/redesign plan related to differentiated instruction. As a part of the initial data review and analysis for the creation of the reform/redesign plan, schools will use Michigan's RtI-MTSS model to review and further develop a school wide tiered intervention system. In addition, the MDE will work to integrate project resources if appropriate and available such as MDE the Reaching and Teaching Struggling Learners program for dropout prevention, and the Michigan Transition Outcomes Project (MiTOP) program for developing systems to support postsecondary outcomes into the online professional learning tools for Priority school educators. Other pedagogical practices focusing on Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning, and Co-Teaching will be incorporated into the online learning supports for Priority school educators.

Support for English Language Learners (ELL)

Michigan's existing system of standards, assessments, accountability and supports for English language learners is robust, defined in MDE's current accountability workbook and meets the federal guidelines. Standards are aligned and MDE has an assessment for ELLs, as described below.

English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) is the annual assessment given to Michigan's students who are English language learners. ELPA measures, on an annual basis, the progress Michigan's ELLs are making in the acquisition of their English language skills. ELPA reports on student progress are provided to districts, regional educational service agencies, the state, and the federal government.

ELLs will take the general assessments, either MEAP or MME, with ELL accommodations that are recommended and routinely used for their instruction in the content area(s) assessed. ELL students who have an IEP will take the assessment specified in their IEP, either MEAP/MME, MEAP-Access, or MI-Access, with the accommodations also specified in the IEP for the assessment.

We use the ELPA to establish annual measurable achievement objectives for progress and proficiency in English and content achievement. Based on ELPA, Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives and local data, LEAs adjust school and district improvement plans to better serve ELLs. Michigan has developed a strong array of services, including intensive professional development, and is working with various partners to implement improved services across the state for ELLs.

While these supports are effective in helping ELLs as they achieve the state's existing graduation requirements, it was generally felt that these materials were in need of refinement. The adoption of the Common Core, coupled with the ESEA flexibility request opportunity, provides the state with a timely point of departure to engage in this important work.

MDE's Title III/EL program office is pursuing membership in the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium. WIDA has already established research-based ELP standards and assessments, many professional development tools, and a technical assistance plan. The WIDA ELP assessments have already been aligned to the Common Core standards and include assessments for ELL students with disabilities. WIDA has over 27 member states and has received the federal Enhanced Assessment Grant whose purpose is to develop online ELP assessments for English learners and improve overall measurement of the Common Core. Michigan has involved its ELL Advisory Committee (comprised of parents, teachers, and other key stakeholders) in gathering the necessary information about their ELP standards and considered possible professional development plans that pertain to the adoption of WIDA standards. Michigan leadership is pursuing the adoption of WIDA standards and is awaiting required approvals from the state's Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB). We are anticipating that Michigan's program office will carry out a thorough staff development plan during the 2012/2013 school year. The plan will support current professional development activities and incorporate training on the ELP standards and the CCSSs

simultaneously. Since WIDA has already completed the alignment study between the ELP standards and the CCSSs, the staff development sessions will also better prepare teachers of ELLs in incorporating effective strategies so that students can successfully navigate through complex text, acquire academic vocabulary and meet these rigorous standards.

With assistance from Great Lakes East, MDE launched the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model Capacity-Building Professional Development Initiative in 2009, to address the needs of English learners in the state. The purpose of the initiative is to develop the capacity of the department to provide sheltered instruction training of trainers across the state that will improve the achievement of English learners, particularly in content area classes. Each MDE trainer provides a four-day regional workshop in the summer to about 40-60 educators and provides ongoing job-embedded professional development with model lessons, debriefing and collegial visits. Such workshops focus on: a) making content comprehensible through language and content objectives; b) teaching both ELP and CCSSs in alignment; c) teaching oral language, comprehension and writing strategies across the curriculum; d) use of balanced assessment to guide and lead instruction.

To support the growing number of English Language Learners in Priority schools, each such school will need to address specific programming decisions for supporting the needs of these students within the instructional program component of their reform/redesign plans. The School Reform Office will collaborate with MDE staff to provide SIOP program access for schools with sizable populations of English Language Learners. In addition, model programs from school districts throughout Michigan will be encouraged to share practices that address the needs of specific populations of English Language Learners.

For Title I schools experiencing difficulty with English Language Learners and not identified as a Priority or Focus school, the Department will coordinate efforts with the Title III program requiring that the school's improvement plan focus on the identified needs of the English Language Learners in the school. The school initiatives will be coordinated with the existing evidenced-based supports identified above as well as access to the subject matter experts utilized to support Priority and Focus Schools.

Federal IDEA funds are being used to complete the Michigan Online Professional Learning System (MOPLS) — an online, interactive, user-driven program available to all Michigan educators who want high-quality professional learning options. MOPLS supports teachers as they deliver content and instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards, and offers ways to engage students who struggle with key concepts in ELA and mathematics. A resource section is offered in both content areas so that educators can extend their understanding of key concepts and methodologies. These resources have been carefully reviewed and selected so that they align to the Common Core. The instructional examples provided through MOPLS were created to provide teachers alternate ways to teach the core content to students who are struggling, specifically students with disabilities.

Two additional MOPLS modules have also been available to Michigan's educators since 2011. The

Assessment Selection Guidelines module aids educator teams and assessment coordinators in the correct identification of students with the proper statewide assessment, guiding instructional teams in their assessment decisions with an interactive flowchart. This module acts as a primer for the MEAP assessment, providing users with detailed understanding of MDE's assessments, the laws and policies that govern them, and sample assessment items. Finally, the Using and Interpreting ELPA Reports program is also available to teachers of English language learners (ELLs) who administer the ELPA. This module, supported with state funds, provides teachers with a complete overview of the assessment reports for the ELPA, starting at the most basic explanations of language domains and score calculation and progressing to a walkthrough of the Student Data File. A second part to this program presents videos made with the cooperation of five different Michigan regional educational service agencies and districts, showing how districts and schools use scores for student placement, program evaluation, and parent communications.

MDE also provides technical assistance to all schools based on Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives of English language learners and other criteria. Technical assistance and professional development incorporate webinars, video conferencing, web dialogues, annual conferences and individualized meetings. The annual Special Populations conference also includes sessions for technical assistance and best instructional practices.

Support for Other Subgroups

The MDE recognizes that sub-group achievement gaps are especially problematic throughout the state. In particular, the statewide achievement gap of African-American students compared with other racial/ethnic groups is dramatic. An analysis of Michigan's current Priority schools reveals that over half of the schools on the current PLA list have student populations that are over 80% African-American.

Recognizing this gap, as well as the other gaps that will be identified in Priority and Focus schools, the School Reform Office has initiated a department-wide effort to analyze existing data throughout the state and nation, and to identify programs that have closed (or show promise for closing) achievement gaps for students. Rather than focusing solely on school practices and gaps in academic achievement, this effort is designed to examine issues of school culture and climate and policy that may impact African-American student performance. The goals of this effort are to create strategies that result in outcomes that not only reduce the achievement gap in academic performance, but also reduce the disparity in dropout rate, disciplinary referrals, and special education placement in Michigan's schools. While initial efforts will be incorporated into plan requirements for Priority and Focus schools, these efforts will be expanded broadly to address all relevant offices and programs in the MDE.

We aim to help all students achieve ambitious, attainable objectives for their learning and growth. Our work with the above-described assessments in the coming years will strive toward career- and college-readiness and emphasize the Common Core State Standards for every Michigan child.

Michigan's New Cut Scores

In spring of 2011, the Michigan State Board of Education authorized MDE to conduct a study linking proficiency cut scores on its high school assessment (the Michigan Merit Examination) to readiness for college or technical job training at two- and four-year colleges, and linking proficiency cut scores on its elementary/middle school assessment (the Michigan Educational Assessment Program) to being on track to career- and college-readiness in high school. That study was conducted over the summer of 2011 and the new career- and college-ready cut scores were adopted by the State Board of Education in the fall of 2011.

This was a bold and courageous move on the part of the Michigan State Board of Education and MDE, in that the proficiency cut scores increased dramatically in rigor and resulted in substantially lower percentages of students being considered proficient. The seriousness of the impact and the level of commitment to career- and college-readiness in Michigan can be seen in the impact data shown below. The impact data describe below for each grade level and content area the statewide percentage of students who were considered proficient based on the previous cut scores, and the statewide percentage of students who would have been considered proficient had the new cut scores been in place in the 2010-2011 school year. Figure 2 shows the impact for mathematics, Figure 3 for reading, Figure 4 for science, and Figure 5 for social studies. In addition, Figures 6 and 7 show the shift in distributions of mathematics percent proficient in schools based on the old cut scores and new cut scores for elementary and middle schools (Figure 6) and high schools (Figure 7). The same shifts are shown for reading in Figures 8 and 9, science in Figures 10 and 11, and social studies in Figures 12 and 13.

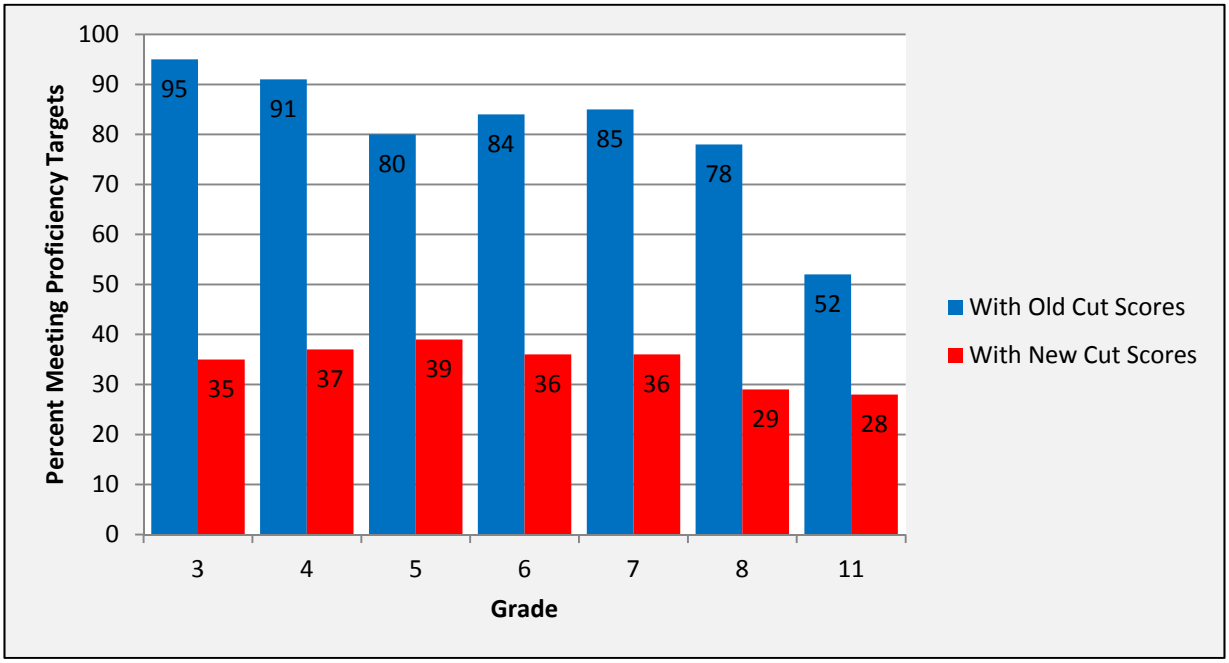


Figure 2. Impact of new cut scores on statewide proficiency in mathematics.

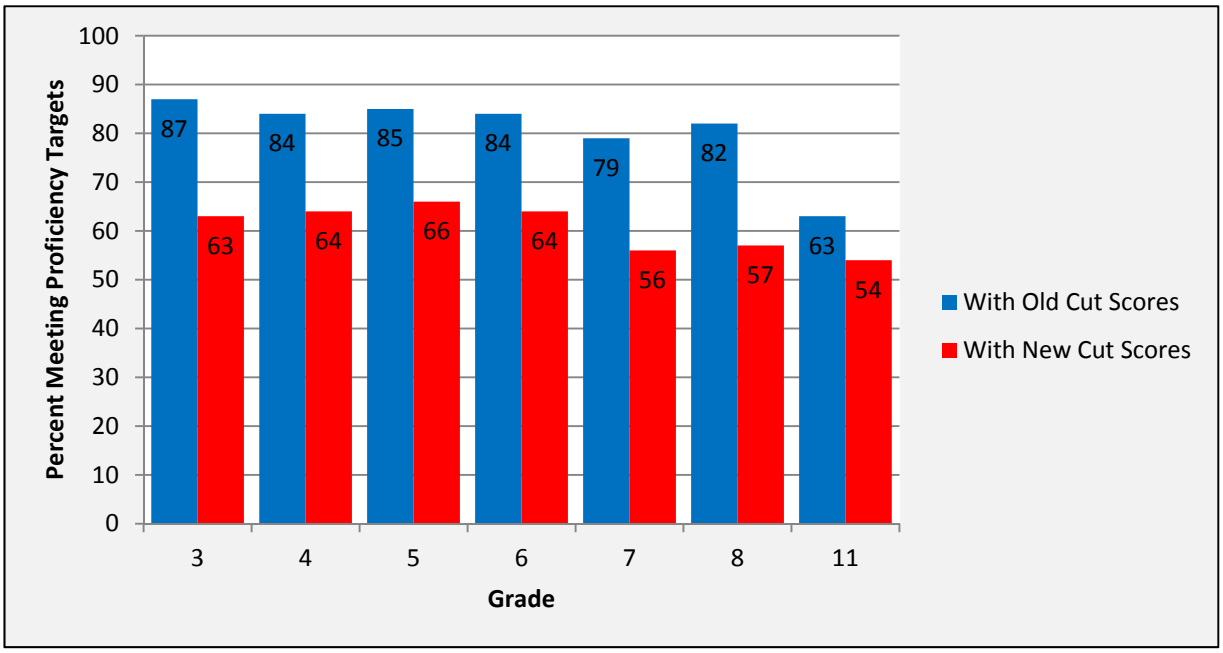


Figure 3. Impact of new cut scores on statewide proficiency in reading.

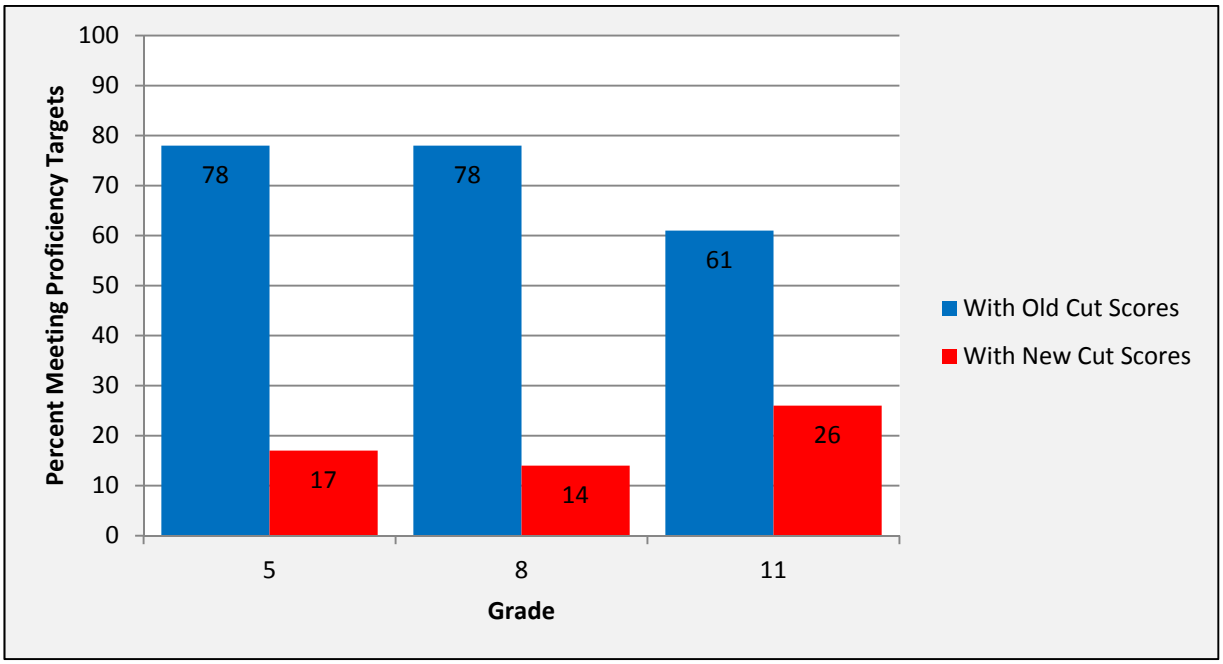


Figure 4. Impact of new cut scores on statewide proficiency in science.

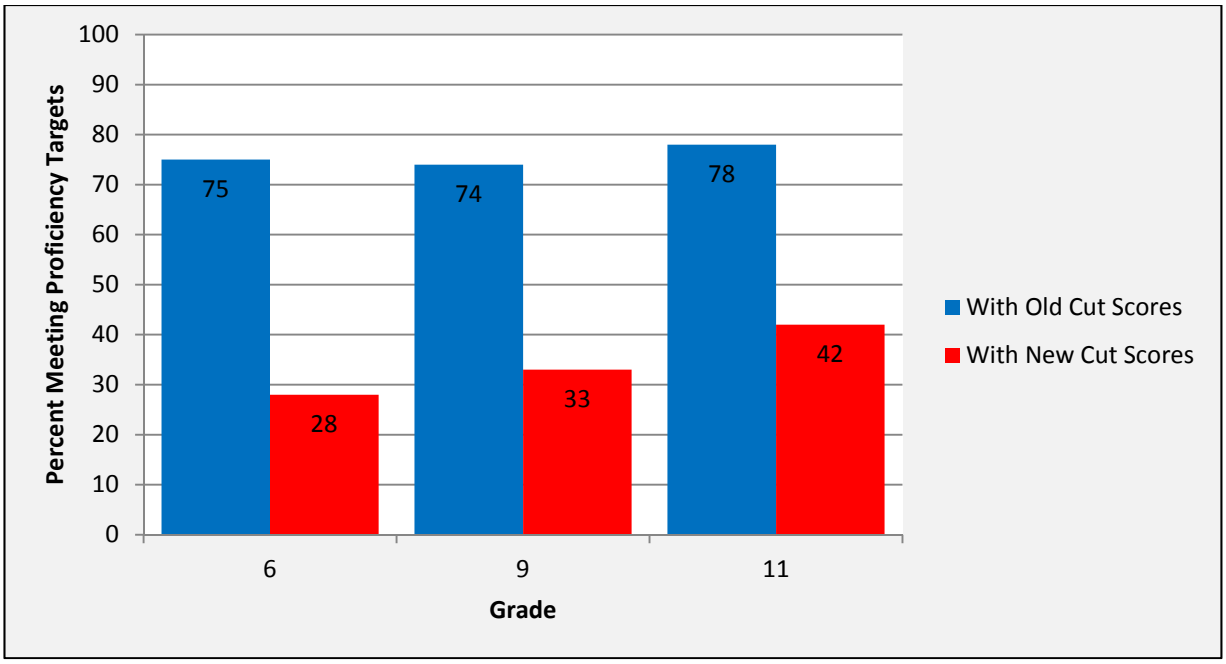


Figure 5. Impact of new cut scores on statewide proficiency in social studies.

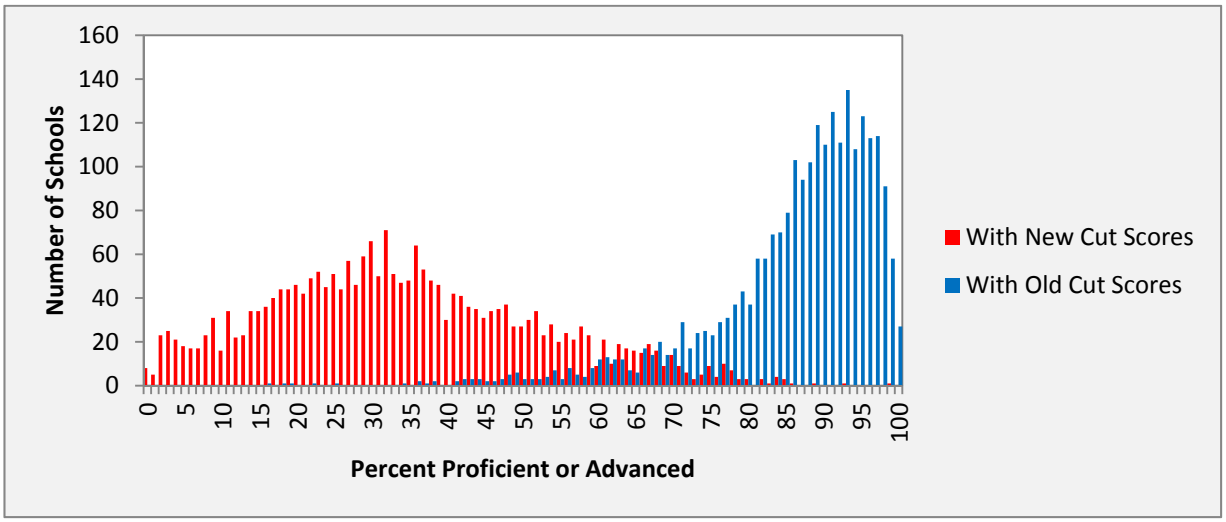


Figure 6. Shift in elementary/middle school distributions of mathematics proficiency from old to new cut scores.

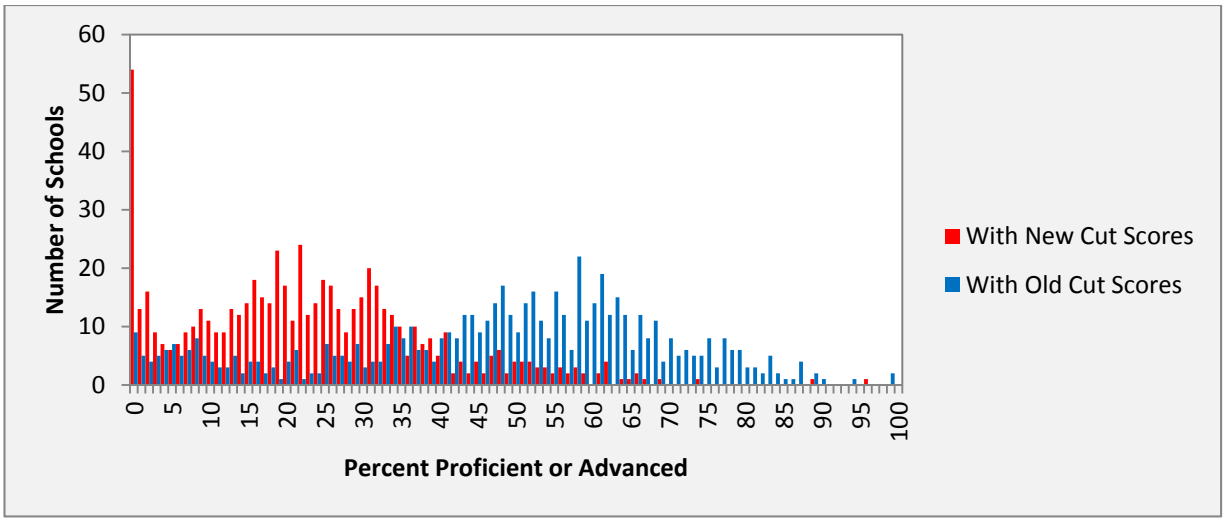


Figure 7. Shift in high school distributions of mathematics proficiency from old to new cut scores.

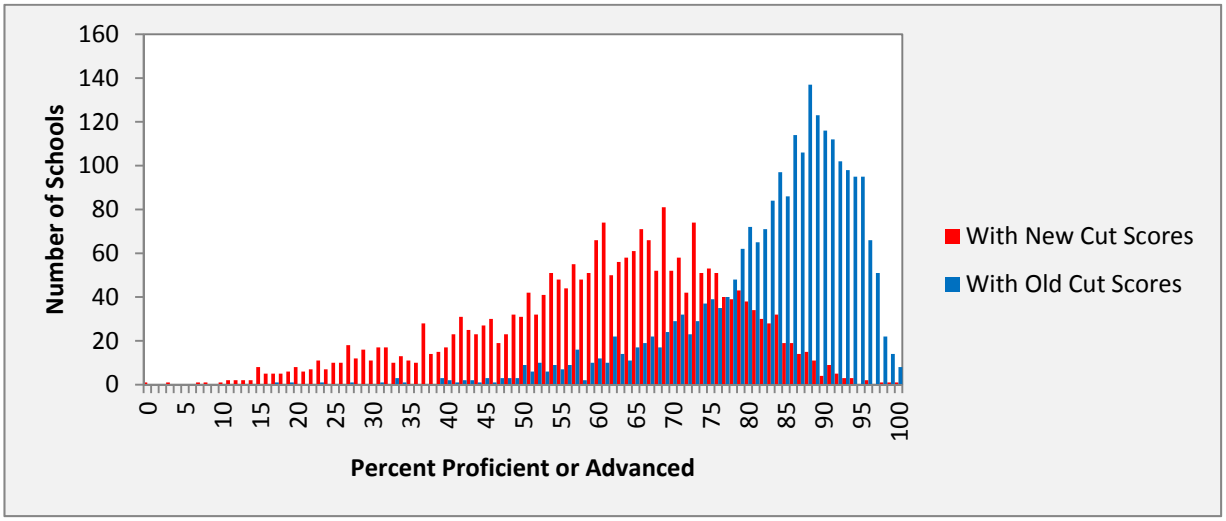


Figure 8. Shift in elementary/middle school distributions of reading proficiency from old to new cut scores.

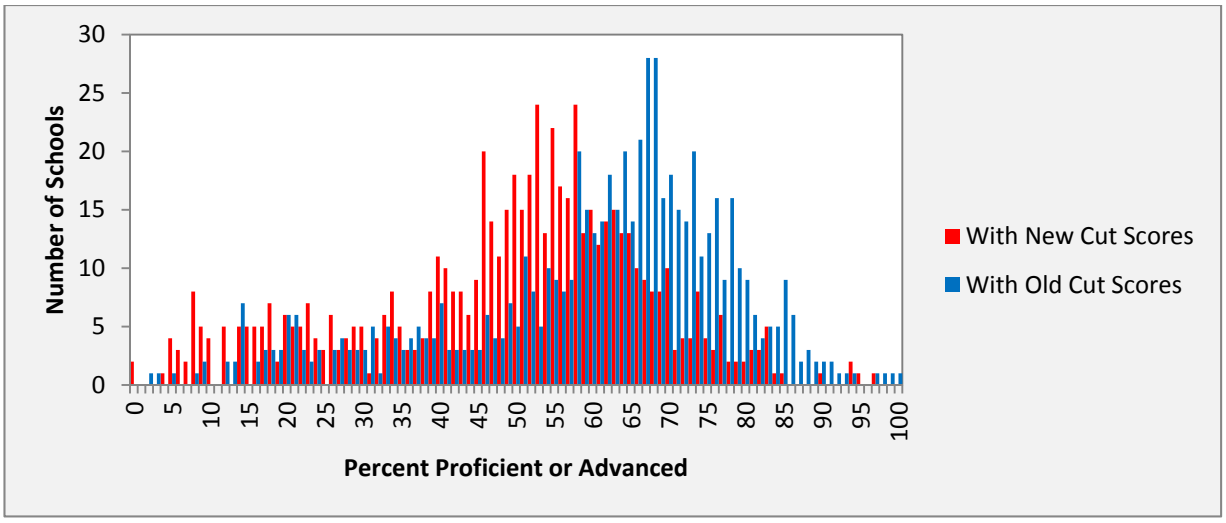


Figure 9. Shift in high school distributions of reading proficiency from old to new cut scores.

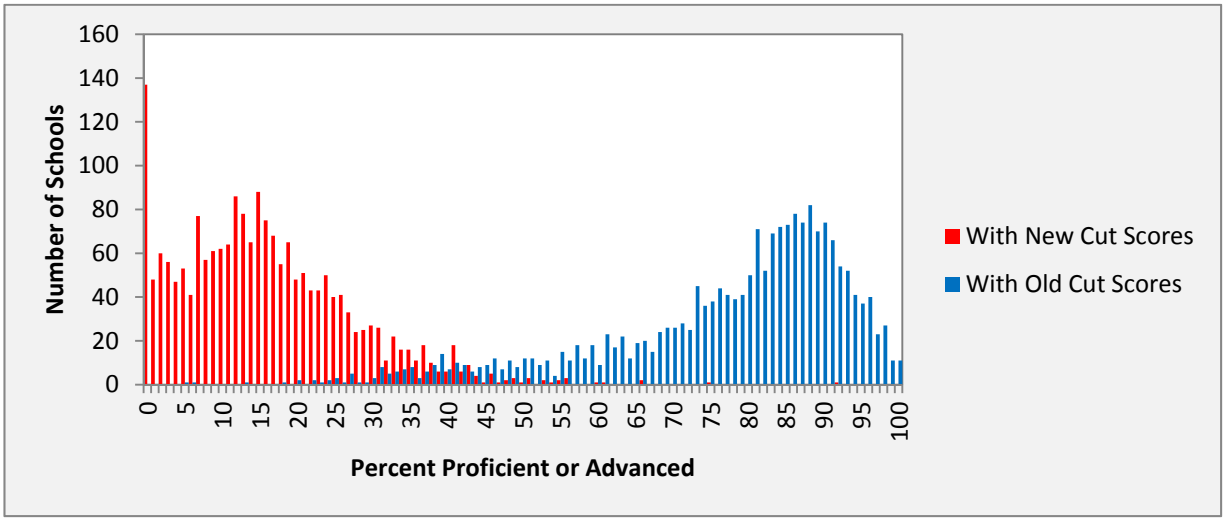


Figure 10. Shift in elementary/middle school distributions of science proficiency from old to new cut scores.

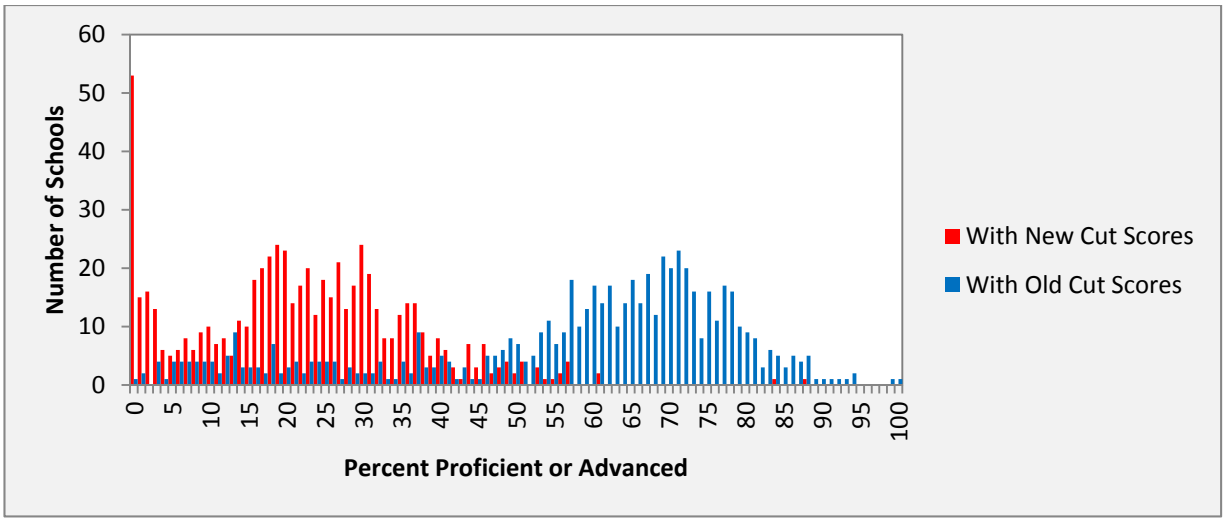


Figure 11. Shift in high school distributions of science proficiency from old to new cut scores.

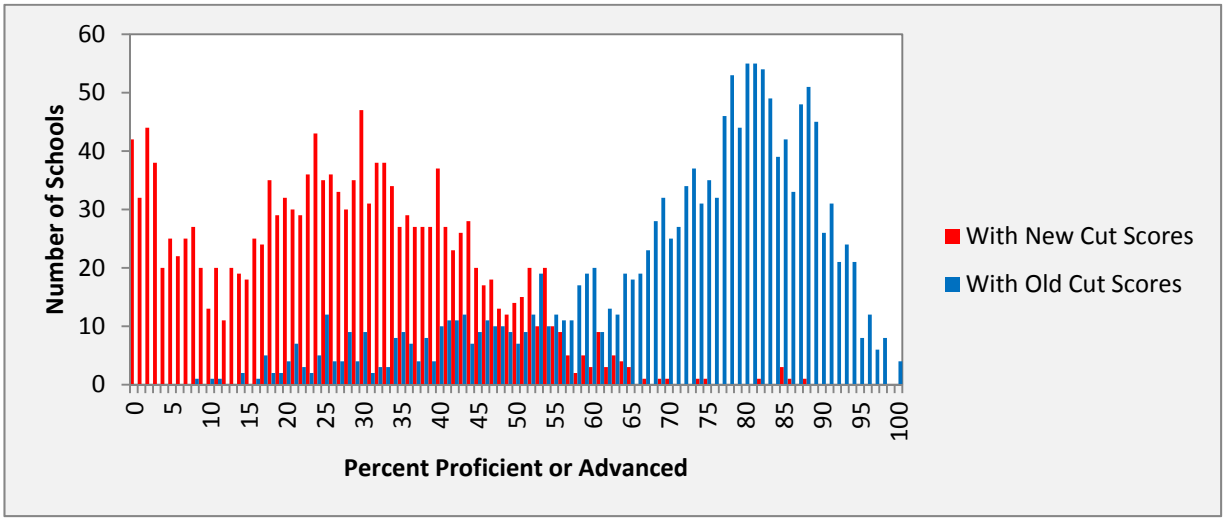


Figure 12. Shift in elementary/middle school distributions of social studies proficiency from old to new cut scores.

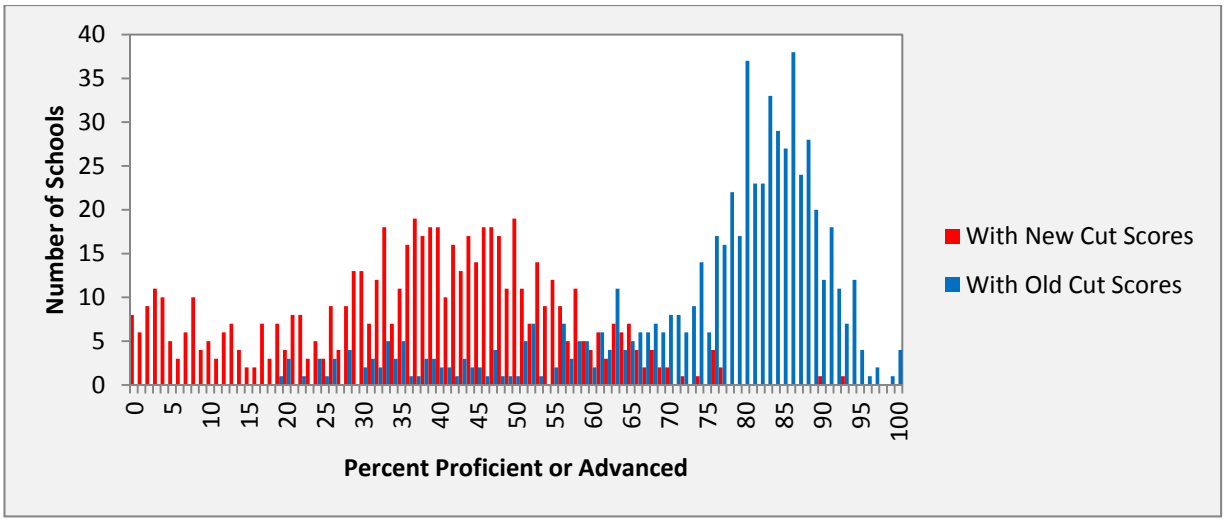


Figure 13. Shift in high school distributions of social studies proficiency from old to new cut scores.

As can be seen from Figures 2 through 13, the rigor of performance expectations on MDE's standardized assessments has increased dramatically. For more information about how these cut scores were derived, please refer to the Technical Appendix (Attachment 13.A).

Effective Educators

MDE is already using its network of partner agencies and organizations to provide specific support to educators. In addition to the development opportunities provided by the state's regional educational service agencies, Math/Science and Regional Literacy Centers, and other partner organizations, Michigan school leaders have access to other quality tools and information through the following resources:

- MDE has ongoing relationships with colleges and universities, professional associations such as the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, the Michigan Association of Public School Academies, and other membership and/or advisory organizations that allow for direct interaction, dialogue and learning opportunities for Michigan principals. Administrators can attend endorsement programs to earn specialty and enhanced endorsements that are added to their school administrator certification. These specialization and enhancement areas include, but are not limited to curriculum, instruction, as well as principal and superintendent enhancement. MDE works closely with the administrator preparation institutions, associations, and organizations to disseminate effective practices and provide training presentations at conferences and other events.

- Michigan State University's Office of K-12 Outreach has provided instructional leadership development during the past six years, as part of our Statewide System of Support. Michigan State University will continue to partner with MDE to develop training for local specialists who can provide tools and processes to improve the quality of leadership at both the district and building levels.

- MDE is working with educator preparation institutions (EPI's) to improve their programs by offering more technical assistance as well as offering information on current trends to incorporate within programs. The review process of programs is coordinating with NCATE to improve principal preparation programs as well as updating current principal and central office standards to include more specified technology and teacher leader standards. The professional associations are also offering more district level programs in conjunction with the department.

MDE collaborated with Great Lakes East/American Institutes for Research (AIR) to develop an evaluation design that determined whether student achievement improved as a result of these efforts.

Teacher Preparation

MDE is currently working to examine and revise teacher preparation endorsement and certification standards in English Language Arts and mathematics to align with the depth of content and rigor of instruction required to effectively teach the Common Core State Standards. We will continue to examine the need for revising endorsement and certification standards as the development of career and college ready content standards are developed and adopted in additional content areas. MI has also revised its endorsement program approval process to emphasize outcome measures, rather than program inputs. This means that each endorsement program must ensure that their candidates are prepared to effectively teach all students based on certification examination data.

MDE worked with stakeholders to develop the Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers (PSMT), adopted by the State Board of Education in 2008. The PSMT work in conjunction with endorsement and certification standards to guide teacher preparation institutions in developing programs that prepare teachers to effectively:

- Create supportive learning environments for all students
- Use innovative technology, including online and virtual learning environments
- Demonstrate depth in content knowledge and content specific pedagogy
- Integrate Instructional design and assessment
- Demonstrate professional responsibility and supportive and collaborative relationships with the student, the school, the district, and the community.

In order to ensure that all parts of the educator preparation program aligns with the knowledge and

skills necessary to effectively deliver instruction and assess learning of career and college ready content, MI is currently deciding whether to revise and continue to use the PSMT (Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers) to ensure alignment with the updated endorsement and certification standards or move to the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards.

As part of the revision of teacher certification standards, we are revising the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) program to align with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). All special education teachers in Michigan are required to obtain a general education teaching certificate before a special education endorsement is added. In this way, we ensure every Michigan teacher knows and understands the Common Core. The institutions that prepare special education teachers will have professional training on the Common Core Essential Elements to ensure that teachers of students with severe cognitive disabilities graduate with the understanding they'll need in their work. MDE will provide this training through the Special Education IHE committee in the spring of 2012.

Other initiatives include:

- Plans to revise the ESL and bilingual endorsement standards to reflect the needs of the field and CCSS. Specifically, the standards will include competencies regarding high incident areas, where it is difficult to distinguish between an EL (language) and special education issues, as well as data driven decision-making. This work will most likely begin in early Fall 2012.
- An EL/Special Education Core Team was formed in 2007. Recently, this team has begun discussing how/ what it would look like to include EL aspects into the Special Education endorsement, as well as EL and Special Education aspects into all endorsement standards.
- We are currently revising all secondary English Language Arts related endorsement standards (i.e. Reading, Reading Specialist, English, Speech, Journalism, and Communication Arts, and Language Arts) to include CCSS/CCR. The standards have been drafted and are being reviewed by the committees.
- We are currently working to draft revisions to the elementary endorsement standards to reflect Math and ELA CCSS, as well as the elementary and secondary mathematics endorsement standards.

MDE views the adoption of the Common Core State Standards as a catalyst for continued systematic change. MDE will work closely with representatives of teacher preparation institutions and key stakeholders to ensure the Common Core is fully supporting career- and college-readiness for all learners in Michigan.

P-20 Transitions

All the strategies and teams described in this section work together with one singular aim in mind: effective student preparation and achievement. Every child attending a Michigan school will experience the best we have to offer in the way of curriculum, instruction, assessment and results. To this end, we will work with our partners to deliver high-quality systems and support that is continuously improving for the benefit of all. But it does not stop there. We are also reaching beyond K-12 to ensure our state addresses the needs of all learners, even those who are not yet old enough to attend school.

In 2011, the Governor established an Office of Great Start within the MDE. The new office combines the Department of Human Service's Office of Child Development and Care and the Head Start State Collaboration with the Department of Education's Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services. By housing the office in the MDE, the state sends a strong signal about the importance of early care and education: it's not about baby-sitting; it's about learning and development in ways that allow for adequate stimulation, brain development, and preparation for school.

The Office of Great Start is responsible for management and leadership for all publicly-funded early education and care programs, including Child Development and Care, the Head Start Collaboration Office, state Pre-Kindergarten (Great Start Readiness Program), early intervention (Part C of IDEA, called Early On in Michigan), early childhood special education (Part B, Section 619), and the state parent education initiative (Great Parents, Great Start), and is responsible for collaborative efforts with other offices that use available Title I, Part A funds and state at-risk (Section 31a of the State School Aid Act), as well as funds for migrant, dual language learning young children, and funds for homeless children for young children. Bringing these funding streams under one management authority allows for a coordinated system of standards, assessment and accountability and for collaborative efforts to develop regional recruitment and enrollment strategies to serve more vulnerable children in high-quality settings. MDE is working with the Early Childhood Investment Corporation with Early Learning Advisory Council funds to revise and enhance our Early Childhood Standards of Quality documents to include alignment from Infant-Toddler through Preschool/Prekindergarten to K-3 standards. Contracted writers are working with large advisory groups to complete the alignment and enhanced documents this school year. The standards and assessments designed to measure program quality are used in all programs and form the basis for the state's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (Great Start to Quality), which is used for all licensed, regulated, and child care subsidy programs and settings. Aligning these initiatives with kindergarten and the primary grades is a necessary foundational step to ensuring that vulnerable children have a chance to enter school prepared for its rigors, safe, healthy, and eager to succeed.

The Michigan Office of Great Start will manage a coherent system of early learning and development that aligns, integrates and coordinates Michigan's investments in critical early learning and development programs. We are reaching beyond K-12 in our approach, and taking bold steps to boost readiness and achievement in our schools.

1.C DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER ANNUAL, STATEWIDE, ALIGNED, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH

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

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

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.

MDE is taking the opportunity offered by the ESEA Flexibility Request to develop a truly unified and differentiated system of accountability and support. The proposed accountability system combines: (i) normative ranking approaches, which allow us to identify those schools most in need of intervention to increase student performance and close achievement gaps, with (ii) a criterion-referenced proficiency-based approach that requires all schools to reach ambitious and attainable proficiency goals and systematically address the needs of every learner. This accountability system uses an easily accessible "scorecard" and intuitive color-coding in order to continue to leverage the importance of light-of-day reporting and increased information to educators, parents and community members. The accountability system informs the differentiated system of recognition and supports, allowing resources and targeted interventions to be accurately deployed to districts. In all of this, MDE reaffirms our singular focus on increasing student achievement through the targeted use of strategic interventions and best practices that are informed by data and accountability.

Our Theory of Action → Principle Two

If a school's challenges are accurately diagnosed through data analysis and professional dialogue at the building and district levels, then the implementation of a focused and customized set of interventions will result in school and student success. This approach will result in:

- **Consistent implementation of career- and college-ready standards**
- **Rapid turnaround for schools not meeting annual measurable objectives (AMOs)**
- **Reduction in the achievement gap**
- **Reduction in systemic issues at the district level**
- **Improvements to the instructional core**
- **Better understanding/utilization of data**
- **Improved graduation and attendance rates**
- **Building of/support for effective teaching**
- **Building of/support for school leadership capacity**

- **Effective accomplishment of responsibilities by district leadership**

Our work on this principle will breathe life into all components of MDE's Theory of Action, and allow us to support teaching and learning in customized, diagnostic ways. Our plans build on available knowledge and resources — standards, instruction and assessment — to make real our twin pillars of excellence and equity for all Michigan learners.

Here's how it will work:

- MDE will rank its schools, developing a "Top-to-Bottom" List of schools and their performance. The ranking will be based on *student achievement*, *student growth over time*, *school improvement over time*, and *achievement gaps* across all five tested subjects (mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing). This list and the methodology used in compiling it are incorporated throughout the accountability system.[3]
- MDE will also generate an Accountability Scorecard for every school, showing their performance on proficiency and improvement targets for all students and for all subgroups. This scorecard will provide schools with Dark Green, Lime Green, Yellow, Orange or Red ratings that allow them to assess at a glance where their areas of strengths and weakness lie. This is discussed in greater detail in Principle 2B.
- One of the key innovations allowing us to focus relentlessly on closing achievement gaps is the addition of the "Bottom 30%" Subgroup that will be used along with the nine traditional subgroups. This subgroup consists of the lowest-performing 30% of students in every school. Its use will ensure that schools are held accountable for increasing the achievement levels of their lowest performing students, and that all schools testing at least 30 full academic year students have a subgroup regardless of the demographic composition of their school. By improving the achievement of the bottom 30% subgroup, a school improves its overall achievement, improves the achievement of low-performing students in each of the demographic subgroups, and closes its achievement gaps.
- Schools at the bottom 5% of the Top-to-Bottom list will be identified as Priority schools (or persistently low achieving schools). Within the Priority school category, four sub-classifications will be used to facilitate triage and ensure appropriate supports are delivered (see Table 1).
- The 10 percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps in the state will be categorized and treated for improvement as Focus schools. The achievement gap is calculated as the distance between the average standardized scale score for the top 30% of students and the

[3] We would like to note that the Top-to-Bottom methodology is a modification of the federally prescribed ranking rules for school improvement grants to persistently lowest achieving schools. Over the course of the 2010-2011 school year, MDE took the original methodology for persistently lowest achieving schools, engaged in multiple and repeated conversations with stakeholders regarding the methodology, and made significant revisions based on that stakeholder feedback. Revisions included adding the achievement gap to the rankings, standardizing scale scores to better compare students and schools, adding graduation rate, and a variety of other improvements. The Technical Appendix contains a chart comparing the two methodologies, along with more detail on the changes made through this iterative process with our stakeholders. Although that stakeholder feedback was generated prior to the ESEA Flexibility opportunity, we would like to acknowledge that the yearlong process on the Top-to-Bottom ranking was an important component in helping to position us to submit this flexibility application.

bottom 30% of students in that each school. Larger gaps decrease a school's overall ranking; smaller gaps help raise their ranking.

- A list of schools Beating the Odds will be developed. A school will be considered as "beating the odds" when it outperforms its predicted Top-to-Bottom percentile ranking as predicted by schools' demographic makeup[4], or based on outperforming the 30 most demographically similar schools in the state.
- A list of schools making and not making Adequate Yearly Progress. AYP will now be presented in a scorecard approach, and incorporates proficiency targets on career- and college-ready cut scores. After 2012, this will not be labeled as Adequate Yearly Progress.
- A list of Reward schools will be identified. Identification will result from the following:
    - Making Adequate Yearly Progress (being a Dark Green, Lime Green, Yellow, or Orange school)

  AND
- Achieving one or more of the following distinctions:
    - Being in the top 5% of the Top-to-Bottom ranking
    - Being in the top 5% of schools on the improvement measures in the Top-to-Bottom ranking
    - Being a school identified as Beating the Odds
    - Being a school showing continuous improvement beyond the 2022 proficiency targets (beginning in 2013)
- All Schools in Michigan – whether they are Title I or not — will be subject to state-level requirements and eligible for MDE support/assistance upon request.

Michigan School Classifications— By The Numbers

MDE is able to demonstrate the required number of priority, focus, and reward schools that meet the respective definitions of those groups of schools.

Priority Schools:

- Step 1: Determine the number of schools it must identify as priority schools
    - Michigan: 100 schools must be identified as priority

[4] The demographic characteristics used are: locale, grade configuration, state foundation allowance, enrollment, percent racial/ethnic in each category, percent economic disadvantage, percent students with disabilities and percent limited English proficient. MDE intends to continue to refine the Beating the Odds methodology and may add or remove demographic characteristics depending on their usefulness in identifying similar schools and in differentiating among schools.

We are considering modifications to the matching process, and are engaged in a study with the Regional Educational Laboratory-Midwest to re-evaluate the Beating the Odds methodology. We have considered dropping the Census-based locale coding currently used, and instead using a Michigan-specific regional measure, as we feel the Census-based codes are not accurately reflecting the realities of experience of schools in Michigan. We are also investigating the impact of dropping enrollment, or redefining the cluster size based on enrollment, because Michigan has a relatively small number of very large schools (i.e. over 1000 students) and so those schools have fewer opportunities to "beat the odds." Those decisions are underway, and will be made based on further data analysis done in conjunction with the Regional Educational Laboratory-Midwest.

- Step 2: Identify the schools on the list generated by the overall rating in the accountability system that are currently-served Tier I or Tier II SIG schools
  - Michigan: 52 SIG schools currently served.
- Step 3: Identify the schools on the list generated by the overall rating in the accountability system that are Title I-participating or eligible high schools that have had a graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years
  - Michigan: 4 schools
- Step 4: Determine the number of additional schools the SEA needs to identify as among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in the State to reach the minimum number of priority schools it must identify by subtracting the number of schools identified in steps 2 and 3 from the number identified in step 1
  - Michigan: 44 schools (100-52-4 = 44)
- Step 5: Generate a list that rank-orders Title I schools in the State based on the achievement of the "all students" group in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments combined and lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years. To generate this list, an SEA might use the same method that it used to identify its PLA schools for purposes of the SIG program, but apply that method to the pool of all Title I schools in the State.
  - Michigan: This was accomplished by taking the ranking system that is used for our current PLA schools and applying it to all Title I schools, as opposed to only the Tier I and Tier II pools.
- Step 6: using the list from step 5, identify which schools fall within the lowest-achieving five percent.
  - Michigan: The lowest 5% of schools on that straight Top-to-Bottom list was identified.
- Step 7: Demonstrate that the list generated based on schools' overall rating in the accountability system includes a number of schools at least equal to the number determined in step 4 that are also on the list of lowest-achieving five percent schools identified in step 6. Note that the schools counted for this purpose must not have been counted as currently served SIG schools or low graduation rate schools.
  - Michigan: We have 55 schools that are both lowest 5% of the PLA list (using percent proficient and improvement) AND lowest 5% of our Top-to-Bottom list, not including SIG or low grad schools. We needed 44 to meet the threshold.

Although Michigan has a sufficient number of schools identified by both metrics to meet the demonstration requirements outlined above, we would also like to present conceptual considerations for USED to review as they consider ranking mechanisms for schools.

MDE has produced and distributed the ranking of all Title I schools that is used to produce the PLA list for two years. In the initial year that the list was released, MDE engaged in substantial discussions with

stakeholders regarding the ranking methodology, as MDE was integrating this methodology into our state accreditation system. Stakeholders raised a number of concerns about the ranking, many of which MDE found to be valid concerns and which resulted in changes in our ranking calculations, producing the Top-to-Bottom methodology we presented here.

One of the key criticisms was that the use of percent proficient as the achievement component of the ranking was unfair, because cut scores were differentially difficult at various grade levels. Being proficient in third grade was easier to obtain than being proficient in eighth grade, so schools with grade spans that included the higher grades were at a disadvantage. MDE conducted some internal analyses, and found some validity in the claim—there did seem to be a relationship between grade span and ranking. Measurement research suggests that this is a common issue with a lack of vertical articulation of standards across grades. Our modified ranking system relies on a standardized student scale score, where the student's scale score on the assessment taken by that student is compared to the statewide average of all students who took that same assessment in the same grade and content area. This helps negate the grade-level differences in standards that are present in any assessment and content standard system, and also makes for a more fair comparison of schools to each other, where grade span is not as easily conflated with achievement. One additional benefit is that keying off scale scores provides a more stable ranking methodology because we are not throwing away information in the scale scores by bifurcating them into proficient/not proficient categories. Finally, with our new, more rigorous cut scores, it would be difficult to determine differences in ranking at the lower end of the ranking, as many schools are clustered around a low percent of students proficient.

We include all full academic year students who take any of our assessments in the Top-to-Bottom ranking. For students who take our alternate assessment, MI-Access, the way this is accomplished is that we take the student's scale score on the assessment they took (the three levels of our alternate assessment are Functional Independence, Supported Independence, and Participation), and standardize that scale score against all students who took that same assessment in the same subject, grade and year. This allows us to standardize scale scores from all assessments and then combine them into the three components of the Top-to-Bottom ranking. We do not limit the number of scores from the alternate assessment that can be included in the Top-to-Bottom ranking. See Appendix 13.E regarding accountability designation for special education centers.

We fully believe our Top-to-Bottom methodology is an improvement over the percent proficient ranking methodology that was part of the original PLA system, and believe this should be considered in a more general sense when asking states to rank schools. Although we can demonstrate that we meet the requirements for number of schools identified under both methods, MDE stands by its revised ranking methodology as a more accurate and fair way to conduct a school ranking.

Reward Schools

- Generate a list that rank orders Title I schools in the state based on aggregate performance in reading/language arts and mathematics for the all students group over a number of years.

  - Use the original PLA methodology, which ranked schools on percent proficient and used only reading and mathematics.
  - Identified the top 5% of Title I schools as "high-performing"
- Generate a list that rank-orders Title I high schools in the state based on graduation rates.
  - Used the graduation rate over four year; identified any school with a graduation rate over 97% as high-performing.
- For each list, set a cut point.
  - Top 5% of the overall PLA list, and over 97% for graduation rate.
- We also generated a list of composite improvement rate for all schools and used only the reading and mathematics improvement composite, then flagged the top 5% of those schools as "reward' schools.
- Remove from the lists all schools not making AYP
  - Done
- Remove from the lists schools that have significant achievement gaps
  - Removed all Focus schools from this list.

Results:
Looking only at the Title I schools, we identify 109 Title I schools using the steps outlined above and 109 Title I schools using our three methods (high performing on our Top-to-Bottom ranking, high improvement on the improvement component of the Top-to-Bottom ranking, and beating the odds). Of those 109, 51 schools (or 47%) are identified by both methodologies. Fifty-eight schools are identified by our methods that are not identified by USED's; and 58 are identified by USED's that are not identified by ours (53%).

Of those identified by MDE's methodology that are not by USED's, 45 of those (78%) are identified by our Beating the Odds methodology, which looks at schools that can significantly outperform their expected outcomes or the outcomes of a comparison group of schools. There is no equivalent to this in the USED system, so therefore we would not expect coherence here.

Of those identified by USED's methodology that are not identified by USED's, these are largely elementary/middle schools (only three standalone high schools), and they are identified as either high achieving or high performing. We believe this indicates what we had previously stated about basing a ranking on percents proficient instead of our preferred and more precise formula of ranking schools based on their standardized student scale scores, improvement, and achievement. We also believe this reflects the inclusion of five tested subjects as opposed to only two.

It is MDE's belief that a 47% overlap between our preferred methodologies and the suggested methodologies of USED is sufficient.

Focus Schools Comparison

- Determine the number of schools that must be identified as focus schools.
  - In 2010-2011, we had 2006 Title I schools, so we needed to identify 201 schools as focus schools

- Identify the schools on the list generated by the overall rating in the accountability system that are Title I and have a graduation rate less than 60% and are not priority schools.
    - Zero.
- Identify additional Title I participating high schools that have graduation rate less than 60% and have not been identified as priority schools.
    - 5
- Determine the remaining number of schools that the SEA needs to identify as focus schools by subtracting the number of schools identified in steps 2 and 3 from the number identified in step 1.
    - 201-5 = 196
- Generate a list that rank orders Title I schools in the state based on achievement gaps between subgroups in a school over a number of years; set a cut point that separates highest achievement gap schools from others.
    - This is our focus schools metric; the average achievement gap between the top 30% and bottom 30% subgroups within each school, across all five tested subjects. The cut point is the value represented by the Title I school at the 10th percentile of this ranking.
- Using this method, we identify 340 Focus schools, 206 of which are Title I schools, and 5 of those are schools with graduation rates below 60% over three years.

Below is MDE's estimated subgroup accountability comparison as requested by USED.

	Number of schools held accountable for one or more ESEA subgroups	Percentage of schools held accountable for one or more ESEA subgroups	Number of students in ESEA subgroups included in school-level accountability determinations (non-duplicated count)	Percentage of students in ESEA subgroups included in school-level accountability determinations (non-duplicated count)
Under NCLB	2906	83%	1411522	93%
Under ESEA flexibility	3521	100%	1518597	100%

MDE's proposed categories and interventions are summarized in Table 6, on page 73.

Figure 14 below demonstrates how the components of the accountability system work together to hold all schools accountable. If a school is a Priority school, it cannot be a Focus school or Reward school, and is "Red" on the Accountability Scorecard. Focus Schools, on the other hand, will be allowed to achieve the appropriate color on the Scorecard and will not automatically be considered "red."

Reward schools are drawn from those schools who are not Priority, Focus, or "Red" on the Scorecard, and are identified as high-achieving, high-improvement, or Beating the Odds.

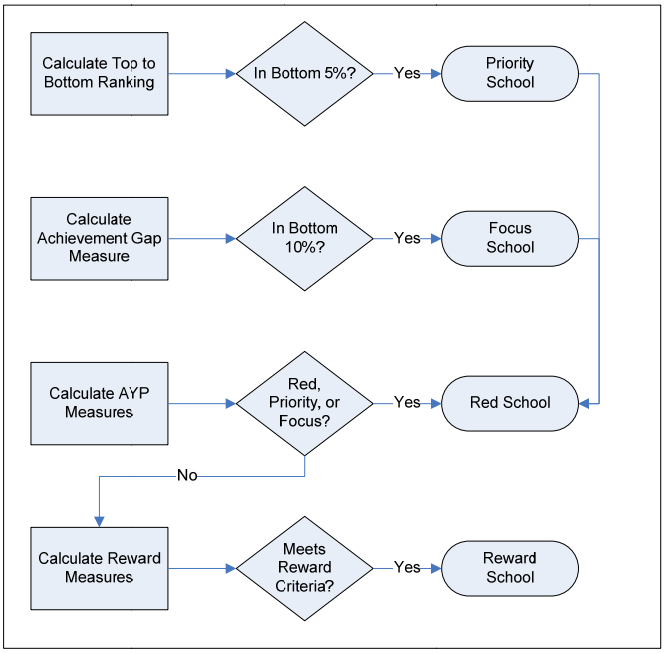


Figure 14. MDE's accountability system as a coherent whole.

The way that all schools are accounted for in MDE's accountability system as a whole is presented in Figure 15 below. As can be seen, all Priority schools are Red in the Red/Orange/Yellow/Lime/Dark Green color scheme, with Reward and Focus schools spanning the Green/Lime/Yellow/Orange boundary. All schools are included in the Dark Green, Lime, Yellow, Orange, and Red buckets—the color-coded Accountability Scorecard ensures that all schools receive a meaningful accountability status. A low-achieving school—for example, one that is ranked at the 10th percentile—with a small achievement gap would not be designated as a Priority school or a Focus school. However, it would still receive a "Red" rating, which indicates to the school and its stakeholders that there are areas of concern at that school.

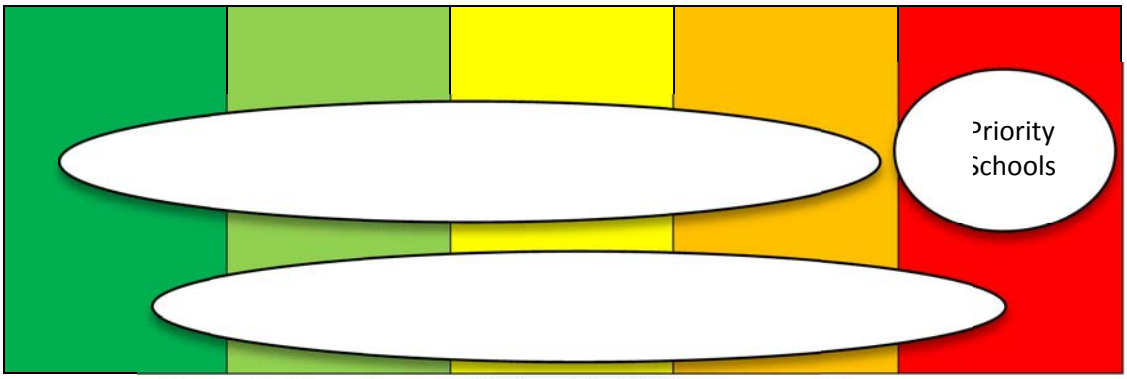
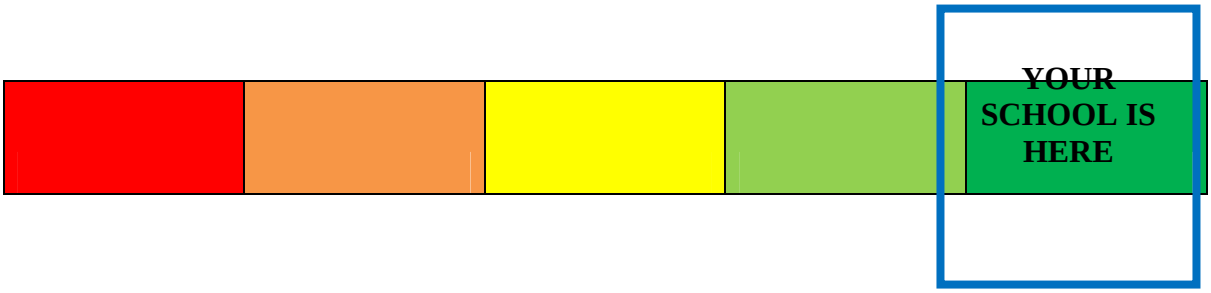


Figure 15. Venn diagram of schools in MDE's accountability system.

In the time between the initial submission to USED and the peer review opportunities, we heard more feedback from the field that raised concerns regarding the proposed Green/Yellow/Red color scheme, and that it did not provide sufficiently differentiated information to parents, stakeholders, and the education community regarding the performance of schools. MDE took this feedback under advisement and would like to propose a revised color scheme.

As opposed to a Green/Yellow/Red color scheme for the final school designation, MDE would now like to expand to five colors—Dark Green, Lime Green, Yellow, Orange, and Red. This allows us to further differentiate the "yellow" category in particular. MDE plans to display these final colors in a continuum, to help parents understand where their school falls (see below for example).



In order to earn each color, a school has to earn a certain target number of points, as follows:

Less than 50%:	Red
50-60%:	Orange
60-70%:	Yellow
70-85%:	Lime Green
Over 85%:	Dark Green

This provides for more differentiation, particularly in the formerly "yellow" category. A school can earn an orange rating or above by demonstrating, on average, improvement (as indicated by safe harbor) in all subjects and subgroups.

General business rules will stay the same, including:

- Red/yellow/green color coding within subject and subgroups (saving the more differentiated coding for the overall color scheme)
- Participation rules: For each "red" that a school earns in any subgroup/subject combination, their overall color is lowered one level. If a school earns two reds in the "all students" category in any two subjects, the school automatically earns an overall "red" rating. This is to prevent schools from choosing to not assess certain students.
- Interactions between Priority, Focus and Reward school status and the Accountability Scorecard stay the same.

All Schools

All Michigan schools are required to carry out the following action steps each year:

- Complete a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA);
- Develop or revise a School Improvement Plan;
- Provide an Annual Education Report to the public in accordance with Michigan law; and
- Submit other academic, financial and compliance data to the RESA and state as required.

MDE's proposed accountability system, submitted pursuant to this ESEA Flexibility Request opportunity, will not change the basic activities and submission requirements for schools. Rather, the new system will build on these basic elements to support rapid improvement and change for schools that are most in need of support.

Priority Schools

Schools at the bottom 5% of MDE's Top-to-Bottom list will be identified as Priority schools. Pursuant to Michigan law, all schools in this category are under the purview of the Michigan School Reform/Redesign Office (SRO). The responsibilities of the SRO are as follows:

- Identification of Priority schools (also considered Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools per Michigan legislation);
- Notification of school boards/charter school authorizers with Priority schools;
- Review of reform plans with recommendations for approval or recommendations for revision and resubmission;
- Notification to school boards/charter school authorizers of Plan Approval/Disapproval;
- Ongoing monitoring and documentation of implementation of reform plans;
- Establishment of the Reform/Redesign District comprised of schools whose plans were disapproved, and those schools not making significant growth toward student achievement; and
- Decision regarding LEA oversight of PLA schools or transfer to the Reform/Redesign District.

In addition to general oversight, the School Reform/Redesign Office provides technical assistance and professional learning support to address the fidelity of implementation of the reform plans. Monitors working with the schools not only address the general compliance with its plan, but support a range of implementation considerations through coaching and a professional learning program. The School Reform/Redesign Office provides strategic support through the following efforts:

- Coordination of MDE reform efforts to ensure thorough integration of activities and monitoring of Priority schools;
- Review and analysis of state policies and legislation that might cause barriers to rapid turnaround in schools;
- Development of policies and strategies to support effective school leaders in Priority schools;
- Strengthening of teacher effectiveness in Priority schools through a combined program of "just-in-time" technical assistance, along with a program of professional learning that is job-embedded, uses best practices, and is linked to Michigan's Teaching and Learning Framework and the Common Core standards; and
- Identification and development of tools and resources to ensure schools implement redesign plans using outcomes-based practices that are designed specifically for rapid turnaround.

Based on all of these efforts, the School Reform/Redesign Office will develop a district intervention model for rapid turnaround that will be used to sustain school level interventions at the district level. The goal of this model is to address the components of reform, as outlined throughout this proposal, and to strengthen district-level systems that will increase the fidelity with which schools can implement their reforms. The creation of the School Reform/Redesign Office was crucial for Priority schools to develop this capacity for a number of reasons. First, it created a central office within MDE to oversee monitoring and decisions about all Priority schools, no matter whether they are Title-I funded or not. Second, the SRO bridges a number of programs and offices within MDE that are directly or indirectly involved in addressing moving reform targets and encourages cross-office collaboration to address the broader, holistic needs of Priority schools. As such, the SRO will also anchor some specific collaborative initiatives, such as the development of supports to eliminate the various achievement gaps that exist within individual schools or districts, as well as statewide for certain subgroups.

The School Reform/Redesign Office is the last opportunity for Priority schools to address persistently low achievement with some focused options while staying under the governance of the local school district. Schools adopt one of the four federal reform models (1003g School Improvement Grant) while under the supervision of the School Reform/Redesign Office. Schools will engage in a year of reform planning, and continue with up to three years of monitoring and support during implementation before decisions about governance and control are made.

Before we describe our Priority School interventions, we recognize that these schools are all going to look very different from one another. Based on our analysis, we can see the bottom 5% of the state's Top-to-Bottom list is comprised of urban, rural and suburban schools, small and large schools, charter and traditional schools, schools with all types of grade configurations, and schools with radically different approaches to teaching and learning. Some schools will have been in the bottom 5% for some time, while others may be experiencing only temporary troubles.

Thus, there will not be a "one size fits all" approach to solving the problems in these buildings, because there are many different reasons why these problems exist in the first place.

Specific, Diagnostic Interventions

MDE will allow for customized interventions and supports to be developed at the local level, with support from an array of experts. This is why subcategories of performance exist, as depicted in Table 6. The state will need to understand and accommodate many different types of concerns within each of its Priority Schools in order to ensure a targeted, effective remedy. This will require extensive coordination among MDE offices, stakeholders, and experts.

To begin, however, all Priority schools will be required to undertake the following, to ensure turnaround and success:

- Notify families of students attending the Priority school of its Priority school status, the reasons for its identification and the school's and district's plans to improve student achievement. (MDE will offer template letters that specify required elements, but schools will be allowed to customize the letter in order to tell their story accurately.)
- Conduct a data-based professional dialogue with district and school staff, designed to ascertain root causes of the large achievement gaps, and identify 1-2 major shifts in teaching/learning practice that hold the potential to substantively shift the performance of the school and post these Instructional Priorities in a "diagnostic" addendum to the school's improvement plan in the AdvancED School Improvement portal.
- Conduct a district-level professional dialogue (with participation of any Focus and Priority schools in the district) to identify 1-2 major shifts in district practice, procedures and systems that would increase the ability of struggling schools to make rapid changes in practice.
- Implement a state-approved Reform/Redesign Plan aligned to their needs over the course of four years: one year of planning and three years of implementation. The four Reform/Redesign options are:
    - Closure;
    - Restart as a charter school;
    - Turnaround; and
    - Transformation
- Prepare to implement Reform/Redesign plans by making necessary revisions to incorporate building and district changes of practice into School and District Improvement Plans and the district's consolidated application for federal funds.

    - Participate in a comprehensive, job-embedded professional learning program that is designed to increase capacity for turnaround by providing tiered supports for administrators, teacher leaders, and teachers around the following:
- Effective ways to understand and address the root causes of their performance issues;
- Successful implementation of the components of the four reform/redesign models, and considerations for the design of effective school reform plans;
- Effective instructional practices, including specific supports for differentiated instruction, management of learning practices, implementing rigorous standards and learning tasks, and

utilizing technologies to support learning;
- Implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports for professional learning, mentorship, community engagement, and other critical practices
- Identification and response to challenges to the reform effort, with progress monitoring tools in core subjects and skills;
- Data utilization for curricular and instructional policy and formative student assessment; and
- Any other strategies or approaches necessary to improve performance and reduce achievement gaps.

- Participate in the Superintendent's Dropout Challenge by identifying 10-15 students in all elementary, middle and high schools who are nearing or in a transition year with multiple dropout risk factors and provide research-based supports and interventions. MDE has data that indicates higher performance in participating schools compared to non-participating schools in both graduation rate and dropout rate.

MDE's approach to Priority Schools brings deeper, more customized assistance to schools experiencing performance challenges. In addition, our revised approach better prepares districts to support their schools on an ongoing basis. Similar customized assistance to special education centers that are not designated as Priority schools is addressed in Appendix 13.E.

Michigan's Revised Statewide System of Support (SSoS)

Our new Statewide System of Support will supplement the efforts of districts and schools that receive Title I funding as they undertake reform/redesign work, in the following ways:

- Offer program supports that are provided by regional educational service agencies:
- A trained School Improvement Facilitator from the regional educational service agency will be part of a School Support Team that meets with the school to support and monitor school improvement efforts; and
- Implement appropriate RESA-provided components:
    - Content Coaches
    - Professional learning aligned with the building needs
    - Culture/Climate intervention (e.g., behavioral support systems, cultural competency building among staff and students)
    - MDE approved Restructuring model from an outside provider

- Offer MDE-level desk reviews of School Improvement Plans, to ensure they accurately identify the root causes of local performance challenges and contain the elements necessary to address them.

- Provide ongoing monitoring and technical assistance through the efforts of a local School

Support Team (SST), staff from MDE's Office of Educational Improvement and Innovation, the School Reform/Redesign Office, local RESA officials, and other experts as appropriate.

Administer Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC) to all core content teachers to analyze the degree of alignment between current instruction and state standards and assessments.

- Facilitate a Diagnostic Data Dialogue to identify root causes and remedies:

- Step 1: Upon identification, the state provides a data wall for each identified Title I Priority School that displays not only existing achievement data but also new context/process data.

    - Step 2: An Intervention Specialist trained and certified by Michigan State University facilitates a diagnostic data dialogue session designed to arrive at a shared interpretation of the results and additional context data, 1-2 critical root causes, a small number of strategies capable of accomplishing the improvement trajectory that put students at the school on track for success, and district system support needed for the effort. This will form the backbone for the development/revision of the school's School Improvement Plan and Reform/Redesign model; for that reason, before the rewriting and consolidated application work begins, the written product from this session (naming root causes and intended teaching/learning changes) will be posted for review by, building, district, ISD/RESA, and MDE's Field Services representatives.

  For Priority Schools, we expect that the strategies that emerge from these facilitated Professional Dialogues will be a customized form of launch, recalibration or deepening of the multi-tiered system of supports that has proved so successful in improving subgroup performance in the state. (See section 2Eiii for evidence)

This can be illustrated as follows:

Priority School Intervention Model

Our experience leads us to believe that a mature school improvement process has taken root in Michigan. The Professional Dialogue described above, coupled with deeper diagnostic data, will strengthen and refocus the strategies that are implemented during the Priority School's regular improvement efforts toward changes capable of catalyzing rapid transformation and turnaround. At the same time, based on the evaluation results for our statewide commitment to multi-tiered systems of support [see Section2Eiii for evidence] we expect that whole-school turnaround and transformation strategies will of necessity address specific subgroups whose performance is lagging. Where subgroups such as English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities or race/gender-specific clusters emerge as significant in the schools customized diagnosis, Michigan's statewide system of support is designed to support a school with tiered interventions such as Structured Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), assisting teachers of students with disabilities with implementation of Essential Elements, and introducing culturally-relevant teaching strategies. Deployment of these targeted strategies will be dependent on the school's diagnostic professional dialogue; Intervention Specialists and School

Support Teams will tap these specialized resources as appropriate for each school's path forward.

***Table 6*. Intervention strategies for Title I Priority, Focus and Reward schools.**

Category/Level of Need	Indicators	Intervention(s)
PRIORITY SCHOOLS		
CLASSIFICATION OF TITLE I PRIORITY SCHOOLS In order to differentiate for supports from the Statewide System of Support, all Priority schools will choose one of the four School Improvement Grant Reform/Redesign models to implement: 1) closure 2) restart as a charter 3)transformation 4) turnaround		
Category/Year 1 Targeted Needs	• Time in Bottom 5% (1 year) • Strength of leading/lagging indicators • Fidelity of reform plan implementation	• School Reform Office • Title I set-asides required • Ongoing monitoring and assistance from School Support Team • Intervention Specialist • Survey of Enacted Curriculum • Superintendent's Dropout Challenge
Category/Year 2: Serious Needs	• Time in Bottom 5% (2 years) • Strength of leading/lagging indicators • Fidelity of reform plan implementation	• School Reform Office • Title I set-asides required • Ongoing monitoring and assistance from School Support Team • Intervention Specialist • Survey of Enacted Curriculum • Statewide System of Support components
Category/Year 3: Critical Needs	• Time in Bottom 5% (3+ years) • Strength of leading/lagging indicators • Fidelity of reform plan implementation	• School Reform Office • Title I set-asides required • Ongoing monitoring and assistance from School Support Team • Intervention Specialist • District Intervention Team • Statewide System of Support components
Category/Year 4: Intensive Needs	Recommendation by the School Reform Officer	• State take-over
FOCUS SCHOOLS		
Year One	The 10 percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps in the state (top 30% of all students compared to bottom 30% of all students) – FIRST year	• Deep/diagnostic needs assessment to identify root causes • District Improvement Facilitator (DIF) • School Improvement Plan revised to strengthen multi-tiered systems of support • Stakeholder meetings • District support toolkit • Superintendent's Dropout Challenge

Year Two	The 10 percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps in the state (top 30% of all students compared to bottom 30% of all students) for TWO consecutive years	• Building Title I Set-asides required • Deep/diagnostic needs assessment to identify root causes • District Improvement Facilitator (DIF) • School Improvement Plan with tiered system of support • District stakeholder meetings with affected populations
Years 3 and 4	The 10 percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps in the state (top 30% of all students compared to bottom 30% of all students) for THREE consecutive years	• Building Title I Set-asides required • Additional district set aside (10% Yr 3, 15% Yr 4) required for each Focus School, UNLESS bottom 30% has made demonstrable progress • Program Evaluation to assess effectiveness of strategies in use • District Improvement Facilitator (DIF)

REWARD SCHOOLS		
Reward	Top 5% on state Top-to-Bottom List	• Recognition in Annual Education Report • Local Media Recognition • Recognition at MDE and Educational Organization Conferences • Promising Practice Videos • Networking Meetings • College/University Recognition • Financial Flexibility • Corporate and/or Philanthropic Recognition

Title I Set-Asides for Priority Schools

All districts with Title I Priority schools will be required to set aside 20% of the LEA Title I allocation for the following purposes. The following Title I set-aside options are provided as choices so that districts and schools may look at their needs and match a research-based choice with those needs. During the Priority School's required "professional dialogue," the Intervention Specialist, the School Support Team including the School Improvement Facilitators (SIFs) meet with the school leadership teams in August/ September to help schools match SSoS components with needs and strategies selected for focused attention and built into the School Improvement Plan. The School Improvement Facilitators, in particular have been trained to provide guidance to schools to consider their use of all funding options, including Title I set-asides, to provide coherent programming to support student achievement.

The 20% obligation will be used for at least one of the following options:

- Option 1: Support Increased Learning Time (required in Transformation and Turnaround Reform/Redesign models). MDE will implement this option in accordance with the Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant guidance that states: *"Increased*

learning time means using a longer school day, week or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for:

- *Instruction in core academic subjects including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography;*
- *Instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including, for example, physical education, service learning and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering, as appropriate, with other organizations; and*
- *Teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional learning within and across grades and subjects."*

As noted, all Priority schools that choose the Transformation or Turnaround option as their Reform and Redesign Plan will be required to include increased learning time as one of their interventions.

- Option 2: **Implement rapid turnaround strategies** designed to accelerate whole-building performance. This may include implementing or strengthening a multi-tiered system of support that includes scaffolded instruction for ELL and SWD students if the professional dialogue has identified this as a primary turnaround strategy for lifting whole-school performance.
    - Option 3: **Offer professional learning for staff** aligned to the building's needs assessment paying particular attention to the needs of ELL and SWD students if appropriate.
    - Option 4: **Obtain a process improvement consultation** for district system-level redesign in service of rapid school turnaround
    - **Option 5: Release time for a teacher-leader** from the Priority School for one year to provide technical assistance to school and district stakeholders to understand the school's reform-redesign requirements, and to incorporate elements of the Priority School's reform-redesign requirements into the school and district improvement plans during the planning year. Hire a full-year replacement teacher for the released teacher-leader's classroom.
    - **Option 6:** Administer interim baseline assessments which will supplement the district's universal screening assessment with additional **diagnostic data and progress monitoring** of student achievement.

At the building level, MDE will require districts with Title I Priority Schools to set aside 10% of their building Title I allocation for each Priority School. This set-aside will be used for any of the following purposes:

· Professional learning on implementation of strategies aligned to its data-derived School Improvement/Reform-Redesign Plan, including adoption of rapid turnaround practices.

· Contract with a local ISD/ESA for a School Improvement Review, which will give the school an external perspective on the processes that best support student achievement.

· Provide daily/weekly time for teacher collaboration.

· Culture/climate interventions, use of time analysis, or culturally responsive teaching interventions as needed.

Levels of Need Among Priority Schools

Priority schools will complete the same documents (CNA, School Improvement Plan, etc.) as all schools. However, they will benefit from additional supports depending on their category of need. Priority schools receiving federal Title I assistance or School Improvement Grants will receive specialized technical assistance and support based on the number of years they have been identified as Priority (or formerly, PLA) schools. Please note that all Priority schools fall under supervision of the Michigan School Reform Officer, who provides direction, accountability and support as needed.

Schools that are already identified as Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools (PLA) entered as PLAs in the 2010/11 school year. That would be their planning year for their Reform/Redesign Plan. Their first year of implementation would be 2011/12. Therefore, their first year to be identified in Category/Year 4 could be 2013/14. Any Title I SIG schools that started in the 2010/11 cohort and continued to be identified in the lowest 5% will be considered to be in their first implementation year during 2012-13.

Michigan did have a cohort of SIG schools identified at the end of the 2009/10 school year. There was no state law at that time that required the identification of Persistently Lowest Achieving schools. Therefore, those SIG schools that are Title I and continued to be identified in the lowest 5% in the 2011/12 school year will be considered to be in their second implementation year during 2012-13. Those 2009/10 SIG schools that were not identified in the lowest 5% in the 2011/12 school year would enter into Category/Year 1 when and if they are identified.

Please note that no matter what the flow through, if the school continues to be identified in the lowest 5% beyond the planning and three implementation years, the School Reform Officer makes the recommendation to the State Superintendent as to the intervention to be taken.

Category/Year 1: Targeted Needs.

Priority schools in this category will be identified based on the following characteristics:

- Time in Bottom 5% (1 year)

- Strength of leading/lagging indicators
- Fidelity of reform plan implementation

Title I Priority schools with targeted needs will develop or implement their own reform/redesign and improvement plans after a facilitated "professional dialogue" based on an MDE-provided data wall, with monitoring by the School Support Team. A mid-year revision of the school's consolidated grant funding will ensure alignment with newly focused strategies and interventions.

Each school receiving federal grant assistance in Michigan currently works with a School Support Team (SST) to ensure improvement. Under our revised plan, the SST in Category/Year 1 schools would include a minimum of two members (at least one district representative, and one representative from the regional educational service agency) who will work with the Intervention Specialist, if appropriate, to ensure the provisions of the school's improvement plan are carried out. The SST will:

- Collaborate with the Intervention Specialist, if appropriate, and the School Improvement Team to write or implement the chosen Reform/Redesign Plan in the planning year;
- Incorporate the Reform/Redesign Plan into the school improvement plan in all years;
- Monitor school improvement plan implementation;
- Monitor student achievement at the classroom level; and
- Provide ongoing training and support.

Category/Year 2: Serious Needs.

Priority schools in Category/Year 2 will be identified based on the following characteristics:

- Time in Bottom 5% (2 years)
- Strength of leading/lagging indicators
- Fidelity of reform plan implementation

Title I Priority schools with serious needs will develop their reform/redesign and school improvement plans with additional help and support from the School Support Team and their Intervention Specialist.

Category/Year 3: Critical Needs.

Priority schools in Category/Year 3 will be identified based on the following characteristics:

- Time in Bottom 5% (3+ years)
- Strength of leading/lagging indicators
- Fidelity of reform plan implementation

Additional assistance during the 3rd year will be provided by a District Intervention Team (DIT). The DIT will consist of a cohort of experts whose services can identify district-level redesign strategies that

would support the rate of improvement in Priority Schools. The DIT members will be experts in diagnosing and addressing root causes in K-12 schools and in strengthening district systems. They will be selected, trained and contracted by MDE in collaboration with its partner Michigan State University, and may include:

- Institutions of Higher Education faculty/experts
- Qualified school leaders & staff (especially from successful peers, such as Reward school);
- Business leaders;
- Attorneys;
- Accountants, and
- Management Consultants

This is not a takeover of the school or district; rather, it is an effort to bring in experts to diagnose root causes and identify appropriate interventions in cases where the school and/or district has struggled to do so for some time.

Category/Year 4: Intensive Needs. Some Michigan schools are chronically underperforming and need extensive, system-wide support. Recall that these schools are all under the purview of the Michigan School Reform/Redesign Office. In Category/Year 4, the School Reform/Redesign Office will make a recommendation that the school be taken over by the state based on its ongoing failure to make progress.

If the School Reform Officer finds that a school is not making progress in implementing a reform plan, she may recommend that the school be transferred to the Education Achievement System (EAS), a new statewide school district that will operate the lowest performing 5% of schools in Michigan that have not achieved satisfactory results or not followed through on reform plans under the oversight of the School Reform/Redesign Office. The EAS is a "last step" intervention that is responsible for managing schools that have otherwise shown no ability to turn around persistent failure under all other reform and redesign efforts, or those schools that are selected by a district-level Emergency Manager. It is designed to provide a new, stable, financially responsible set of public schools that create the conditions, supports, tools and resources under which teachers can help students make significant academic gains. It will do this by creating new systems and types of schools that are non-traditional and better able to scale and sustain dramatic improvement in student performance. It will first apply to underperforming schools in Detroit in the 2012–2013 school year and then be expanded to cover other low performing Priority schools referred from anywhere in the entire state. The School Reform Office can transfer a school to the EAS if the school is not making adequate progress on implementation of the reform plan as outlined in Section 2D. Any LEA in the state has the option to place schools under the authority of the EAS.

Legislation (MCL 380.1280(6)) created the state School Reform/Redesign Office and a statewide School

Reform/Redesign District in 2010. The law established the authority for this statewide school district that was later used when the Educational Achievement Authority (EAA) was created through an inter-local agreement between Eastern Michigan University and the Detroit Public Schools. While both of these "parent organizations" were necessary to form the system, it operates as an independent, freestanding entity within the State of Michigan.

The Educational Achievement System (EAS) is a statewide school district led by the EAA and governed by an 11 member board with two members appointed by Detroit Public Schools, two members appointed by Eastern Michigan University, and seven members appointed by the Governor. The executive committee of this group, composed of five members of the board, selected a Chancellor for the system to administer all functions of the EAS. The School Reform Office transferred all of the duties and responsibilities of the School Reform/Redesign District to the EAA. Draft EAA legislation has been introduced in the State Legislature as of the time of this response to further establish the operational role and relationships between the EAA and MDE, the State, and other school districts.

A school that enters the EAS remains there for a minimum of five years. During that time, the EAS operates as a statewide school reform district, with the same administrative authority and functions as a local school district. However, the EAS has considerable operational flexibility relative to local school districts to support reform efforts for instruction, operations, and financial management. The EAS may impose one of the four School Intervention Models on a school placed within the system, and may also impose a number of other financial and operational actions, including termination of contracts or collective bargaining agreements, in order to support instructional efforts to facilitate student achievement. After five years, an evaluation will be made of the school's progress, with input from the Parent Advisory Council. If the school is deemed healthy and performing at the end of that period, the school can choose to remain in the system, transfer its governance back to the original school district or charter school, or seek a charter to run independently. If the school has improved to the point it can transfer its governance, a Parent Advisory Council, in collaboration with the school principal, will play a decision-making role regarding what organization the school chooses to be a part of at the end of a successful improvement period.

If a school or district is identified to be in financial deficit, regardless of academic performance, an executive review team appointed by the Governor may recommend oversight by an Emergency Manager, appointed pursuant to Michigan's Local Government and School District Accountability Act. An EM takes charge in chronically, financially troubled districts to oversee financial and academic improvements. Schools in this circumstance are removed from the supervision of the School Reform Officer. Michigan's PA 4 of 2011 provides the designated EM with a variety of allowable strategies to address the district's financial challenges, including the ability to modify or cancel contracts and collective bargaining agreements, remove personnel or district leaders, develop new academic or educational plans, or other administrative flexibility to address financial, operational, or instructional issues in the district. As such, the EM has the authority to determine which low performing schools will be placed in the EAS based on a set of established criteria.

State Accountability

MDE will monitor all Priority Schools and their districts to ensure:

- Families were informed of the Priority school's status.
- Monitoring and evaluation reports are submitted according to established timelines;
- The selection of the Reform and Redesign Plan aligns with the school's Comprehensive Needs Assessment;
- The implementation of career- and college-ready standards in support of the school's Reform and Redesign Plan;
- Priority Schools' School Improvement Plans are aligned with needs assessment and implementation of career- and college-ready standards;

All Priority Schools are under the supervision of Michigan's School Reform Officer. Those schools that do not move out of this category or make substantial increases in student achievement after three years of implementation of their Reform and Redesign Plan may be moved to Category/Year 4 and placed in the Education Achievement System. This process is explained in Section 380.1280c of Michigan's Revised School Code. Additionally, MDE will monitor all Title I Priority Schools and their districts to ensure:

- The selection of the SSoS component aligns with the school's Comprehensive Needs Assessment;
- That all districts have a Intervention Specialist working with the Priority School, central office and the school board; and
- Surveys of Enacted Curriculum are administered in Year One of planning and Year Two of implementation for those schools in which the number of staff teaching core content will yield optimal analysis of results.

A Word About Our Partners

Agency support will be needed to train/develop team members and ensure access to high-quality tools/resources as they work. We cannot carry out these processes in isolation.

We have been working with the following key groups to ensure support for our proposed model and ensure their willingness to help us implement:

- Stakeholder associations
- Institutions of Higher Education
- Regional Educational Service Agencies
- Successful/Reward schools

The input from these groups, especially the regional educational service agencies that administer Regional Assistance Grants, has informed the ongoing development of the supports to Priority schools. Specifically, the focus on interventions at the district level, the inclusion of a multi-tiered system of supports and the inclusion of a culture/climate intervention option came directly from the regional educational service agencies' input. We very much look forward to moving forward collectively to make strong changes to support student learning and growth in our Priority schools.

MDE relies heavily on our partners, the Intermediate School Districts and Educational Service Agencies (ISDs/ESAs), to deliver services to the Title I MI Excel schools identified as needing support through our Statewide System of Support (SSoS.) MDE allocates to ISDs/ESAs Regional Assistance Grant (RAG) funds to provide these services from the SSoS along with guidance and technical assistance on appropriate use of these funds.

One of the primary supports that ISDs/ESAs provide to SSoS schools is to assign a School Improvement Facilitator (SIF) as a lead on the School Support Team. MDE trains these SIFs to:

- Work with the district representative and school leadership team (which always includes the principal) to identify which SSoS components would support their needs as indicated by a review of their School Data Profile, School Process Profile and the Goals Management section of their School Improvement Plan (SIP.) During year 2 and beyond this review occurs in August/September so that services can begin when the new grant cycle begins in October.

- Facilitate the school leadership team in a process to implement their SIP at the classroom level by monitoring the adult evidence of strategy implementation and the impact of this implementation on student achievement. The Instructional Learning Cycle is the tool used for this process.

Supporting training materials for SIFs on School Support Teams can be found at: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_30334-103288--,00.html, under the headings MI Excel School Support Team Training Materials and School Support Team Documents.

MDE holds quarterly technical assistance meetings for the SIFs where training, support and networking is provided. Additionally, MDE's School Support Team Coordinator participates in at least one SST meeting in each of the ISDs/ESAs that support MI Excel schools. After the meeting, the SST coordinator leads the SST in a debrief discussion on the effectiveness of the SST meeting. This debrief follows a protocol that focuses on what works, what didn't work and what might be improved.

As we move forward into identifying MI Excel schools as Priority Schools, MDE will train the SIFs in the components of the Reform/Redesign models as well as the research about turnaround schools. Though there is no certification process for SIFs, the high standards that ISDs/ESAs have for hiring their consultants in addition to the training provided by MDE, the skills and abilities of these facilitators

allows MDE to deploy them with confidence.

MDE's SSoS also currently uses Instructional Leadership Coaches and Content Coaches. These coaches must be certified in order to be hired by ISDs/ESAs using RAG funds. This certification includes two steps:

- Successful completion of Coaching 101 which provides participants with basic coaching knowledge and skills. Michigan State University (MSU) provides this training. Information on this can be found at: http://micoaching101.org/

- Additional training as either an Instructional Leadership Coach through MSU or a Content Coach through Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA.)

MDE's next cohort of Content Coaches must successfully complete an online series of professional learning modules, as well as Coaching 101, in order to be certified. MAISA is no longer providing coaching training.

Moving forward in the opportunity to redesign the SSoS in response to the Flexibility Waivers, MDE is shifting the focus of the SSoS from the building level to the district level. We are replacing Instructional Leadership Coaches who work with the building principal with Intervention Specialists (Priority Schools) and District Improvement Facilitators (Focus Schools.) Both the Intervention Specialists and the District Improvement Facilitators will be trained by MSU using the MDE district tools:

- District Process Profile/Analysis which is based on MDE's School Improvement Framework:

- District Data Profile/Analysis

- District Improvement Plan

Other training resources will include the research and tools from the Center for Innovation and Improvement for their Academy of Pacesetting Districts work. MSU will also be bringing forward other turnaround schools' research for the development of this training.

System-Wide Coherence

All of the pieces of the supports for Title I MI Excel schools through the SSoS have been based on Michigan's School Improvement Framework and rely on MDE's tools for continuous school improvement. This includes the initial needs assessment which consists of the School Process Profile/Analysis which are rubrics based on the School Improvement Framework, the School Data Profile/Analysis, and Goals Management in the School Improvement Plan. The School Support Team monitors the implementation of the SIP at the classroom level; continuous school improvement has

been the organizing force in the SSoS.

All Michigan schools use the AdvancED website to input their Continuous Improvement work. Schools complete the required SI pieces, in addition to meeting their Title I and Health and Safety requirements. MDE provides training and support for our "One Common Voice, One Plan" initiative at our bi-annual School Improvement conferences and through the training modules developed by the ISD/ESA work group called MI CSI (Michigan Continuous School Improvement.) Various ISDs/ESAs also provide training for their local schools in MDE's school improvement process.

The Office of Improvement and Innovation (OEII,) the Office of Field Services (OFS,) and the SRO are working together to streamline the documentation required of Priority Schools under our combined system. Our partner, AdvancED, will be supporting this work by incorporating our monitoring tools into the AdvancED "One Common Voice, One Plan" website. We are resolved to make this documentation aligned to MDE's school improvement processes.

The range of supports for schools in planning and implementing reform efforts were established by Michigan legislation (Section 1280C of Michigan's Revised School Code) to align with the School Improvement Grant program. This legislative linking results in a formal alignment between the various reform efforts, which also requires coordination in both supports and decision mechanisms regarding the oversight of the schools implementing reform efforts. Details of these decision mechanisms and supports are also aligned, as both the exit criteria (leading, lagging, and implementation indicators) and common supports (technical assistance, online PD, and monitoring supports) are similar for all Priority schools.

Focus Schools

As stated, the 10% of schools with the largest achievement gaps in the state will be categorized and treated for improvement as Focus schools. The achievement gap is calculated as the distance between the average standardized scale score for the top 30% of students and the bottom 30% of students in that each school. MDE's approach to Focus Schools combines the deep diagnosis and customized interventions of our Theory of Action with the district-level intervention model we use throughout this proposal:

All districts with Focus Schools will be expected to:

- Notify families of students attending the Focus school of its Focus school status, the reasons for its identification and the school's and district's plans to improve student achievement. (MDE will offer template letters that specify required elements, but schools will be allowed to customize the letter in order to tell their story accurately.)
- Conduct a data-based professional dialogue with district and school staff, designed to ascertain root causes of the large achievement gaps, and identify 1-2 major shifts in teaching/learning practice that hold the potential to substantively shift the performance of the school's bottom

30%

- Post these Instructional Priorities in a "diagnostic" addendum to the school's improvement plan in the AdvancED School Improvement portal.

- Conduct a district-level professional dialogue (with participation of Focus and Priority schools) to identify 1-2 major shifts in district practice, procedures and systems that would increase the ability of struggling schools to make rapid changes in practice.

- Make necessary mid-year revisions to incorporate building and district practice changes into: School Improvement Plans, District Improvement Plan, and the district's consolidated application for federal funds.

- Participate in the Superintendent's Dropout Challenge by identifying 10-15 students in all elementary, middle and high Focus schools who are nearing or in a transition year with multiple dropout risk factors and provide research-based supports and interventions.

Further, all Title I Focus schools will be expected to conduct stakeholder meetings with affected populations identified in the bottom 30%

To assist districts with Title I funded Focus schools to perform these required actions, MI-Excel, Michigan's statewide system of support will make available:

- A district support toolkit, outlining tools, exemplars and practices that have enabled districts to support their schools to make dramatic, sustained, demonstrable improvement will be made available.

- 40 hours of District Improvement Facilitator (DIF) time for each school will be made available during year one and year two for preparing district staff to conduct professional dialogues with each of the district's Focus Schools, for assisting the district to identify district-level benchmarks for system improvements necessary to support school plans, and for monitoring implementation progress against these benchmarks. DIFs will be trained, certified and employed by MDE or its designee, Michigan State University.

- A data wall will be made available for each identified Focus School that displays achievement and demographic data in formats designed to support data-inquiry.

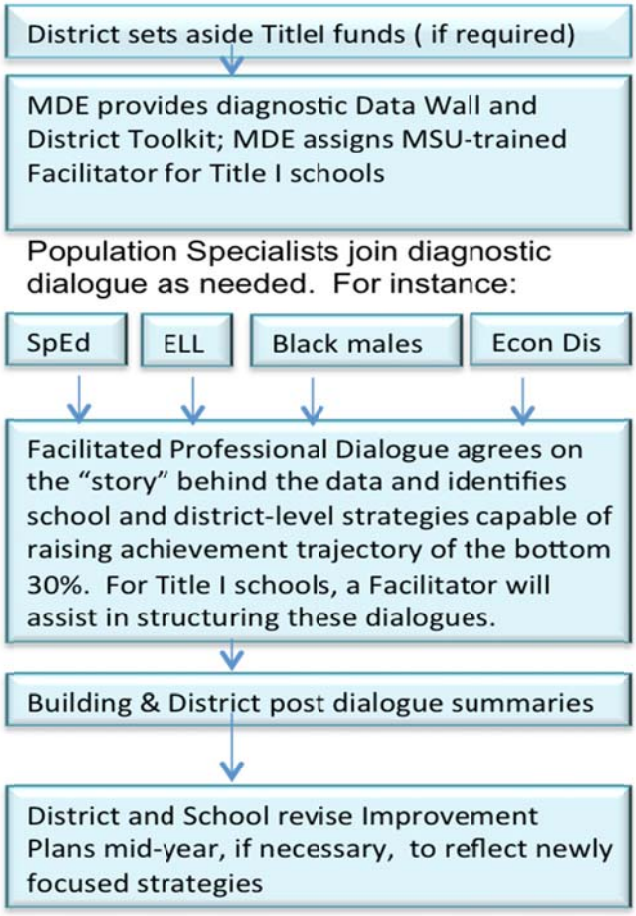
- Based on an analysis of achievement data and of the subgroups involved in the bottom 30%, resources and experts with experience working with specific populations will be identified to participate in and support the professional dialogues.

For Focus Schools, we expect that the strategies that emerge from these facilitated Professional Dialogues will be a customized form of launch, recalibration or deepening of the multi-tiered system of

supports that has proved so successful in improving subgroup performance in the state. (See section 2Eiii for evidence)

This can be illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 17. Focus School Intervention



The above illustration provides examples of areas where population specialists might be utilized. The specific subgroups named are not intended to be all-inclusive or limiting, but are provided for demonstrative purposes only.

Our experience leads us to believe that a mature school improvement process has taken root in Michigan. The Professional Dialogue described above, coupled with deeper diagnostic data, will strengthen and extend the multi-tiered system of supports that is implemented during the school's regular improvement efforts. We are confident that differentiated application of Michigan's successful multi-tiered system of supports (See 2.E.iii for a summary of what we've learned from evaluation efforts) will customize our efforts in ways that accelerate the learning of students with disabilities, English language learners, and other subgroup populations.

If these interventions fail to yield necessary results and a Focus school is identified for a second, third or fourth consecutive year, the following actions will occur:

- A second diagnostic Professional Dialogue will occur. The dialogue protocol will focus on questions regarding the fidelity of implementation of chosen strategies.

- The written product from the Professional Dialogue (root cause, required trajectory, chosen strategies for further strengthening the school's tiered system of support for identified groups, district support required) will be posted for review.

To assist districts with Title I funded focus schools to perform these required actions:

- During the third year as a Focus School, Title I focus schools will continue work with a district improvement facilitator (DIF). The DIF's involvement will increase to longer, more sustained assistance (up to 50 days/year) at the building and district level, and will be purchased by the district using its Title I set-aside.

- The clear plan of action will be incorporated into the annual revision of District and School Improvement Plans, with the assistance of the DIF.

- Benchmarks for school performance will be established and monitored by the DIF and reported to district administrators, school board and state throughout the year. Benchmarks for district performance will be established and monitored by the DIF to school board and state.

- The District Improvement Facilitator will present a written report/summary to the school board including information on the data, implementation results and benchmarks.

Title One Set-Asides for Focus Schools

The following district-level set-asides will be required for Focus Schools:

In the first and second year of identification of Focus School(s) there is no district set aside required.

In the third and fourth years of identification of Focus School(s) the district shall set aside
A calculated sum equal to 10% of each Focus School's previous year Title I budget up to a maximum of 10% and 15% respectively of its LEA Title I allocation, unless the proficiency levels of the Focus School's Bottom 30% of students have improved as determined by MDE, for uses specified below.. This set-aside is not required for Focus Schools whose bottom 30% of student has improved proficiency as determined by MDE.

- **Requirement in Year 3 and beyond of identification:** Contract with a District Improvement Facilitator from MDE or its designee in the second year and beyond of having a school or schools continuing to be identified as Focus Schools. This is required for districts that have schools identified as Focus Schools in Years Three and beyond.

PLUS

- **Option 1 (any year):** Provide a multi-tiered system of support that includes scaffolded instruction for SWD and ELL students or other identified student groups if the school does not currently implement one. If the school currently implements such a system, deepen or broaden the scope or enhance the fidelity of its implementation

OR

- **Option 2 (any year):** Professional learning for staff aligned to the building's needs assessment.

At the building level, a 10% Title I set-aside will be required during Year 2 and beyond for one or more of the following purposes which best aligns with the building's needs:

- **Option 1:** Professional learning on implementation of multi-tiered system of support and/or scaffolded instruction of students in lowest performing student groups
- **Option 2:** Provide weekly/daily time for teacher collaboration
- **Option 3:** Contract for the administration of Surveys of Enacted Curriculum
- **Option 4:** Contract with the local ISD/ESA or MDE for a School Improvement Review, which will give the school an external perspective on processes that best support student achievement.
- **Option 5:** Professional learning about implementing the Essential Elements for teachers with MI-ACCESS students in the bottom 30%
- **Option 6:** Culture/climate interventions, use of time analysis or culturally-responsive teaching interventions as needed

Table 8 offers an example of how these set-aside options might be coordinated in Year Two.

Table 8. Focus School Set-Aside Model, Year Two

No District level set-aside of LEA Title I funds is required		
No cost	Restructure the school day to incorporate 30 minutes of an intervention block	MDE-provided District Improvement Facilitator for Professional Dialogue and Plan Development (40 hours)
10% of Building Allocation = $8,000	Two Professional Learning sessions for all staff on how to implement a multi-tiered system of support ($6500)	Contract for Surveys of Enacted Curriculum with technical assistance from ISD on interpreting results and incorporating into SI Plan ($1500)

If districts cannot work with their buildings to put appropriate multi-tiered systems of supports in place and reduce the achievement gap, there will be financial consequences in addition to the public relations consequences of having buildings labeled as Focus Schools. The financial consequences will be that the percentage of the LEA Title I allocation that is required to be set-aside to serve Focus Schools will increase incrementally as the years of identification increase:

· Third year of identification – unless the Focus School's bottom 30% of students have improved as determined by MDE the LEA will set aside an amount equal to 10% of the building Title I budget of the previous year for each non-improving Focus school, not to exceed 10% of the LEA Title I funds for that year. If the total Title I budget for the previous year for all of the non-improving Focus Schools within the district exceeds 10% of the LEA Title I funds the set-aside will be capped at 10% and distributed to the non-improving Focus Schools in proportion to their building Title I budgets of the previous year.

· Fourth year of identification **-** unless the Focus School's bottom 30% of students have improved as determined by MDE the LEA will set aside an amount equal to 10% of the building Title I budget of the previous year for each non-improving Focus school, not to exceed 15% of the LEA Title I funds for that year. If the total Title I budget for the previous year for all of the non-improving Focus Schools within the district exceeds 15% of the LEA Title I funds the set-aside will be capped at 15% and distributed to the non-improving Focus Schools in proportion to their building Title I budgets of the previous year.

Additionally, the District Improvement Facilitator is provided by MDE or its designee in Year One and Two to provide the professional dialogue that examines the Focus Schools' data, identifies root causes of issues and directs the revisions of District and School Improvement Plans. If this support is not sufficient for the district to help its school close the achievement gap and no longer be identified as a Focus School, then a required use of the LEA Title I set-aside during year three will be to contract with MDE or its designee for the services of this District Improvement Facilitator.

Following is an example of how these set-aside options might be coordinated in Year Three if the school continues to be identified as a Focus School.

Table 9. Focus School Set-Aside Model, Year Three

LEA allocates 10% of each non-improving Focus School's previous year Title I budget up to a total of 10% of the LEA Title I allocation = $180,000	Contract with District Improvement Facilitator - $550/day for 40 days ($22,000)	Hire two .6 multi-tiered system of support specialists ($130,000)	Purchase supplementary reading materials for Tier 2 intervention that meet the needs of ELLs ($28,000)
10% of Building Title I Allocation = $8000	Provide professional learning for all staff on using scaffolded instructional strategies in Tier 1 to better meet the needs of ELLs ($2000)	Contract with a .5 instructional coach with expertise in scaffolded instructional strategies. ($6000 from set-asides, $30,000 from regular Title I allocation)	

The Title I set-aside options are provided as choices so that districts and schools may look at their needs and match a research-based choice with those needs.

State Accountability

MDE will monitor all districts with Focus Schools to ensure:

- Families were notified of Focus School status.
- Required reports are submitted according to established timelines;
- District Improvement Plans have been revised to reflect the supports to Focus Schools; and
- The achievement gap in these schools is indeed narrowing.

School Accountability

Districts will monitor each of their own Focus Schools to ensure:

- The School Improvement Plan is being implemented as written. This monitoring includes using the MDE evaluation tool annually;
- Progress monitoring of student achievement data in the core content areas at the classroom level occurs, is the basis of teacher collaboration and informs instruction;
- The building principal has the competencies to manage school processes and lead the staff in improvement efforts;
- The school board is informed quarterly of the school's progress; and
- The monitoring and evaluation reports submitted to MDE reflect the school's reality.

A Word About Our Partners

Agency support will be needed to train/develop team members and ensure access to high-quality tools/resources as they work. We cannot carry out these processes in isolation.

We have been working with the following key groups to ensure support for our proposed model and ensure their willingness to help us implement:

- Stakeholder associations
- Institutions of Higher Education
- Regional Educational Service Agencies
- Successful/Reward schools

The input from these groups has informed the ongoing development of the supports to Focus schools.

Specifically, these partners have helped us focus on interventions at the district level, the inclusion of a multi-tiered system of supports, the inclusion of time for teacher collaboration and contracting for the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum.

Extra Support for Students' Extra Needs

Students with disabilities and English language learners are of particular concern in the discussion around Focus schools. MDE's concerns about achievement gaps extend to all subgroups, but these students in particular merit attention, given the array of additional tools and supports that exist to boost their achievement.

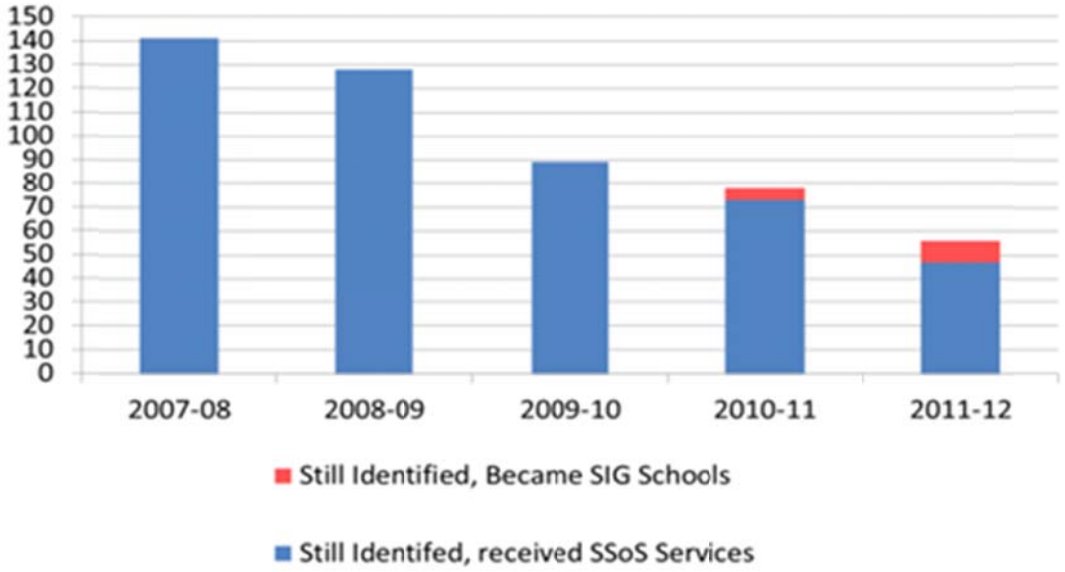
As described in Principle 1, MDE administers the ELPA to English language learners and other assessment alternatives for students with special needs. MI-Access and MEAP-Access offer alternatives that are specified in a student's IEP. ELL students with disabilities may have accommodations on the ELPA, or districts may apply for waivers for specific ELPA domains as specified in a student's IEP.

Our work around each of these populations, however, is not limited to testing alternatives. Please refer to Principle 1 to review standards, tools and resources available to help schools support English language learners and students with disabilities. We aim to help all students achieve ambitious, attainable objectives for their learning and growth. To that end, we will work with Focus schools to ensure they are capitalizing on these resources and delivering on the promise of excellence and equity for all.

Evidence of Priority/Focus Intervention Effectiveness

The current SSoS is built on a continuous improvement model. We have evidence of improvement for many schools as referenced in our original cohort of the 141 schools that entered the system in the 2007/08 school year. 141 Identified Title I schools received services through the SSoS. The graph below charts their progress over the next four years.

Figure 18. School Improvement Results



This progress can be attributed to the coaching model for principals and teachers as well as the focus on school improvement by the School Support Teams. MDE has based all of its supports on research as indicated below.

- Statewide System of Support
    - Support
        - Instructional Rounds
        - Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
            - A Clear and Shared Focus
            - High Standards and Expectations for All Students
    - Research
        - Center on Innovation and Improvement: http://www.centerii.org/
        - Raising the Achievement of Low Performing Students: http://www.mcrel.org/topics/products/105
        - School Improvement Planning Process Guide: http://centerforcsri.org/files/SchoolReviewGuide.pdf
        - Seven Correlates of Highly Effective Schools: http://ces.ou.edu/7_correlates_effectiveness.html
        - DuFour, R. & Eaker, R. (1998). Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement. Bloomington, IN.: National Educational Service and Alexandria, VA: ASCD. See Chapters 4-5 on Mission and Vision/ Values and Goals.

- Payne, R.K. (1998). A Framework for Understanding Poverty. Baytown, TX: RFT Publishing Co.
- Schmoker, M. (1999). Results: The Key to Continuous School Improvement (2nd Ed.). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Schmoker, M. (2006). Results Now: How We Can Achieve Unprecedented Improvements in Teaching and Learning. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Redding, S. (2006). The Mega System: A Handbook for Continuous Improvement Within a Community of the School. Lincoln, IL: Academic Development Institute.
- Zemelman, S., Daniels, H., & Hyde, A. (2005). Best Practice: Today's Standards for Teaching & Learning in America's Schools. (3rd Ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- School Improvement Review Process

  - Support
    - Instructional Rounds
    - Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
      - High Standards and Expectations for All Students
      - High Levels of Family and Community Involvement

  - Research

    - DuFour, R. & Eaker, R. (1998). Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement. Bloomington, IN.: National Educational Service and Alexandria, VA: ASCD. See Chapters 4-5 on Mission and Vision/ Values and Goals.
    - Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M.G., Simon, B.S., Salinas, K.C., Jansorn, N.R., & Van Voorhis, F.L. (2002). School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action. (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
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    - Schmoker, M. (2006). Results Now: How We Can Achieve Unprecedented Improvements in Teaching and Learning. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
    - Sowers, J. (2004). Creating a Community of Learners: Solving the Puzzle of Classroom Management. Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Education Laboratory

- Wong, H.K. & Wong, R.T. (1998). The First Days of School: How to be an Effective Teacher. Mountain View, CA: Harry K. Wong Publications, Inc.

- Leadership/Instructional Coaches

  - Support
    - Curriculum Survey
    - Professional Learning
    - Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
      - Effective School Leadership
      - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments Aligned with State Standards
      - Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching
      - Supportive Learning Environment
      - Focused Professional Development

  - Research
    - Core Curriculum Standards : http://www.corestandards.org/
    - Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development: http://www.ascd.org/
    - National Council of Social Studies : http://www.socialstudies.org/
    - National Council of Teachers of English: http://www.ncte.org/
    - National Council of Teachers of Mathematics: http://www.nctm.org/
    - National Science Teachers Association: http://www.nsta.org/
    - National Staff Development Council. NSDC Standards for Staff Development: http://www.learningforward.org/standards/index.cfm
    - Results-oriented professional development by Thomas Guskey http://web.archive.org/web/20060405093712/http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/rpl_esys/pdlitrev.htm
    - Seven Correlates of Highly Effective Schools
    - http://ces.ou.edu/7_correlates_effectiveness.html
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Since Michigan has only 1½ years of data on schools that have chosen to implement a Transformation or Turnaround plan, we have not have enough time to evaluate the results. Our hypothesis is

- If we combine the successful elements of the current Statewide System of Support (SSoS) with the implementation of a Transformation or Turnaround Plan, schools have the opportunity to make rapid achievement; and

- If districts and schools use their Title I money to support the SSoS and Transformation/Turnaround Plan, students have the opportunity to increase student achievement rapidly.

Reward Schools

MDE is working with its partners and stakeholders to identify innovative ways to recognize high-achieving schools. The reward schools we identify will all receive the same level and type of recognition, regardless of their subcategory (e.g., Beating the Odds, etc.).

Although we do not have funds available to reserve under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) to provide financial incentives to Reward schools, we have identified other types of incentives, as described below.

- Every school in Michigan is required by state statute to complete an online Annual Education Report (AER). The AER for Reward Schools will include their reward status and spotlights their high achievement. Each reward school will be identified using one or more of the following designations:
    - Reward School – Beating the odds
    - Reward School – Highest performing
    - Reward School – Highest progress
    - Reward School – Exceeding 85% Proficiency
- The MDE will provide local media recognition with information on Reward Schools and encourage coverage telling each school's unique story. Press releases will identify the criteria that reward schools met to achieve this status , e.g. Beating the Odds, Highest performing, Highest progress or Exceeding 85% proficiency. Some Reward schools will meet more than one of these criteria and will be recognized for each one they meet.
- Reward Schools will have their practices highlighted at the (MDE's annual School Improvement Conference, and will receive other conference and event recognition through our partner educational organizations. Reward Schools and their teachers will be featured by giving presentations or panel discussions on their success strategies at MDE and partner annual meetings. Recognition by partner organizations may highlight schools by

elementary and secondary principal associations, superintendent and school board organizations and other similar associations. Teachers in Reward schools may be recognized at subject specific associations (e.g. English Language arts, mathematics, science social studies, etc.), Reward schools and teachers in these schools will be identified as meeting one or more of the criteria, e.g. Beating the Odds, Highest performing, Highest progress or Exceeding 85% proficiency. The MDE has verbal agreements with several of these organizations and associations to recognize schools and teachers at their annual meetings. Formal letters of commitment will be obtained upon approval of the waiver.

- Reward Schools will receive certificates and banners for display in buildings. The banner, for example, will include the year of their recognition and the criteria met, e.g. Beating the Odds, Highest performing, Highest progress or Exceeding 85% proficiency. As funding allows, the top 20-40 Reward Schools meeting the criteria "Beating the Odds," will each be featured in their own video or audio documentary spotlighting the practices used that resulted in this recognition. Educators from these schools will be identified in the credits of these documentaries. These will be placed on the MDE website for promising practices and provided to the school for inclusion on its own website. Other similar schools will be encouraged to review these documentaries and contact the school to learn how to implement effective practices leading to high achievement.

- Representatives from Reward Schools will be invited to attend networking meetings with demographically similar lower performing schools. Focus will be on sharing promising practices and practical experience.

- MDE will utilize social media (e.g., Facebook, Pinterest, Google+) to share examples of schools with common, well diagnosed achievement or gap problems that have been resolved with specific interventions to all schools in the state. We will also use social networking applications to allow schools with similar issues to join in conversations, ask and answer each other's questions, and expand their learning communities to improve timely implementation.

- A number of Michigan colleges have committed to recognizing Reward schools by inviting students in grades 9-12 for college and career days and inviting students graduating from a Reward school to campus for special functions.

- All Title I eligible Reward schools will be invited to participate in the Michigan school wide consolidation project granting increased flexibility in the use of federal grant funds which is being piloted regionally in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

- MDE is seeking corporate and philanthropic organization support for Reward School Recognition. MDE will reach out to these organizations for recognitions such as financial support, material support (supplies/technology, other resources). Final details are yet to

be determined and are contingent upon waiver approval.

- MDE will arrange Reward School dignitary visits by state officials, including members of the State Board of Education.

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

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

Assessment of General Populations

MDE administers the Michigan Merit Examination in the spring of 11th grade. MDE also administers the Michigan Educational Assessment Program in the fall of grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics, grades 4 and 7 in writing, grades 5 and 8 in science, and grades 6 and 9 in social studies.

However, beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, MDE has implemented new proficiency cut scores for the Michigan Merit Examination and Michigan Educational Assessment Program, such that a proficient or advanced score now indicates that:

- In high school, a student is on track for success in further education (including technical career training) at two- and four-year colleges and universities
- In elementary and middle school, a student is on track to being career- and college-ready in high school

To give an understanding of the impact of these new cut scores, the 2010-11 percentages of students who were considered proficient or above based on the old cut scores are presented in the figures below, alongside the percentages of students who would have been considered proficient had the new cut scores been in place. These data have been shown for mathematics, reading, science, and social studies in Figures 2 through 6, respectively. Because the cut scores on the Elementary, Middle, and High school writing assessments were already set to be reflective of career- and college-readiness, those cut scores were not reset. The actual percentages of students who met the proficiency bar on writing are presented in Figure 6.

In Principle 1, we discuss in detail our new cut scores, which are reflective of being on track for career- and college-readiness in the 11th grade, and on track for success in the next grade in grades 3-8. These cut scores are an important element in ensuring that Michigan is focused on career- and college-readiness for all students. For more information on how these cut scores were determined, please see the Technical Appendix (Attachment 13.A).

Alternate Assessment

As described previously, MI-Access is MDE's alternate assessment system, designed for students with cognitive impairments whose IEP (Individualized Educational Program) Team has determined that MEAP assessments, even with accommodations, are not appropriate.

MDE has three levels of alternate assessment for students with differing levels of significant cognitive disabilities. These are Functional Independence (for students with mild but significant cognitive disabilities), Supported Independence (for students with moderate cognitive disabilities), and Participation (for students with severe cognitive disabilities). The percentages of students scoring at the attained or surpassed level are presented below in Figures 24 through 26 for mathematics, accessing print (a combination of reading and writing), and science, respectively.

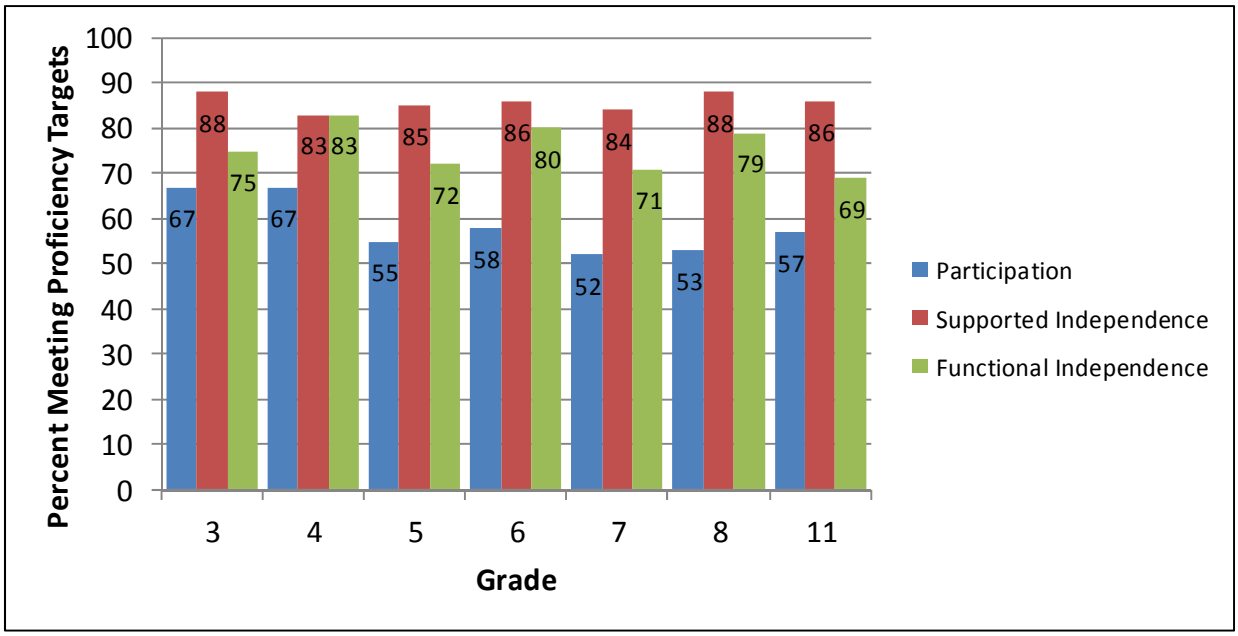


Figure 19. Statewide proficiency on MI-Access mathematics.

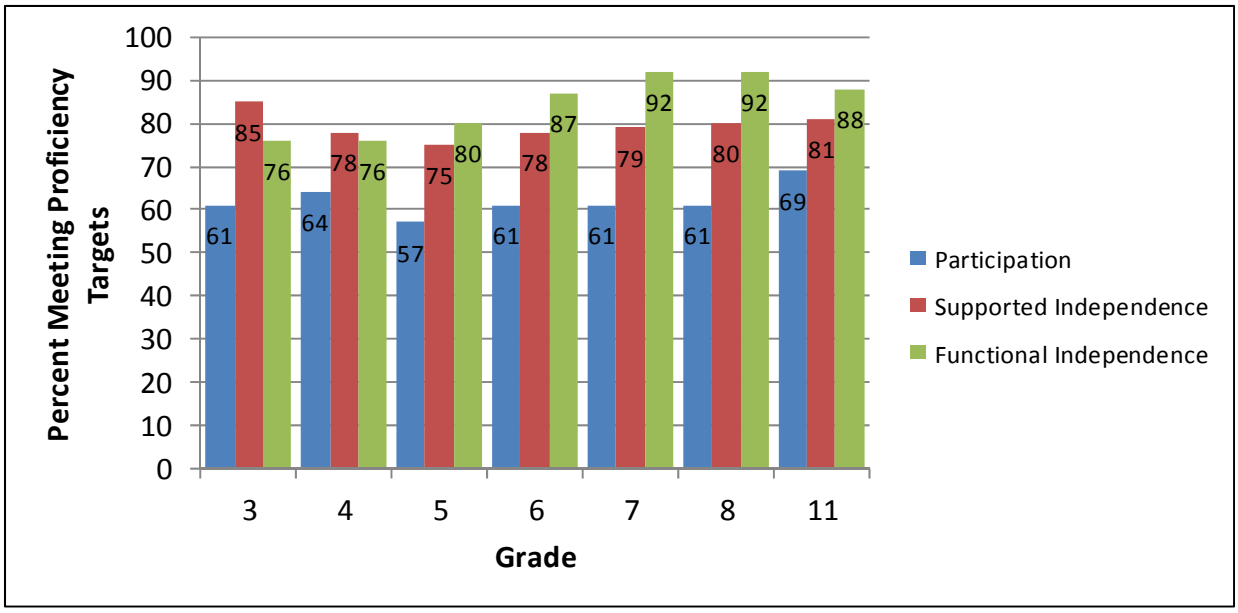


Figure 20. Statewide proficiency on MI-Access accessing print.

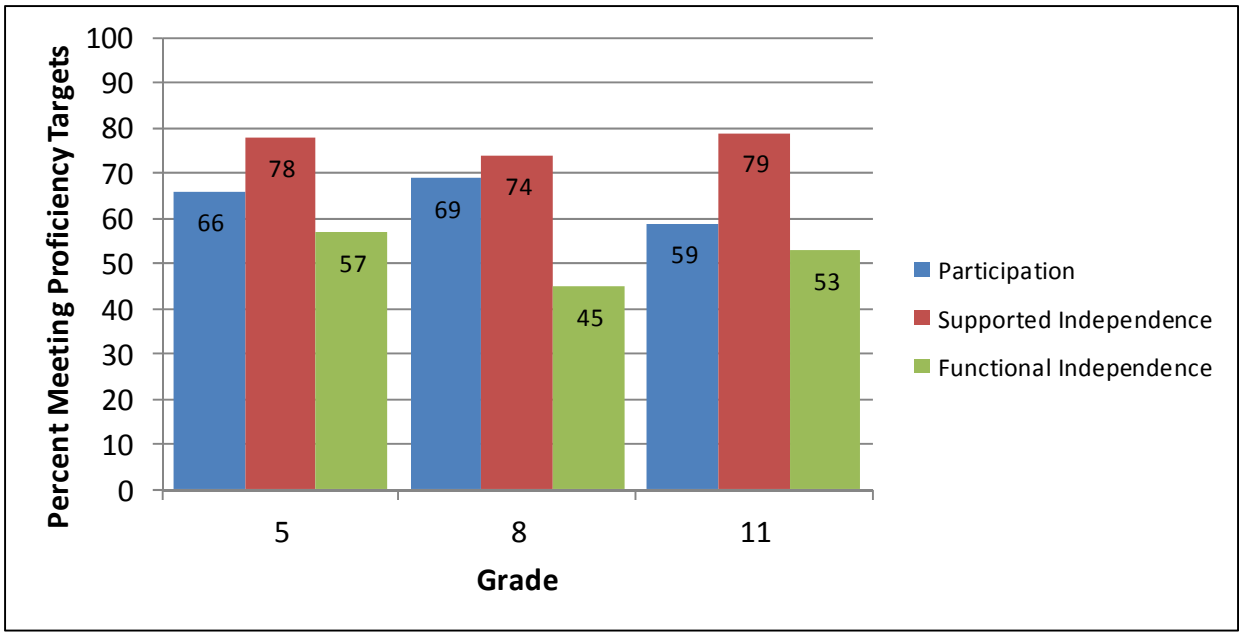


Figure 21. Statewide proficiency on MI-Access science.

Accountability Calculations

We welcome the opportunity to broaden our focus on student achievement by including all five tested content areas (mathematics, reading, writing, science and social studies) into both the ranking calculations as well as the Accountability Scorecard calculations.

Ranking Calculations

Based on the original rules for identifying persistently low achieving schools for federal School Improvement (SIG) Grants, MDE has developed a Top-to-Bottom ranking methodology. This Top-to-Bottom list is the baseline list from which Priority, Focus and Reward schools will be generated.

This Top-to-Bottom ranking methodology includes all five tested subjects, with each subject weighted equally. If a school only has three tested subjects represented in the building, each subject would count for 1/3 of the final ranking.

In our stakeholder meetings regarding both the Top-to-Bottom ranking and this waiver application specifically, concerns were raised regarding our decision to weight each subject equally, since fewer students test in science, social studies, and writing than do in reading and mathematics (science, social studies and writing are currently only tested once per grade level). Although MDE understands these concerns, we believe conceptually that ranking each subject equally requires that schools pay equal attention to each subject, even though we *measure* some subjects less frequently. One of the lessons we've learned from NCLB is that schools have shifted substantial resources into teaching reading and mathematics, often to the detriment of other subjects. If we plan to adhere to our goal of career- and college-readiness for all students, then we feel it is important to place equal weight on all tested subjects in our accountability calculations and remove the incentive to focus more narrowly on reading

and math. A student who is truly prepared for career and college success will understand reading and mathematics, but they will also have solid science skills, familiarity with the various social science concepts and, in particular, will be competent and articulate writers.

Accountability Scorecard

Currently, MDE uses only reading/language arts and mathematics. Commensurate with our focus on all five subjects, we propose that we include writing, science and social studies beginning in the 2012-2013 school year in the Accountability Scorecard. We will establish AMOs for each grade and subject area.

In addition, the 95% participation requirement will be extended to all tested subjects. The importance of continuing to ensure full participation in statewide assessments was something that MDE very carefully considered in our original proposal and discussed extensively with stakeholder groups. This is why MDE proposes a model where failing to meet participation targets can automatically turn a school's scorecard color to Red. It actually prevents schools from being allowed to compensate for low participation with higher achievement. If a school fails to test at least 95% of their students in one subject/subgroup combination, their overall color is lowered one level. If they fail to do in in two subject/subgroup combinations, their overall color is lowered two levels; 3 subgroup/subject combinations, lowered 3 levels, and so forth. If a school fails to assess at least 95% of their students in the "all students" category in two subjects, they are automatically designated as a Red school, regardless of proficiency or other performance data.

Participation Rate Clarification and Proposal

Clarification: In the Accountability Scorecard, if a school fails to assess at least 95% of their students in any subject/subgroup combination, they are automatically considered red for that subgroup/subject combination. If a school fails to assess at least 95% of students in two or more subjects in the "all students" category, they are automatically considered red overall.

Addition: To prevent schools from choosing to be "red" for participation in order to avoid assessing low-performing students, MDE proposes to add an additional check. If a school receives a "red" for participation for one school year, they will be placed on a participation "watch list" and will receive notification from MDE that they are not compliant with state and federal law regarding participation in state assessments, and that there are consequences for this lack of compliance. If they are "red" for participation for two consecutive years (or for three years out of five years), they are automatically named a priority school and placed under the direction of the School Reform Officer.

The 95% participation data will be for reporting only in the 2011-2012 accountability cycle in writing, science and social studies, and will then be used in the final Accountability Scorecard and other accountability determinations beginning in 2012-2013. This is due to the fact that this will be a new requirement for schools, and fair accountability practices suggest that schools should be notified of high-stakes requirements prior to their implementation.

Fair practice also drives our approach to the aggregation of student data. Any integration of student growth data into a school or district average requires averaging growth from all students, producing

some aggregate measure. The key to producing a useful average is to appropriately weight the different types of student growth in such a way that policy goals are incentivized. MDE feels that our weighted performance level change (PLC) actually reduces the chance that low-growth can be masked by high-growth, by awarding negative points for declines in student performance, and by awarding zero points for students who maintain their proficiency level grade over grade if those students were previously not proficient. In this way, only desirable growth receives positive point values, and the school average can be evaluated to see if the majority of students are achieving desirable growth. Because the weighted PLC is used in a ranking, each school's weighted PLC is compared to all other schools' weighted PLC. All other things equal, schools with more low growth students will have lower weighted PLC indices, which will produce lower overall rankings.

MDE will continue to include science and social studies in the state's system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support as it has in the past two years. In order to ensure that all students have the opportunity to be appropriately included in this system, the state is developing an Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS) for social studies. MDE already has AA-AAS assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics and science that have received full approval by the USED as meeting all ESEA requirements. The state will develop an AA-AAS assessment in social studies that contains the same level of technical adequacy, stakeholder involvement, and content alignment as its alternate assessments in the other content areas. This will ensure access for students with significant cognitive impairment to MDE's assessment continuum and enable schools and teachers to calculate valid and reliable individual student growth in a consistent manner for all content areas.

Currently, MDE has social studies assessment results on approximately 350,000 students, obtained from our MEAP and MME assessments, including the vast majority of our students with disabilities. Nearly 40,000 of Michigan's students with disabilities participate in the general assessment with accommodations. We only lack data from approximately 9,000 students who take the MI-Access alternate assessment in other subject areas but are not assessed in social studies on a state-delivered assessment. MDE feels it is in the best interest of students and schools to use currently available social studies assessment results while we are implementing our plan to develop and implement an alternate assessment in social studies.

MDE's plan to develop an alternate assessment in social studies allows us to have a functional assessment available by 2013-2014. In the interim two years (2011-2012 and 2012-2013), MDE has begun requiring districts and schools to indicate whether or not students who take the MI-Access assessment in other subjects have participated in a locally administered social studies assessment. These students will be part of the 95% participation requirement in the accountability system starting in the 2012-2013 school year. Prior to that, this information on student participation in a locally administered social studies alternate assessment will be collected and reported in the 2011-2012 school year (but only for informational purposes in order to give the field appropriate time to adjust). Districts and schools are also asked to provide information on what type of assessment the

district gave to the student. MDE will enhance their compliance monitoring in the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years and will audit a sample of districts that reported student participation in alternate social studies assessment. The state will review local documentation, the information provided to the state and ensure an assessment was administered. MDE will publicize these enhanced monitoring plans widely, so that even those schools who are not selected are aware of the potential for this monitoring.

Table 8: Michigan AA-AAS Social Studies Development Plan

Date	Task/Event	Status
October-November 2011	Gather information from the 13 states that have developed an alternate assessment in social studies.	Completed
December 2011	Develop preliminary budget and high-level scope of work	Completed
January 2012	Gather Department resources in preparation for developing extended social studies content standards	In Progress
February 2012	Submit AA-AAS social studies plan to USED as part of ESEA flexibility request	In Progress
March 2012	Convene standing Students with Disabilities (SWD) advisory committee to determine resources and stakeholder involvement opportunities	Specific Date/Location TBD
March 2012	Revise plan if necessary based on feedback from USED	TBD
April 2012	Finalize budget and scope of work	TBD
May-June 2012	Develop fully articulated project schedule	TBD
July –September 2012	Department staff draft extended social studies standards	TBD
October-December 2012	Stakeholder review and finalization of extended social studies standards	TBD
January-February 2013	Finalize test design and item development requirements	TBD
Spring 2013	AA-AAS social studies item writing and stakeholder review	TBD
Fall 2013	AA-AAS social studies cognitive labs and field-testing	TBD

Fall-Winter 2013	Field-test results analyzed; Bias and Content Committee meetings held; operational design finalized	TBD
Spring 2014	First operational AA-AAS social studies assessment administered	TBD
Spring 2014	Standard-setting	TBD
Summer 2014	Results incorporated into MDE's state accountability system	TBD

Based on our experience with reading/language arts, mathematics and science, the high-level schedule above is achievable and reasonable given that Michigan receives no federal funds for this content area.

Clarification on the Transition from Current AYP to New Scorecard

In August of 2012, MDE plans to publish School Report Cards that include the following:

- AYP designations for schools and districts, as specified in our Accountability Workbook through our Consolidated State Application.
- Statewide Top-to-Bottom ranking
- Priority, Focus and Reward school designations

These calculations will be based on assessment data from fall of 2011 and spring of 2012, as well as graduation rates from the 2011 graduating cohort.

The AYP designations made during this time will be based on our original system of calculating AYP, and any modifications to this system have been negotiated through the Accountability Workbook process.

In August of 2013, MDE will publish School Report Cards that include the following:

- Our new Accountability Scorecard, which is our AYP replacement.
- Statewide Top-to-Bottom ranking
- Priority, Focus, and Reward school designations.

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)

Arriving at the AMOs

Beginning in 2011-2012, MDE began holding schools accountable for achieving career- and college-readiness with their students by instituting new, rigorous cut scores that indicate whether or not a student is career- and college-ready (in the 11th grade) or on track for success in the next grade (in grades 3-8). To take into account the much higher standard set by the increased cut scores, we have

proposed AMOs that are rigorous yet achievable. We also propose a "safe harbor" methodology for schools and for subgroups that sets an ambitious and attainable way for schools to demonstrate improvement toward the goals.

MDE's ultimate goal is that 100% of our students be career- and college- ready. However, we acknowledge that we are far from this goal now. Given the reality of our current situation and acknowledging the need for a system that demands high levels of improvement but that also sets attainable goals, we will use 85% proficient as an interim goal by 2022 for any school below 85%. Once a school reaches 85% of students proficient, that school will begin working toward a goal of 100% proficiency.

In stakeholder meetings with various groups, as well as in internal MDE discussions, we have wrestled extensively with the question of identifying targets that are appropriately ambitious and also attainable. One concern is that 85% is not ambitious enough—that it sounds as if we are willing to settle for 15% of our students NOT being career- and college-ready. We understand that concern. MDE believes that *every* student should graduate with the skills necessary to succeed in career and college. However, we also know that we have a long way to go until we are at that point. Currently, even very high performing schools are not at 85% proficient on our new career- and college-ready cut scores. In fact, even the 95th percentile of schools—schools who are performing better than 95% of all other schools—fail to reach the bar of 85% of students proficient. See Table 9 below for various percentiles of school-level proficiency in each tested subject.

Table 9. **2010-11 Percent of Students Proficient by School Percentile**

	2010 Performance			
	Math	Reading	Science	Social Studies
5th percentile	7.3	28.5	0.0	2.0
10th percentile	12.2	37.0	2.0	5.0
20th percentile	19.2	48.2	6.3	14.5
40th percentile	29.2	59.5	12.2	24.8
60th percentile	37.7	67.1	17.4	32.8
80th percentile	50.8	75.1	25.1	42.5
90th percentile	60.3	80.5	31.3	50.0
95th percentile	67.3	84.1	37.0	54.5

In addition, Figures 27 and 28 show the distributions of school-level percent proficient in mathematics for elementary/middle schools and high schools, respectively. Figures 29 and 30 show the same distributions for reading, with Figures 31 and 32 for science, Figures 33 and 34 for social studies, and Figures 35 and 36 for writing.

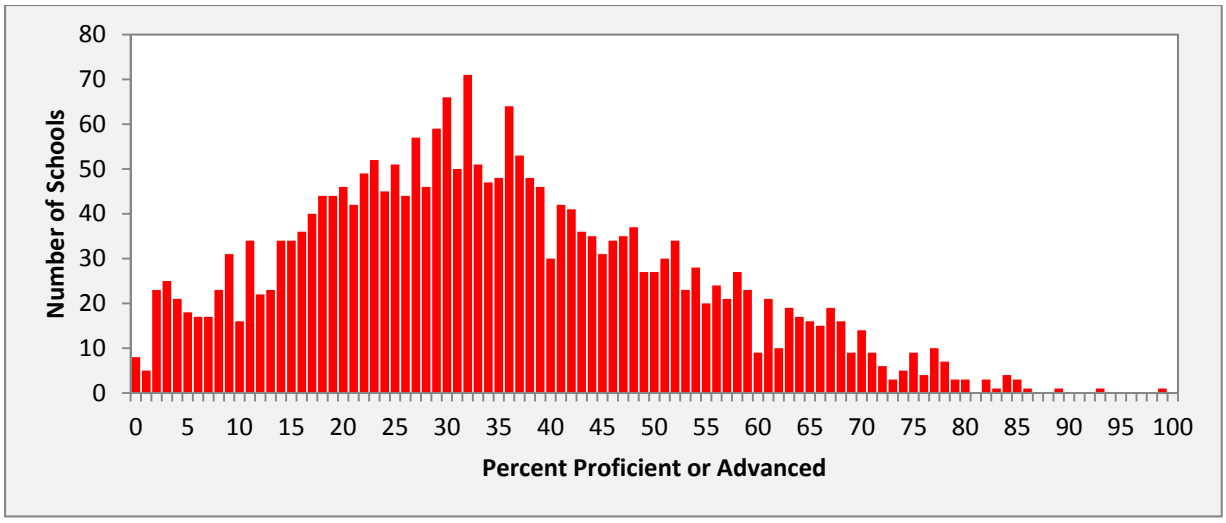


Figure 22. Elementary/middle school distribution of mathematics proficiency.

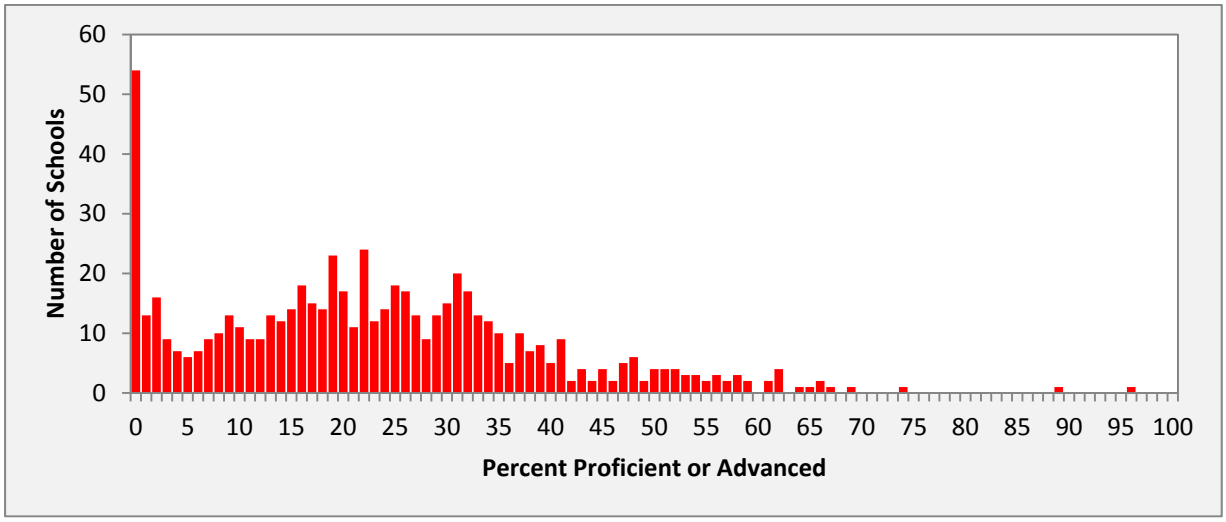


Figure 23. High school distribution of mathematics proficiency.

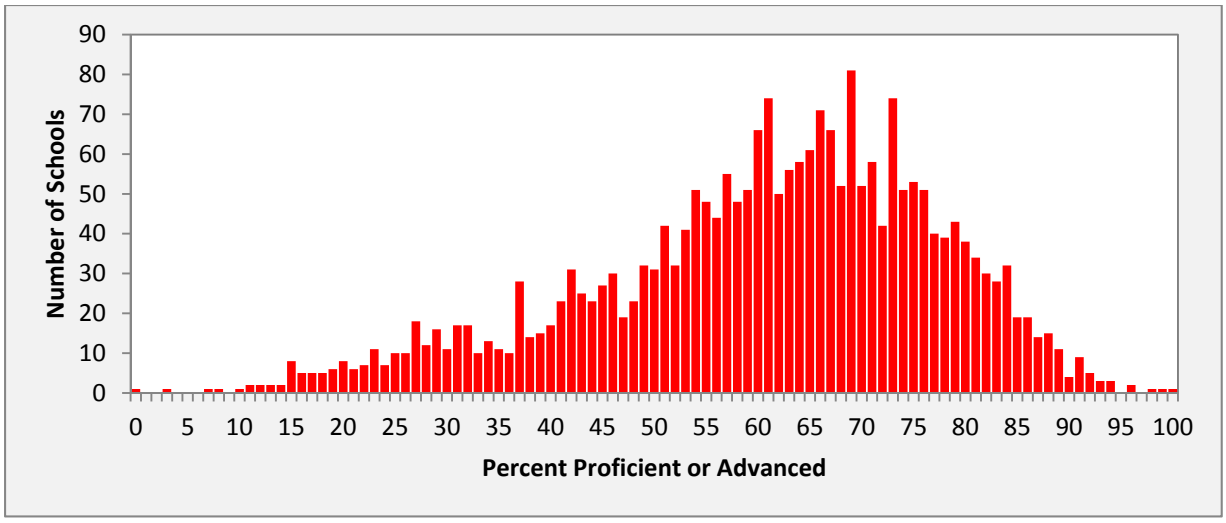


Figure 24. Elementary/middle school distribution of reading proficiency.

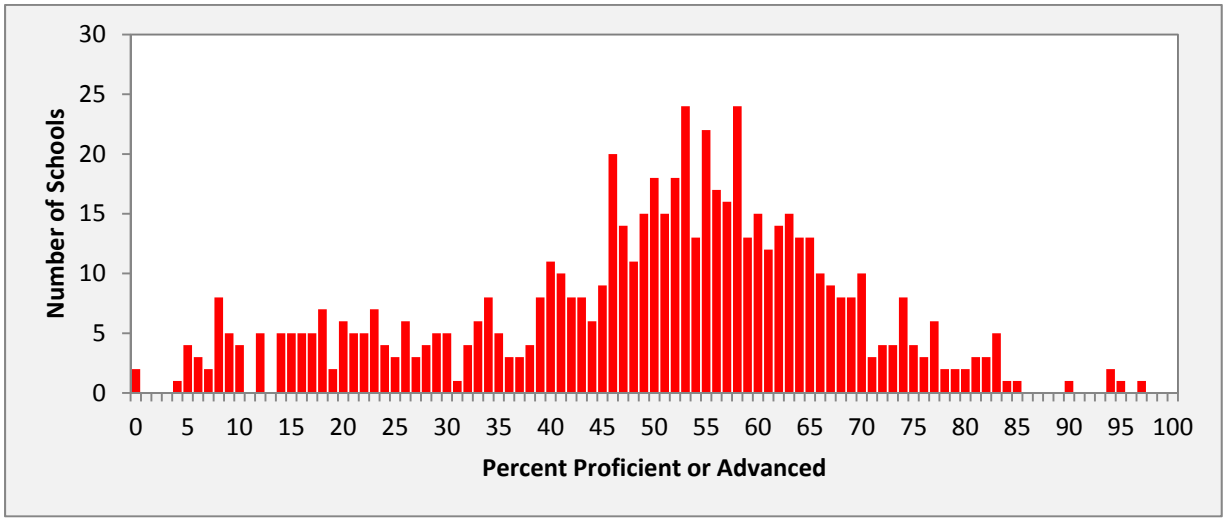


Figure 25. High school distribution of reading proficiency.

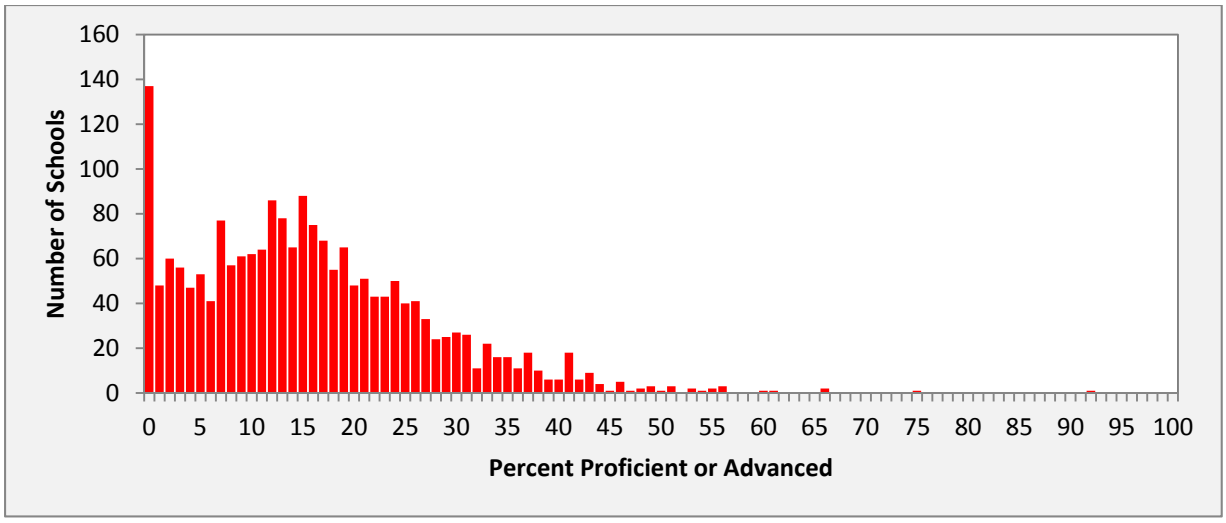


Figure 26. Elementary/middle school distribution of science proficiency.

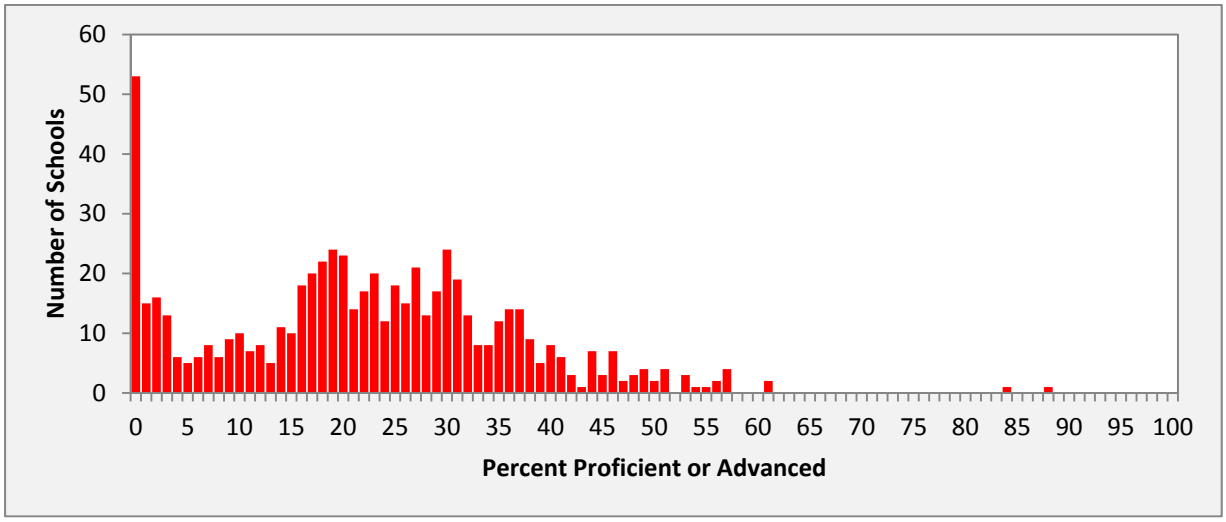


Figure 27. High school distribution of science proficiency.

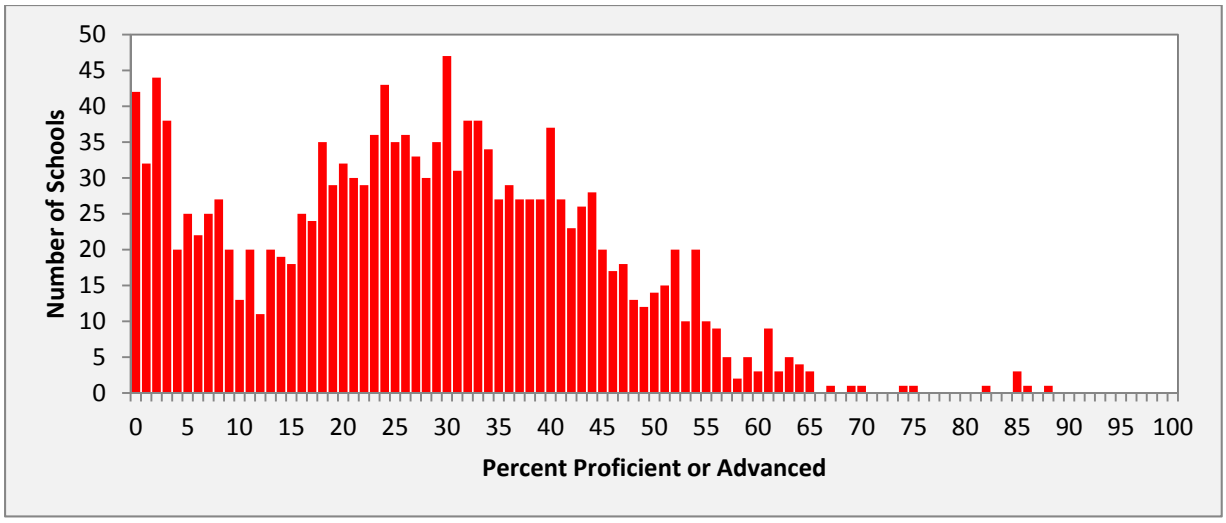


Figure 28. Elementary/middle school distribution of social studies proficiency.

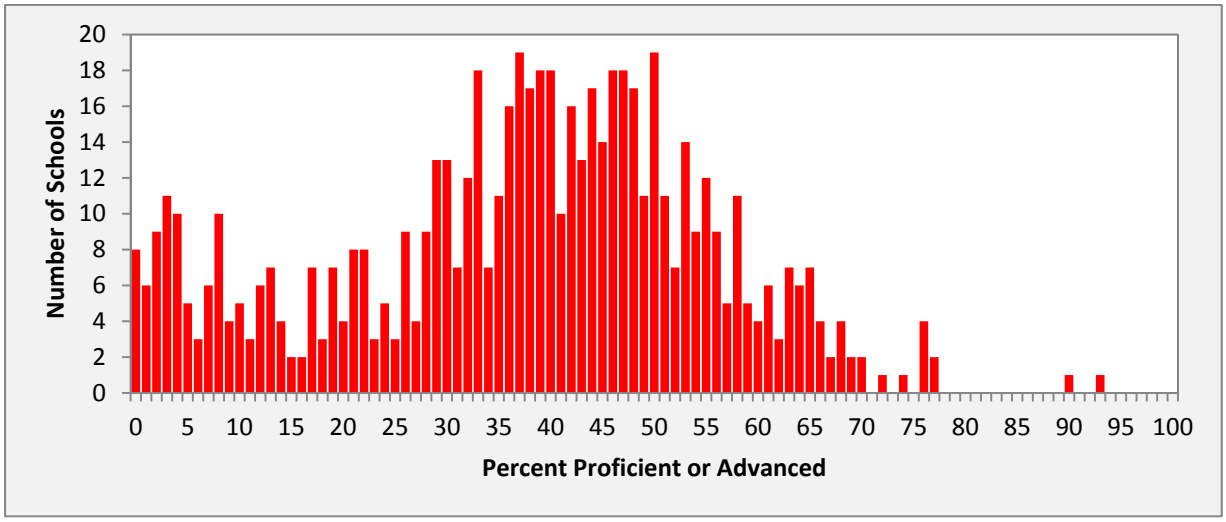


Figure 29. High school distribution of social studies proficiency.

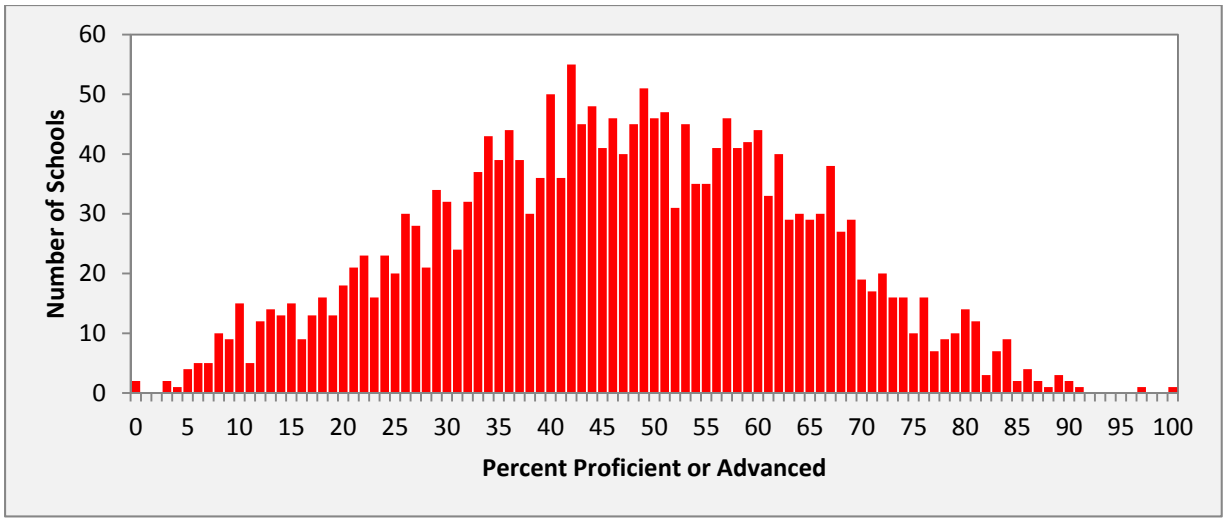


Figure 30. Elementary/middle school distribution of writing proficiency.

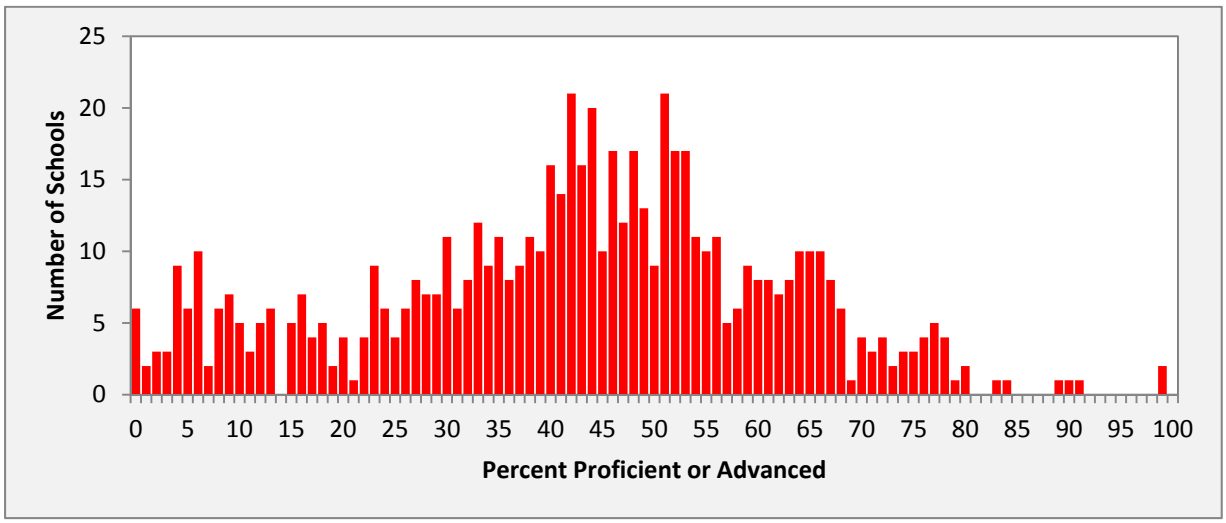


Figure 31. High school distribution of writing proficiency.

Looking at these numbers, we can see the goal of achieving 85% proficiency on the new career-and college-ready cut scores is highly ambitious. Getting all Michigan schools to a point where 85% of their students are considered proficient on our new cut scores will represent a significant achievement and a fundamental shift in how we prepare students for the world beyond K-12 education. We believe we will get there. But we also believe 85% represents the appropriate interim goal, with 100% still our ultimate goal.

It is important to keep in mind that, for schools to achieve 85% proficiency on our new and very rigorous cut scores, many schools will have to improve the percent of students who are proficient by five, six, seven or even eight percent each year. These rates of improvement are extremely aggressive.

Indeed, concerns have been raised that our AMOs are ***too*** ambitious. For schools to meet these targets, they will be required to improve the percent of students who are proficient at a rate that has rarely

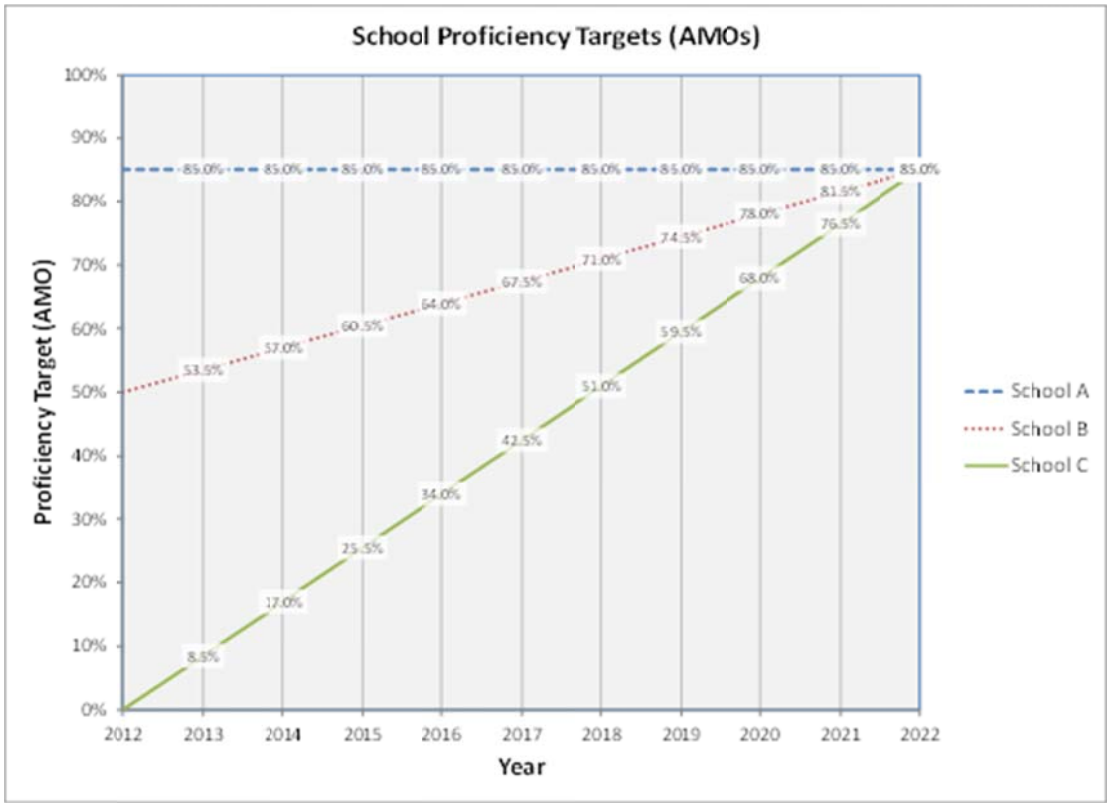
been demonstrated in the past four years. MDE spent substantial time considering the possibility of lower proficiency targets, to make them more attainable. After much discussion, we return to our theory of action—that we believe that the systematic and targeted use of data, accountability and related supports, coupled with increased expectations for all students, teachers, administrators, and the SEA, will lead to a fundamental change in student achievement and school improvement. This is taken in combination with the fact that we have not seen how schools will behave when shooting for the higher bar of the new cut scores as compared to their behavior in shooting for the previously lower cut scores. Taken together, we feel it is reasonable to set an initial target of 85% percent proficient in each content area. What we are proposing is not only a different accountability system; it is a different system of expectations, supports, consequences, and rewards that represents a shift in our work as an education enterprise. We want to change the culture of learning and expectations in the state, and also change the way that we do business as the SEA. We believe that this will result in changes in achievement, and therefore we choose to keep our targets where they are currently specified.

However, we acknowledge that it is difficult to predict future performance by looking at past data, because of the shifts in cut scores, as well as the variety of new interventions. Following a continuous improvement model, MDE intends to employ a systematic re-evaluation of not only the targets, but also the efficacy of the system of supports and interventions. Specifically, we plan to monitor the data and performance of schools until the 2014-2015 school year, at which time MDE's adoption of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments will necessitate an evaluation of the targets and the system. Following that time point, MDE will consider necessary modifications to the system every three years. If more than 50% of schools have made at least safe harbor targets, but are failing to make the proficiency targets, we will consider resetting the ultimate AMOs. Conversely, if over 75% of Michigan schools are consistently meeting the proficiency targets, we will consider resetting the AMOs with a higher end target. Targets will always be re-evaluated using the consideration of the equal mandates of ambitious AND attainable. Specifically, if the targets prove unattainable, targets will be reevaluated to be both ambitious and attainable by identifying targets attained by some percentage of schools significantly above the state average (e.g., targets attained by at least 20 percent of schools).

What MDE's AMOs Look Like

In the past, MDE has set the same targets for each school statewide. Our original idea for the ESEA Flexibility Request was to continue to set targets in this manner. However, stakeholders indicated that differentiated targets provide a more meaningful way for a school to consider the improvements they need to make, and they also ensure that all schools are held to an increasing target each year. Therefore, in order to differentiate our accountability system, we now propose differentiated targets for schools. Each school has its own target, which will be set as follows (Figure 32 below helps illustrate our system of differentiated proficiency targets, or AMOs.):

- Calculate the percent of students who are proficient (on the career- and college-ready cut scores) in the 2011-2012 school year.[5]
- Calculate the distance for each school between 85% and its current percent proficient, and divide that distance into ten increments.
- Those increments become the proficiency targets for each school.
- A school's targets do not reset each year. This way, a school knows what its trajectory needs to look like and can plan ahead. Having clear goals that are communicated in advance to schools is an important element in a transparent and useful accountability system.
- When a school reaches 85% proficient and remains there for two years, it is awarded a "Green" status (see report card explanation on page 114, and given the opportunity to earn "Reward" status by continuing to show improvement.[6] As long as the school remains above the 85% target, it will not drop below an overall "Green" rating. If the school does show improvement, it will be named a Reward school. This ensures that schools that meet this rigorous target are rewarded for this difficult achievement, but are also incentivized to continue to improve toward a goal of 100% proficiency.



[5] We will continue to identify students as "proficient" for the purposes of the Accountability Scorecard if they are: Level 1 (Advanced) or 2 (Proficient); provisionally proficient (within two standard errors of the cut score; or growth proficient (demonstrated growth at a "Improvement" or "Significant Improvement" rate). This is our current practice in AYP as well.
NOTE: THIS CHANGE IS CONTINGENT ON AN AMENDMENT APPROVAL

[6] We will define improvement as being a positive four-year slope.

Figure 32. Setting differentiated AMO targets for individual schools.

MDE further proposes that our timeline for achieving 85% proficiency rates be extended to end in 2021-2022, which is ten years from the 2011-2012 school year. The new, very aggressive cut scores instituted in the 2011-2012 school year mean that the metric by which students are measured is much more rigorous, and we believe this should be reflected in both the targets and timelines we give to schools to meet those targets.

Modeling/Scenarios

Some might question how our AMOs would apply to real-world schools. At this point, we feel that any analyses run to address this question would not provide relevant data. This is because although we have historical data, the historical data we have are based on new cut scores applied retroactively. We do not have any historical data against which to compare the AMOs because the only data which we have is for schools which were shooting for the old cut scores rather than our new cut scores. Our current analyses show that very few schools have achieved 85% proficient in any content area, so that it is clear that the 85% proficiency target is clearly an ambitious target. To address whether the targets are attainable (including for subgroups), we have put in place three provisions: (1) starting AMOs are where the school starts out in the first year of the 10-year period ending in 2022, (2) if a school or subgroup fails to meet an AMO, it can still achieve a "safe harbor" target of improving at the rate of the school at the 80th percentile in the base year, and (3) we have built into the application a review cycle at which time the AMOs will be evaluated for adequate rigor and attainability.

The Need for Safe Harbor

We need to strike the appropriate balance between ambitious proficiency targets and attainable improvement goals. We believe wholeheartedly in the need to dramatically move Michigan forward so that many more students are prepared for career and college upon graduation, and we know that this means that schools need to behave in fundamentally different ways than they have in the past. This is why we retained ambitious and aggressive *proficiency* targets in our AMOs.

We also know, however, that schools—particularly those who are furthest behind—need the ability to make progress and be rewarded for that progress. This is why we propose a new safe harbor methodology, and a new way of communicating this to schools, districts, and parents.

- For the whole school, as well as for each of the subgroups, schools can make safe harbor if it demonstrates a high rate of improvement.

- To identify how much improvement is sufficient to make safe harbor, MDE needed to identify a rate that had been *demonstrated* by schools, but that was still ambitious and rigorous. To do this, we look at the distribution of improvement rates for schools in each grade level (elementary, middle, and/or high school) over the previous four years (using a four-year improvement slope). We find the improvement rate of a school at the 80th percentile. This

means that 20% of schools had a greater improvement rate, but 80% of schools were improving at a slower rate. See Figure 29 below for an illustration of how this rate was determined.

- This improvement rate is then set as the "safe harbor" rate for each grade level and subject. This rate is calculated in the base year (e.g., 2012-2013) and will remain the safe harbor improvement rate until scheduled target reevaluations.

- We believe that grounding this safe harbor rate in the actual data and improvement patterns of schools ensures that we are asking for ambitious but also attainable improvement rates for safe harbor.

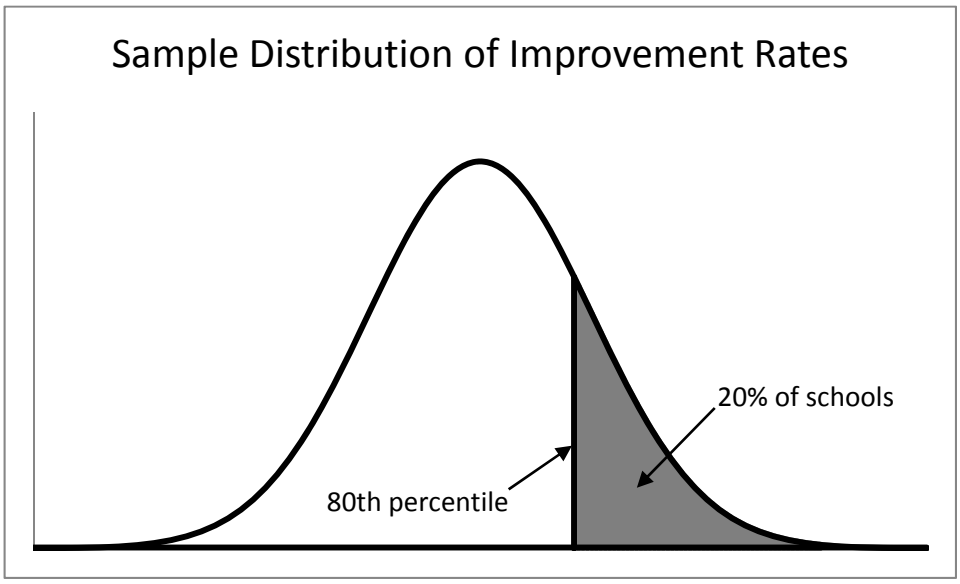


Figure 33. Identifying safe harbor annual improvement targets for a whole school and bottom 30%.

If a school meets its target based on making safe harbor as opposed to meeting the initial proficiency target, we will utilize the "Yellow" category in the new Accountability Scorecard to indicate this to parents. While both Yellow and Green indicate "making" a target, Yellow indicates that it was achieved through safe harbor (i.e. improvement) while Green indicates that the school achieved the actual proficiency target. This enhances the ability of the accountability system to differentially identify and to reward, and to assist schools in targeting their resources more appropriately.

Focusing on Achievement Gaps and Low Achieving Subgroups

MDE has developed an innovative strategy to aggressively address our achievement gaps and to ensure that strategic focus is placed on closing gaps by improving the achievement of those students who are still being left behind in their schools. To do this, we will add the "bottom 30%" subgroup to the current nine demographic subgroups already required under NCLB. Here's how this will happen:

- Each student's scale score on a given content area, grade level, and test (e.g. alternate versus

general) is transformed into a z-score in comparison to students taking the same test in the same content area in the same grade level across the entire state. The z-scoring allows for comparison of scores across grade levels and test types to assure that all students are accounted for and to assure that a subgroup is created wherever 30+ Full Academic Year students take the test regardless of grade level.

The averaging of z-scores means that the system is a fully compensatory system. If all else is equal, an improvement in any one z-score will result in an improvement in the grand mean z-score. If all else is equal, a decline in any one z-score will result in a decline in the grand mean z-score. It also means that a change in a single z-score cannot have an overly large impact on the grand mean z-score. We find that to be an appropriate outcome, in that improved achievement in only one area should not result in a dramatic rise in the overall index, but improved achievement in the majority of areas should.

- The lowest scoring 30% of students are identified in the "bottom 30%" subgroup.
- The school is then expected to make either the proficiency or the improvement targets for that "bottom 30%" subgroup, in addition to the other nine subgroups and the whole school targets.[7]

We believe the addition of this subgroup has many benefits. First, it requires that schools be strategic and specific about closing the achievement gap by requiring them to improve the achievement of their lowest performing students, regardless of the demographic subgroup of those students. If we are serious about closing achievement gaps, we have to identify those students who are furthest behind and hold schools accountable for doing something about those students.

It helps reduce the "masking" effect that can occur when using only the nine traditional subgroups. If a low performing student is in a high-performing subgroup, this student will be missed by the accountability system—the group as a whole will meet the target, and the school will likely focus their attention elsewhere. By including a bottom 30% subgroup, schools now have to be intentional about those students.

This methodology also ensures that all schools have at least that subgroup. One criticism of the current subgroup methodology in AYP is that schools in more diverse areas are penalized for this diversity, as they now have more targets to meet because they have more subgroups.[8] In 2010-2011, there were over 700 schools in Michigan who did not have a subgroup (beyond the majority student "subgroup"), and many more who only had one additional subgroup. However, we know that low-performing students are in every school, and that for many of them, attending a "successful" school may not be

[7] Every school with at least 30 Full Academic Year students will have a bottom 30% subgroup calculated for Accountability purposes. MDE plans to continue to utilize its current methodology for generating an Accountability status for very small schools; this methodology makes use of a sliding confidence interval along with multi-year averaging to allow us to identify an Accountability status for all schools in the state.

[8] This is due to the fact that a school is required to have at least 30 Full Academic Year (FAY) students in a particular demographic subgroup in order to be held accountable on that subgroup.

translating into personal success and progress. By including a bottom 30% subgroup, all schools have to address the needs of their lowest performing students, even if they are not identified using the traditional methodology.

If a school is improving the performance of its bottom 30% subgroup, they are also improving the performance of all of their other subgroups, as well as their whole school. The bottom 30% identifies the portion of each subgroup that is low performing. We think this is a powerful tool to actually close achievement gaps, both overall and within each subgroup.

We plan to also retain the nine traditional subgroups. Originally, MDE suggested that we hold schools accountable only on the overall performance of all students, and the performance of the bottom 30% subgroup, with the rationale that the bottom 30% captures the *low-performing* segments of each subgroup. As we reviewed the application and the proposal with stakeholders, however, they voiced concerns that we would lose the focus on individual subgroups that has been a critical component of NCLB for a decade. There was also concern that schools would not be able to understand the interventions necessary if we did not look both at the lowest performing students AND the students in the nine traditional subgroups. The combination of those demographic subgroups with the bottom 30% subgroup ensures that schools focus both on groups that have been historically underrepresented or neglected in the educational context while at the same time adding the specific focus on the lowest performing members of those groups (as described above).

This point merits emphasis. **MDE proposes to continue to hold schools accountable on the performance of all nine ESEA subgroups, *as well as* on the performance of the new subgroup, the bottom 30% subgroup**. Therefore, schools must not only show improvements with their lowest-achieving students, regardless of demographics, but they must also monitor performance and show improvements in each of their demographic subgroups as well. It is a dual structure of unmasking students—students who may have been masked in one methodology are revealed in the other.

In further analysis of that bottom 30% subgroup across schools, we have found that all nine ESEA subgroups are represented in that bottom 30% subgroup. What happened in schools is that students in those subgroups who were previously hidden from accountability because they were in subgroups that were too small to be detected, or because their performance as masked by higher-achieving students in those same subgroups. Now, all of those students are picked up and combined in the bottom 30% subgroup.

Subgroup Targets and Safe Harbor

For all subgroups, including the bottom 30%, the proficiency targets remain the same as for the whole school. This is because we believe that our ambitious proficiency goals need to extend to all students in all groups.

Safe harbor is determined in the following manner:

- *Bottom 30% subgroup:* This subgroup must show an improvement rate that is equivalent to the safe harbor improvement rate for the whole school—that is, the rate that is reflective of an improvement rate of a school at the 80th percentile of the improvement distribution. This means we expect the lowest 30% of students to show a rate of improvement that is ambitious but that has also been demonstrated by at least 20% of schools in the past. It also means that schools will need to be very purposeful about differentiating instruction and targeting resources to the students in this subgroup.

  If the bottom 30% subgroup meets their *improvement* target, this will be considered "Green" in the Accountability Scorecard (as opposed to the "Yellow" that would normally be attributed to safe harbor). The bottom 30% subgroup is, by definition, the lowest performing 30% of students in the school, based on a rank ordering of their standardized scale score from the assessment each student took. Therefore, making the safe harbor *improvement* target with this group is a strong achievement and deserves to be rewarded with a green flag instead of a yellow. This group does not have any "high performers" in it to pull up the average of the subgroup in the manner of other subgroups. They are only the lowest performing students. If a school is successful in increasing the percent of students in their bottom 30% subgroup who are considered proficient, even if they do not meet the school's AMO, they have achieved a significantly high level of improvement in the percent of their *lowest-performing* students who are proficient.

  However, with the ESEA subgroups, those groups do not consist only of the lowest-performing students. There will be a mix of high, average, and low-performing students in each of the ESEA subgroups. Therefore, it's appropriate to require that they meet absolute proficiency targets, or in lieu of meeting those targets, that they show improvements over time by meeting safe harbor. Given that they already have some proficient students in each of those ESEA subgroups, it is appropriate to award safe harbor improvement with a yellow as opposed to the green awarded for meeting the proficiency AMO.

- *Nine demographic subgroups*: If one of the demographic subgroups does not meet the proficiency target for the whole school, the safe harbor rate for that subgroup is set at the safe harbor improvement rate that applied to the whole school (for that particular level and subject) Again, this improvement rate is reflective of the rate of improvement demonstrated by a school at the 80th percentile of improvement within a particular level. This is sending the message that we have the same ambitious proficiency targets and the same ambitious *and* attainable safe harbor targets for the whole school and for all demographic groups within the school.

  If one of the demographic subgroups does not meet the proficiency target, and instead meets the safe harbor improvement target, this subgroup will receive a "Yellow" on the Accountability Scorecard. This sends the message to the school and to parents and other stakeholders that,

although the school is demonstrating improvements in those subgroups, their proficiency rates are still below the expected target. Again, we believe this strikes the balance between ambitious and rigorous expectations for proficiency, while providing attainable ways for schools to demonstrate progress towards goals. If a school fails to meet either the proficiency or the improvement target for a subgroup, that subgroup will be "Red" on the Accountability Scorecard.

Overall Scorecard Compilation

MDE has been engaged in the past several years in a series of initiatives to increase the accessibility of our data and reporting, to ensure that schools, parents, and other stakeholders can more easily find and understand information about their school. These projects have included the creation of more user-friendly "lookup" tools, increased resources on our website, and concerted efforts to create tools that assist end users with understanding the data and metrics. Additionally, in coordination with the Center for Educational Performance and Information (Michigan's education data agency), MDE has developed and rolled out a new data portal, MiSchoolData.

The MI School Data portal is a critical element that allows us to specify a theory of action that calls for an accurate diagnosis of school challenges using data analysis and professional dialogue, as it provides an extensive set of data for stakeholders to access. It includes information about assessment trends, school demographics, graduation/dropout rates, staffing information and educator effectiveness.

Building on these initiatives and the lessons learned from them, as well as on MDE's desire to leverage "light-of-day" reporting and transparency more efficiently to help communicate important information about the performance of schools to the public, we will take the opportunity presented by ESEA Flexibility to redesign our school report card, as described below.

The key elements of this new Accountability Scorecard will be:

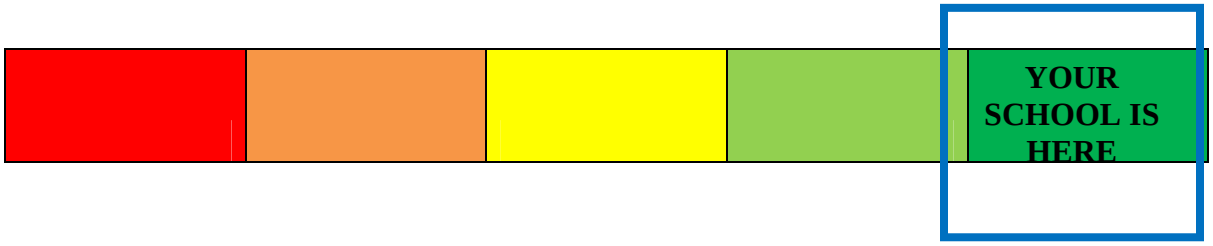
- Easy-to-understand color scheme (Red, Orange, Yellow, Lime Green, and Dark Green) so that schools can see at a glance where their areas of strength, caution, and weakness are, and target their efforts appropriately.
- Clear labels for Priority, Focus and Reward schools, helping stakeholders understand how the two types of metrics fit together.
- The ability to click through and see more detailed information on any given subject or subgroup, while at the same time retaining a simple, at-a-glance overview.

Determining the Colors

Colors will be determined for each school using the following set of business rules:

- The whole school will receive a Red, Orange, Yellow, Lime or Dark Green rating for each subject. Each subgroup will receive a Red, Yellow, or Green rating for each subject. Each group/subject Red rating means that a school did not meet the proficiency OR the safe harbor improvement target. Yellow means the school met the safe harbor improvement target only. Green means the school met the proficiency target (or that the bottom 30% subgroup met the safe harbor target).
- If a school fails to assess at least 95% of their students overall or in a subgroup (with the exception of the bottom 30% subgroup, as it is only defined once students have already tested), the school automatically receives a Red in that subject. If a school receives two Red participation ratings in the "all students" category, the school's overall status will default to Red. The purpose for this strict participation requirement is to prohibit schools from strategically choosing which students not to assess in order to raise their overall proficiency scores.

  To determine the final overall color for the school, each subgroup color in each subject will be assigned a point value. This allows us to further differentiate the "yellow" category in particular. MDE plans to display these final colors in a continuum, to help parents understand where their school falls (see below for example).



In order to earn each color, a school has to earn a certain target number of points, as follows:

Less than 50%:	Red
50-60%:	Orange
60-70%:	Yellow
70-85%:	Lime Green
Over 85%:	Green

This provides for more differentiation, particularly in the formerly "yellow" category. A school can earn an orange rating or above by demonstrating, on average, improvement (as indicated by safe harbor) in all subjects and subgroups.

General business rules will stay the same, including:

- Red/yellow/green color coding within subject and subgroups (saving the more differentiated coding for the overall color scheme)
- Participation rules: For each "red" that a school earns in any subgroup/subject combination, their overall color is lowered one level. If a school earns two reds in the "all students" category in any two subjects, the school automatically earns an overall

"red" rating. This is to prevent schools from choosing to not assess certain students.

- Interactions between Priority, Focus and Reward school status and the Accountability Scorecard stay the same.

As demonstrated below, Michigan will display and include graduation rates for all subgroups in the Accountability Scorecard.

Four example Accountability Scorecards are presented below for example schools that achieved an overall Green (Figure 34), an overall Yellow (Figure 35) an overall Red (Figure 36) and another overall Yellow because of having one Red subgroup (Figure 37). We did not provide samples of either Lime or Orange for purposes of this document.

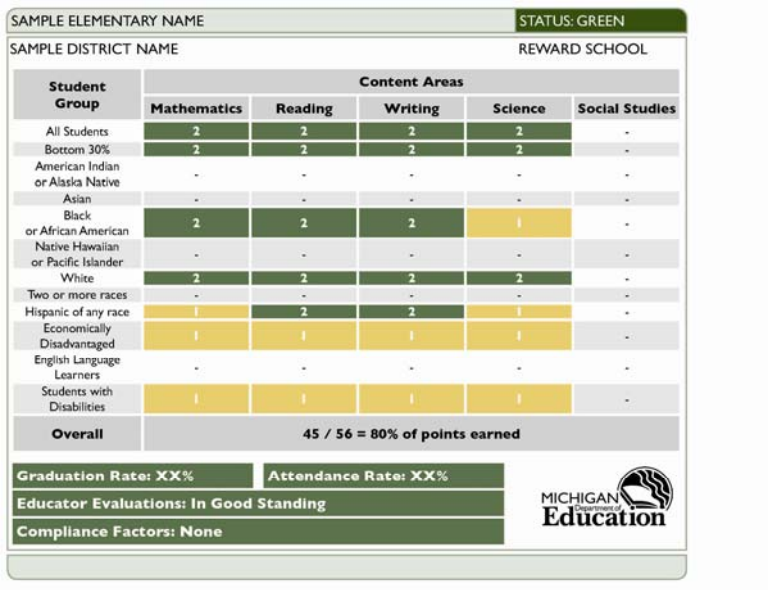
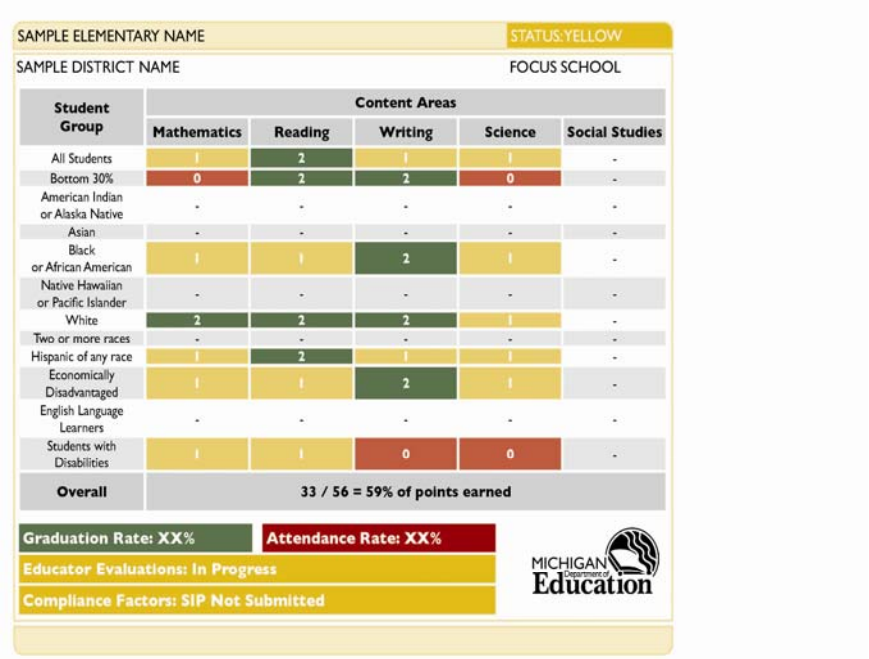


Figure 34. Sample Accountability Scorecard for a school achieving an overall Green.



SAMPLE ELEMENTARY NAME — STATUS: YELLOW

SAMPLE DISTRICT NAME — FOCUS SCHOOL

Student Group	Content Areas				
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies
All Students	1	2	1	1	-
Bottom 30%	0	2	2	0	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	-	-	-
Black or African American	1	1	2	1	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
White	2	2	2	1	-
Two or more races	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic of any race	1	2	1	1	-
Economically Disadvantaged	1	1	2	1	-
English Language Learners	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	1	1	0	0	-
Overall	**33 / 56 = 59% of points earned**				

Graduation Rate: XX%

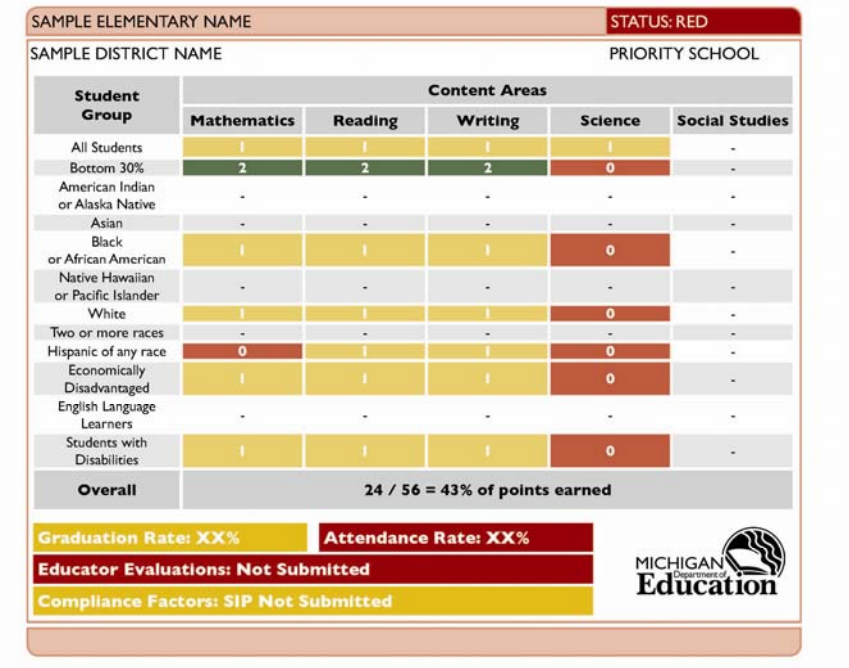
Attendance Rate: XX%

Educator Evaluations: In Progress

Compliance Factors: SIP Not Submitted

MICHIGAN Department of Education

Figure 35. Sample Accountability Scorecard for a school achieving an overall Yellow.



SAMPLE ELEMENTARY NAME — STATUS: RED

SAMPLE DISTRICT NAME — PRIORITY SCHOOL

Student Group	Content Areas				
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies
All Students	1	1	1	1	-
Bottom 30%	2	2	2	0	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	-	-	-
Black or African American	1	1	1	0	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
White	1	1	1	0	-
Two or more races	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic of any race	0	1	1	0	-
Economically Disadvantaged	1	1	1	0	-
English Language Learners	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	1	1	1	0	-
Overall	**24 / 56 = 43% of points earned**				

Graduation Rate: XX%

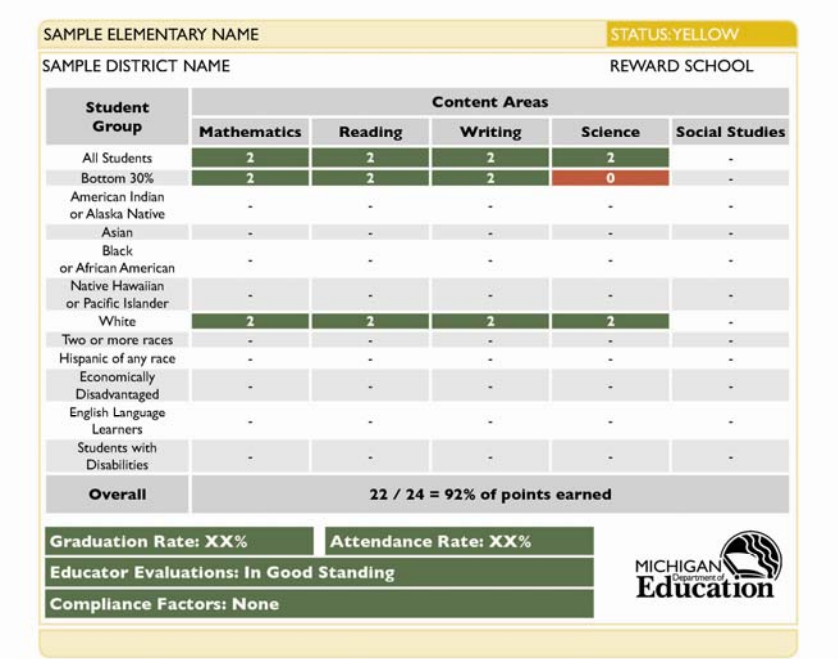
Attendance Rate: XX%

Educator Evaluations: Not Submitted

Compliance Factors: SIP Not Submitted

MICHIGAN Department of Education

Figure 36. Sample Accountability Scorecard for a school achieving an overall Red.



SAMPLE ELEMENTARY NAME — STATUS:YELLOW

SAMPLE DISTRICT NAME — REWARD SCHOOL

Student Group	Content Areas				
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies
All Students	2	2	2	2	-
Bottom 30%	2	2	2	0	-
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	-	-	-
Black or African American	-	-	-	-	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
White	2	2	2	2	-
Two or more races	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic of any race	-	-	-	-	-
Economically Disadvantaged	-	-	-	-	-
English Language Learners	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Overall	**22 / 24 = 92% of points earned**				

Graduation Rate: XX% **Attendance Rate: XX%**

Educator Evaluations: In Good Standing

Compliance Factors: None

MICHIGAN Department of Education

Figure 37. Sample Accountability Scorecard for a School Achieving an overall yellow because of a subgroup achieving a Red.

This system helps to counter the perception that there are "too many ways to fail AYP," a common criticism that we have heard over the last ten years of No Child Left Behind. In this system, a school has some wiggle room, in recognition of the fact that schools are complex ecosystems and changing performance is not always a linear process. Introducing the "Orange-Yellow-Lime Green" concept (which is essentially translated to making AYP—with cautions) means that we have the ability now to differentiate school performance beyond the former dichotomous make/did not make designation that lost a lot of the nuance about where schools were doing well and where they were doing poorly.

We also believe that the proposed Accountability Scorecard is highly intuitive to users, which is particularly important since education touches everyone but not everyone is a professional educator or has extensive data training skills. The five-color scheme is intrinsically familiar to everyone; and the grading scale for a school's final color mimics an actual traditional grading scale, with which everyone is acquainted.

MDE has used stakeholder input extensively to address concerns about how these color categories are assigned. Initially, we had only three colors (Red-Yellow-Green), understanding that, particularly in the first several years of this system, we would be likely to have a large "Yellow" category. This was a point of discussion with our stakeholder groups, many of whom felt we should make the "Green" category larger and the "Yellow" category smaller. After reviewing the data, MDE still believes this is appropriate given our current performance. While many of our schools are not "failing," very few of them are

succeeding at the level that we need them to succeed (i.e., preparing students for career and college), making Yellow (with its cautionary message) an appropriate color for these schools. Yellow is also important in terms of being able to utilize the accountability data to appropriately target supports for continuous improvement of all schools. When a school has an overall Yellow rating, it becomes necessary to look at the colors within the subjects, and assess the reasons for that Yellow rating.

However, following the submission of our initial ESEA flexibility request, we determined that we could get more specific with stakeholders by breaking our three-color categories down still further. We introduced two new colors, Orange and Lime, which allow for more clarity and detail about how schools are performing. Thus, our former "Yellow" category is more nuanced and allows for a clearer picture of school achievement over time.

The Red category will also serve as a warning system for schools with regard to their potential to become a Priority school. The Red category will include more schools than the lowest 5% of schools. This is appropriate, because although a school may not be in the lowest 5%, they may be close, and the Red designation can be used to alert them to the fact that they are in a danger zone. Importantly, the colors within subjects and subgroups can then help them to target their work more efficiently so that they can increase achievement, close gaps, and improve subgroup performance strategically where it is most needed.[9][10]

Determining a Scorecard for LEAs

MDE will produce a scorecard (using the green/yellow/red color scheme described above) for each LEA as well as each school. All calculations and factors will be the same, but results will be aggregated to the district level. MDE plans to treat the district as one large school, so to speak, rather than calculating a green, yellow or red status for each grade level within the district.[11] Treating the district as one unit will help with clarity of results, and will also push districts to play an active role in the accountability and the supports. This means that subgroups will be detected more quickly in the district now; the n-size of 30 students will only need to be reached district-wide for that subgroup to appear on the Scorecard, as opposed to 30 in elementary, middle and high school. This will be particularly helpful in terms of detecting and holding districts accountable for the performance of their limited English proficient students. Only 71 of 200 districts that have LEP students currently receive a district level AYP designation for their LEP subgroup, because they do not have 30 students at each of the grade levels. This change will now hold more districts accountable for these students.

MDE also plans to produce a Focus Districts list starting in 2012-13, where districts are ranked by the size of their achievement gap in the same manner as schools. We are concerned that some districts

[9] For determining Accountability in small schools, MDE intends to continue to use its current small schools methodology for AYP, which includes multi-year averaging, as well as a sliding confidence interval for making Accountability determinations.

[10] MDE intends to continue to utilize current calculation practices for the Accountability Scorecard, such as including formerly special education students and formerly limited English proficient students, multi-year averaging, indexing across grades, and other technical details to calculate Accountability.

[11] This change has been proposed in MDE's 2011-2012 Accountability Workbook and was implemented in 2011-12.

may choose to segregate their lowest performing students in one building, in order to keep achievement gaps smaller in their other buildings. One critically important element in designing high-stakes accountability systems is to be very strategic about avoiding unintended consequences--such as potentially increasing the segregation of schools by requiring schools to focus on their achievement gaps. By producing a district Focus list, districts have to be accountable for the size of their achievement gap overall, as well as within certain schools. MDE will publish a list of these Focus Districts, utilizing "light of day" reporting to flag districts in which it appears gaps are occurring on a district level (not just at a school level). In 2014-2015, when the Smarter Balanced assessments are adopted and implemented, we will examine the possibility of attaching consequences to the Focus Districts, but will produce the report for research and evaluation until that point.

If districts begin to segregate low-achieving students into certain schools and allow them to be "failure factories," the achievement gap will not close. Furthermore, if a district pre-emptively segregates students whom they perceive have the potential to be low achieving into certain schools, we lose substantial ground that has been made in the desegregation of schools and the integration of all races, disabilities and languages into open access schools.

Other Academic Indicators

MDE proposes to include the following elements in the Accountability Scorecard: graduation rate, attendance, participation, educator evaluations and compliance with state law.

Graduation Rate

As is currently done in AYP, we propose to hold schools accountable for making the 80% graduation rate target. If the school does not meet the target, it has an opportunity to make it on safe harbor, which is defined (as previously) as the reduction of 25% of the gap between the current graduation rate and the 80% target. If a school has the graduation rate of 80%, it will receive a "Green" for graduation rate; if it makes the graduation rate improvement target, it will receive a "Yellow"; and if it misses both the rate and the improvement target, they will receive a "Red." A "Red" on this indicator will function the same way as any other "Red"—a school cannot be "Green" if it has a "Red."

Although graduation rate is an important indicator, MDE feels that placing too much emphasis on graduation incentivizes schools and districts to graduate students who are not proficient, and therefore not considered career- and college-ready. Given the demands of MDE's high school curriculum, as well as the rigor of our new cut scores, MDE wants all students to be exposed to rigorous content and to be held accountable for learning that content. If schools and districts are not held accountable first and foremost for the extent to which students learn that content and meet those expectations, then the opportunity for inappropriately graduating students is too great. Keeping the weighting at 16% allows MDE to hold schools accountable for the graduation of their students, but does not allow graduation to overwhelm the performance, improvement and achievement gap measures, all of which MDE believes are central to our core mission of improving the career and college readiness of all students in the state.

Attendance

In order to ensure that schools without a graduation rate have an additional indicator, we will continue to use attendance rate for elementary/middle schools. This is either a "Green" (the school met the target) or a "Red" (the school did not meet the target).

Participation

As mentioned previously, participation will be calculated in conjunction with each subject and subgroup, and a school must assess 95% of students. One "Red" for participation keeps a school from being "Green" overall; two "Reds" for participation in the "all students" category mean that a school is automatically "Red" overall. This is to prevent schools from not assessing students, particularly those low-performing students in subgroups.

One common (and somewhat misleading) comment we received from stakeholders is that it's too easy for "one student" to cause a school to miss a participation target. This is only true in schools with very small subgroups or numbers of students. In a school with 100 students, for example, 95% participation is 95 out of 100 students, leaving five students who, if not assessed for some reason, will not hurt the school. It is true that the 6th student to not be assessed would put the school over their limit, but there are five other students who were not assessed first.

However, to account for the fact that a very small school or very small subgroup can be negatively impacted by only one student, we propose that if more than 5% of the population OR two students, whichever is greater, is not assessed, the school fails to meet its participation target. For example: if a subgroup has 30 students in it, 5% of 30 students is 1.5 students. In this case, we would round up and say that the school needs to assess 28 of 30 students in order to meet the target.

Educator Evaluations: Reporting Effectiveness Labels

In order to strengthen our ability to ensure compliance from districts in terms of implementing their local evaluation systems (as well as the state evaluation system), we will give schools credit for reporting 100% of their educator effectiveness labels and at least 95% of their students in the Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL) collection. This will be either a "Green" or a "Red" indicator—either the school reports 100% of its required labels and 95% of its students in the TSDL and receives a Green, or it does not and receives a Red. Transparency with parents and other stakeholders is critically important, and including this important measure of quality on the Accountability Scorecard is a key element to that.

Compliance with State Law

Schools are required by state law to have a school improvement plan, and to complete School Performance Indicator reports. These data are a necessary element of this systematic diagnosis of the school, their strengths and weaknesses, and developing and monitoring a plan. Therefore, we will give a school credit for submitting a school improvement plan and completing their School Process Rubrics.

These data are then used in schools for their data analysis discussions and for targeting instruction and reforms.

Rationale for AMOs

The AMOs we propose reflect the fact that Michigan's starting point is dramatically different, given our new career- and college-ready cut scores. The proficiency AMOs require that schools grow by equal increments each year, remain the same once set, and reflect a school's starting location. These were all important modifications that were introduced based on lessons learned from the previous AMOs. Schools need to have targets that relate to their own situation; they need to be clear on what the goals are so that they can plan ahead, and they need to be given a steady trajectory to work with, versus the "stair-step" approach taken previously, where targets remained constant for several years and then dramatically increased in the years approaching 2014.

The performance change we expect to see in our schools during the next few years is significant. However, it's also carefully grounded in extensive research, data analysis, and stakeholder input. As mentioned previously, we spent considerable time engaged with practitioners and policy groups as we set forth to build our new AMOs. We also ran volumes of data in an effort to test our assumptions and results.

We have sought to harness the tension between ambition and attainability, and we believe we have struck the right balance. We are cognizant of the challenges our schools face, particularly with the pending change in cut scores, but we believe they are capable of achieving their objectives if they have the right tools and support. As outlined in this waiver request, we think we can deliver that support through diagnostic intervention and data-driven approaches.

Perhaps the best support for our thinking, however, relates to the core principles stated at the beginning of this document:

* **All means all. Every child has an innate capacity for learning, and we must meet the needs of each and every Michigan student with high-quality systems, tools and resources. Our expectations for all students must be consistently high.**
    * The use of for the bottom 30% subgroup for calling out subgroup achievement will allow us to isolate and address student achievement gaps wherever they exist, not just in Michigan's larger schools.
    * The growth rates we're targeting are going to propel our students forward at a pace we've never before seen, but think our schools can manage.
    * The state is prepared to leverage its partnerships and resources to make sure these AMOs are met. Why? Because of the next core belief, stated below.

* **We must ensure our children are career- and college-ready. We define this as student**

preparation that is adequate to allow a student to pass first-year community college courses without remediation. Our state is preparing students not just for the opportunities we know about today, but also for the economic and intellectual challenges of the future.

- We cite this quotation, which says it all:

  > A May 2011 study by the Detroit Regional Workforce Fund found that 47 percent of adult Detroit residents, or about 200,000 people, are functionally illiterate — which means that nearly half the adults in the city can't perform simple tasks such as reading an instruction book, reading labels on packages or machinery, or filling out a job application. Depressingly, about 100,000 of those functionally illiterate adults have either a high school diploma or the GED equivalent. You can stimulate the Detroit economy all you want, but even if jobs come back, people who can't read won't be able to do them.[12]

- Michigan's economy, which is among the worst in the nation, needs educational rigor, innovation, and results. We are using this ESEA Flexibility Request as the next step in our work to deliver those results.

- **Our teachers and administrators are professionals whose talents are equal to the task before them. We must ensure our systems support their work effectively and allow them to innovate to meet the needs of their students.**
  - We have high-caliber individuals working in classrooms and schools across Michigan. We owe it to them to set our expectations higher and give them an opportunity to produce the growth of which they are capable.
  - Teacher organizations and policy experts are backing our plans. They support these proposed AMOs and, in fact, are asking to get started.
- **Our school-level interventions must similarly emphasize careful diagnosis and intervention, to maximize all available resources and effectively address the needs of all students.**
  - Michigan has a wealth of expertise that can be brought to bear. We must begin to coordinate and harness our leaders, with an eye toward continuous improvement for all.
  - We must constantly review and inform, review and inform. If we get to a scenario where most schools are up along that 85% line, we'll keep pushing that bar upward and working to deliver even more for Michigan's children.
  - One-size-fits-all approaches are clumsy, costly, and less effective than those that diagnose and treat specific concerns. If we get smart about our interventions, we can get faster, stronger results.

But the most important evidence we can provide to show these AMOs are appropriately targeted is this: we are willing to hold ourselves, our schools, and our state accountable for them.

[12] Friedman, Thomas and Mandelbaum, Michael (2011). That Used to Be Us: How America Fell Behind in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Annual Measurable Objectives for the State

Per the discussion requesting that MDE develop Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for the state as a whole, the MDE has created statewide AMOs for the next ten years based on where the state is starting out (in the 2011-12) school year for each subject area (mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing) and school level (elementary, middle, and high school). Each of the AMOs follows a linear increase from the starting point in the 2011-12 school year to 85% proficient in the 2021-22 school year as shown in the table below.

Subject	Level	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mathematics	Elementary	40%	44%	49%	53%	58%	62%	67%	71%	76%	80%	85%
	Middle	36%	41%	46%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%
	High	30%	36%	41%	47%	52%	58%	63%	69%	74%	80%	85%
Reading	Elementary	66%	68%	70%	72%	74%	76%	77%	79%	81%	83%	85%
	Middle	63%	65%	67%	70%	72%	74%	76%	78%	81%	83%	85%
	High	57%	59%	62%	65%	68%	71%	74%	76%	79%	82%	85%
Science	Elementary	16%	23%	30%	37%	44%	51%	58%	64%	71%	78%	85%
	Middle	17%	24%	31%	38%	44%	51%	58%	65%	71%	78%	85%
	High	27%	33%	38%	44%	50%	56%	62%	68%	73%	79%	85%
Social Studies	Elementary	28%	33%	39%	45%	51%	56%	62%	68%	74%	79%	85%
	Middle	29%	34%	40%	46%	51%	57%	62%	68%	74%	79%	85%
	High	41%	45%	49%	54%	58%	63%	67%	72%	76%	81%	85%
Writing	Elementary	44%	48%	52%	56%	60%	64%	68%	73%	77%	81%	85%
	Middle	46%	50%	54%	58%	62%	66%	70%	73%	77%	81%	85%
	High	49%	52%	56%	60%	63%	67%	70%	74%	78%	81%	85%

The 2012 AMO was created by taking the 2011-12 percent proficient across all assessments (MEAP or MME, MEAP-Access, and MI-Access), and creating a weighted average across the elementary grades (3-5), middle school grades (6-8), and high school (grade 11). Social studies was the exception in that the grade 6 social studies scores were considered for elementary level, with grade 9 scores considered for middle school, and grade 11 scores considered for high school.

Our State Report Card

https://www.mischooldata.org/AER/CombinedReport/InquirySettings.aspx

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.

MDE proposes four identification strategies for Reward schools:

- Beating the Odds (identifies schools that should be rewarded for performing more highly than expected). The basic strategy for the Beating the Odds analysis is as follows:
    - Identify schools that are similar on demographic characteristics, and from each group of similar schools, identify the highest performing school.
    - Identify a school's predicted outcome based on demographic characteristics, and then identify which schools over-performed their expected outcome.
    - Identify those schools who are determined by both methodologies to be "beating the odds" to be the final list of Beating the Odds schools.

  MDE has received some suggestions from stakeholders regarding the Beating the Odds methodology. Prior to the ESEA Flexibility application, the Beating the Odds list was simply a report that MDE produced each year in order to encourage schools that were doing better than expected in terms of their performance. With the increased stakes attached to it via this application, however, MDE commits to engaging in a series of stakeholder meetings to refine and revisit the methodology. For example, in some of the clusters of schools, the school with the highest ranking may not be significantly higher than the mean ranking of that cluster, but that top-ranked school in the cluster would still be identified as beating the odds. These types of methodological business rules are best hammered out through thoughtful conversation with external stakeholders and experts.

  What we do know now is that subgroup performance is an important element of this calculation. The outcome metric for both ways of identifying schools beating the odds is MDE's Top-to-Bottom school ranking. That ranking includes as a component the size of the achievement gap in each school. Schools with large achievement gaps are pulled down in the rankings, and are therefore unable to be identified as beating the odds. In addition, as a failsafe, schools are disqualified from being recognized as beating the odds if they are identified as focus schools. Finally, both methods of identifying schools as beating the odds incorporate demographic risk factors as either matching variables or covariates. Therefore, schools identified as beating the odds are by definition outperforming their prediction based on their demographic mix of students.

- Top 5% of schools on the Top-to-Bottom list of schools ("high performing schools"). Detail on Top-to-Bottom methodology is included below; the basic strategy for the Top-to-Bottom list is as follows.
    - Using data on all five tested subjects and graduation rate where available, rank schools from the 99th percentile to the 0th percentile.
    - Each content area metric is based on achievement (1/2 of the metric), improvement (1/4 of the metric) and achievement gap (1/4 of the metric). This creates a tension between high achievement, but also improvement over time and keeping the achievement gap small so that all students are learning.
    - Once the complete Top-to-Bottom list is identified, the top 5% of that list can be considered "highest-performing" schools. These are schools with high overall achievement, who are demonstrating improvement over time, and who are demonstrating high achievement and improvement in all students as evidenced by their small achievement gaps.
- Schools with the top 5% improvement rates (on a composite rate of improvement in all tested subjects)—for "high progress" schools
    - In the complete Top-to-Bottom ranking, an improvement rate is identified for each content area.
    - To determine "high progress" schools, the following steps are conducted:
        - Create a composite improvement index based on improvement in all available tested subjects.
        - Rank schools on their composite improvement index.
        - Identify the 5% of schools with the highest rates of improvement.
- Schools improving beyond the 85% ultimate proficiency target for the whole school and remaining a Green school otherwise.

A school cannot be named a Reward school if it is a Priority school or a Focus school, or if it has failed AYP (i.e. gotten a "Red" overall status on the Accountability Scorecard).

Understanding the Top-to-Bottom Methodology

In 2011, MDE produced a comprehensive Top-to-Bottom ranking of all schools in the state. This ranking was developed based on the original methodology for identifying persistently lowest achieving schools, following the federal School Improvement Grant ranking formula requirements. Throughout the 2010-2011 school year, MDE modified the original PLA ranking based on extensive comments from

stakeholders and internal evaluation of the methodology and data. Although the 2011 PLA list was still run using the original methodology (due to a technicality in state legislation), MDE produced the full Top-to-Bottom list as part of our "light of day" reporting initiatives. It gave schools a "low-stakes" look at their ranking on the new metric, provided them with important diagnostic data for their schools, and afforded MDE the opportunity to educate schools and educators on the metric before it took on a more high-stakes nature.

The Top-to-Bottom list includes all five tested subjects (mathematics, reading, writing, science, and social studies) and graduation rate (when available). Each subject is measured using three indices: achievement, student growth/school improvement, and achievement gap.

- Achievement: To obtain a measure of a school's achievement over all students in various grades and test types, we standardize each student's scale score on the test they took. This gives us a value that tell us how well each student did on that test compared to all others statewide who took that same test in that same grade and subject in a given year. This allows us to standardize out potential differences in difficulty of cut scores or tests not accounted for in the psychometric properties of the test, and also allows us to put all students on a similar metric so that we can combine it for overall school achievement. Additionally, given our recent change in cut scores, looking at the percent of students proficient would have made it impossible to accurately rank at the bottom of the distribution, as so many schools have zero percent of their students proficient. Using standardized scale scores makes this truly a normative ranking system, as the proficiency criteria are not reflected in a school's ranking.
- Improvement: Student improvement is included in two ways—integrating individual student-level growth data where available (reading and mathematics, grades 3-7) and examining school-level improvement rates where the student-level growth is not available. Provisions are made so that higher-performing schools are not penalized if they lack room to show improvement.
- Achievement gap: This gap is calculated as the distance between the average scale score for the top 30% of students and the bottom 30% of students in that each school. Larger gaps decrease a school's overall ranking; smaller gaps help raise their ranking.

For schools with a graduation rate, the school is ranked on both the graduation rate as well as improvement in graduation rate, and this counts as 10% of the overall school ranking.

Each content index counts equally toward the final ranking, and a school receives a ranking if it has at least 30 full academic year students in both the current and the previous year in at least two content areas.

Graduation Rate Proposal for MDE's Accountability Scorecard

MDE proposes that we integrate graduation rate into the accountability scorecard in the following manner:

- Treat graduation rate as an additional subject in the scorecard, giving it equal weighting with the other five tested subjects. This means each subject will be 16.66% of the final score.

- Schools will receive two points for meeting the graduation rate target (80% graduation) in each applicable subgroup as well as the all students group, one point for meeting the improvement rate, and zero points for failing to meet either goal.

The graduation rates used in both the Accountability Scorecard and the Top-to-Bottom list are MDE's approved cohort graduation rates, as generated by the cohort graduation rate methodology required by USED.

	Math	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies	Graduation Rate
All Students						
White						
Black						
Hispanic						
Asian						
A/PI						
Multi						
SWD						
ED						
LEP						
Bottom 30%						XXXXXXXXX

In 2013-2014, MDE proposes modifications to the Top-to-Bottom Ranking to account for outliers.

Following the implementation of our ESEA Flexibility application in the 2012-2013 school year, MDE convened a group of stakeholder to discuss the metrics, and in particular, the Focus metric. There was a concern voiced by the field that schools were being identified as Focus Schools “only” because they had very high-achieving students. While this was not true in the majority of the cases, the resulting data analysis and discussions with the field helped MDE identify an issue with our Top-to-bottom ranking methodology: the impact of extreme z-scores from outliers in the assessment data. In order to address this issue, we propose a change to the overall Top to Bottom methodology by which we normalize the underlying student assessment distributions, and then cap the resulting z-scores at (-2, 2). This minimizes the impact of extreme z-scores. It is important to note that we do not drop those scores, but rather cap them and still include them in the ranking.

MDE believes this helps us to more appropriately identify schools in which there is systematic low-achievement and/or large gaps, as opposed to schools with a relatively small number of very high- or low-achieving students whose extreme z-scores exerted undue influence on the metric. Our predictive analyses also establish that we are not losing schools with large gaps between various demographic subgroups, including students with disabilities and demographic subgroups with this change in the overall Top-to-Bottom ranking methodology.

The Technical Appendix includes a rationale for TTB changes (see Attachment 13.C) and detailed business rules (see Attachment 13.B) on this methodology. We have also created a webpage with extensive resources for schools, districts and others to understand their ranking.

Finally, MDE has initiated a significant informational campaign regarding the Top-to-Bottom ranking methodology. This included presentations on the ranking during a 12-stop Accountability Tour around the state, a statewide webcast, recorded interactive presentations, and numerous hands-on presentations with schools, districts, and other organizations.

Small Schools in the Top-to-Bottom Ranking

In order to receive a ranking, a school is required to have at least 30 Full Academic Year students in both the current and previous year in at least two tested content areas. This means that very small schools, or schools with a small number of full academic year students, do not receive a ranking and therefore are ineligible to be Priority, Focus or Reward schools. These schools tend to be very small charter schools, alternative education schools, and very small rural schools. Although it is appropriate for those schools not to receive a ranking in the current methodology (due to the N-size requirements for stable and reliable calculations), we also recognize that those schools need to receive reasonable and meaningful accountability designations.

MDE's minimum N-size of 30 students is based upon investigation of research and scholarly papers that indicated the number thirty was large enough to yield statistically reliable results. Subgroups with less than 30 students will still be reported to the school or district for instructional purposes but not included in accountability determinations.

MDE's compromise between the competing goals of more disaggregated reporting and greater statistical reliability is to set the minimum number of students at 30. MDE is not alone in choosing an N-size of 30. It appears the majority of other state's accountability systems have come to the same conclusion. More than half of all states chose 30 or 40 as their minimum N-size for federal accountability systems required under the No Child Left Behind Act.[13]
We intend to convene a taskforce specifically to address this task, particularly given the fact that the schools are not only small, but tend to fall into distinct categories. For example, finding appropriate metrics to hold alternative schools accountable is a challenge; they should have high expectations like all other schools but they also educate a unique population and metrics for success may be different and may include other measures. MDE will begin to convene this taskforce in the spring of 2012, and will conclude work by December of 2012. At that point, MDE will submit the appropriate notifications to USED and request modifications to current policy as appropriate.

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

[13] U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, *State and Local Implementation of the* No Child Left Behind Act, *Volume IX—Accountability Under* NCLB*: Final Report*, Washington, D.C., 2010.

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

MDE is working with its partners and stakeholders to identify innovative ways to recognize high-achieving schools. Although we do not have funds available to reserve under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) to provide financial incentives to Reward Schools, we have identified other types of recognition, as described in Section 2A of this waiver request.

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.

Using the Top-to-Bottom methodology described above, MDE plans to identify Priority schools as:

- Schools in the bottom 5% of the Top-to-Bottom ranking.
- MDE will ensure that the number of schools identified as Priority schools is equal to at least five percent of the state's Title I schools as Priority schools.

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

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

As described previously, all LEAs with Priority schools will be required to implement one of four intervention models as described in the US Department of Education Final Requirements for School Improvement Grants:

- Turnaround Model
- Transformation Model
- Restart Model
- School Closure

A Priority school that implements one of the four School Improvement Grant models satisfies the turnaround principles. *See page 10 of the ESEA September 23, 2011 Flexibility document.*

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.

In January 2009, Michigan's legislature passed reform legislation and embodied it in Michigan's School Code. This law requires the following:

Section 380.1280c

(1) Beginning in 2010, not later than September 1 of each year, the superintendent of public instruction shall publish a list identifying the public schools in this state that the department has determined to be among the lowest achieving 5% of all public schools in this state, as defined for the purposes of the federal incentive grant program created under sections 14005 and 14006 of title XIV of the American Recovery and Reinvestment act of 2009 Public Law 111-5.

This law sets out timelines by which LEA's who have schools on the list must submit reform/redesign plans to Michigan's state school reform/redesign officer. Schools identified on this list must select as the basis for their plan one of the federal models--turnaround, transformation, restart, or closure. Plans must include all elements as described in the federal guidance.

The SEA's proposed timeline engages both the District and its Priority school(s) to obtain differentiated levels of support based on the school's status and individual needs. Please refer to Section 2A for more information about the supports available to Priority schools.

Prior to the initial identification of the Priority schools, MDE will provide early notice technical assistance events each spring that target the bottom 15% of schools on the Top-to-Bottom list from the previous fall as preparation for engaging in reform planning when the Priority list is published later in August each year. This aids districts and schools in both making effective funding decisions regarding set-asides for the following year to support initial turnaround efforts and in engaging in early data and policy analysis to prepare for the development of reform/redesign plans if later identified as Priority schools.

Early technical assistance is designed to improve the quality and feasibility of implementation of reform/redesign plans for schools. Using the Professional Dialogue protocol and data wall, potential Priority schools will engage in introductory needs analysis and planning with MDE facilitators to guide reform/redesign plan development. Even if not later identified on the Priority school list, this dialogue will engage a broad range of poorly performing schools and initiate reform-minded efforts that should end up in all schools' School (and District) Improvement Plans. This also addresses financial set-aside considerations before the school's consolidated application are completed, so that reform-specific strategies are incorporated into the application plan.

Once identified as Priority schools, the timeline for intervention planning and implementation (see revised section below) is initiated, beginning a second set of elements of the intervention process. Schools on this list formerly known as "Persistently Lowest Achieving" will now receive the designation of Priority Schools and will follow the timeline as given in the state law. All dates in the

timeline required by law are shown with an *.

***Table 11*. Timeline for Priority Schools.**

Date	Action Step
Late spring each calendar year	School Reform Office holds "early notice" workshop to address reform considerations with bottom 15% of the past year's Top-to-Bottom List. This early notice was requested by LEA Superintendents due to the time constraints of the legislated timeline for reform plan development.
Summer of each calendar year	School Reform Office facilitates technical assistance meetings that include Professional Dialogue based on each school's data wall to help address likely reform plan options, considerations for future funding through the consolidated application, and other reform needs and efforts.
No later than September 1 of each calendar year*	List of Priority Schools published by MDE*
No later than three weeks after publication of Priority Schools list	State School Reform Officer holds initial meeting with LEA and school(s) representatives to offer the MDE-provided data wall, plan for the ensuing facilitated "professional dialogue session," and review Reform and Redesign options: • Restart Model • Transformation Model • Turnaround Model • Closure The following groups will be represented at the initial meeting to offer technical assistance. • MDE-trained facilitators with expertise in both school reform and knowledge of the guidance under which the plans must be developed and operated. • Representatives of the regional education service agencies that have Priority schools who will be offering assistance at the local level. • For schools in Category/Year Three, members of district intervention teams with expertise in diagnosing systems problems at the district level. (Personnel, budget, procurement, instruction and instructional strategies, professional development)
Next 90 days	Category/Year 1 schools hold a "professional dialogue" session using the MDE-provided data wall, select the appropriate intervention model and write or revise a draft reform/redesign plan to submit through AdvancED modified SIP templates. Title I priority schools will receive assistance for this work from an MDE-provided intervention specialist who will: • Work with school leaders to select the most appropriate Reform and Redesign model based on needs • Identify District system-level improvements needed to support schools' rapid turnaround strategies including:

	• Student Achievement/Instruction • Budget and Financial Practices • Procurement • Recruitment, Screening, Hiring and Placement of Staff • Select which components of the Statewide System of Support meet the student and staff needs and be incorporated into chosen model Category/Year 2 schools will receive assistance in revising and implementing their plan from an intervention specialist, who will accomplish the following: • Participate, if designated by the school reform officer, in the school's facilitated "professional dialogue" to help strengthen the reform/redesign plan identify root causes of low student achievement • Identify and resolve system issues which are barriers to full plan implementation Category/Year 3 districts/schools' District Intervention Team will play a more active role. The Intervention Team will do the following: • Diagnose problem areas in district level supports and school implementation capacity and provide prescription(s) for solutions • Conduct a needs assessment of the school(s) to select the most appropriate Reform and Redesign plan • Participate in the school's "professional dialogue" to integrate its analysis into the district and school's evaluation of Year Two efforts • Write the plan • Budget for the implementation of the plan • Provide oversight of plan implementation • Design and coach effective evaluation of teachers and principals • Support/mentoring of principals Category/Year 4 districts/schools These schools are going to be subject to transfer into the EAS pursuant to state law.
Within 90 days after publication of Priority Schools list	LEA submits draft school(s) Reform and Redesign Plan(s) to State School Reform Officer
Within 30 days after Reform and Redesign Plan submission*	State School Reform officer reviews the draft plans and gives feedback to LEA through AdvancED modified SIP templates.
Within 30 days after the draft Reform and Redesign Plan is reviewed and returned to the LEA	LEA must resubmit plan for approval/disapproval: • If Reform and Redesign Plan is not approved, the school will be placed under the auspices of the Educational Achievement System beginning the following school year • If Reform and Redesign Plan is approved, LEA/school use the

	remainder of the school year to put the plan in place for implementation the following fall*
Throughout the school year	School Support Team and the Intervention Specialist, under guidance of SRO, meets quarterly with Priority School(s) School Improvement Team to monitor the continuous improvement processes in the school. Each school reports quarterly to MDE on its plan implementation progress Category/Year 4 schools are monitored monthly by the School Reform Office to evaluate progress on the School Reform Plan. Evaluation reports are shared with schools to review progress and plan next steps for plan implementation.
No later than June 1	1. The LEA and school must conduct a next-round "professional dialogue" using its MDE-updated data wall to evaluate efforts to date and consider whether to continue or adjust chosen strategies and implementation options. 2. LEA must revise its district plan to indicate how its Priority schools(s) will receive district supports 3. School must revise its school improvement plan through AdvancED modified SIP templates to incorporate components of the Reform and Redesign Plan it has selected to implement in the upcoming year, the appropriate indicators for progress monitoring, and the supports chosen to meet its needs.
No later than August 30	MDE will perform a desk review on both the district and the school to determine whether the improvement plans have been appropriately updated and create a file for each school that contains baseline data for both leading and lagging indicators
During the following school year of Reform and Redesign Plan implementation These activities will continue in successive years of implementation if the data indicates a need. Schools are moving off the Priority List and new schools are coming on the list	• MDE will hold a minimum of two networking meetings for LEA/school teams with Reform and Redesign Plans to share best practices around the implementation of college and career ready standards and the instructional strategies that best support such implementation • MDE will devote a strand of the Fall and Spring School Improvement conferences for Priority Schools to support implementation of their plans and the implementation of college and career ready standards • MDE-trained Improvement Specialists will monitor the implementation of the Reform and Redesign Plan, communicate regularly with the district and school board and meet monthly/bimonthly with MDE to share updates and network with other contractors. • MDE will conduct site visits on a regular basis (at least quarterly with monthly visits where needed) to review progress on plan implementation, and will work with schools to provide focused technical assistance around implementation efforts. These efforts will generate a progress report based on benchmarking efforts related to implementation indicators and quantitative

leading and lagging data indicators related to school and student performance.

- MDE will provide an online professional development and communication tool that addresses common reform barriers for teachers, instructional leaders, and building/district administration.
- A series of job-embedded professional learning events and resources will be created and disseminated using this site, and based on "just-in-time" data summaries from school monitoring efforts.
- MDE will develop a comprehensive professional development program of resources and strategies that specifically address achievement gap remediation efforts for use in Focus and Priority schools. These will be based upon a number of leading, research-based models for addressing both general proficiency achievement gaps (as identified by the Bottom 30% indicator addressed earlier) and cultural sub-group achievement gaps.

During the reform/redesign planning and implementation process, a number of resources are provided to Priority schools (along with some parallel efforts for Focus Schools) to support the rapid turnaround required for these schools. These are detailed below.

Table 12. Timeline and Resources for Rapid Turnaround

REFORM / IMPROVEMENT PRINCIPLES	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY SCHOOL INTERVENTION (Funding Source)	FOCUS SCHOOL INTERVENTION (Funding Source)
Develop strong leadership capacity in schools (Transformation and Turnaround Model Requirement 1)	This trained Intervention Team works at the district level to do a deep diagnostic to identify the root causes of the district leadership and processes not being able to provide support to its focus schools.	For Title I schools, an intervention specialist (MDE)	For Title I schools, District Intervention Facilitator (MDE during year 1-2, funded through Title I set-aside during third and subsequent years)
	Based on the results of the diagnosis above, the trained Intervention specialist informs and advises district and building leader in turnaround and school improvement.	Intervention Specialist (MDE or its designee) available to Title I schools and/or SRO Technical Assistance available to all schools	

Effective Teachers (Evaluation addressed in Transformation Requirements 2 and 3; Turnaround requirements 3-5)	Professional Learning aligned to building's needs and focusing on the implementation of multi- tiered systems of support and instructional strategies such as scaffolded instruction that have proven effective with SWDs and ELLs.	Professional Learning (for Title I schools, this can be funded through District Title I Set-Asides and Regional Assistance Grants)	
	Trained Content Coaches will provide modeling, feedback, classroom data collection, monitoring and team level professional learning to teachers at the classroom level related to the building's identified needs focusing on research-based strategies and aligned with the School Improvement Plan.	Content Coaches (for Title I schools, this can be funded through Regional Assistance Grants)	
	Guidelines of the Michigan Council for Teacher Effectiveness are designed to accompany MDE's new teacher evaluation system, utilizing links to professional learning tools, supports for mentorship, and other system components and requirements.	Teacher Effectiveness Guidelines and System (State of Michigan)	Teacher Effectiveness Guidelines and System (State of Michigan)
Redesigned Schedules for Additional Time (Transformation requirement 8 and Turnaround requirement 10)	Priority schools are required to provide additional instructional time in core subject areas as a part of their reform/redesign plan, with recommended increases of 300 hours per academic year. Title I set-aside funding allows districts to supplement the use of increased learning time in accordance with the Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant guidance	Support Increased Learning Time (for Title I schools this can be funded through District Title I Set-Aside)	
	MDE has provided resources for districts and schools as support for their multi-tiered systems of support. MDE recommends the use of such a model as a support for struggling learners, especially SWDs and ELLs. The research clearly states that multi-tiered systems of support such as Response to Intervention (RtI) help struggling learners master the curricular expectations.	Implement a multi-tiered system of support that includes scaffolded instruction for SWDs and ELLs (for Title I schools this can be funded through District Title I Set-Aside)	Implement a multi-tiered system of support that includes scaffolded instruction for SWDs and ELLs (for Title I schools this can be funded through District Title I Set-Aside)

	Surveys of enacted curriculum inform instructional practice with regard to alignment of common core curriculum standards to what is actually being taught in the classroom. ISD/ESA consultants can then provide technical assistance on how to increase alignment at the classroom level.	Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SRO provides this for all priority schools in year 1; for Title I schools, this can be funded in subsequent years through Regional Assistance Grant)	
	Professional Dialogue with trained turnaround facilitators will utilize school data to reach needs-based decisions about relevant research-based instructional programs that are appropriate to address school needs and can be supported by ISD/ESA consultants or commercial providers.	For Title I schools, Professional Dialogue facilitators (MDE or its designee, District and/or School Title I Set-Aside)	For Title I schools, District Intervention Facilitator (MDE during year 1-2, funded through Title I set-aside during third and subsequent years)
	The restructuring model will focus on improving instruction, curriculum alignment, rigor, and relevance. An outside vendor with a research-based program may be utilized.	MDE Approved Restructuring Model (Regional Assistance Grant)	
Use of Data for Continuous Improvement , including School Improvement decisions, Differentiated Instruction, and Guidance for Alignment of Professional Development (Transformation requirements 4, 6, and 7; Turnaround requirements 7, 9, and 10)	The School Support Team provides ongoing support to the school in how to monitor student achievement at the classroom level, identify individual obstacles to meeting turnaround/improvement goals. Works to assist teachers to identify strategies to overcome obstacles. Focuses on the Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC) which is aligned to the School Improvement Plan (SIP).	For Title I schools, School Support Teams which includes a trained School Improvement Facilitator (Regional Assistance Grant)	
	School Improvement Plan (SIP). This plan is required of all schools, and is submitted / revised on an annual basis. It utilizes an Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC) that focuses on a series of short-term cycles of instruction, data analysis and adjustment of instruction to address specific areas of need at the classroom level. The ILC relates to the **Turnaround and the Transformational models** as each have components addressing using data to identify and implement systemic policy and instructional efforts to support school improvement. The SIP is currently being integrated with both Turnaround or Transformation Model	School Improvement Plan Integration for Reform/Redesign Plans. (MDE)	School Improvement Plan Integration. (MDE). *While Focus Schools do not require specific plan models per legislation, they do utilize the SIP to address gap-related improvement efforts.*

	requirements for the reform/redesign plan, so that Priority schools can address both legislated components in a single plan. This also allows for ease in monitoring and evaluation across MDE departments, as the analysis and review tools are also built into the system.		
	An external team that visits the school after reviewing all data and provides descriptive data on the instructional core from classroom observations and stakeholder focus groups. This data can then be used to revise the School Improvement Plan	School Improvement Review (For Title I schools, this may be funded through District Title I Set-Aside)	
	Each Priority school is assigned to SRO / MDE staff who are trained to facilitate and support rapid reform efforts such as those required of the Transformation or Turnaround Models. Staff conduct school visits periodically to review instructional practices, culture and climate considerations, and discuss plan initiatives and evaluation data to determine progress. Feedback and technical assistance support are provided to schools to support reform plan implementation.	Monitoring and Technical Assistance (MDE)	
	The School Reform Office is developing an online professional learning system for Priority school educators that is integrated with the monitoring process, but also provides access to online, job-embedded professional learning tools for teachers, instructional leaders, and administrators to provide strategy oriented learning tools and resources that are linked through collaborative communication tools to customize the learning experience for each educator and school staff. Resources provided are aligned to needs identified by monitors and supported through cross-office coordination of expertise within MDE and across the Statewide System of Support.	Online Professional Learning Communities for Priority Schools (School Reform Office / MDE)	

	Review of SIP ensures that school reform plan or SIG plan elements are incorporated into the SIP and not stand alone documents. Avoids potential conflict between strategies and goals in separate plans, avoids duplication and reduces waste.	MDE Desk Review of SIPs (MDE)	MDE Desk Review of SIPs (MDE)
Safe and Healthy Students (Transformation requirement 10; Turnaround requirement 2)	Dropout challenge creates a safer, nurturing environment to mentor students at risk of dropping out.	Superintendent's Dropout Challenge	Superintendent's Dropout Challenge
	Culture and climate intervention focuses on created a safe environment for students to learn in, a healthy environment for teachers to teach in that is focused on meeting the needs of all students.	Culture/Climate Intervention (for Title I schools, this may be funded through the Regional Assistance Grant)	
Family and Community Involvement (Transformation requirement 10; Turnaround requirement 12)	Dropout challenge creates a safer and nurturing environment to mentor students at risk of dropping out.	Superintendent's Dropout Challenge	Superintendent's Dropout Challenge
	Online professional learning tools (as addressed above) will provide guided assistance and strategies for schools to engage families and community members in reform-related efforts. In addition, as the School Reform Office is also addressing specific issues of the achievement gaps for African-American students in Michigan, as well as considerations for English Learners, cultural resources and context-specific learning supports will be provided to help educators better engage with these students and their families and community. This includes use of the "Collaborating for Success" Parent Engagement Toolkit along with scaffolds for appropriate use by schools.	Online Professional Learning Communities (MDE)	Online Professional Learning Communities (MDE)

The SEA's proposed timeline allows the District and its school(s) to obtain differentiated levels of support based on each school's status. Please refer to Section 2A for more information about the supports available to Priority schools.

MDE's Statewide System of Support is designed to build the capacity of School Improvement Team members to identify root causes of low student achievement through the collaboration and direction of the School Support Team. Through quarterly meetings with the building School Improvement Team, this School Support Team is also building the capacity of staff to monitor the implementation and impact of the School Improvement Plan. These activities can be continued after the school is no longer identified and the School Support Team is not assigned to the school.

Additionally, the various components that might be chosen that align with the school's needs will help develop skills and therefore increase the capacity of staff to:

- Implement research-based strategies;
- Deepen the knowledge of the Common Core Standards;
- Lead improvement initiatives;
- Use data to inform instructional decisions;
- Continue climate, culture, student engagement initiatives; and/or
- Implement new skills from job-embedded professional learning opportunities after the supports are no longer available.

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.

For a school to exit priority school status, they have to receive a Green, Lime, Yellow or Orange on the Accountability Scorecard at the close of their third year in the priority school intervention. In order to do this, a school must either meet aggressive proficiency targets, which are set in order for the school to obtain 85% of students proficient by the year 2022, or must have demonstrated significant improvement. This proficiency and/or improvement gains must be demonstrated not only in the all students group, but in each of the nine traditional ESEA subgroups as well as in the new bottom 30% subgroup.

This means that a priority school who achieves a Green, Lime, Yellow or Orange on the Accountability Scorecard and exits priority status has:

- Met all interim measurements of progress for priority schools (approved plan, leading and lagging indicators).
- Met proficiency and/or improvement targets on average as a school.
- Increased the proficiency rate of all traditional subgroups
- Increased the proficiency rate of their very lowest performing students.

This means that achieving a Green, Lime, Yellow or Orange means that achievement gaps have been narrowed, because the school has to have demonstrated improvements in the lowest performing students, as well as in all demographic subgroups. It also means that the school has regularly increased their achievement as measured by percent of students proficient.

Additionally, using the Accountability Scorecard brings a nice coherence into the system—it eliminates the need for yet one more metric that schools have to be familiar with. They will receive an Accountability Scorecard during their years in the priority intervention, and will be able to track their progress and understand areas of weakness. Using a separate exit criteria would only make it more difficult for schools to know what they have to do in order to make sufficient improvements to exit priority status.

MDE proposes exit criteria for Priority schools that are based upon two categories of indicators that are designed to both guide and account for the changes that need to take place for rapid turnaround efforts. **Programmatic indicators** allow the reform plans for individual schools to be unique to the needs of the school while addressing common indicators of reform processes that are aligned to the School Improvement Grant reform models. These indicators utilize graduated outcomes that are developed collaboratively by MDE and the school reform team, set feasible yet rigorous expectations that are designed for rapid turnaround, clearly communicated to schools, and scheduled at a pace for implementation that is consistent with such rapid transformation. **Performance indicators** are common among all Priority schools, and are used to determine long-term outcomes for the reform/redesign plan of the Priority schools. The use of both types of indicators to determine progress for Priority schools ensures that schools implement a comprehensive reform plan and attain student proficiency goals during the process, including the overall improvement of student achievement and the narrowing of achievement gaps for sub-groups.

Programmatic indicators are divided into two categories. Leading quantitative indicators are used to determine early progress toward goals based on an initial data review by schools around issues of climate and student performance. All Priority schools must address ten common leading indicators in their plans and early implementation efforts, leading to partial achievement of these indicators in year one, and 80+% of indicators by year two of implementation. Implementation indicators are proposed by each Priority school during the initial reform/redesign planning process, drawn from a set of common, outcomes-based indicators. Details of the use of these indicators follow:

- ***Leading indicators*** - All Priority schools will work collaboratively with MDE to set annual targets for the ten leading indicators (listed in Table 13 on page 147). These indicators address issues of policy, engagement, and school structure, and are commonly regarded as lead indicators for broader reform efforts at the building or district level. Targets are set based upon a two-year growth model toward state averages for these indicators at a minimum, or higher targets where appropriate based on the school's recent data for these indicators. Each indicator counts toward the metrics for progress in implementing the school reform plan, which is used to determine continued SRO oversight or transfer of the school to the EAA. Half of the target goals must be achieved by the end of the first year of implementation for each school.

- ***Implementation indicators*** – All Priority schools will identify a list of targeted implementation

indicators that are aligned to the requirements of the SIG reform models that best represent the focus areas for their reform plans. Each indicator links to relevant evidence and outcome data, which are monitored by monthly visits from MDE consultants who are trained to support the needs of turnaround efforts. Schools must achieve full implementation on at least 50% of the indicators during the first year of implementation. Monitors will work with the Priority schools to support the alignment of school policy practices, selection of research-based instructional models, decisions about job-embedded professional learning design to support instructional and policy plan components, and other related efforts to the schools' reform plan.

These indicators are linked to evidence-based outcomes at the time of selection and will be reviewed twice during the school year (at semester breaks) to review progress using an indicator based progress report. As a dynamic document, the progress report will be used by monitors to update observations and data gathered during the visits to provide information that can both guide the implementation or adjustment of the reform plans and provide data to determine the progress status for schools. These progress reports will be used by the SRO to make exit decisions to the Education Achievement Authority (EAA) during the three years of plan implementation by the schools, as well as for the final exit criteria for schools at the end of their plan implementation phase. Each Priority school's indicator selection will be reviewed annually to determine modifications to their reform plan based upon changes in progress, staffing, school/district policy, and other considerations that may adjust the objectives within the plan over time.

Performance indicators are utilized in years 3-4 for Priority schools, and are based upon student growth and performance in statewide assessments. These indicators are used in two ways to review progress of Priority schools. First, during the reform planning process in year 1, Priority schools review student data for all subjects and subgroups to determine curricular and sub-group based intervention strategies based on need, and to determine school proficiency targets (AMOs) for each subject and subgroup for each of the four years of plan development and implementation. These are used as targets to determine individual performance goals for the school for each of the four years, which are specifically used to determine scores used in the determination of satisfactory progress (Table 5) for schools. In addition to student proficiency outcomes, other lagging indicators such as graduation rate, college enrollment rate, and percent of English language learners who attain English proficiency are reviewed to determine annual goals for use in the annual progress review.

Secondly, the performance indicators are used as minimum level benchmarks for progress during the three years of reform plan implementation. Schools must achieve Accountability targets each of these years to continue plan implementation (and to avoid recommendation for transfer to the EAA), regardless of their implementation efforts. These targets are required for all students in all subjects, as well as all relevant student sub-groups for the given school.

MDE recognizes that some of the reform efforts may take time to implement in ways that may not see the sizable gains in student proficiency required to meet Accountability targets every year, Priority schools may achieve "safe harbor" in performance indicators in one of the years of plan implementation. Safe harbor is defined as being in the 80+ percentile for improvement for a given year in the grade level and/or subject. This safe harbor benchmark does not apply to the final student proficiency level at the end of the four-year designation as a Priority school; they must meet the Accountability benchmarks established when the original reform/redesign plan is submitted and approved.

The Priority school exit criteria and timeline need to account for situational events that may cause a temporary lack of progress in implementing school reforms (i.e. an unanticipated departure of a building principal or similar major change), or may result in sudden demographic changes (i.e. merger with another school or grade realignment by building within a district) that could set back progress toward student proficiency targets. For this reason, Priority schools may be placed "on hold" for up to a year during the reform/redesign plan implementation. This hold would suspend the target goals of the programmatic and performance indicators during the year of the hold, and the school would work with MDE staff to modify or update the plan to accommodate the change required due to the event. At the end of that year, progress determination would resume using the programmatic and performance indicator targets from the previous year.

Exit criteria for Priority schools will be reviewed each year to determine if the school is making satisfactory progress, using these indicators. Semi-annual reviews of progress (or annual reviews of student performance data) will be used to determine inadequate progress. Such a determination will lead to recommendation for removal of the school from the LEA to the statewide Educational Achievement Authority (EAA). Schools placed with the EAA are not eligible to return to their local school district for at least five years, based upon exit criteria for the EAA).

- A Priority school needs to meet its Accountability targets after a year of planning and three years of intervention planning or be on track to meet their accountability targets in the Accountability Scorecard during the final year of intervention, and show significant improvement as reflected through reform plan implementation and a combination of leading and lagging indicators.
    - AMO targets have been adjusted to reflect new cut scores.
    - Student growth, provisional proficiency, and safe harbor are all still available to schools to help them make Accountability targets. These are combined with other leading and lagging indicators and a set of identified practices based on each school's reform plan that are identified through implementation indicators aligned to the reform plan.
    - During the three years of intervention, additional indicators related to plan implementation will be used to assess the progress of individual school's reform efforts, and ultimately, inform the decision for poorly performing schools to the EAA.

These are identified in the table below. Individual progress indicators within each category are used to generate scores that are weighted according to the year of implementation as shown.

- This holds Priority schools accountable to move students toward proficiency at an escalated rate during their time in the Priority school intervention, while recognizing that implementation of the reform plan may not be immediately reflected in student growth because of ongoing transitions within the school.

- It sends the message that we hold equally high expectations for our Priority schools as we do for all schools.

Indicators of implementation and progress are weighted at different levels over the three years to allow for reform plan efforts to be reflected in student performance outcomes, and focus on leading indicators and implementation efforts during early efforts as a Priority school.

***Table 13*. Determination of satisfactory progress for Priority schools.**

Review Criteria	Year 0 (Planning Year)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Leading Indicators: - Instruction time increases - Assessment participation rate - Dropout (and/or mobility) rate - Student attendance rate - Students completing advanced work - Discipline incidents - Course completion and retention - Teacher performance using eval. system - Teacher attendance rate	n/a	20%	20%	0%
Implementation Indicators: - Build leadership capacity - Teacher/leader evaluation process - Educator reward/removal process - Professional learning for staff - Recruitment/retention of staff - Data use to guide instruction - Quality instruction and differentiation - Increased learning time - Family/community engagement - Operational flexibility - Technical assistance partnerships	n/a	80%	55%	40%
Lagging Indicators: - % students in each proficiency level - Average scale scores - %ELL who attain English proficiency - Graduation rate	n/a	0%	5%	10%

- College enrollment rate - Improvement on leading indicators Student Proficiency and Accountability: - All Students - Race/Ethnicity Subgroups - Limited English Proficient - Students with Disabilities - Economically Disadvantaged - Bottom 30% (achievement gap)	Designated as Priority School	0%	20%	50%

Two sets of indicators are used to make decisions regarding the exit of a Priority school from SRO authority. Early decisions regarding an exit to the EAA may be made at the end of year one of implementation, or any point thereafter using the indicators from Table 5. These indicators are based on criteria specific to the school's reform plan, and to data identified by the school to identify leading indicator targets.

In addition to the progressive scoring using these indicators, a school must make Accountability targets after a year of planning and three years of intervention planning, or on track to meet their accountability targets in the Accountability Scorecard during the final year of intervention. Referring to Figure 32 on page 111, the proficiency targets for schools will vary depending on their initial proficiency level at 2012 (or the time of identification as a Priority school, if not currently identified as such) for each of the subjects and subgroups within their school. The AMOs vary over time, growing from the initial state to 85% proficiency by 2022. A school that is on track to make its Accountability targets at the end of the final year of intervention has progressed to meet the targets identified at three years out (to match the time of the implementation of the school reform plan). While they do not need to make this rising target every year during the implementation of their reform plan, they need to show enough growth to meet "safe harbor" requirements in the intervening years (years 1 and 2 of implementation). For instance, if a school is at 0% proficiency (School C on Figure 32) at the point of identification as a Priority school, they need to have approximately 25.5% of students at proficiency by the end of their third year of implementation, as this would be on track to achieve 85% by 2022. Similarly, if School B on the same chart were a Priority school, with 50% proficiency in 2012 in a given area, they would need to be at approximately 60.5% proficiency by the end of their third year of implementation. Interim years would not necessarily meet the linear growth targets for years 1 and 2 of implementation, but would need sufficient growth for safe harbor during those two years. However, safe harbor in year 3 would only be an option if the school has made the AMOs in both years 1 and 2.

The scorecard's Accountability indicator is used as a final, critical decision at the end of the third year of plan implementation for Priority schools. Student achievement data from the final year of implementation are incorporated into the calculations for Accountability for schools each August. If, at the end of three years of implementation showing significant progress through implementation indicators, a school fails to achieve the three year Accountability target for student proficiency as described above, the school will likely be recommended for exit to the EAA, at the discretion of the School Reform Officer to address contextual issues for lack of achievement of these outcomes.

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.

Using the Top-to-Bottom methodology identified above, we further identify Focus schools as follows:

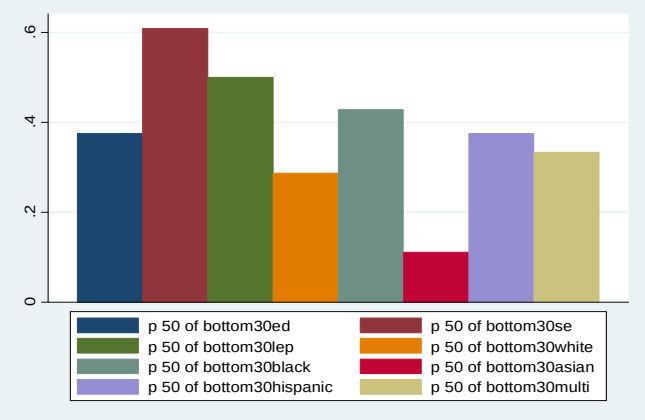
- Schools with the largest achievement gap, where achievement gap is defined as the difference between the average scale score for the top 30% of students and the bottom 30% of students.
- MDE proposes that we redefine "subgroup" for the purpose of identifying Focus schools to be the bottom 30% of students, regardless of which demographic subgroup the student is in.

We feel this methodology is an improvement over using a solely demographic-based gap methodology because it allows us to target ***achievement gaps,*** which we believe is the relevant question. A pure demographic-based methodology allows for the low performance of students within those groups to be masked by higher performance of other students in those same groups, which means the lower-performing students will not be noticed and accurate supports will not be identified.

That being said, we have conducted extensive analyses of our bottom 30% subgroup and have found the following:

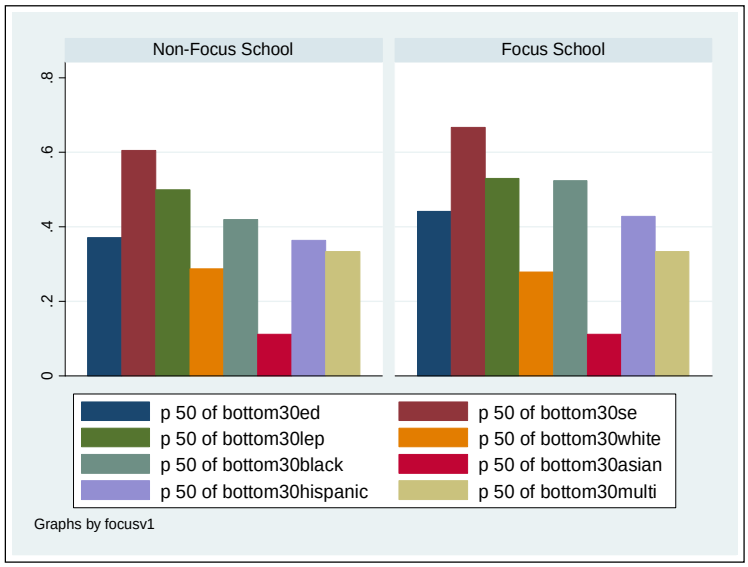
- The bottom 30% subgroup is comprised of the traditional ESEA subgroups. The chart below shows the average school composition of the bottom 30% subgroup. As can be seen, all ESEA subgroups are represented, with students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, black/African American students and economically disadvantaged students most commonly represented.

Figure 38. Average School Composition of Bottom 30% Subgroup



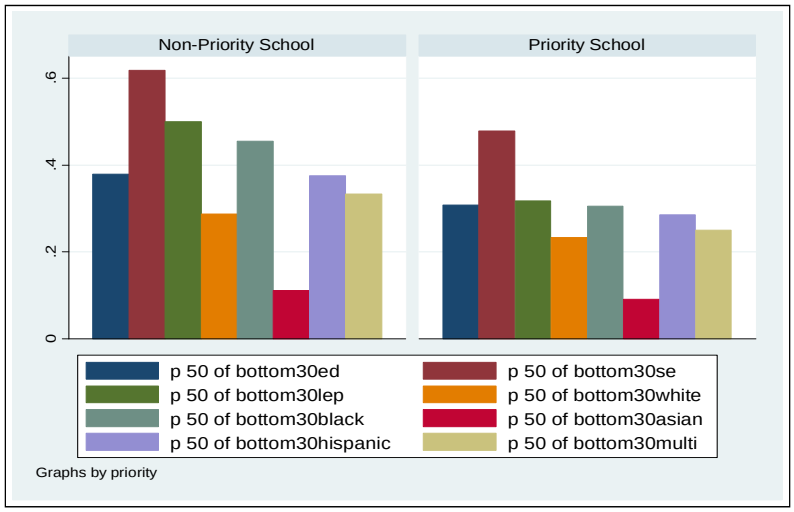
Examining the difference between Focus and non-Focus schools, we see that Focus schools have even higher concentrations of those student groups in their bottom 30% subgroup than non-Focus schools. This indicates that the Focus methodology is still detecting differences in achievement in traditional subgroups.

Figure 39. Comparison of Focus and Non-Focus School Subgroups in Bottom 30%



Interestingly, when looking instead at priority schools, we see that their bottom 30% subgroup is much more equally distributed than the focus schools. This indicates that we are indeed detecting a different type of school with the Focus schools methodology—schools where there are not only large achievement gaps in general, but where there are also large gaps between demographic subgroups.

Figure 40. Comparison of Priority and Non-Priority School Subgroups in Bottom 30%



Case Study

MDE's Focus schools strategy identifies schools which otherwise may not be identified using traditional subgroup methodology. As an example, here is a case study of Sunshine School. Sunshine School has 167 students, 115 of which are white. In the traditional ESEA subgroup methodology, they would only have had an economic disadvantaged subgroup (which includes 67 students); the 21 black students, 1 Native American student, 8 Asian students, 4 Hispanic students, and 18 multiracial students would not have been detected (as they would not have met the minimum n-size). Also, the 22 students with disabilities would not have shown up as a valid subgroup.

Using the Focus schools and the bottom 30% methodology, the bottom 30% subgroup consists of 50 students, including 12 black students, 1 Asian student, 3 Hispanic student, 23 white students, and 11 multiracial students, as well as 8 of the 22 students with disabilities and 29 of the 67 economically disadvantaged students. A couple of notes:

- This methodology actually brings to light 35 students who would not be detected using a demographic subgroup based methodology.
- In the economic disadvantage subgroup, 29 students are in the bottom 30%. However, if we were only using the economic disadvantaged demographic criteria, the higher performance of the other 38 students in the subgroup would likely have masked the lower performance of these 29 students.
- In the students with disabilities subgroup, all of those 22 students would have been hidden using a straight demographic methodology. However, in this methodology, the school is held accountable on the performance of 8 of those 22—the eight students who are lowest performing. This highlights the fact that the bottom 30% subgroup is not exclusively students with disabilities, and instead, the bottom 30% subgroup consists of the *lowest performing* students in those subgroups.

Stakeholders have questioned whether or not this methodology might result in a relatively high-performing school overall having a large achievement gap, where the bottom 30% subgroup is still relatively high performing. MDE believes it is appropriate to hold an overall high-performing school accountable for having a large achievement gap because, as our core values state, we want to increase achievement and see growth in ALL of our students. Although a school may be doing relatively well compared to other schools in the aggregate, it is still a negative learning experience for those students who are left behind. At the same time, MDE recognizes that high-performing, high-gap schools will include some schools whose gap results from the deliberate juxtaposition of two populations as part of a strategic and demonstrably successful effort to accelerate the learning trajectory of the lowest achievers. Though the rapid improvement trajectory (for example, successful assimilation of refugee students into a general population) can be established, the high gap will remain indefinitely (because, for example, of fresh populations of immigrant students each year). In these cases, we have designed an exit path from the Focus School category called Good-Getting-Great (G-G-G) schools.

Good-Getting-Great schools will

- O Receive written Good-Getting-Great designation from the state superintendent, upon determination by the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability that:
  - o Their Top-to-Bottom ranking is in the 75th percentile or above (placing them in the bottom right quadrant of the chart in Figure 41), and
  - o Their bottom 30% (though initially low-performing) is making rapid enough progress to achieve Safe Harbor status
- o Be removed from future Focus School lists, even though their overall achievement gap warrants inclusion, and

Removal of Good-Getting-Great schools from the Year 2 and 3 Focus School lists (and subsequent lists, if continued) will result in additional schools being identified as Focus Schools in order to include a full 10% of schools with the greatest achievement gaps.

The support system of deep diagnostic data, facilitated professional dialogue and customized interventions will also identify the appropriate type of interventions and supports for other high-performing, high-gap schools. The school will still be held accountable, but not all interventions require transformative strategies; some will consist of holding steady what is working well while strengthening or deepening efforts with the particular low-performing population.

We also examined the relationship between the size of the achievement gap and the overall achievement level of the schools. Looking at Figure 41 below, we can see that there are relatively high achieving schools with very large gaps—but there are also high-achieving schools WITHOUT large gaps. Similarly, there are lower achieving schools with large gaps as well.

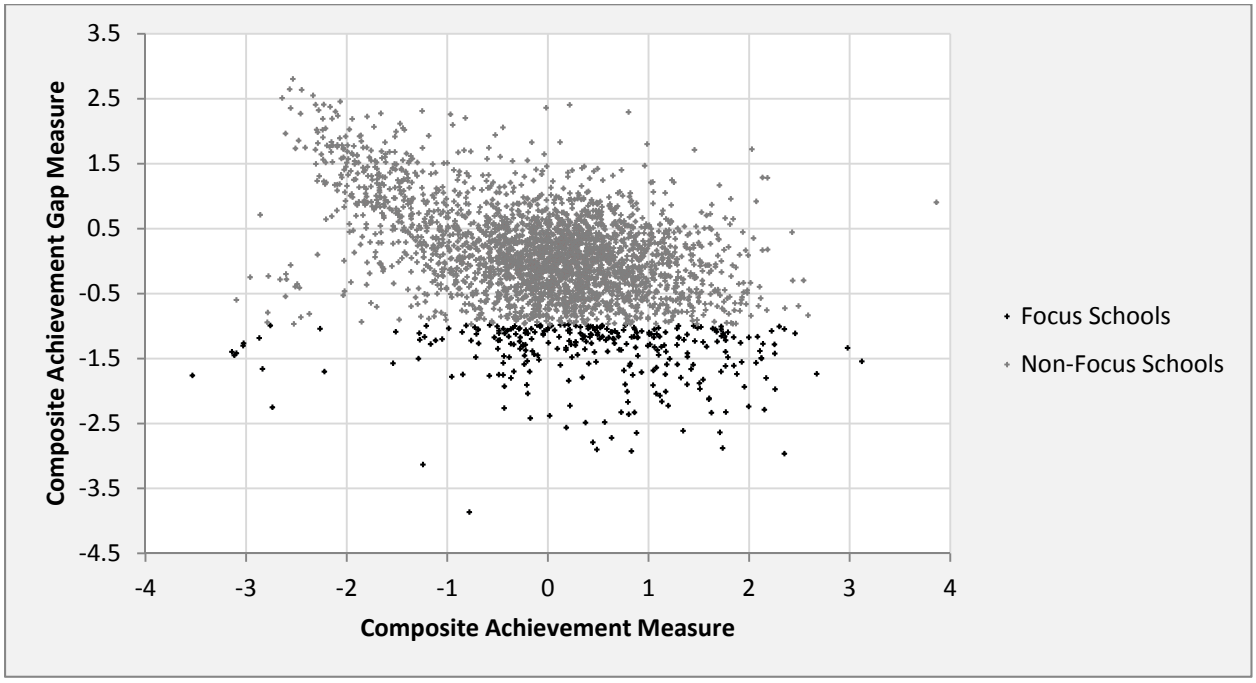


***Figure 41*. Distribution of Focus schools by achievement measure.**

One final concern about Focus schools that we have heard from stakeholders is that a low-achieving school may not be identified as a Focus school because it avoids a large gap—but it is in need of interventions and support. This is where the system of differentiated accountability works together. A very low-performing school will be identified as a Priority school; schools that are slightly higher than the bottom 5% but that are still low-performing will likely receive a "Red" on the Accountability Scorecard, which serves to put them on warning that their achievement levels need to increase in order for them to avoid the more substantial sanctions associated with Priority schools.

Focus schools are merely one of many methods in the system to identify schools in need of interventions and support, and will be a critical component to Michigan achieving one of our key goals—to close the achievement gap within schools and reduce the achievement gap statewide. This will only happen if we hold every school accountable for achieving success with all of its students.

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.

Focus School Needs

Focus School interventions will be implemented Fall 2012 as shown in the timeline below.

MDE anticipates that the needs of Focus schools will differ widely, depending on the nature, size and reason for their achievement gaps. For this reason, the deep diagnosis (Data+Professional Dialogue) will lead to a broad timeline and menu of activities that will allow for customized intervention and treatment of local student performance issues.

At the same time, MDE expects that the customized interventions that result will be variations on the highly successful model of multi-tiered support systems which has achieved such well-documented success in Michigan where it has been faithfully implemented. Our experience with multi-tiered support systems is at a mature stage which allows us to rely on its effectiveness as our primary initiative for Focus Schools. Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi) – a multi-tiered model that combines Response to Intervention (RTI) for instruction and Positive Behavior Support (PBS) for behavioral interventions -- has funded 11 regional coordinators who manage technical assistance and training for over 600 participating Michigan schools. Evaluators tell us that in one example of a widespread Michigan initiative using a multi-tiered system of support, there is data supporting the following:

- Schools have demonstrated an average increase of 5% each year in students scoring at grade level based on Curriculum-Based Measurement reading assessments.

- Schools have demonstrated a 10% average reduction in the rate of major discipline referrals per year.

- Sampling of schools that implement positive behavior support with fidelity report 7% more students meeting or exceeding standards on MEAP reading component (this means approximately 25 more students per school achieve the standards)

- Schools have demonstrated an average reduction of 3% each year in students requiring intensive reading supports

- Between 2007-08 and 2008-09, schools decreased special education referrals and special education identification rates by almost 1% across the project.

We conclude that high fidelity implementation of the model reduces student need for intensive supports while increasing the number of students meeting reading standards. This approach also frees up school resources to better address the needs of students requiring intensive supports.

MDE has started development of a District Toolkit that will be a resource for districts that have schools identified as Focus Schools. Part of this toolkit, will be a needs assessment which will help districts diagnose where they are not giving their schools adequate support around the processes that support student achievement. This needs assessment will be based on MDE's district improvement tools as well as the research and tools from the Center for Innovation and Improvement for their Academy of Pacesetting Districts work.

MDE's plan is to have these toolkits available by September 2012. At that time, we will provide technical assistance to districts on the use of this toolkit in the form of MDE-trained and paid-for District Improvement Facilitators (DIFs). With the assistance of their DIFs these districts will have one year to self-diagnose and self-prescribe changes in their supports to Focus Schools based on the resources in the toolkit. If there are schools in their district that continue to be identified as Focus Schools in the 2013/14 school year, these districts will continue with the 40 hours of MDE provided services of the District Improvement Facilitator who will conduct another data-based professional dialogue with particular focus on what needs to be put in place at the district level for better building support.

We look for stronger attention to be paid to student populations that are not performing adequately through stronger, more focused implementation of the tiered system of supports which has proved so successful when applied w fidelity. Based on feedback from stakeholders, we have also built checks into our proposed accountability system that would prevent schools from lowering the achievement of the top 30% of their students as a means of addressing the gap, rather than boosting the performance of the bottom 30%. Our structure for determining the Accountability Scorecard will ensure that all students must achieve well in order for the school to be on track toward its proficiency targets.

Table 14. Timeline for Focus School Interventions

Date	Action Step
No later than September 1, 2012 and succeeding years of focus school status	MDE publishes focus school list
No later than October 1, 2012 and succeeding years of Focus School status	MDE convenes technical assistance meeting with districts and school(s) staff to discuss next steps, requirements, and resources available MDE assigns trained District Improvement Facilitator to each district.
Between October 1 and January 30 of Focus School status	All districts participate in a structured, facilitated professional dialogue around their gap to explain the "story" behind the data, determine its root cause, and identify strategies capable of closing the gap. In preparation for revising their consolidated application to MDE, showing how chosen strategies will be implemented and , if in year 3 and 4 of identification and not having improved as determined by MDE, encumbering set-asides for eligible activities as directed by MDE, the teaching and learning priorities resulting from the dialogue are posted to the AdvancEd website.
Before the end of the second semester	District submits revised consolidated application and revised school improvement plan Focus schools begin implementation of strategies included in revised plan
At least one regional meeting during the school year	MDE convenes regional meetings to check progress with improvement activities and provide technical assistance
By June 30 of each school year	All focus districts and schools submit

	benchmarking reports to MDE and the local school board

Examples of Interventions

MDE has scoured the research on improving schools and believe that the most critical resource needed in Focus Schools is a multi-tiered system of support. The Tier One instruction must be rich and explicit and teachers must be able to provide scaffolding and differentiation to meet students' needs so that the achievement gaps among all students as well as subgroups of students is minimized. Student performance is dynamic and their access to additional tiers of support must be timely and systematic so that they can function in Tier One successfully. Successful implementation of a multi-tiered system of support requires that teachers are able to progress monitor all students in order to make effective instructional decisions if Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions are required.

MDE will require districts to ensure that their Focus Schools have a robust multi-tiered system of support in place and that the teachers have the skills and abilities to implement such a system with fidelity. MDE has resources available to support teachers in this work and expects that the Title I district and building set-aside funding can support this work.

As MDE implements the Academy of Pacesetting Districts through the Center on Innovation and Improvement, we are learning what processes and procedures need to be in place in order for districts to support all schools as well as struggling schools. The documentation that districts are developing is highlighting their need to be intentional in what they do to support their schools and not just reactive. This model is influencing our system of support to the districts with multiple focus schools. As part of our District Improvement Toolkit, we will provide guidance to districts in documenting their supports to Focus Schools as well as an assessment to determine their success in resource alignment.

In addition, MDE is working to coordinate multiple interventions and reform efforts into a thematic program of professional learning and support for school districts, schools, and individual educators around the topic of achievement gaps. These efforts will address general achievement gap considerations, such as narrowed instructional focus and differentiation of curriculum expectations, through interventions focusing on instructional practices that target these gaps, such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Instructional Differentiation, and policy practices including a focus on Beating the Odds schools. In addition, this program of professional learning will focus on those issues that are reflected in achievement gaps for minority student populations as a result of cultural bias or local and regional policy issues.
The School Reform Office will coordinate these efforts among the Office of Educational Improvement and Innovation, the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability, the Office of

Professional Preparation, and the Office of Field Services, among others, to ensure that individual innovations or program efforts are aligned, when appropriate, to include in the thematic focus on achievement gap issues.

Just as we are holding Michigan schools accountable for delivering stronger results, we are raising the bar on our own agency outcomes as we build stronger supports for each and every learner in our state.

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.

Once a school is identified in the Focus category, it will remain in Focus status for accountability purposes for three years beyond its initial identification year. The requirements and supports identified in section 2.A.i. may be conditionally suspended, however, if the school is not included in the second and subsequent years' Focus Group calculations.

To exit Focus status the school must:

- Following the end of Year 4, meet its Accountability scorecard targets (attaining Green, Lime, Yellow or Orange designation), including meeting the safe harbor target for the bottom 30% subgroup. (Accountability designation made in August following end of Year 3).

If a school fails to exit Focus status following the beginning of Year 4, they continue on as a Focus School and have the opportunity on a yearly basis to exit if they meet the Accountability criteria shown above.

The consistent exit criteria above will ensure that Focus Schools remain within the system of support (with its incrementally increased pressure to attain these results) until the conditions are met.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS (SEE ATTACHMENT 9)

Provide the SEA's list of reward, priority, and focus schools using the Table 2 template. Use the key to indicate the criteria used to identify a school as a reward, priority, or focus school.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	REWARD SCHOOL	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL
Ex. Washington	*Oak HS*	*111111100001*		*C*	
	Maple ES	*111111100002*			*H*
Adams	*Willow MS*	*222222200001*	*A*		
	Cedar HS	*222222200002*			*F*
	Elm HS	*222222200003*			*G*
TOTAL # of Schools:					

Total # of Title I schools in the State: _____
Total # of Title I-participating high schools in the State with graduation rates less than 60%: _____

Key	
Reward School Criteria: **A.** Highest-performing school **B.** High-progress school **Priority School Criteria:** **C.** Among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the proficiency and lack of progress of the "all students" group **D-1.** Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years	**Focus School Criteria:** **F.** Has the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup(s) and the lowest-achieving subgroup(s) or, at the high school level, has the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate **G.** Has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate **H.** A Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years that is not identified as a priority school

D-2. Title I-eligible high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years **E.** Tier I or Tier II SIG school implementing a school intervention model	

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.

As described earlier in this request, all schools in Michigan will be ranked on a top-to-bottom list. Of those Title I schools not identified as Reward, Priority or Focus, MDE will take measures to ensure continuous improvement. The very fact that this ranking will be publically reported will be an incentive for schools to focus on increasing student achievement.

All Title I schools in Michigan will be expected to use Michigan's Continuous School Improvement Tools (MI CSI) to analyze its needs and determine the root causes of systems issues and learning gaps:

- MI CSI Tools
    - School Data Profile/Analysis
    - School Process Profile/Analysis
    - Goals Management in the School Improvement Plan

MDE has a robust building level School Improvement process, tools, training modules and a website that houses building's School Data Profile/Analysis, School Process Profile/Analysis and School Improvement Plan. Title I schools also have their Targeted Assistance and Schoolwide components housed on this website.

When schools use these MI CSI tools as a diagnostic for uncovering the root causes of systems issues and student achievement challenges, schools can then identify goals, measurable objectives, strategies and activities in the core content areas that have the greatest likelihood of increasing student achievement.

Michigan has identified many tools, resources and processes to support continuous improvement in all schools that Title I schools will be expected to use to improve student achievement:

- Common Core Academic Standards to ensure students' readiness for college or careers
- Michigan's READY Early Learning Program
- Modules to improve instruction available at no charge through Michigan Virtual University at Learnport
- Michigan's Teaching for Learning website for professional development in research-based instructional strategies and the use of data to inform instruction
- Michigan's Literacy Plan
- Michigan Online Resources for Educators for professional development in how to integrate technology into instruction of the Common Core Academic Standards
- Michigan's elibrary resources
- Michigan's School Data Portal
- Michigan's MORE technology portal
- Regional Data Initiatives
- Parent Involvement Toolkit

- Participation in the Superintendent's Dropout Challenge to identify students at risk of dropping out of school and implementation of research-based supports and student level interventions to reduce the dropout rate
- Michigan's Online Professional Learning System (MOPLS) is a series of interactive learning programs designed to guide educators in recommending assessments for students and using assessment results to assist students who are struggling with concepts in ELA and/or math.

MDE has partnered with the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) to develop units, lessons and resources based on the Career and College Ready Standards. These units range from Kindergarten to 11th grade in ELA and math. These resources are available online at no charge to teachers in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Title I schools also have Technical Assistance from Office of Field Services consultants at the district level to address supports for the root causes. Title I schools will also receive technical assistance from the Office of Field Services, Special Populations unit consultants regarding English language learners and similar support from the Office of Special Education consultants regarding students with disabilities. Our work with a number of partner organizations extends MDE's capacity to help these schools develop strong, data driven needs assessments and school or district improvement plans.

For those schools not designated as "red," these supports will prove satisfactory. For those Title I schools designated "red," MDE will take a more active role. These schools will receive technical assistance from their regional educational service centers – RESAs - to ensure that the proper root causes are being addressed in appropriate research-based ways.

In 2012-13, during the first year of being designated "red" for a subgroup or overall (therefore not meeting Accountability targets), Title I buildings not meeting Accountability targets will be required to use their annual School Improvement Plan to address the needs of the identified subgroup. The consequences for Title I schools not meeting Accountability targets for the 2012- 2013 school year will include the following:

- Review and revise the existing School Improvement Plan to reflect the evidenced-based supports provided to those populations not meeting Accountability targets
- Review and revise the Consolidated Application to reflect the evidenced-based supports provided to those populations not meeting Accountability targets

During the second consecutive year that a Title I building is designated "red" (does not meet Accountability targets) for the same identified subgroup or overall, the building will set aside 5% of their building level Title I allocation to address the needs of the identified subgroup.

During the third and subsequent consecutive years that a Title I building is designated "red" (does not meet Accountability targets) for the same identified subgroup or overall, the building will set-aside 10% of their Title I allocation for at least one of the following options:

- to purchase data workshop services from ESA consultants or Schoolwide Facilitators to further identify root causes of the subgroup performance

- to provide stipends to allow school staff to participate in diagnostic data work to identify root causes of subgroup performance
- to provide professional learning for staff to address root causes identified in diagnostic analysis
- to contract with a School Improvement Facilitator or Schoolwide facilitator to assist the school in revising and implementing School Improvement strategies focused on the identified subgroup

MDE has confidence in this array of supports, incentives and interventions because we see that the systematic school improvement cycle works in the vast majority of Michigan schools; what is missing in the remainder, we believe, is substantive and focused content for the school improvement planning. We have designed the Data Workshop specifically to bring the "Diagnostic Data Leading to Customized Intervention" factor described in our Theory of Action to the identified schools where achievement still lags so that they can use the successful school improvement cycle with more fidelity.

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.

Throughout this document, supports for the various types of schools have been described. Additionally, MDE has compiled a list of resources available at no charge to all schools in Michigan, as described in the previous section.

Michigan schools annually assess themselves against the School Improvement Framework. The Framework consists of five strands, twelve standards, 24 benchmarks and 90 key characteristics that were supported by research as supports for continuous improvement in all schools.

The five strands are:

1. Teaching for Learning
2. Leadership
3. Personnel & Professional Learning

4. School & Community Relations
5. Data & Information Management

As Michigan has developed resources for its schools, it has been purposeful in aligning all supports to the School Improvement Framework. Then, when schools look at their self-assessment, there are aligned resources that could support identified deficits. This chart compiles all of the supports mentioned in this document along with other MDE supports and demonstrates how they align with our School Improvement Framework.

***Table 15*. Summary of recognition, accountability and support For Principle 2; alignment with the Michigan School Improvement Framework**

Strands of the School Improvement Framework					
School Type	**Strand 1** **Teaching for Learning**	**Strand 2** **Leadership**	**Strand 3** **Personnel and Professional Learning**	**Strand 4** **School and Community Relations**	**Strand 5** **Data and Information Management**
All Schools	*MI Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Resources* MI-Map Toolkit *MDE Career- and College-Ready Curriculum Resources* ASSIST for Teachers *Michigan Online Resources for Educators* Michigan's Electronic Library MDE's Teaching for Learning Framework *Michigan's Online Professional Learning System (MOPLS)*	*MI Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Resources* MI-Map Toolkit *MDE Superintendent's Dropout Challenge*	*MI Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Resources* MI-Map Toolkit	*MI Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Resources* MI-Map Toolkit *Parent Engagement Toolkit* MDE's READY Early Learning Program	*MI Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Resources* MI-Map Toolkit *Regional Data Initiatives* MI School Data Portal *MORE Technology Portal*
Title I Schools "red" on Accountability Scorecard	Math/Science Center Technical Assistance *Literacy Center Technical Assistance*	District Support *MDE Monitoring*	Data Workshop *Professional Development in "red" area/ subgroup(s)*		Data Workshop
All Priority Schools	*See All Schools above*	*See All Schools above plus:* Reform/Redesign Plan	*See All Schools above*	*See All Schools above*	*See All Schools above plus:* MDE Monitor

(more on next)

School Type	Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 3	Strand 4	Strand 5
Title I Priority Schools	SSoS Content Coach *SSoS Restructuring Model* Extended Learning Time *MDE approved instructional model* *Surveys of Enacted Curriculum* School Improvement Review	School Support Teams *SSoS Instructional Leadership Coach* SSoS Culture/ Climate Intervention *District Improvement Liaison* District Support/ Monitoring/ Evaluation *MDE Monitoring* Possible state take-over if no substantial improvement after three implementation years	Professional development aligned to root causes *Training in components of Reform/Redesign Plan* SSoS aligned professional development	District quarterly reports to local school board *Expanded School Support Teams*	School Support Team monitoring School Improvement Plan implementation and student achievement at classroom level
Title I Focus Schools	Tiered system of interventions for identified groups *MDE approved instructional model* Teacher collaboration time *Surveys of Enacted Curriculum* School Improvement Review	*District Improvement Facilitator* District conducted Instructional Rounds *District Support/ Monitoring/ Evaluation of building SI Plan and processes* District Support/ Monitoring/ Evaluation of the building principal *MDE Monitoring of district support, the DI Plan and District Improvement Facilitators*	Professional development for effective instruction of identified groups *Professional development on implementation of tiered system of interventions*	District quarterly reports to local school board	Benchmarks for District Improvement Plan implementation and student achievement at building level
Title I Reward Schools	*See All Schools above*	*See All Schools above plus:* Increased flexibility in use of federal grant funds	*See All Schools above*	*See All Schools above* plus: Honored at MDE School Improvement Conference *Provide banners and/or certificates*	*See All Schools above*

MDE has had success with its Title I schools no longer being identified after being in the SSoS for several years. However, there are also many Title I schools that have been in the SSoS for many years, some since 2006. Our building level supports have not been able improve their chronic low achievement. Many of these schools are now identified as Persistently Lowest Achieving schools. These schools have not benefited from a continuous improvement focus – they need rapid turnaround. This flexibility waiver opportunity has given us the opportunity to reexamine our SSoS, look at the research on improving achievement in low-performing schools and alter our approach to this important work.

This change in focus has led us to target intervention at a district level. Systemic issues have prevented many schools from implementing successful improvement efforts. By supporting district-level improvements, we hope to build consistency, capacity, and leadership across troubled systems, to ensure that all schools get the timely, effective resources they need.

Priority Schools: Supports and Interventions

MDE is taking a diagnostic approach to resolving school challenges, particularly when it comes to chronically low-performing buildings or those with significant achievement gaps. These schools will receive intensive, personalized support to ensure fast results. Specific information on this topic is provided in Section 2A.

We are most optimistic about the use of highly skilled District Intervention Teams (DITs) in districts with Title I schools that have been Priority Schools for a third year. As described, each district with a Priority School in Category/Year 3 or higher will be assigned a District Intervention Team. District intervention teams will work in Priority schools in Category/Year 3 to help revisit, revise and diagnostically deepen reform/redesign plans. These plans will be informed by data and guided by the following research-based district level competencies:

1. **Leadership that Combines Passion with Competence**. Superintendents, principals, other administrators, and even lead teachers effectively cultivate not only a sense of urgency but also a sense of possibility, built on demonstrated expertise among people in key positions and their commitment to continuous improvement.
2. **Clear, Shared Conceptions of Effective Instructio**n. The district identifies key ideas concerning effective instructional and supervisory practice, and works to establish them as a "common language" for approaching instructional improvement.
3. **Streamlined and Coherent Curriculum**. The district purposefully selects curriculum materials and places some restrictions on school and teacher autonomy in curriculum decisions. The district also provides tools (including technology) and professional development to support classroom-level delivery of specific curricula.
4. **Organizational Structures and Personnel that Embody Capacity to Teach and Motivate Adults**. The district maintains routines and structures within which adult educators (sometimes consultants) engage teachers and administrators in continuous improvement of instructional and supervisory practices. Coaching, observing, and sharing make it difficult for individuals to avoid the change process, and the push for adaptive change spurs resisters to leave their comfort zones or eventually depart from the district.

5. **Patient but Tough Accountability**. The district develops tools and routines for monitoring teaching practices and learning outcomes, targeting assistance where needed, and sometimes replacing teachers or administrators who fail to improve.
6. **Data-Driven Decision Making and Transparency**. Teachers and administrators analyze student performance for individuals and summarize data by grade level, special education status, English as a second language status, race/ethnicity, and gender. The district publicizes strategic goals for raising achievement levels and reducing gaps, and tracks progress in visible ways. Administrators identify, examine, and often emulate practices from successful schools.
7. **Community Involvement and Resources**. The district engages a range of stakeholders, including school board members, local businesses, and parents, to do their part toward achieving well-formulated strategic goals.

At a minimum, the Intervention Team will consist of:

- A district representative that also sits on the School Support Team (see below);
- An individual with district business office experience;
- An individual with knowledge in curriculum and instructional practice;
- An individual with school improvement or turnaround experience;
- An individual from a postsecondary institution; and
- Any other individual the superintendent of public instruction or state feels will contribute to the effectiveness of the Intervention Team's work.

The Intervention team will begin its work by conducting a review of the district's capacity to support rapid individual building turnaround efforts. At a minimum, the Intervention Team will address the following areas:

- District business practices, including but not limited to:
    - Human resource policies and practice
    - Contracting policies and procedures
    - Procurement policies and procedures
- District support of instructional programs
- District support of building principals
- District communication policy and practice
- Assist with writing the District Improvement Plan

School Support Teams

Each Title I Priority School will receive a School Support Team (SST) as defined in Title I, Part A, Section 1117(a)(5). In addition to the statutory membership requirements, the SST will include an individual from a school with similar demographics that the SEA has recognized as "Beating the Odds."

The SST will provide technical assistance to the Priority School to select the appropriate intervention model. The support team will:

- Attend a data-based Professional Dialogue with Priority School staff and conduct a needs assessment using MDE's Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA). The CNA in conjunction with other data will identify the root causes of low student performance.
- Use the results of the needs assessment to help the Priority School choose a Reform and Redesign Plan /intervention model that best meets the school's needs and choose the components of the Statewide System of Support that aligns with the chosen plan
- Incorporate the elements of the Reform and Redesign Plan into the revision of the School Improvement Plan

The SST will monitor the school's implementation of the School Improvement Plan through a minimum of four quarterly meetings with the building School Improvement Team.

An MDE-trained and appointed Intervention Specialist will make sure that the components of the Reform and Redesign Plan/selected intervention model are being implemented as written and that benchmarks are being met.

MDE will approve or disapprove all Reform and Redesign Plans and perform a desk audit on a sample of District and School Improvement Plans to determine the revisions include the components of the Reform and Redesign Plans.

Accountability

LEA Accountability

LEA central office staff will meet regularly with the Reform/Redesign school liaison from the Priority school. Regular updates will be presented to the LEA school board. As noted previously, the Reform/Redesign liaison will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the Reform and Redesign Plans/intervention model. The LEA will also be responsible for submitting biannual monitoring reports to the SEA.

State Accountability

MDE will ensure that biannual monitoring and evaluation reports are submitted as required. MDE will also randomly sample school improvement plans for alignment with the needs assessment, the approved reform and redesign plan, and implementation of career- and college-ready standards.

As noted previously, Michigan statute requires a State School Reform Office to oversee the submission and approval of Reform and Redesign Plans, under the auspices of the State Reform Officer. In addition, MDE will randomly sample Priority Schools' improvement plans for alignment with their needs assessments and the implementation of career- and college-ready standards.

If LEAs are unable to provide sufficient technical assistance and support to its Priority Schools so that they are no longer identified as Priority Schools after three years of Reform and Redesign Plan implementation, these schools may be placed in the Education Achievement System under the supervision of the Reform and Redesign Officer who administers the state's Reform and Redesign School District as described in Section 1280c of Michigan's Revised School Code.

Priority School Funding

Priority schools have flexibility in leveraging Title I set-aside funds through the following mechanisms:

Intervention Team Funding

MDE currently utilizes a portion of its 1003(a) funds to support an initiative that focuses on instructional leaders with emphasis on a coaching model. MDE has granted these funds to a third party (Michigan State University) that administered the programming through a fellowship program supporting administrators and their building leadership teams (The Michigan Fellowship of Instructional Leaders).

MDE intends to shift its focus toward the district level. This will necessitate a paradigm shift from a strict professional learning model and to a more directive approach in the form of the Intervention Specialists and District Intervention Teams. The Fellowship of Instructional Leaders will cease to exist in its current form and MDE's designee -- likely Michigan State University (MSU) -- under direction from the state, will be responsible for developing and training the Intervention Specialists and Intervention Teams.

MDE's designee – likely MSU -- will hire, employ and supervise the Intervention Specialists and Intervention Teams under the direction of MDE.

School Support Team Funding

School Support Teams are funded through grants to Regional Educational Service Agencies via MDE's Section 1003(a) 4% reservation for schools in improvement (as waived to be used for Priority and Focus Schools).

Funding for Priority Schools

Title I set-asides will be required to support Priority school interventions, as described in Section 2A.

Funding to Priority Schools: 1003(a) Funds

Regional educational service agencies will use 1003(a) funds to support needs-based supports for Priority Schools. As noted previously, the Intervention Team (LEA level) and School Support Team will assist the Priority School in selecting the supports as detailed in the plans for the Reform and Redesign plans/selected intervention model. These supports may include:

- School Support Teams (REQUIRED)

- Instructional Content Coaches
- Supports to address cultural and climate issues, use of time analysis and issues, and cultural relevant teaching issues, as needed.
- Restructuring/Turnaround services through third party vendors (screened/hired by the RESA)
- Professional development (supplements the professional development funds granted directly to LEAs as outlined below)

MDE will also grant 1003(a) dollars directly to the LEA to fund targeted professional development that supports implementation of the Reform and Redesign Plan/intervention model.

Focus Schools

For districts with Focus Schools, MDE will provide a toolkit, based on Michigan's improvement process and tools as well as the resources provided by the Academy of Pacesetting Districts so that the district may assess its capacity to support its Focus School. For Title I schools, MDE will also provide 40 hours of consultation with an MDE-trained and funded District Improvement Facilitator to assist the district in preparing to conduct required data-based professional dialogues that will identify strategic intervention plans.

These districts will be required to report to their school boards quarterly on the results of its self-assessment and its ensuing support of its Focus School. This toolkit will be developed in the summer of 2012 by MDE School Improvement staff who have been trained by Center of Innovation and Improvement in Center for Innovation and Improvement's Academy of Pacesetting Districts.

Supports and School Accountability

For districts with Focus Schools identified for three years, the district will purchase with its Title I set-aside funds the services of an MDE-trained District Improvement Facilitator (DIF) with central office or related experience to provide technical assistance to central office and the school board in order to assist them in providing more effective support to their Focus Schools through:

- Guiding them in how to conduct a needs assessment using MDE's Comprehensive Needs Assessment and the school's individualized Data Wall to identify the root causes of low student performance that could be improved by district support
- Revising the District Improvement Plan to incorporate supports to the Focus School(s.)
- Setting district-level benchmarks for the support of Focus schools
- Monitoring and Evaluating the Focus Schools' Improvement Plans and district-level benchmarks providing a structure of differentiated supports to all students, focusing on the lowest performing student subgroups.

LEA Accountability

The LEA will monitor and evaluate the School Improvement Plans of their Focus Schools and provide quarterly progress reports to their school board. The LEA will also implement the recommendations of the District Improvement Facilitator. Biannual reports of progress will be submitted to the SEA.

MDE Accountability

MDE will ensure that biannual monitoring reports are submitted as required. MDE will randomly sample District Improvement Plans for alignment with the needs assessment and support of Focus Schools. In addition, MDE will meet bimonthly with the District Improvement Facilitators to check on LEA progress.

Focus School Funding

Focus Schools have flexibility in leveraging Title I set-aside funds as described in Section 2A.

Funding for the Focus School: Section 1003(g) School Improvement Funds (SIG)

If funding allows, MDE intends to use Section 1003(g) dollars for Focus Schools after 2014 when the last round of SIG grantees have completed their three-year grant cycle. MDE plans to expand the Regional Assistance Grant to regional educational service agencies to support the Focus schools. The service agencies will offer the same types of supports and services as planned for Priority schools. This will include the use of School Support Teams. Following the same process used for Priority schools, the School Support Teams will assist the Focus school in determining where their needs lie, as based on achievement data and the results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA). These supports may include:

- School Support Teams (REQUIRED)
- Instructional Content Coaches
- Supports to address cultural and climate issues
- Restructuring/Turnaround services through third party vendors (screened/hired by the regional educational service agency)
- Professional development

Improving MDE and School Capacity

MDE will build its capacity because it will have a better sense of the performance of all schools due to the dual identification of the Top-to-Bottom list and the identification of the largest gaps. This will allow MDE to better provide services, tools and products to meet the needs of schools.

The LEAs with Priority schools will build their capacity to understand how to use MDE's School Data Profile/Analysis, School Process Profile/ Analysis and Goals Management to identify root causes of why schools are not achieving. In collaborating with the regional educational service agency consultants on School Support Teams, LEAs will build their collaboration skills, planning skills, monitoring skills and evaluation skills. Identifying which components of the Statewide System of Support best meets the needs of its Priority schools has the potential of building the LEA's capacity to form partnerships with the providers of the components.

The LEAs with Focus schools will build their capacity to understand how to use MDE's District Data Profile/Analysis, District Process Profile/ Analysis and Goals Management to identify the root causes of where their district falls short in being able to support a school with large achievement gaps. The

District Improvement Facilitator will spend a minimum number of days with central office staff to build their capacity related to many core leadership functions, including how to:

- Identify priorities;
- Remove barriers to effective teaching and learning;
- Meet the professional development needs of teachers;
- Use the evaluation system to focus on instructional improvement; and
- Monitor and evaluate school improvement plans.

Schools will build their capacity to make the connection among student achievement data (summative and formative,) school demographic data, school process data, school perceptual data and what they do with students in the classroom. Schools will increase their capacity to monitor the implementation of school improvement plans and the impact of this implementation on student achievement.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

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

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

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

Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation Guidelines

MDE believes in improving the quality of teaching, of leadership at the building and district levels, and also believes in rewarding excellence in our educators and enhancing the professionalism of teachers in our state.

Our Theory of Action → Principle Three

If a school's challenges are accurately diagnosed through data analysis and professional dialogue at the building and district levels, then the implementation of a focused and customized set of interventions will result in school and student success. This approach will result in:

- **Consistent implementation of career- and college-ready standards**
- Rapid turnaround for schools not meeting annual measurable objectives (AMOs)
- Reduction in the achievement gap
- Reduction in systemic issues at the district level
- **Improvements to the instructional core**
- Better understanding/utilization of data
- **Improved graduation and attendance rates**
- **Building of/support for effective teaching**
- **Building of/support for school leadership capacity**
- Effective accomplishment of responsibilities by district leadership

As outlined in our theory of action, educators working in tandem with students, bolstered by a system of accountability and supports, are key elements in allowing Michigan to reach our goals of career- and college-readiness for all students and a reduction in the achievement gap around the state. To support this work, MDE has been engaged in systematically implementing educator evaluations statewide, in efforts that include legislation, locally-driven initiatives, and initiatives supported by MDE. These efforts will eventually result in Michigan having a statewide evaluation model not only for teachers, but also for administrators. It is important to note that MDE specifically extends responsibility and evaluations beyond the principal and into central office leadership, believing that quality education practices must be evident at all levels of the organization.

As MDE works to develop a statewide evaluation model, we are simultaneously implementing locally-developed evaluation systems, which provide for a laboratory of ideas and opportunities for piloting local initiatives, and also ensure that we begin changing the quality of instruction and educational leadership in Michigan *immediately*.

Educator Evaluations: Legislative and Policy Background

In 2009, Michigan passed legislation requiring annual educator evaluations that included student growth as a "significant part," the results of which are used to inform decisions about promotion, retention, placement and compensation. These evaluations were specified to begin during the 2011-2012 school year. Michigan's LEAs immediately began preparing to implement this legislation, and are now in the midst of the first year of implementing these locally-developed annual educator evaluations for all teachers and administrators. For the first time, every single one of Michigan's educators will be evaluated using measures of student growth, and the results of these evaluations will be reported into MDE's data systems.

One issue with the original legislation was that it did not standardize the process across districts, in order to ensure both a standard of quality and continuity in ratings. To address this shortcoming, the Michigan legislature revisited the original statute in the summer of 2011 and revised it in order to

introduce more standardization and comparability into both the educator evaluation system and the ratings produced by this system.

This legislation now provides MDE with a statutory template for implementing a statewide system of teacher and administrator evaluation and support systems. This legislation serves as MDE's educator evaluation guidelines.

In the summer of 2011, the Michigan legislature substantially revised the laws regarding tenure and the promotion and retention of teachers. Among other things, Michigan educators now earn tenure based solely on effectiveness, and all promotion and retention decisions must be based on effectiveness as well, with the time in the profession or the school no longer taken into consideration.

Michigan is one of few states implementing annual educator evaluations that include student growth as a significant portion in the 2011-2012 school year, due to its proactive and aggressive legislation. We believe this is a strength for us, even though the evaluations systems differ across districts. We do know, however, that districts have been having critical conversations with stakeholders, designing observation rubrics, looking for solutions to integrate growth, developing local assessments, partnering with foundations or other nonprofit enterprises in their area, and collaborating with each other as they work to develop a system that is fair and that meets the criteria of the original law. To support this, MDE hosted two statewide Educator Evaluation Best Practices conferences in 2011 and 2012 focused on student growth, in order to help the field come together and share their best practices with each other.

Resources & Final Guidelines

One of the key elements of the second round of educator evaluation legislation was the creation of the Michigan Council on Educator Effectiveness (MCEE), a two-year appointed body tasked with the creation of a statewide evaluation model for both teachers and administrators. MDE is excited about the opportunity afforded by MCEE.

MCEE consists of three members appointed by the Governor, including Deborah Loewenberg Ball (dean of the University of Michigan School of Education), Mark Reckase (professor of Measurement and Quantitative Methods at Michigan State University) and Nicholas Sheltrown (director of measurement, research and accountability at National Heritage Academies in Grand Rapids). The council has two additional members appointed by the Senate Majority Leader and Speaker of the House, respectively; David Vensel, the principal of Jefferson High School in Monroe, MI, and Jennifer Hammond, principal of Grand Blanc High School. Finally, MCEE includes a designee of the Superintendent of Public Instruction as a non-voting member; this individual is Joseph Martineau, Executive Director of the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability for the MDE. The statute required that the members of the Council have expertise in psychometrics, measurement, performance-based educator evaluation models, educator effectiveness, or development of educator evaluation frameworks in other states, and the selected Council is well-qualified and highly respected in these

fields.

MCEE meets regularly, and has begun the critical task of determining the key elements of a statewide evaluation system. When completed, the Council will report these recommendations to the Legislature, the State Board of Education, and the Governor. MDE will adopt these guidelines at the time that they are completed by the Council to ensure that Michigan has a high-quality system of educator evaluations that has similar rigor statewide.

MDE recognizes that this work will take time, and that in the interim, districts are still required to implement locally-developed evaluation systems. Therefore, based on the best practices and research within the state and nationwide, and the eventual elements of the system the Council will recommend, MDE is and will support the work of MCEE through multiple means, including the development of resources to support districts as they implement their local systems, and regular communication with the field regarding the ongoing work of the MCEE..

What will be included in the final guidelines?

MCEE will develop a series of recommendations for a statewide evaluation system. Given that MCEE is still engaged in its work, the exact recommendations are unclear at this point. However, it is clear that the recommended statewide system of evaluations will include several statutorily-required elements:

- A statewide student growth and assessment tool that includes a pre- and post-test, and that will be able to be used for all content areas, apply to student with disabilities, and measure growth for students at all achievement levels[14];
- A state evaluation tool for teachers;
- A state evaluation tool for administrators;
- Recommendations for what constitutes each effectiveness rating, and
- A system by which local evaluation systems can be approved as equivalent to the statewide system.

MCEE's Interim Report, released on April 27, 2012, provides greater detail on guidelines. We provide a copy of this report in the appendix.

Teachers of students with disabilities

Michigan's legislation on educator evaluation makes clear two main principles: 1) that the student growth and assessment tool that will be recommended by the Council must include assessments that can be used with students with disabilities and 2) that the statewide evaluation system must be able to be used to evaluate teachers of students with disabilities. We acknowledge the need for high standards for student growth for students with disabilities, and also acknowledge the need for some flexibility in how that growth is defined and measured. The evaluation system will utilize growth data

from state assessments.

Michigan's educator evaluation law requires that every educator be evaluated annually, using student growth data as a significant part. This means that each teacher is responsible for the growth experienced by students in his or her classroom, regardless of whether they are students with disabilities or ELLs. Through our Teacher-Student Data Link, we have provided districts with lists of every teacher in their district, with all students for whom they were the teacher of record for some class, and their relevant assessment data, attached. Districts must apply local rules regarding student attribution, attendance, etc., to that file, and can then integrate those growth data into the teacher's evaluation. We have also developed a tool to help them analyze these data and determine the average weighted growth index of students by each teacher, school and district (where more growth receives a higher weight and declines receive a lower weight). At the present time, the growth data that can be provided from state assessments is limited to reading and mathematics in grades three through seven, both on the MEAP and the MI-Access (Functional Independence). We have also provided districts with student results from the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), linked to their teacher of record, and a district can choose to factor those data into a general education teacher's evaluation.

MDE Support for Implementation
As MDE adopts the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium assessments and develops additional interim benchmark measures, more growth data from state assessments will be available for use.
MDE will support what is specifically required in the legislation, and will base its supporting resources on best practices from the field and from nationwide research.

Our resources will support:

- Integration of student growth from state assessments into evaluations (offering ways to evaluate local and national assessment tools for their ability to measure growth);
- Development of an observation protocol (steps involved, quality checks necessary, how to evaluate the tool for appropriateness);
- Important elements of training for evaluators. For this, we will use the Measures of Effective Teaching findings as well as partner with organizations like the Michigan Education Association to help districts identify the key elements of a high-quality training program for their evaluators;
- Inclusion of suggestions, ideas, and cautions for developing final metrics that combine multiple measures.

MDE reiterates that these resources are developed and provided to support our districts while the Council continues its work; These resources will provide an intermediary step in helping to introduce consistency across district systems.

MDE plans to leverage two sources when developing resources:

- State legislation regarding the requirements of the statewide evaluation system in order to align the interim guidelines with the final requirements; and
- The Michigan Framework for Educator Effectiveness. The Framework is a model for educator evaluations that was collaboratively developed in support of the MDE's Race to the Top Round Two application by the Michigan Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers-Michigan, the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association. This Framework focuses individual evaluations on both the extent to which the individual achieves personal goals as well as group goals, and encourages the use of multiple measures of student growth and achievement. While the Council produces final recommendations for the statewide evaluation system, the Framework represents a currently available, collaboratively developed conceptual model for conducting evaluations, and can be used to support districts in the interim until the statewide evaluation system becomes available.

Below is a graphic that helps illustrate the interplay between MDE's resources and the final guidelines and statewide system developed via the legislatively-outlined process:

***Table 16*: Educator Evaluation Tools and Timing.**

School Year	Evaluation System/Guidelines	% of Evaluation Based on Student Growth and Achievement Data
2011-2012	Locally determined Educator Evaluation Systems	"significant part"
2012-2013	Locally determined Educator Evaluation Systems	"significant part"
2013-2014	Michigan Council Evaluation Tool implemented;	25%
2014-2015	Michigan Council Evaluation Tool	40%
2015-2016	Michigan Council Evaluation Tool	50%

How the state's guidelines are likely to lead to the development of local teacher and principal evaluations and support systems (specific response to questions addressed in Principle 3A guidance)
Michigan's educator evaluation legislation is some of the most aggressive and significant in the nation, especially with the 2011 revisions to the original 2009 law. This law provides us with information about what the statewide evaluation system will include, even though specifics are still under development by the Council and via the legislatively described process. Therefore, we know that the system will:

- Be used by ALL districts statewide.

- Be based on results of the pilot from the 2012-2013 school year.
- Be used for continual improvement of instruction. The statute specifies that "the annual year-end evaluation shall include specific performance goals that will assist in improving effectiveness for the next school year and are developed by the school administrator... in consultation with the teacher, that would assist the teacher in meeting those goals" (PA 102, (2)(a)(iii). Additionally, Michigan's new tenure laws (passed in conjunction with this evaluation legislation) require that decisions related to promotion, retention, placement, and tenure be based solely on effectiveness, not length of service. This provides a high-stakes reason for educators to use the results of their annual evaluations to improve instruction, as there is now an incentive/consequence structure attached to these efforts.
- Differentiate performance using four performance levels. The statute requires that educators receive one of four ratings: ineffective, minimally effective, effective and highly effective (PA 102, (2)(e) for teachers and (3)(e) for principals and other school administrators.
- Use multiple valid measures, including a significant factor on student growth. **These measures will include student growth as provided in state administered assessments.**
    - The legislation requires that evaluation systems will include student growth assessment data as a significant factor. The legislation requires the following:
        - 2013-2014: 25% of the annual year-end evaluation based on student growth and assessment data.
        - 2014-2015: 40% of annual year-end evaluation based on student growth and assessment data.
        - 2015-2016: 50% of annual year-end evaluation based on student growth and assessment data.
    - For teachers, the legislation requires that evaluation systems include, at a minimum: student growth and assessment data and multiple classroom observations.
    - For administrators, the legislation requires that the evaluation systems include, at a minimum: student growth data (aggregate student growth data used in teacher evaluations), a principal or administrator's proficiency in evaluating teachers, progress made by the school or district in meeting the goals set forth in the school's school improvement plan, pupil attendance, student, parent and teacher feedback, and other information considered relevant [PA 102, s(3)(c)(i-iv)].
    - Requires that all student growth and assessment data shall be measured using the "student growth assessment tool that is required under legislation enacted by the legislature after review of the recommendations contained in the report of the Michigan Council" [PA 102, (2)(a)(i)]. Since the "student growth assessment tool" is required to provide a way to assess all students in all grades, including students with disabilities and English language learners, student growth data for all students will be included in the evaluation system.
- Include a process for ensuring that all measures that are included are valid measures.
    - The Michigan Council must recommend a "student growth and assessment" tool that can produce valid/reliable measures of student growth for use in evaluations.

  - The Council must also recommend a process for approving local evaluation tools for teachers and principals.
  - MDE will strongly urge the Michigan Council to recommend that MDE be given a legislative mandate to monitor evaluation systems to ensure compliance.
- Define a statewide approach for measuring student growth in grades and subjects that are not currently tested.
  - The clear intention of the legislation is that MDE will expand its portfolio of state assessments to provide growth data in all grades and subjects; or will expand its portfolio of approved national or local assessment tools that can be validly used to determine growth in all grades and subjects.
  - **Michigan is currently a governing state in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, and will adopt all assessments developed via that collaboration.**
  - MDE is implementing Explore and PLAN on a pilot basis to participating districts to provide growth data in high school that are aligned with the ACT (which is part of MDE's high school assessment).
- Require that teachers and principals be evaluated on a regular basis:
  - The statute requires annual evaluations for all educators.
  - The statute also requires multiple classroom observations, which means the evaluation system will, at a minimum, have to give teachers feedback at two or more time points throughout the year.
  - For provisional teachers, as well as teachers who have been rated as ineffective, a midyear progress report is required.
  - The legislation that is already in place and that governs the evaluation work in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 requires that all educators be evaluated annually.
- Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development.

  As stated previously, the statute requires that "the annual year-end evaluation shall include specific performance goals that will assist in improving effectiveness for the next school year and are developed by the school administrator... in consultation with the teacher, that would assist the teacher in meeting those goals" [PA 102, (2)(a)(iii)].

Teacher and Principal Inclusion in the Process

The MDE will follow a two-pronged approach to involve principals and teachers in the process of developing guidelines for a state system: 1) through the legislatively-mandated process and 2) through more iterative and hands-on interactions with stakeholders through MDE's technical assistance and support to the field. We believe that the combination of these two processes will engage principals and teachers in multiple ways.

The state legislation specifies involvement of principals and teachers in the process. This includes:

- Two principals serve on the five-member Michigan Council on Educator Effectiveness.

- The 14-person advisory committee to the Michigan Council has to include teachers, administrators and parents.
- As noted above (recommendation (b)(ii) of the Michigan Council), the Council must seek input from school districts, Regional Educational Service Agencies, and charter schools that have already developed and implemented successful, effective performance evaluation systems.
- The final report of the Michigan Council will be submitted to the legislature and the State Board of Education, both of which solicit feedback from various stakeholders.

Additionally, MDE is supporting the work of the Council and acting as a conduit for best practices, examples from the field, and stakeholder feedback. MDE has conducted the following activities with teachers and principals as of the time of this waiver application:

- Hosted a "best practices" conference in April 2011 for districts, schools and professional organizations in Michigan to demonstrate to other districts and schools, as well as to MDE, educator evaluation systems or components of these systems. This was an opportunity for MDE, as well as the education community, to hear feedback from those engaged in this work. The conference was attended by over 600 individuals from around the state.
- MDE hosted a second conference in February 2012 focusing specifically on three topics related to student growth:
  - How to use the growth data from state assessments in evaluation systems;
  - How to measure student growth in currently non-tested subjects and grades; and
  - How to combine multiple measures when determining a final effectiveness level.

  This conference is in specific response to feedback ME received from districts and schools regarding their questions, concerns and needs, and will again feature "best practices" from districts that have identified ways to integrate student growth for all educators.
- Offer continual and ongoing technical assistance to districts upon request, reviewing their proposed systems, offering suggestions or providing resources, and collecting information on the needs of the field in terms of developing rigorous systems.
- Present in multiple venues statewide to groups of stakeholders to share information on the legislative timelines, as well as to gather information and feedback from attendees regarding their concerns, suggestions and activities to develop these systems in their local context.

This work by MDE, in addition to providing support to LEAs and schools as they navigate this process, allows us to gather feedback on a micro-level from stakeholders, both regarding challenges and concerns but also regarding best practices and successful strategies. MDE plans to continually share this feedback with the Michigan Council, to supplement the formal methods outlined in statute for principals and teachers.

Table 17. Timeline for Implementation of Educator Evaluation System

MICHIGAN'S EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS GUIDELINES & MDE SUPPORT

Date	Requirements based on Michigan Law	USED Requirements	Party Responsible	Evidence	Resources	Obstacles
School Year 2010-2011	State Fiscal Stabilization Fund requirement: administrator effectiveness labels must be publicly reported on www.mischooldata.org.	N/A		www.michigan.gov/mischooldata		
March 2011	MDE develops an "Educator Evaluations" tab on its website as a location for the latest information regarding evaluations and effectiveness in Michigan, resources from across the country, and other evaluation-related information.	N/A	MDE - BAA	www.michigan.gov/baa		
April 2011	MDE hosts an Educator Effectiveness Conference for district participation to understand the laws, to assist with development of local evaluation systems, to showcase districts already in the process of developing and/or implementing systems of evaluation for the 2011-12 school year. Attended by 582 persons.	N/A	MDE - BAA		Assistance from Great Lakes East; BAA staff organizer	Securing funding to get the conference planning underway.
July 2011	The Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness (MCEE) legislatively created to provide recommendations to	N/A	Legislature	PA 100-103		Aggressive timelines in law for implementation

	the Michigan Legislature, State Board of Education, Governor, and State Superintendent on refining the Michigan educator evaluation system by April 30, 2012. New laws passed regarding educator evaluations and tenure (PA 100, 101, 102, 103).					
September 1, 2011	Locally developed systems of educator and administrator evaluation must be in place (for the 2011-12 school year), which base the effectiveness label determination on student growth in significant part (as determined by local-determined guidelines). Aggregate effectiveness labels publicly reported at the school level at www.mischooldata.org. *Developed with the involvement of teachers and school administrators *Applicable to all teachers and school administrators *Evaluates job performance at least annually while providing timely and constructive feedback *Establishes clear approaches to	N/A	Local districts		www.michigan.gov/baa	Aggressive timelines for development of local systems; "growth" measures from state assessments only available in reading and mathematics for grades 4-8 on MEAP and MI-Access FI; each district building its own system to meet the law

	measuring student growth, providing growth data to educators *Uses evaluations to inform decisions regarding promotion, retention, development plans, tenure, certification, and termination					
Fall 2011	MDE tours the state via an "Accountability Tour" at 13 locations to provide support, information, best practices about educator effectiveness laws and systems, AYP, and other accountability-related information at no cost to participants.	N/A	MDE - BAA		http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-22709_59490---,00.html 4 BAA staff at 13 all-day presentations	Setting up sites, travel, ensuring the most up-to-date information
December 2011	MCEE convenes.	N/A	MCEE			
February 2012	MDE hosts Educator Effectiveness Conference for district participation that focuses on using student growth measures. Many district-run breakout sessions about local systems based on student growth were the primary focus for the conference. Attended by 539 participants.	N/A	MDE - BAA			
March 2012	MDE makes Teacher-Student Data Link (TSDL) files available for districts to link student performance level on spring 2011		MDE - BAA			QA processing for files; providing secure access rights

	state assessments to teachers.					
April 2012	MCEE issues an interim report recommending a pilot in SY 2012-13 of multiple options for teacher observation tools, student growth model/value-added models in a refined educator evaluation system requesting $6M for the pilot. MDE posts the MCEE Interim Progress Report on the Educator Evaluation tab on its website and fields phone calls and emails.	N/A	MCEE MDE	http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/SBE_Supports_MCEE_Interiim_Report_386376_7.pdf		Interpreting the Interim Report to inform MDE's next steps.
May 2012	MDE makes Teacher-Student Data Link (TSDL) files available for districts that link student performance level and student performance level change ("growth") on fall 2011 state assessments to teachers. MDE creates and makes available a TSDL tool for district/school use that calculates a Performance Level Change (PLC) rate at the district, school, and teacher level and allows PLC to be analyzed at the district, school, and teacher level.		MDE – BAA MDE - BAA			QA processing for files; providing secure access rights

June 2012	MCEE expected to release details about the pilot and observation tools. MDE gathers information and creates/finds resources and tools in the form of a "Resource Kit" that is aligned with MCEE's interim report to support districts as they go forward in the development of their local evaluation system. Districts report effectiveness labels of all teachers and administrators through the Registry of Educational Personnel. Districts take an MDE survey on their K-12 System of Educator Evaluations.	N/A	MCEE MDE Local districts Local districts		BAA staff member District personnel District personnel	
July 2012	MCEE expected to release other components of the teacher evaluation system. District personnel participating in MCEE Pilot will be trained on the tool that will be put into place.	N/A	MCEE MDE – BAA MCEE & local, participating districts	MCEE Interim Progress Report, p. 14 www.michigan.gov/baa	MCEE BAA staff	Timelines
Aug	MDE accepts		MDE		BAA staff	

2012	applications for approval of Principal and Assistant Principal Training Programs for Conducting Educator Evaluations for grant funding as allocated in 2012 PA 201					
Sept 2012-June 2013	Year 2 of locally developed educator and administrator evaluation systems (as described for the 2011-2012 school year).	N/A	Local Districts		www.michigan.gov/baa	
Fall 2012	MDE, in a joint effort with the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), the Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA), the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA), the Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (MI-ASCD), the Michigan Education Association (MEA), and the American Federation of Teachers-Michigan (AFT-MI), will host two-day workshops at various locations across the state regarding best practices and processes for conducting evaluations across levels and in	N/A	MDE MASSP MASA MAISA MI-ASCD MEA AFT-MI			Aligning schedules for planning

	accordance with MI laws.					
Sept 2012-June 2013*	MCEE implements a pilot project of selected evaluation systems* (including multiple options for classroom observations and for value-added models) in Michigan school districts consistent with the recommendations of MCEE's Interim Progress Report.	N/A	MCEE			
Oct 2012	MCEE expected to release student growth model.	N/A	MCEE			
Oct 2012	MDE analyzes effectiveness labels submitted by districts in June.	N/A	MDE – BAA		BAA staff	Availability of file from CEPI
Nov 2012	MDE provides assistance, support, and resources for districts regarding MCEE's student growth model released in October. MCEE expected to release evaluation tool for administrators and details on pilot of administrator evaluation.	N/A	MDE – BAA MCEE			
Nov 2012	MDE opens the grant application process for districts to apply for approved Principal and Assistant Principal Training for Conducting Educator Evaluations		MDE – BAA & OFM		BAA staff	
Nov-Dec	MDE posts a space for "Resource Kit"		MDE			

2012	components on the Educator Evaluation tab of its website for district access. The Resource Kit will be added to/updated as resources are developed and available.					
Dec 2012	MDE develops supporting documentation/information for MCEE's evaluation tool for administrators.	N/A	MDE		BAA staff	
Dec 2012 – Jan 2013	MDE applies business rules for Principal and Assistant Principal Training Grant submissions – approximately 5000 grants will be awarded at no more than $350.		MDE BAA			
April 2013	MCEE recommends changes for obtaining professional certification	N/A	MCEE			
June 2013	Districts report effectiveness labels of all teachers and administrators through the Registry of Educational Personnel.	N/A	Districts		District personnel	Submission of data on time
June-Aug 2013	MCEE reviews pilot results and adjusts evaluation systems based on results.	N/A	MCEE			Timelines
Fall 2013**	MCEE makes recommendations for the final state requirements and guidelines for educator and administrator evaluation systems to the Michigan	N/A	MCEE			

	legislature, State Board of Education, Governor, and State Superintendent.					
Fall 2013	MDE produces materials to support districts with their transition to the final guidelines and statewide system. MDE hosts conferences/webinars to assist districts in understanding the recommendations from the MCEE. MDE updates its Educator Evaluation tab on its website with the latest information and supporting resources. MDE provides additional support as needed via phone and email.	N/A	MDE		MDE staff	
Fall-Winter 2013**	Per previous legislation, the Michigan Legislature receives the MCEE recommendations and enacts legislation finalizing the statewide educator and administrator evaluation system.	N/A	Legislature			
Winter 2013	TSDL files made available to districts for Spring 2012 and Fall 2012 assessments.	N/A	MDE – BAA			
School year 2013-2014*	Implementation of final, statewide educator and administrator evaluation system based on 25% student growth (implementation	Pilot of Statewide System; student growth signific	MCEE			Providing resources

	begins after legislative approval). MDE provides on-going assistance and support via electronic resources on its website, answering phone calls and emails, attending speaking engagements, and hosting webinars and conferences for districts as they adjust their local systems to meet the requirements as enacted in the legislation. MDE continues partnerships with MASSP, MASA, MAISA, MI-ASCD, MEA, AFT-MI to provide professional development to the field.	ant factor	MDE MDE, MASSP, MASA, MAISA, MI-ASCD, MEA, AFT-MI			Determining areas of need and developing materials that are timely.
Winter 2014	TSDL files made available to districts for Spring 2013 and Fall 2013 assessments.	N/A	MDE-BAA			
June 2014	Districts report effectiveness labels of all teachers and administrators through the Registry of Educational Personnel.	N/A	District		District personnel	
August 2014	MDE analyzes results of effectiveness labels reported. First year that comparison across districts can be made.	N/A	MDE – BAA		BAA staff	
School	Implementation of	Implem	Local			

Year 2014-15	final, statewide educator and administrator evaluation system based on 40% student growth. MDE provides on-going assistance and support via electronic resources on its website, answering phone calls and emails, attending speaking engagements, and hosting webinars and conferences for districts as they continue on into year 2 of the statewide system. MDE continues partnerships with MASSP, MASA, MAISA, MI-ASCD, MEA, AFT-MI to provide professional development to the field. Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium assessments go into place; will provide growth data for evaluations in applicable subjects and grades.	entation of Statewide System; student growth significant factor	Districts MDE MDE, MASSP, MASA, MAISA, MI-ASCD, MEA, AFT-MI MDE - BAA			
June 2015	Districts report effectiveness labels of all teachers and administrators through the Registry of Educational	N/A	Districts		District personnel	

	Personnel.					
August 2015	MDE analyzes results of effectiveness labels reported. Second year that comparison across districts can be made—and the change from the first year of implementation to the second year can be examined.	N/A	MDE - BAA			
School Year 2015-16	Implementation of final, statewide educator and administrator evaluation system based on 50% student growth. MDE provides on-going assistance and support via electronic resources on its website, answering phone calls and emails, attending speaking engagements, and hosting webinars and conferences for districts as they continue on into year 2 of the statewide system. MDE continues partnerships with MASSP, MASA, MAISA, MI-ASCD, MEA, AFT-MI to provide professional development to the field.	Implementation of Statewide System; student growth significant facto	Local Districts MDE MDE, MASSP, MASA, MAISA, MI-ASCD, MEA, AFT-MI		District personnel MDE staff	
June 2016	Districts report effectiveness labels of all teachers and	N/A	Local Districts		District personnel	

	administrators through the Registry of Educational Personnel.						
August 2016	MDE analyzes results of effectiveness labels reported. Three-year trends across districts and across the state can be made and published.	N/A	MDE		BAA staff		

*Michigan's Pilot and statewide implementation are both one year ahead of USED Requirements.
**MDE projected timeline, but is dependent upon actions of MCEE and the Michigan legislature.

Gathering Input from Stakeholders

While the Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness does not include teachers (although it does include principals), there is an Advisory Committee to the MCEE as established by PA 102 of 2011. The Advisory Council to the MCEE is comprised of Governor-appointed teachers, district leaders, and members of education associations.

This committee has responded to questions submitted by the council, and has provided input on the observation and student growth components of the council's charge. Below is a list of members.

Table 20. List of MCEE Advisory Committee Members

Name	Position	Organization	Representing
Dan L. DeGrow, Chair	Superintendent	St. Clair County RESA	public school administrators
Amber M. Arellano	Executive Director	The Education Trust-Midwest	education advocacy gro
Ernst A. Bauer	Research, Evaluation and Assessment Consultant	Oakland Schools	public school administrators
William C. Chilman, IV	Superintendent	Beal City Public Schools	parents of public school pupils
Barbara F. Mays	Vice-Chair	Barton Elementary School Parent Organization	parents of public school pupils
Mary A. Kovari	Principal	Detroit Institute of Technology High School	public school administrators
Kirstin G. Queen	HR Manager	Ford Motor Credit Company	parents of public school pupils
John F. Haan	Elementary Teacher	Charlevoix Public Schools	public school teachers

Tonya Allen	Chief Operating Officer and Vice President	Program for The Skillman Foundation	parents of public school pupils
Ingrid J. Guerra-Lopez	Director	Wayne State University Institute for Learning and Performance Improvement	public school teachers
Krista L. Hunsanger	Teacher	Grand Ledge Public Schools	public school teachers
Colin Ripmaster	Principal	Mattawan High School	public school administrators
Richard S. Carsten	Superintendent	Ida Public Schools	public school administrators
Matthew T. Wandrie	Superintendent	Lapeer Community Schools	public schools administrators
Nathan R. Walker	Organizer	American Federation of Teachers Michigan	public school teachers
Tammy M. Wagner	Dickinson		parents of public school pupils

MDE will continue to work with stakeholders to seek input from the field as districts implement the current law that requires an annual evaluation of educators based on student growth measures and must include multiple observations.

Both MDE-hosted Best Practices conferences were attended by a wide range of school-related personnel, with 10% of attendees who identified themselves as teachers, and nearly 30% who identified themselves as Principals or Assistant Principals. All attendees were surveyed about the usefulness and applicability of the information presented at the conference to which there was an overwhelming response that the information was useful or extremely useful. Presentations along with other resources were then made available under the Educator Evaluation tab at www.michigan.gov/baa so attendees and non-attendees alike could access the information presented at the conference.

MDE is also in the process of conducting pilot tests with several districts across the state that range from understanding more about value-added estimates and the MDE's assessment data, standard setting for common assessments, and leveraging data analysis within Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). District leaders, principals, and teachers are all critical contributors in these pilot studies. The results of these studies will depend on their feedback and input.

MDE's Initiatives to Improve Educator Quality: From Training to Professional Development

We believe that educator evaluations are only a piece of the overall picture of ensuring quality educators in Michigan. This strategy also includes rethinking and revising teacher preparation, enhancing teacher licensure opportunities, supporting teacher instructional practices, and providing targeted professional learning for educators. Although we will focus intensively on our evaluation initiatives in this section, below are a few highlights of each element relating to MDE's overall

educator quality strategy:

Teacher Preparation Institutions: Enhancing the Preparation of Teachers through Teacher Preparation Institution Reform

MDE understands that the work of educator evaluation is actually far larger than the evaluation system itself. Now that we have adopted the Common Core State Standards, teachers need to be adequately prepared to teach those standards. They also need to be familiar with the ways in which they will be evaluated when they are employed in a district and school. This requires that we rethink, as a state, how teachers are prepared in Michigan.

MDE is currently involved in utilizing the linked data between the teachers and their teacher preparation institutions to understand how many graduates from each institution are employed, if they are employed in high-need schools, and more importantly, if they are effective in their roles. We are also planning to redesign our teacher preparation institution rubric in order to hold the institutions more accountable for the outcomes of their students. Finally, we will be changing our certification tests, both to increase the rigor of their cut scores to be reflective of the increased rigor required of students with new student cut scores, and to assess potential teachers more directly on their ability to understand and teach content. We are identifying ways for student teachers to be evaluated by the evaluation system of the district in which they are working, to provide an assessment of pedagogy as an exit criterion for the student teacher and also to familiarize them with the process of being evaluated using student growth.

Changes to Teacher and Administrator Certification and Licensure

MDE has undertaken two initiatives related to teacher and administrator certification. The first is that MDE has begun to require certification of all administrators, to ensure all administrators have appropriate preparation and training. MDE has also established alternate routes to administrator certification.

Second, MDE has revised its teacher licensure rules, in order to create a three-tiered licensure system. This system is in the final stages of rule-making and will go into effect when this process is completed. The three-tiered licensure system allows teachers to advance from the provisional to the professional license, and then have the option to continue on to an advanced professional license based on the demonstrated effectiveness. MDE did this in order to help incentivize high-quality teachers to stay in the classroom while at the same time creating professional pathways for advancement.

Supporting Instruction

MDE's efforts to support effective instruction have been described at length in Principle 1 and 2; here we briefly highlight a few key initiatives. The first is the **Teaching for Learning Framework**, which was created to support effective instruction in challenging content across all grade levels and content areas. The Framework outlines 77 research-based Essential Skills (organized into Fundamental

Processes and Core Elements) that can be learned, practiced, and utilized by classroom teachers to efficiently and effectively deliver instruction. Certainly it is not the expectation that a teacher use all 77 Essential Skills in every lesson or every day – or even every week. Rather, the resources and guidance contained in this website are meant to support teachers in determining how to effectively match the Essential Skills to the content and learning objectives to which they are teaching in order to maximize student learning.

MDE has two parallel and related processes for developing credible ways to evaluate teachers of students with disabilities and teachers of English Language Learners in the statewide evaluation system. The first is that our statewide evaluation law requires that all teachers are required to be evaluated annually, using student growth as a significant part (for the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school year) and then with the "statewide student growth and assessment tool" beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. This student growth and assessment tool, which is currently in the recommendation stage from the Michigan Council on Educator Effectiveness, is required to include a pre and a post test and be able to be used for students with disabilities. The clear intent of the law is that all teachers be evaluated and that we work to develop more assessments that provide growth data relevant to the population they teach.

At the present, however, we have growth data available in reading and math for one of our alternate assessments (Functional Independence, which is used by the majority of our students with disabilities who take the alternate assessment). We also have growth data in reading and mathematics in grades 3-7 for students who take the MEAP, which includes students with disabilities and ELLs who take the MEAP with accommodations. MDE is providing these growth data back to districts, linked to their teacher of record, for their use in their local evaluation system. Until 2013-2014, each district will have its own local evaluation system. MDE has committed to produce interim guidelines to help districts in their decisions and system development until the statewide evaluation system is available, and these guidelines will include recommendations about when and for whom the state-provided growth data can be used in evaluations. MDE's available growth data will expand with the adoption of the Smarter Balanced Assessments and the Dynamic Learning Maps, as well as with interim benchmark exams, and at that time, we will provide additional guidance on using those assessments to measure growth and to evaluate all teachers, including those who teach students with disabilities and ELLs. Additionally, the WIDA consortium assessments are expected to provide student growth data for English Language Learners as part of their new system, and MDE will utilize those data once WIDA is adopted.

MDE has also hosted two Best Practices conferences, both of which have featured sessions on evaluating teachers of students with disabilities and English Language Learners. We make available resources on our website for districts to choose from. We are also seeking a partner district or districts who are engaged in this work to participate in a pilot study with MDE to identify local assessment tools that provide meaningful measures of growth for students with disabilities and ELLs so that we can make that information available to all of our districts.

We also note the resources available through the **Michigan Online Professional Learning System (MOPLS)**. MOPLS is a series of interactive learning programs designed to guide educators in recommending assessments for students and using assessment results to assist students who are struggling with concepts in mathematics and English language arts. MOPLS learning modules are funded under a federal grant for the development of MDE's MEAP-Access assessment.

MDE also maintains standards for principals and administrators. These school employees also are subject to educator evaluation requirements and will be included in the framework designed by the Michigan Council on Educator Effectiveness.

For more information about resources available to support teachers and instructional leaders, please refer to Section 1B.

Professional Learning Opportunities and Ongoing Education
In the last two years, MDE convened a stakeholder group to develop new recommendations regarding professional learning. This group produced a new policy on professional learning, which the Michigan State Board of Education adopted in January 2012. This policy is based on the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning, and the intent is to help districts, schools, and educators appropriately identify professional learning opportunities to support their work. We anticipate the field can leverage these standards when integrating professional learning into their evaluation systems, and we intend to produce interim guidelines to assist them with these efforts.

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.

This section is organized as follows:

- Adoption of guidelines
- Michigan's Pilot
- MDE Resource Kit and Other Supports
- Compliance

ADOPTION OF GUIDELINES
Michigan's strong educator evaluation legislation provides a legislative mandate by which the majority of this work will be accomplished. At the present time, each LEA is required to adopt the state

evaluation system, or to have a high-quality system in place that meets all requirements by the 2013-2014. This provides the legislative "muscle" necessary to begin the process of ensuring that these systems are implemented. To support the work of MCEE, MDE will create a Resource Kit that aligns with the thinking and direction of the MCEE. It will include references and resources from agencies like the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality and local districts that have developed tools that align with the vision, principles and direction of the MCEE. It will include components to support a variety of aspects of educator evaluations including observations, student growth measures, data collection, and evaluation of the system itself, and training evaluators for observations.

However, MDE recognizes that legislation is only the beginning step in ensuring successful implementation of these evaluations, and that additional efforts are need both to provide *supports* for implementation and to ensure *compliance* from our districts.

MICHIGAN'S PILOT: *Establishing an official pilot year*

The MCEE has, since the original submission of Michigan's ESEA Flexibility request, recommended a pilot year. From the MCEE Interim Guidelines, the pilot year recommendation is outlined below. Additionally, the Michigan Legislature has approved the request of MCEE to conduct an official pilot study of evaluation tools and systems during the 2012-2013 school year that will provide the basis for MCEE's final recommendation.

In MDE's educator evaluation pilot, student growth is included in several ways. Growth based on the state assessment will be included, but MDE also plans to pilot growth measures from additional types of assessments, such as off-the-shelf assessments to allow for multiple measures of student growth to be incorporated into educator evaluations. Growth data from these assessments will then be integrated into final effectiveness labels at the prescribed rates to evaluate how those measures function in the overall designation. Students will, of course, take the state assessments on the regular schedule but will also take the following: (1) a computer adaptive assessment in English Language Arts and mathematics in grades K-6 three times during the school year, and (2) the EXPLORE/PLAN/ACT series as a pre/post measure in grades 7-12. In this way, all students will take both the state test and a pre/post assessment using an off the shelf test. Value added models based on both the state tests and the off-the-shelf tests will be calculated for incorporation into educator evaluations.

Text ***excerpted from the MCEE Interim Progress Report, released April 27, 2012, is shaded in light yellow.***

Next Steps: 2012- 2013 Pilot

After investigating educator evaluation reforms across the country, the MCEE has concluded that a pilot test is not only important, but imperative. Such a pilot test will allow a set of recommended tools and approaches to be tried out in a small number of districts and schools for a year in order to learn about how well they work and to uncover any problems that should be remedied before implementing a

system wholesale in all Michigan schools. While postponing the implementation of the "final" system might seem wasteful, not doing so would be reckless, both fiscally and technically.

A pilot year will provide data on implementation and validity, and crucial feedback from education professionals using the tools and approaches. During a pilot, technical and logistical challenges could be confronted and resolved, and the resources necessary to put a statewide system into place could be developed (including a communication system, materials for teachers and administrators, and a database for storing information), increasing the likelihood of our state succeeding in this complex but vitally important undertaking. Building a rigorous evaluation system that holds all Michigan educators accountable for student learning depends on understanding how well it works in practice and designing it to be fair, reliable, and defensible. New Jersey, Rhode Island, Washington, and Colorado have all used pilots or phase-in years to learn more about their proposed state evaluation systems, and each state has been able to adjust these systems based on the feedback and ideas generated from pilot-participating districts and schools. We want nothing less for our state's educators and the 1.5 million children they teach each year.

General Design

The council recommends a pilot study of evaluation tools in 12 school districts to be carried out during the 2012-13 school year. The pilot study is crucial because it will allow the state to learn about educator evaluation as it takes place in school settings and to accommodate practical and technical issues that arise in the pilot test. It will also take advantage of the fact that many school districts have already begun the hard work of institutionalizing rigorous, regular observation systems in their teacher evaluations. Districts in Michigan will be invited to apply to be part of the pilot study, and the 12 districts will be selected to represent the range of districts and schools in the state—in terms of context, geography, governance, size, and resources. The pilot will precede the implementation of educator evaluation in Michigan, and will be used to develop the final recommendations of the Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness. Below are specifications as currently known for the pilot study of evaluation tools.

Teacher Observation Tools

The council recommends studying three teacher observation tools in the pilot study, specifically looking at each tool implemented in four different districts of different sizes—one large, one medium, and two smaller districts—for a total of twelve participating districts. The tools, which the MCEE will select in the coming few weeks, will be the most promising (in terms of evidence and feasibility) and most likely to fit Michigan's needs.

Before the pilot begins in the fall of 2012, educators in pilot districts will be trained in the use of the tool identified for study in their district. Districts will not be asked to cover the costs of training, implementation, or data analysis for the pilot. The MCEE will specify exact details about the implementation of the pilot and will oversee the project to ensure a well-designed study that maximizes its contributions to the progress of designing a strong educator evaluation system. Lessons learned

during the pilot study will also lead to the development of responsible criteria for granting waivers, as it will be important to the credibility of the state's educator evaluation system to have rigorous standards for granting exceptions to the final recommendations from the council.

Student Growth Model/Value-Added Model Pilot

In addition to the studies of the observation tools, the council recommends a pilot of several alternative student growth models and value-added models in the 12 pilot districts. The MCEE plans to conduct a pilot using existing assessments such as MEAP in grades 3 through 8, new assessments in high school (possibly EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT), computer adaptive assessments in grades where tests are available, and local assessments in non-tested grades and subjects. Such a set of pilot studies will help prepare for new assessments that are being developed now and will provide crucial information about the different types of growth models and value added models that could be implemented in Michigan.

Piloting a student growth model will allow educators to examine both the student growth data and teacher and administrator observation data to understand better how evaluation will work when it is implemented in Michigan. The pilot study will likely highlight strengths and weaknesses in the tools and in the data they yield. This will help in the continued design of MDE's educator evaluation system.

Administrator Evaluation Pilot

Although this report focuses on teacher evaluation tools, the MCEE has already begun gathering comparable information about administrator tools. It is also likely that the challenges associated with teacher observations are similar for administrators, and thus work on recommending administrator tools will be informed and accelerated by the council's deliberations about teacher observation and evaluation tools. The council will be recommending one or two tools for evaluating administrators in October 2012 and will incorporate them into the pilot study. As with the teacher observation pilot, districts will not be asked to cover the costs of training, implementation, or data analysis for the pilot. The MCEE will provide more information about this aspect of the pilot in upcoming months.

Process for Implementing Pilot and Analyzing Results

The MCEE recommends that four full-time staff be dedicated to the pilot study: an Education Consultant Manager, two Education Research Consultants, and a Secretary. The team will be located in the MDE, but will be accountable to the MCEE during the pilot study. It will distribute applications to districts, and will then select districts for inclusion from the applications received. The staff will aim to select a diverse group of districts to participate and will consider geography, urbanicity, socioeconomic status, size, governance, and other characteristics of districts in the state. Districts will be assigned to an observation tool by the team so each tool is implemented in varied settings.

District faculty and administrators will receive training from experts provided by observation tool vendors. Throughout the pilot study, members from MDE's evaluation staff will offer support and guidance in using the tools.

The council recommends that an outside research organization be employed under the oversight of the MDE to analyze the data from the pilot study. The organizations providing observation tools also provide data collection protocols. The outside research group will be given the collected data from the observation tools for evaluation. At the same time, administrators in pilot districts will use the observation data to complete that portion of the teacher evaluation.

The research group will also conduct focus group or other interviews to understand better how well school personnel understood the tools and how to use them, whether the tools were feasible for use in a school setting, how systematically and rigorously the tools and processes were implemented, and how reliable and valid the data from the tools appeared to be.

In addition, the outside research group would match data from the pilot of the student growth tool(s) and the administrator evaluation tool(s) with the teacher observation data. This task will highlight how well the tools work in concert, and whether there are any reliability and validity concerns that should be addressed.

All data analysis from the pilot study will be provided to the MCEE, which may use it to inform its final recommendations.

Budget
The council has consulted with several states about their design and implementation of teacher evaluation, including their pilot studies. Based on what we have learned from these states, we recommend that the state include $6,054,418 in the FY 2013 budget to cover the cost of the pilot in the 2012-13 school year. That amount includes the cost of training, implementation, data analysis, staff support, and reporting, as well as other expenses that the state and districts involved in the pilot will incur.

*****End excerpt from Interim Progress Report of the MCEE*****

MDE RESOURCE KIT & SUPPORTS FOR IMPLEMENTING EDUCATOR EVALUATIONS
MDE is currently engaged in a number of efforts to support districts as they implement their local evaluation systems. These include:

- Educating the field on the requirements of the legislation currently (2011-2012 and 2012-2013) and in the future with the statewide system. MDE has conducted nearly 30 presentations statewide, including webinars and other virtual resources, aimed at educating the field in the requirements of the law, and providing them with access to best practice. We developed a web resource to support districts.
- Educating the field on the elements that will be required in the final system so that they can align their local systems with the upcoming statewide requirements whenever possible.

- In conjunction with the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), MDE now has information on teachers linked to the students they taught in the 2010-2011 school year. This enables us to provide this linked teacher/student data and all available student assessment data back to districts for potential inclusion in their local systems. MDE will release both the high school assessment results (the Michigan Merit Examination, and the MI-Access assessment) as well as the elementary/middle school assessment (MEAP, MEAP-Access, and MI-Access) to districts by early March 2012.

  The only state-provided assessments that provide actual student *growth* are the elementary/middle school MEAP and MI-Access, in grades 3-7, reading and mathematics, as this is where adjacent grade testing is currently available (see Principle 1 for a further discussion of MDE's plans to adopt additional measures of student growth in the next several years). To support the use of this growth data, MDE developed an easy-to-use tool that allows district to summarize the number of students who are demonstrating growth.

- In February 2012, MDE hosted our second annual statewide Educator Evaluation Best Practices conference, with a specific focus on integrating student growth into educator evaluations. Educators from around the state who have more mature systems in place for educator evaluations shared topics regarding how they are using student growth measures, how they are using local assessments for student growth, ways to automate the data collection necessary for a good system, and how they've developed, piloted and refined observation rubrics. MDE experts in research, evaluation, and measurement also offered findings and recommendations regarding the use of state assessment data in educator evaluations, and what to keep in mind in terms of establishing the validity and reliability of tools and measures.

- MDE has begun a partnership with one of our larger regional education agencies to assist them in conducting standard setting on their common assessments, in order to utilize those assessments for determining growth at the local level. We plan to publish both the procedure and the findings from this exercise, so that other districts can engage in similar efforts to set standards on their own common assessments. This helps increase the rigor of the local assessments being used to measure growth, and allows MDE to provide some of the measurement expertise that we have at the department to the field, via a pilot example.

- MDE is engaged in a pilot study with another large urban district to use their historical teacher/student data link (as the statewide link contains only one year of data, and at least three are required for value-added modeling) to estimate a variety of value-added models using the state assessment data (the MEAP), and to provide some guidelines to the field about specifying and using these value-added models. Very little is known at this time about the accuracy of these models to classify teachers into the appropriate effectiveness categories, particularly when using the state assessment data. We plan to make this information available to the field, but also to the Michigan Council to help inform their decisions regarding a new student growth and assessment tool to be used in the statewide

evaluation system. Having good information and evidence will greatly enhance our ability as a state to develop a high-quality statewide system. MDE believes that leveraging these smaller pilots is an efficient way to help generate some of that information.

- MDE will produce guidelines for selecting "off-the-shelf" assessments, including elements of a high-quality assessment and how a district or regional service agency can evaluate the assessment's ability to measure student growth to assist districts during the locally-developed educator evaluation years.

- MDE will produce guidelines for the use of locally-developed interim benchmark and formative assessments, again to assist districts until the statewide evaluation tool is developed and implemented.

- In conjunction with producing resources of support, MDE will gather information, resources, and details about MCEE's selected observation protocols for districts to better understand how to use that protocol. This will be a "best practices" tool that districts can utilize or can reference in their own work in the interim years until the Council recommendations can be implemented.

- One of our larger districts is planning to make use of student, parent and teacher surveys, as done in the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project. We plan to partner with them to evaluate the consistency of ratings generated from value-added measurements, observations, and the survey data, and make that information available to districts, as well as to the Council to inform their decision-making process.

- A key concern of many districts is how to document and defend their system, once they have developed it. MDE has a great deal of experience in establishing business rules and building comprehensive accountability systems in which all decisions are documented and applied, and we plan to produce a "best practices" toolkit regarding the steps necessary to document and defend each decision in the evaluation system, as well as suggestions for how to collect, store, and utilize the data collected. MDE has begun conversations with the Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA), the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MI-AISD), the Michigan Education Association (MEA), and the American Federation of Teachers-Michigan (AFT_MI) to provide districts with a framework for providing training for evaluators in the form of a jointly-developed two-day series of workshops. Evaluators (principals and others) need to be trained in *how* to do an evaluation, regardless of which evaluation system they are using. We will also produce guidelines for districts to utilize as they develop their local training programs for their local evaluation systems. Again, this information will be made available to MCEEto assist them with their development and recommendation efforts. MDE has identified a large intermediate school district that is currently engaged in developing extensive training for

principals and other evaluators, and plans to partner with this ISD in order to leverage their thinking and expand our supports based on this initial work.

- We are also assisting the Persistently Lowest Achieving (which will now be priority schools as well) with the implementation of their educator evaluation systems through the intervention of the State School Reform Office (SSRO), and the hands-on assistance provided to those schools who fall under the purview of the Statewide System of Support. The Intervention Teams, district-level facilitators, and other leaders engaged in the process of turning around low-performing schools will ensure that teacher evaluation and support is carefully woven into their diagnostic treatment of performance issues.

MDE RESOURCE KIT AND OTHER SUPPORTS

All Resource Kit plans are inserted into the MCEE Interim Progress Report text and are denoted in italics and with a RK→ symbol*

Text from the Interim Progress Report of the Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness has background shading of light yellow.*
Released April 27, 2012

The following common vision grounds the efforts of the MCEE:

The Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness will develop a fair, transparent, and feasible evaluation system for teachers and school administrators. The system will be based on rigorous standards of professional practice and of measurement. The goal of this system is to contribute to enhanced instruction, improve student achievement, and support ongoing professional learning.

Design Principles for an Educator Evaluation System

It is essential that MDE have a clear set of design principles for the development of its educator evaluation system:

- Expectations should be clear and rigorous.
- The system should involve multiple measures.
- The system should enhance performance.
- The system should be committed to and structured to support ongoing educator learning and development.

Criteria for Selecting Observation Processes and Tools

With these design principles in mind, the MCEE recommends five criteria for the selection and review of observation instruments and related materials to be used by Michigan school districts:

- The instruments should be aligned with relevant state and national standards for educators.

In Michigan, there are three relevant frameworks that need to be aligned with the educator evaluation system: the Teaching for Learning Framework (Appendix I), the School Improvement Program framework (Appendix J), and the Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers (see Appendix K). In addition, as new policies and reforms are embraced by the state, (e.g., the Common Core State Standards), educator evaluation systems must be aligned to support teachers who are adjusting curriculum and instruction to these new mandates. There are also myriad standards for teaching issued by professional organizations (e.g., the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, the National Council for Social Studies, etc.) that are relevant.

RK → Copies of each of the Frameworks listed above
RK →A checklist/thought process for evaluating alignment of a given observation instruments to each of the three frameworks listed
RK →Resources to evaluate alignment of educator evaluation system to the Common Core State Standards (drawn from other states)
RK →Copies of other standards for teaching

- The instruments should be used both for describing practice and supporting ongoing educator learning/development.

Although one goal of the educator evaluation system is to identify weak or underperforming teachers, the power of the system will lie in its potential to improve continually the capacity of Michigan's educator workforce. Thus the system should be designed to support teacher and principal learning over time.

RK →examples of professional learning opportunities and strategies, tied both to content and to practice
RK →Checklist/thought process for evaluating a district's current system to determine the extent to which it is supporting teacher and principal learning over time
RK →Survey tool that districts can choose to use with teachers and principals to determine self-identified professional development needs

- The instruments should be accompanied by a rigorous and ongoing training program for evaluators.

The documentation of teaching is only as good as the observer. Observers need to be trained to observe carefully, attend rigorously to the key elements of instruction, to be thorough and accurate in their note taking and assessments, and responsible in the conclusions they draw from their observations. This takes training, and every commercially available observation protocol includes substantial training. Several require annual retraining as well.

RK → Standardized process for training evaluators (key activities and steps, checklists, items for consideration)
RK → Descriptions of Principal and Assistant Principal Training Programs keyed to specific observation instruments (externally developed; MDE will simply link)for which districts can choose to attend and apply for grant funding.

- Independent research on the reliability and the validity of the instruments should be available.

Although locally developed measures or adaptations of widely used measures might be appealing to many educators, an educator evaluation system involves high-stakes decisions about employment and credentialing. Over time, therefore, it is essential that any locally developed observation instrument be rigorously examined for its reliability and validity. It is also essential to monitor fidelity of districts' use of any common state-wide protocol. Although any tool recommended as the common tool for the state will already be supported by evidence of validity, it will nevertheless depend on proper local implementation to be reliable and fair.

RK → Sample process that can be followed to establish the reliability of an instrument
RK → Sample process that can be followed to establish (or investigate) the validity of an instrument
RK → Tools to support districts in leveraging their data to establish reliability and validity of instruments. For example—standardized Excel spreadsheets into which data can be entered to assist districts in conventional reliability calculations.
RK → Information on the methodological steps and challenges in addressing reliability and validity; raise the collective data literacy of the profession in order to consider these types of questions more thoroughly
RK → Standardized process for conducting standard setting on common assessments

- The demands of the process should be feasible (in terms of personnel, time, and financial cost).

Institutionalizing educator evaluation for every teacher in every school multiple times across the year will require major changes in the work of the principal. Rigorous observation systems require pre- and post-conferences with teachers, extended and brief observations, time to review and analyze the observational data (along with additional material), and time to conference with every teacher. Efforts to short circuit and truncate these components will compromise the quality and defensibility of the evaluation system. Thus concerns for adopting a system that is feasible in terms of time, personnel, money, and other human and material resources are critical.

Observation/Evaluation Systems

Many observation and evaluation systems are currently available. Some have been developed by researchers, others by professional developers, others by educators committed to providing sound support for early career teachers. Several states—Rhode Island, North Carolina, and Colorado, for example—have developed their own protocols (often adapting aspects of other widely used observation tools). Most of these materials are not accompanied by credible research on their reliability and validity. In addition to hearing from several Michigan school principals about their observation systems, the MCEE carefully examined the following tools:

- The Marzano Observation Protocol (Marzano Research Laboratory)
- The Thoughtful Classroom (Silver Strong & Associates)
- The Five Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (The University of Washington, Center for Educational Leadership)
- Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching Proficiency Test Instrument (Outcomes Associates, Inc.)
- The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS, Teachstone, Inc.)
- The TAP Rubric (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching)

All of the existing protocols are potentially aligned with MDE standards for teachers, although they differ substantially in level of detail and relevance to all grade levels and subject areas:

RK → Provide extensive information on these six observation tools, including information produced by the company, any external research or information, and reflections/observations from districts currently using these models.
RK → Showcase MCEE pilot district results using one of these six observation tools at conferences, in online profiles and case studies, and in other public venues where appropriate.

Some of the observation protocols focus exclusively on what observers might see in a classroom; others include professional responsibilities such as collaborating with other teachers, working well with parents, planning and reflecting on lessons. Very few of them have been the subject of independent research; only the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System have substantial research in terms of instrument validity and reliability.

Lessons Learned

All of the state commissioners whom we interviewed and all of the observation system vendors emphasized several important issues. We summarize the main ones here:

- Pilot phase: A system of educator evaluation will only work to improve student learning if there is extensive buy in, understanding, and local learning. Every state commission recommended a pilot testing year, during which proposed tools and approaches can be tried out and their

feasibility and fairness analyzed. Such pilot testing enables appropriate adaptations to be developed, as well more communication and buy in. Pilot testing is also essential for assessing the feasibility of the processes proposed.

- Phasing in: Educators and evaluators cannot use a system with fidelity if they do not understand it. Each observation system involves considerable mastery of tools and processes, by both teachers and their evaluators. All vendors recommend phasing their system in. Two aims were identified:
  - Learning the tool. The observation tool is an essential catalyst for stimulating learning in the system. Principals and teachers need time to acquaint themselves with the tool, adopt the new technical vocabulary that accompanies any educator evaluation system, and reorient themselves to the changes in their responsibilities that are required by the system.
  - Training the evaluators. Every vendor emphasized the necessity of taking time to train (and in some cases, certify) the evaluators before launching the process. Untrained evaluators significantly threaten the integrity and fidelity of the implementation, which in turn compromises both its capacity to improve student learning as well as its validity and reliability.
- One observation is not enough and walkthroughs are not sufficient. Research on how many observations are needed to develop a sound description of a teacher's practice makes it clear that one observation is not sufficient, and can actually provide inaccurate information on the quality of instruction. While there is no definitive answer to the question "How many observations of what length are sufficient?", researchers conducting the Measures of Effective Teaching study have found that multiple observations lead to higher levels of reliability, and recommend that, when the data will be used for high-stakes evaluation, teachers must be observed during more than one lesson. Study authors also suggest that state and local education authorities regularly audit reliability by having outside observers conduct observations on a subset of teachers and compare scores to those from observations by school administrators.15
- There is a larger system of policies, practices, and resources that accompany the educator observation tools. This includes:
  - Training/retraining for the evaluators/principals
  - Appeals processes
  - Handbooks for teachers
  - Handbooks for principals
  - Rubrics for summative evaluations based on multiple observations
  - Technology to support observations (e.g., iPads and apps)
  - Technology to support data entry and management (including interfaces for multiple system users—for example, principals who are doing evaluations and teachers who are entering information—linked also to student assessment information)

[15] Kane, Thomas & Staiger, Douglas (2012) "Gathering feedback for teaching: Combining high-quality observations with student surveys and achievement gains." Measures of Effective Teaching project, pp. 38-40.
http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Gathering_Feedback_Research_Paper.pdf

- Technical studies: Every tool needs to be evaluated for its quality. This involves conducting research on the reliability and validity of instruments (e.g., testing whether different observers using the same instrument and observing the same teacher will produce similar ratings and examining the correlation between evaluations based on observation instruments and evaluations using other empirical data).
- Communication network for ongoing educator education
- Pilot study and subsequent revisions

RK→As outlined above, we will seek to produce or gather and provide these sorts of supporting policies, practice,s and resources for the observation tools and other elements that support MCEE's work.

Challenges

In reviewing research and interviewing relevant actors in other states, the MCEE has identified several important challenges that will have to be confronted when making recommendations about the observation tool to be used.

- ✓ Challenge 1: Being fiscally and practically feasible. Only two instruments have independent, persuasive data associated with them about their reliable use (Framework for Teaching and CLASS). Both are labor intensive, and require multiple observations, as well as considerable material and personnel resources. A fair system requires the use of tested instruments that result in defensible observations and subsequent evaluations, but this costs both money and time.

- ✓ Challenge 2: Ensuring fairness and reliability. No matter what tool is selected, considerations of feasibility are important, but must be balanced by an overriding concern for fairness. Determining how many observations are required, how many observers there should be, the number of dimensions and sub-dimensions on which teachers should be evaluated, and what the necessary training and expertise of evaluations should be are crucial considerations. All of the available evidence suggests that multiple observations are needed and multiple observers need to be trained. Some of the available instruments (that do not have independent evidence associated with them) are shorter or have been streamlined for the purposes of briefer, more efficient observations, but these instruments may not produce observations that are of high enough quality to make high-stakes decisions. Principals do not have the time needed to conduct multiple observations for every teacher (in addition to end of the year conferences), nor do they have the content expertise to be qualified to make sound judgments across all content domains.

- ✓ Challenge 3: Assessing the fidelity of protocol implementation. Given the high-stakes nature of the decisions that will be made based on these observations, it is imperative that there be a rigorous system in place to check that instruments and procedures are implemented with integrity and rigor. Every vendor with whom we spoke emphasized the importance of observer training and retraining. As the use of these observations goes to scale in thousands of teachers' classrooms, data must be collected and analyses conducted to appraise whether tools are being used accurately and whether protocols for implementation are being followed.

  RK → Produce informational/educational materials to help stakeholders (like teachers and principals) understand the concept of fidelity of protocol implementation, its importance, and strategies to ensure that fidelity.

- ✓ Challenge 4: Determining the equivalence of different instruments. If the state grants waivers to school districts to use a range of observation and evaluation tools, it is imperative that evidence is collected concerning the equivalence of instruments. That is, it would be unacceptable for teachers in one district to be held to a standard that is higher or lower than another district. Thus, the state will also need to collect information to demonstrate the equivalence of judgments made using different tools.

Observations of teaching might seem straightforward and commonsensical to many. However, the council's research makes clear the need to be vigilant in demanding the rigorous and accurate use of instruments that have also been submitted to critical research and review. Doing anything less would jeopardize the integrity of the entire process, limit the policy's capacity to improve schooling for Michigan's children, and compromise the entire reason for this initiative.

Teacher Evaluation: Student Growth Model

The central purpose of teaching is to help students learn, and student growth measures can provide valuable insights into teachers' effectiveness in doing so, particularly when coupled with other measures of teaching efficacy. Given the central place that student learning holds in the initiative to develop an excellent educator evaluation system in Michigan, the MCEE is examining ways in which accounting for student growth can be effectively incorporated into the state's approach to evaluating educators. As this brief update will illustrate, much work has been done on this important component and much work remains to be completed before any recommendations can be made.

One of the first challenges for the MCEE has been to clarify exactly what is meant by "student growth." Despite its apparent simplicity, it is actually a term that has taken on a range of meanings around the country. An early task of the council was to survey the field to understand different ways this term is being used in education policy. This review has included consulting with various experts in learning measurement and modeling, reviewing work done by other states, meeting with service providers, and consulting with local school districts.

The council has found wide variance in the ways in which organizations describe student growth measurement. They differ in (1) the tests used to assess student growth, (2) the actual analytic techniques for quantifying student growth, and (3) the measures of value-added by educators to student growth. These are based on different assumptions and vary in their accuracy and reliability. Each of these three is explained briefly below.

Tests Used to Measure Student Growth

The MCEE has reviewed a range of assessments that can be used to produce estimates of student growth. These include teacher-made assessments, state tests (such as the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, or MEAP), and national norm-referenced tests (such as Northwest Evaluation Association's [NWEA] Measures of Academic Progress [MAP] or Scantron Performance Series). Specific characteristics of each assessment affect what it means to track students' growth.

Quantitative Measures of Student Growth

The council's investigations so far have allowed for a broad definition of student growth, including proxies for student growth (e.g., students' percentile ranks conditioned on pretest scores), which are often used as measures of student progress. Measures of student growth and progress that are currently in use for accountability purposes around the U.S. vary from the simple to the statistically complex. Simple examples include:

- Difference scores based on pre-test vs. post-test administrations of the same test in the same grade (not in use on a large scale).
- Transition tables tracking student performance levels from one grade to the next (such as those used in Delaware, Iowa, Minnesota, and Michigan).

More complex examples include:

- Difference scores based on pre- vs. post-test administrations, where the difficulty level of the test is calibrated on a vertical scale16 to individual students' achievement levels at the time of the pre- or post-assessment (this approach is not in widespread use, but available through such instruments as the NWEA MAP).
- Difference scores based on vertically scaled tests from one grade to the next (such as those used in some states with vertically scaled assessments).
- Student growth percentile models such as those used in Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, and Massachusetts. In these models, percentile ranks of students' post-test scores are given for students who started out with similar scores on the pre-test.

[16] Vertical scales attempt to place test scores of students across grades on a common scale. For example, all students taking a particular test (regardless of grade) may fall on a vertical scale of 0 to 1000. Leveraging a common scale across grades is supposed to allow educators to compare student test score movement between adjacent grades as a way to estimate student growth. Thus, a helpful feature of vertical scales is that they allow the comparisons of test scores easily between grades. Vertical scales are not without their limitations, however. It is important to note that there is legitimate scholarly disagreement regarding the validity of vertical scales, and the council will need to consider these disagreements when making its recommendations.

Although each of these approaches satisfies a broad definition of measuring student growth, an important task of the MCEE will be to pilot these models to determine which are the most valid and reliable for use in evaluating educators.

RK→Produce and disseminate informational materials to districts and schools on these approaches to measuring student growth; pros/cons; cautions in use.

RK→ Tool for using Michigan's current growth data, available from the MEAP assessments. MDE has already made this available to districts, and will continue to refine this tool. Known as the MDE Weighted PLC Tool, it helps districts and schools take their performance level change data from the MEAP assessments in reading and math in grades 3-8 that has been linked by MDE to teachers of record, and analyze it at the teacher, school, and district level. Districts and schools are able to cut and paste their linked student/teacher file into the tool, and the tool produces aggregate values using a weighted performance level change system. Districts are able to change the weights on the various performance level changes, and are also able to make decisions regarding the application of rules about student attendance or other student attributional issues.

MDE has been working with districts and schools to get this tool in their hands. Early responses from the field indicate that people find it useful. One school leader has indicated that she is seeing differences in elementary school teacher "ratings" in math and reading, and that these ratings correspond to what they would expect to see in terms of teacher strengths and weaknesses, based on observations and teachers' minors. Understanding these differences is allowing the school to help target professional development more appropriately—more reading professional development for some teachers, more math professional development for others. MDE plans to continue and expand the use of this tool and related materials, as well as continue to work with districts using the tool to gather information on best practices and utility and to share these with other districts.

Value-Added Measures

Value-added measures (VAM) attempt to isolate the effects of individual educators on the achievement or growth demonstrated by their students. VAM may be based on measures of student growth or vertical scales, but do not need to be. This is because measures of value added for an individual teacher are based on the deviation of that teacher's students' scores (or growth or progress) from the scores (or growth or progress) those students were expected to achieve based on previous achievement (and possibly other factors).

There are many different approaches to measuring the "added value" of an individual teacher's impact on students' growth, but there is legitimate and important scholarly disagreement over the appropriateness of these various approaches. Some researchers are skeptical about VAM in general because they question the validity of making causal claims about the impact of individual educators on student outcomes. The MCEE is committed to a thorough review and pilot of existing and emerging approaches, before making a final recommendation about the value-added component in MDE's educator evaluations. Although it seems common sense to be able to identify the impact a particular teacher has on students' progress, it is far from simple to do and the risks of doing it unreliably and

improperly are obvious threats to the goal of this initiative to develop a strong system to evaluate and improve educator effectiveness in Michigan.

RK→Continue to produce and disseminate informational materials to districts, schools and other stakeholders regarding value-added models, how to use them, strengths/cautions, and methodological challenges.

RK→ MDE has already forged a partnership with two different groups—one large district, and one statewide initiative—to begin running value-added models on their data in order to begin to evaluate these models in practice. We will continue these partnerships, and will produce white papers and technical documents to share with other districts as they grapple with issues related to value added modeling. We will also share these findings with the MCEE, to help inform their work.

Plans for the Future of Michigan Assessment

Because measures of growth are highly dependent on the measures of achievement used to calculate student growth, the **MCEE has taken a serious interest in the direction of state testing in Michigan as led by the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (BAA). BAA has provided the MCEE with a detailed overview of the MDE's plan to develop additional standardized measures in the coming years and guide Michigan as the state moves to the Common Core State Standards and the supporting suite of assessments.** (See Appendix L for a high-level overview of the next five years of planned testing development in Michigan.)

As the MCEE continues to investigate current work being done on measuring student growth, council members with technical expertise have also begun to evaluate how specific approaches to growth modeling **would operate using MEAP** and other [state] assessment data. The council will continue this work in the coming months and will include their findings in a future report.

Challenges to Resolve

Measurement of student growth and "value added" are important components of educator evaluation. However, the different possible approaches present challenges that require more research and evaluation. Attributing student growth to individual educators in ways that are both fair and valid is a daunting task. MCEE is committed to addressing the challenges, and to incorporating the necessary safeguards in their recommendations. In addition to the issues entailed by the measurement of student growth and educators' added value, the MCEE has identified additional challenges that require further discussion and review:

- ✓ Challenge 1: Measurement error in standardized and local measurements. The MCEE recognizes that data collected from local and standardized assessments include some degree of random measurement error, some significant enough to lead to gross miscalculation of teachers' impact on student growth. It will be crucial to account for such measurement error in any responsible approach to including student growth and VAM in educator evaluation.

- ✓ Challenge 2: Balancing fairness toward educators with fairness toward students. The MCEE recognizes that there are significant issues to consider regarding whether demographic information should be incorporated into the statistical models used for VAM. Including such information will result in different expectations for certain groups of students based on their backgrounds, which in turn may result in maintaining or even increasing achievement gaps. While this is less fair to students, it is fairer to educators to take into account the background characteristics of their students in setting expectations for growth. Not including demographics in setting expectations for student growth is fairer toward students, but is less fair toward educators. It is important to design a system that balances fairness toward educators and students.

  RK → MDE's ongoing partnership with a large Michigan district will allow us to provide the MCEE with quantitative evidence on the impact of including demographic characteristics in the models.

- ✓ Challenge 3: Non-tested grades and subjects. Performing student growth calculations depends on having good measures in place. Measuring growth in non-tested subjects, such as art, physical education, music, etc. is a significant issue for the MCEE to address in its recommendation. An additional issue is the fact that many teachers do not teach in grades that are tested.

- ✓ Challenge 4: Tenuous roster connections between students and teachers. Fundamental to describing a teacher's influence on the learning outcomes of students is knowing which students he or she teaches, and to what degree each teacher is responsible for the instruction of each student. Based on discussions with local districts and state agencies, and national policy work, the MCEE recognizes that the student-teacher rostering relationship has a number of important challenges that need to be addressed. Repeatedly states have reported difficulties in simply determining which students were associated with which teachers.

- ✓ Challenge 5: Number of years of data. Teachers' assignments change regularly, some more than others. Teachers' work shifts as changes arise in their assignments to grade levels, subject areas, schools, and students. Instructional effectiveness must be geared to specifics of the context. Teachers also retire, while others enter the workforce. Like observations, assessments of value added are only as good as the data available, and for many teachers in tested grades and subject areas there is considerable variability in how many years of data are available.

In the coming months, the MCEE will continue to investigate these and other important issues as they relate to using student growth data to inform educator evaluation.

Combining Observation and Student Growth Scores

As this document has revealed, challenges exist in the selection of observational and student growth tools. The council has found that it is also important to consider carefully how values produced from observational and student growth tools are combined into a final evaluation score. The MCEE has reviewed the approach for combining evaluation scores in states such as New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Ohio, North Carolina, and Colorado. From these states' teacher evaluation systems, two approaches have emerged: formulaic and rubric.

In the formulaic approach (Tennessee and New York), inputs such as student growth and teacher observation are given weights and combined into a single teaching performance score by means of a formula. Combined scores are then mapped to a labeling scheme, which provides descriptions of teaching performance. For example, in New York 60 points of the evaluation are based on nationally recognized measures of teacher performance. The other 40 points are based on growth, giving a total possible of 100 points. The number of points a teacher earns is then mapped onto the following performance standards:
Ineffective: 0 – 64
Developing: 65 – 74
Effective: 75 – 90
Highly Effective: 91 – 100

Other states chose to use a rubric approach, where teacher observation data and student growth data are both independently mapped to standards of performance. For example, teachers may score a 5 in student growth, but only a 1 from observations of their teaching. The two scores are mapped to a rubric to determine the overall evaluation rating ("Partially Effective"). The rubric below is an illustrative example provided by Colorado:

Figure 42. Sample Rubric

Quality Standards Score						
	5	Partially Effective	Partially Effective	Effective	Highly Effective	Highly Effective
	4	Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective	Effective	Highly Effective
	3	Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective	Effective	Effective
	2	Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective	Effective	Effective
	1	Ineffective	Ineffective	Partially Effective	Partially Effective	Partially Effective
		1	2	3	4	5
		Student Growth Score				

Each of these approaches to combining scores presents challenges and opportunities. Naturally, a constraint of the rubric approach is that it is best applied to evaluation systems that equally weight two

components (such as observation and growth). However, the rubric approach has intuitive appeal to educators, and is likely easier to understand than a formulaic approach. Approaches that use a formula are fairly flexible in their weighting and the number of factors employed, but may communicate a false degree of precision. The MCEE considers the combining of component scores to be an important challenge that requires more discussion.

Other Potential Components of the Educator Evaluation System

Observations and student test scores are only two of the components of educator evaluation systems that are being developed. Other components include documents that support the observations, as well as other materials contributed by teachers, principals, students, or parents. Among the other components used in other states are the following:

- Pre-observation conferences
- Post-observation conferences
- Summative evaluation conferences
- Teacher self-assessments
- Professional accountabilities (e.g., National Heritage Academies' mid- and year-end evaluations)
- Educator growth plans (developed by teachers or administrators)
- Locally developed assessments of student learning
- Structured review of student work
- Teacher artifacts using portfolio or evidence binder processes
- Feedback from students, parents, and/or other teachers using structured survey tools
- Teacher self-reflection and progress on professional growth goals

The MCEE will continue to consider the other components that should be included in MDE's educator evaluation system.

RK → Provide districts and schools with concrete examples of these components, along with any available evidence on their use

Timeline

PA 102 of 2011 set out goals for a rigorous evaluation system intended to enhance instruction and support professional learning in Michigan. The MCEE understands the urgency of such reform, but also acknowledges the high stakes involved in restructuring educator evaluation. In order to ensure that MDE provides policy and direction that will empower teachers and leaders to meet the needs of students and improve student outcomes, the MCEE has designed the following timeline. This will allow for the thought, research, and collaboration necessary to make responsible, fair, and feasible recommendations.

Table 19. Estimated Timeline for Completing Recommendations	
Month/Year	Recommendation
June 2012	Observation tool(s) Details regarding the 2012-2013 pilot year
July 2012	Other components of teacher evaluation systems
October 2012	Student growth model
November 2012	Evaluation tool for school administrators Details regarding the pilot of administrator evaluations District waiver processes and principles
April 2013	Professional certificate
June 2013	Review all recommendations and adjust based on new data and information

Looking Forward

Evidence shows that skillful instruction can dramatically increase the probability that students will learn. Such teaching is sensitive to students' environments, good at buffering interferences, and adept at promoting students' academic engagement as well as their social and emotional development. Being able to achieve our ambitious educational agenda in this state depends on building and supporting a system that can ensure that the teachers who serve in our classrooms have the requisite professional skills and know how to use them with the diversity of Michigan's 1.5 million schoolchildren.

As such, the charge presented to the MCEE is ambitious and historically significant, as it could lead to revolutionary changes in how educators are evaluated in Michigan. The council is committed to moving quickly on this charge and to learning as much from other states as possible about how to create the infrastructure, procedures, and tools necessary to create this new system.

***********End excerpt from MCEE Interim Report*****

ENSURING COMPLIANCE

In the current legislation, MDE is not given specific authority with regard to compliance with educator evaluations. MCEE will be making determinations regarding monitoring and compliance to ensure that LEAs are appropriate implementing evaluation systems. MDE has strongly recommended to MCEE, the Governor, and the Legislature that any legislation for the final statewide educator evaluation system includes provisions and funding for MDE compliance monitoring of schools and districts to ensure their systems meet requirements and are implemented with fidelity. Given the high stakes of the evaluation system for teachers and administrators, we will also recommend that legislation specifies consequences for being out of compliance.

MDE also has tools available to encourage compliance. Foremost among them is the power of "light of day" reporting. In our theory of action, we make the role of data and information a central piece of the

conversations that the education community will have in order to drive their work. MDE has substantially increased our reporting efforts in the past several years, providing more information regarding how districts and schools are doing, even if it is not for a formal accountability system or required report. We plan to leverage this focus on dashboards, public transparency, and reporting to help ensure compliance. Key activities will include:

1. Publishing the educator effectiveness labels in the aggregate by school and district, using the MiSchoolData portal.
2. Hold schools accountable for submitting 100% of their required effectiveness labels in the new Accountability Scorecard. This gives schools credit for submitting their labels (after conducting evaluations).

4. Use available state assessment data and the teacher-student data link to cross-reference reported educator effectiveness labels with available data. If a district is reporting all highly effective teachers, but the district, school, grade and/or individual level data suggest otherwise, this suggests the district may need to better align its system with rigorous evaluation principles. As required by the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, through an Evaluation System Factor Survey that asks districts to respond to their progress in development and implementation, the components included in the evaluation system, and the uses of the results. The results of this factor survey will be published broadly, both at the aggregate level and with generalized findings from survey analysis.
5. Collection and review of local evaluation systems (see below for more detail).

As part of MDE's overall approach to improving educator effectiveness, which includes more than only the educator evaluation component, workgroups have been formed in order to implement a series of recommendations regarding professional learning, preservice training, and other components of an overall educator effectiveness plan.

MDE will continue to work with stakeholders to seek input from the field as districts implement the current law that requires an annual evaluation of educators based on student growth measures and must include multiple observations.

MDE plans to conduct a voluntary review of educator evaluation systems across the state as a means of monitoring progress of development and implementation of evaluation as described below.

Overview

MDE will institute a review process whereby districts voluntarily submit their evaluation plans (along with samples, timelines, and all materials related) for a comprehensive review of their educator evaluation systems. This would provide the districts feedback on their system that is customized and categorized into what's working with the system and what needs work.

Given the timeline for development and implementation of evaluation systems, the necessity for the system to work in a high stakes environment (public reporting of effectiveness labels), and the need to revise while putting the system into place, we believe this "beating the odds" approach that highlights districts good work would be incentive to continue their work to comply with state law.

This type of review would also allow MDE to highlight districts that have designed and are implementing rigorous evaluation systems against an MDE-developed evaluation protocol.

This would potentially allow for a more in depth study following the review through site visits and interviews. This would allow MDE to publish case study information. In addition to providing positive "light of day" reporting for districts across the state, MDE will write a summary review explaining and describing key practices across the state, as well as areas for development across systems in the state.

Purpose
Monitoring and reporting

Timeline

June 2012 –	Develop communication documentation regarding the review process
July 2012 -	Request for evaluation system submissions for review
August 2012 –	Collect systems and begin review
September 2012 –	Review paper submissions
October –	Report findings
November 2012– February 2013	Conduct further research via site visits and interviews with district leaders of the "top performing" or "highest quality" or "most comprehensive" evaluation Systems
April 2013 –	Publish case studies and overall findings via www.michigan.gov/baa

Resources available to support the work of educator evaluations
Districts and schools have access to several resources, including the ones named above. In addition, the systems of supports outlined throughout this application will foster diagnostic leadership on the part of school leaders and improvement specialists alike. This is an important feature of MDE's program design, in that it weaves our state's system of support back through the delivery of daily classroom instruction, and ensures the content we intend to deliver (career- and college-ready standards, as established through the Common Core) —and, indeed, are intervening to deliver in diagnostic, personalized ways, as

described in Principle Two —is being achieved at the classroom level. We consider teacher evaluation to be a school improvement tool as much as any other intervention described in our waiver request.

Our Statewide System of Support will work with building- and district- level leaders to provide hands-on, specific assistance with teacher evaluation processes. As diagnostic improvement decisions are made, local leaders can use the teacher evaluation process to support staff in achieving critical results. MDE and other intervention specialists will be actively engaged in supporting local schools as they accomplish this work.

Michigan's strong educator evaluation legislation provides a legislative mandate by which the majority of this work will be accomplished. At the present time, each LEA is required to adopt the state evaluation system, or to have a high-quality system in place that meets all requirements by the 2013-2014. This provides the legislative "muscle" necessary to begin the process of ensuring that these systems are implemented.

SAMPLE FORMAT FOR PLAN

Below is one example of a format an SEA may use to provide a plan to meet a particular principle in the *ESEA Flexibility*.

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (*e.g.*, staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (*e.g.*, staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Adopt SBAC assessments	2011-12 development activities 2012-13 technology readiness and pilot testing 2013-14 technology readiness and field testing 2014-15 technology readiness, operational implementation, and professional development	BAA staff BAA and OEII staff BAA and OEII staff BAA and OEII staff	SBAC Memorandum of Understanding SBAC Work Groups Detailed Roster	7 BAA staff actively engaged in SMARTER Balanced Work Groups 1 BAA and 1 OEII staff serving as co-State Readiness Coordinators focused on technology readiness OEII Curriculum Unit engaged in instructional support and professional development	Michigan legislation requiring administration of college entrance test in 11th grade Moving to online assessment Moving all assessments to spring
Adopt DLM assessments	2011-12 development activities 2012-13 technology readiness and pilot testing 2013-14 technology readiness and field testing 2014-15 technology readiness, operational implementation, and professional development	BAA and OSE staff BAA, OSE and OEII staff BAA, OSE and OEII staff BAA, OSE and OEII staff	DLM Memorandum of Understanding	3 BAA and 1 OSE staff actively engaged in DLM development activities OEII Curriculum Unit engaged in instructional support and professional development	Moving to online assessment Moving all assessments to spring

Adopt WIDA assessments*	2011-12 compare WIDA to Michigan's ELPA assessment (cost, standards, data, reports, etc.) 2012-13 prepare Michigan ELL community and conduct WIDA pilot testing and comparability and bridge studies 2013-14 professional development and full implementation of WIDA	BAA of OFS staff BAA and OFS staff BAA and OFS staff	January 30, 2012 WIDA meeting agenda	7 BAA and 3 OFS staff actively engaged in pursuing WIDA adoption	Replacing Michigan's ELP standards with WIDA's Professional development supporting transition activities
Modify Michigan MEAP and MME assessments to support CCSS alignment	2012-13 item development and alignment reports produced 2013-14 field test slots on MEAP and MME include CCSS content not assessed in the past; produce alignment report in light of SBAC Content Specifications 2014-15 Discontinue MEAP and MME in SBAC covered content areas	BAA and OEII staff BAA and OEII staff	Fall 2011 Sally Vaughn Memorandum	BAA Test Development and OEII Curriculum Unit	Timely professional development to Michigan's ELA and mathematics educators
Social Studies	*Refer to	BAA and		5 BAA and 2	Funding

AA-AAS	detailed timeline included with Principle 2 materials	OSE staff		OSE staff actively engaged in development and funding strategy	source for development and operational administration Developing extended social studies content standards Enhancing IEP monitoring to include social studies
Develop Michigan IBA system (grades and content areas not addressed by SBAC)	2011-12 Hire 2 FTE and release online administration RFP 2012-13 Finalize IBA test designs and develop items 2013-14 Field test and continue item development 2014-15 implement operational phase 1 IBA 2015-16 implement operational phase 2 IBA	BAA, OEII and OGS staff	2 IBA position descriptions	BAA Test Development, OEII Curriculum Unit, and OGS staff actively engaged in design and development activities	Current funding only for initial development of online, optional tests Field-testing simultaneously with SBAC and DLM Incorporation into existing MDE systems

***MDE is exploring this option and will follow this timeline once WIDA is adopted**

Acronym Key

MDE	**Michigan Department of Education**
BAA	**Bureau of Assessment & Accountability**
OEII	**Office of Education Improvement & Innovation**
OSE	**Office of Special Education**
OFS	**Office of Field Services**
OGS	**Office of Great Start**
SBAC	**Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium**
DLM	**Dynamic Learning Maps (Alternate Assessment Consortium)**
WIDA	**World-class Instructional Design and Assessment**
AA-AAS	**Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards**
IEP	**Individualized Education Program**
MEAP	**Michigan Educational Assessment Program**
MME	**Michigan Merit Examination**
CCSS	**Common Core State Standards**
IBA	**Interim/Benchmark Assessments**
RFP	**Request for Proposals**

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (*e.g.*, staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Identify 2011-2012 priority, focus and reward cohorts	Fall 2011: Test elementary and middle school students Spring 2012: Test high school students Summer 2012: Create accountability files (i.e. apply rules for full academic year, feeder schools, etc.) By September 1, 2012 (pursuant to state law):	BAA	Top to Bottom Ranking methodology Focus methodology Reward methodology	Staff time (calculations, quality assurance checks) Enhanced reporting displays in the MI School Data portal	Given that these lists leverage an existing methodology, there are few obstacles here

	publish priority list; will publish Focus and Reward (high achieving and high improving) at the same time November 2012: Produce 2011-2012 Schools Beating the Odds list; add to reward school list This will be cohort #3 for priority schools (as Michigan has two cohorts of persistently lowest achieving schools in the pipeline) and cohort #1 for focus and reward				
AYP Determinations 2011-2012	ESEA Flexibility does NOT apply February 2012: Request modifications to current AMOs using Accountability Workbook to account for cut score change in 2011-2012 school year Late spring 2012: Calculate	BAA BAA OFS	None	Staff time Revised reporting displays to accommodate proposed changes to current AYP	Managing the interplay between ESEA Flexibility and Accountability Workbook Communicating the meaning of these designations to the field

	preliminary AYP Summer 2012: Report card appeals August 2012: Final AYP Determinations published; Annual Education Report published				
Accountability Scorecard Determinations 2012-2013	Accountability Scorecard Summer 2012 (assuming waiver is granted): Requirements gathering for new system; identify impacted areas; develop timelines Fall 2012: Draft business rules; redesign online interface in MI School Data Portal; redesign secure sites for appeals and other work Winter 2013: Write all calculation code; build new webpages Late spring 2013: Preliminary Scorecards generated; extensive	BAA	None	Extensive staff time Funds for redesign of displays in the MI School Data portal and internal secure site reporting Staff time and funds to create and implement an enhanced professional learning campaign	Represents substantial redesign of AYP system to replace with new accountability system; need appropriate time and resources to ensure accuracy

	quality assurance checks necessary Early summer 2013: Allow schools a preview and appeals window Early August 2013: Produce and publish final Accountability Scorecard (including Priority, Focus, and Reward school designations on the Scorecard) Fall 2013: Extensive professional learning campaign to educate educators, parents, and the public on the new scorecard				
Prepare for implications of adopting SBAC assessments	SBAC fully operational: 2014-2015 All assessment and accountability processes will be impacted by this shift. MDE will spend 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 identifying	BAA		Staff time Project management resources	With the SBAC assessments and systems still in development, it is difficult to plan ahead.

	processes that will be impacted by this shift and making necessary modifications. Because of our shift from fall to spring testing, our ability to produce growth measurements may be impacted. MDE will apply for appropriate exemptions at that time.				
AMAO revisions	2013-2014: full implementation of WIDA (Adoption pending) Fall 2013: Begin requirements gathering to establish necessary changes to AMAOs (based on data from the pilot testing to understand impact of new standards and new tests) Late Fall 2013: Submit revisions to Consolidated State	BAA OFS	None	Staff time	Challenge of aligning timelines

	Application for Title III Accountability to reflect new standards and cut scores Summer 2014: Run AMAOs using WIDA assessments and new targets				

Principle 3: Educator Evaluations

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (*e.g.*, staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
2011-2012 School Year	Districts implement locally developed evaluation systems that include student growth as a significant part March 2012: BAA returns assessment data linked to teachers based on the 2010-2011 school year data April 2012: Districts report effectiveness labels for all educators in to the Registry for Educational Personnel April 30, 2012: Michigan Council on Educator Effectiveness produces final recommendations (based on legislative timelines; does not take into account possible changes to the legislative timelines that the Council may request) By June 2012: MDE produces draft interim guidelines for districts to utilize until statewide evaluation system is created.	BAA OEII OFS OPPS Michigan Council (MDE does not control)	PA 102 (educator evaluation legislation)	Staff time	Challenges from districts regarding reporting labels Developing interim guidelines that do not interfere with the Council's recommendations

	July 2012: Districts submit Teacher/Student Data Links that reflect the 2011-2012 school year By September 2012: MDE release interim guidelines to the field				
2012-2013 School Year	Districts implement locally-developed evaluation systems. MDE continues to refine and expand interim guidelines. MDE continues ongoing pilot projects and identifies new pilot projects. March 2013: MDE returns assessment data linked to teachers based on the 2011-2012 school year April 2013: Districts submit effectiveness labels July 2013: Districts submit Teacher/Student Data Links that reflect the 2012-2013 school year *Note: Pilot projects for state-based interim assessments begin this year.	BAA	None	Staff time	
2013-2014 school year	Statewide evaluation tool slated to take effect; will replace locally developed evaluation systems (note: assumes that	BAA Michigan Council	None	Staff time	

	legislatively mandated timelines are not revised) Student growth must be included at 25% March 2014: MDE returns available assessment data linked to teachers based on the 2012-2013 school year. April 2014: Districts submit effectiveness labels. July 2014: Teacher/Student Data Link *Note: Field testing begins for state-based interim assessments				
2014-2015	First year of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium assessments; will provide growth data in more grades and subjects. Statewide evaluation system. Student growth must be included at 40%.	BAA SBAC	None	Staff time	Need to substantially revise the accountability system to account for shift in testing
2015-2016	Statewide evaluation system. Student growth must be included at 50%	BAA	None	Staff time	