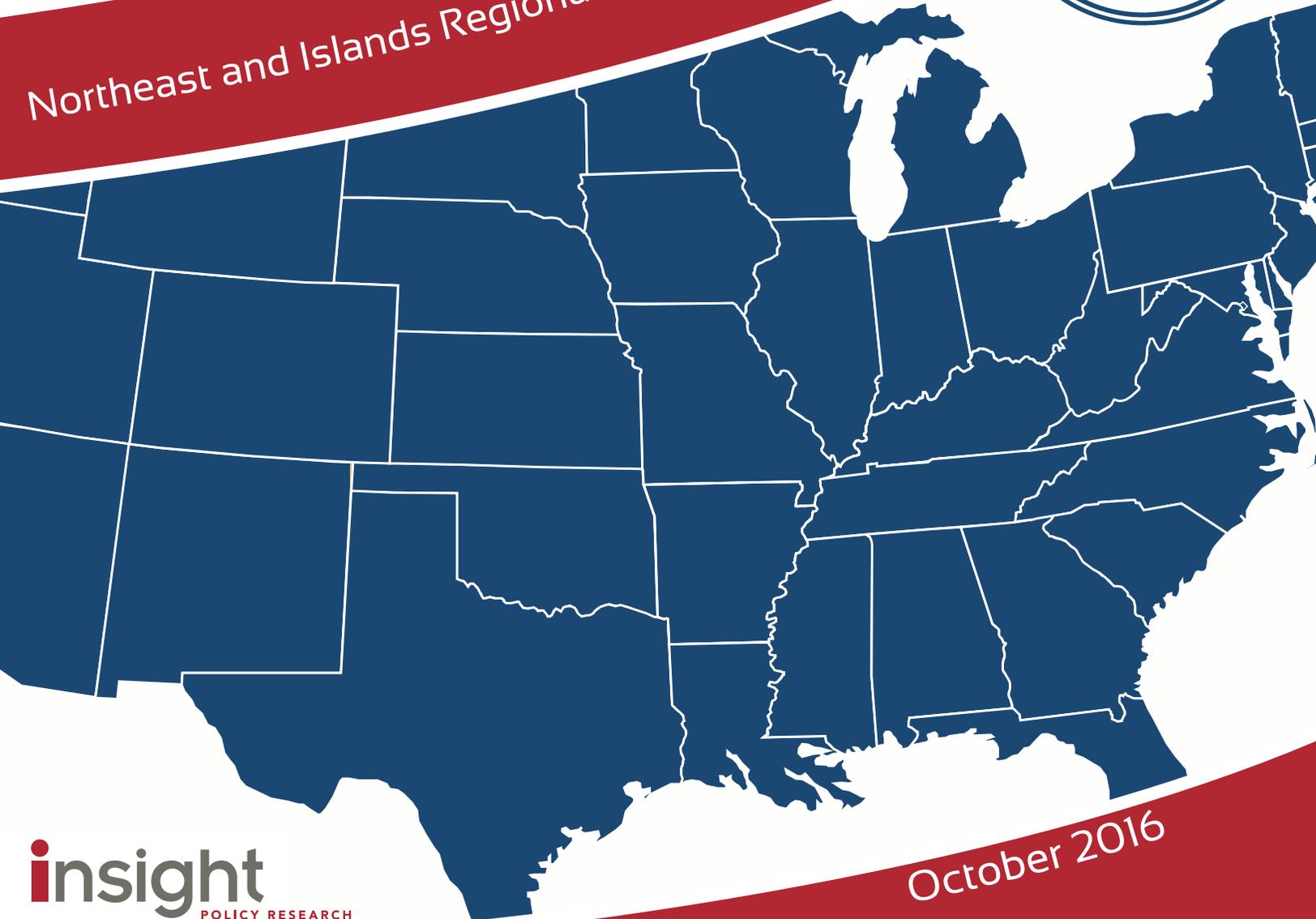


Identifying and Addressing Regional Education Needs

U.S. Department of Education



Northeast and Islands Regional Advisory Committee



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The Northeast and Islands Region:

A Report Identifying and Addressing the Region's Educational Needs

October 5, 2016

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Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Insight Policy Research under Contract No. ED-ESE-15-A-0010/0001 with the U.S. Department of Education. The report represents a team effort with many individuals making important contributions, and we gratefully acknowledge their assistance. We recognize the sustained help of Kim Okahara, Program Officer; Britt Jung, Group Leader in the Office of School Support and Rural Programs; and Patrice Swann, the Contracting Officer's Representative from the U.S. Department of Education. We thank Laura Holian, Jackson Miller, and Brittany Cunningham from Insight Policy Research for their assistance in preparing the regional profile, developing templates for data collection, and providing logistical and administrative support for the committee's needs-sensing activities. Finally, we extend particular appreciation to the members of the Northeast and Islands Regional Advisory Committee for their persistence and dedication in collecting constituent input from across the region so we could appropriately represent the education needs of the Northeast and Islands region in this report. Specifically, we thank Belinha De Abreu, Gene Reiber, Lauren Sterling, Santina Thibedeau, David Allan Little, Alan Wagner, Alonta Wrighton, Stanley Litow, Harry Gonzalez, Alan Tenreiro, Yvette McMahon-Arnold, and Suzanne Buck.

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Executive Summary

This report summarizes the activities and results of the Northeast and Islands Regional Advisory Committee (RAC), 1 of 10 RACs established under the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. § 9601 et seq.). The RACs were formed to identify the region’s most critical educational needs and develop recommendations for technical assistance to meet those needs. The technical assistance provided to state education agencies (SEAs) aims to build capacity for supporting local education agencies (LEAs or districts) and schools, especially low-performing districts and schools; improving educational outcomes for all students; closing achievement gaps; and improving the quality of instruction. The report represents the work of the Northeast and Islands RAC, which includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Committee members convened three times and reached out to their respective constituencies between July 19, 2016, and August 31, 2016. Members of the Northeast and Islands RAC represented a variety of stakeholders, including LEAs and SEAs; institutions of higher education; parents; practicing educators; and organizations serving youths and educators. The members collaborated, communicated, and shared resources using Communities360^o, an interactive online platform hosted within the larger GRADS360^o system housed within the secure U.S. Department of Education environment. Table A provides a list of committee members and their affiliations.

Table A. Northeast and Islands RAC members

Member name	Affiliation	State
Suzanne Buck	Vermont Future Farmers of America	Vermont
Belinha De Abreu	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization	Connecticut
Harry Valentín González	Puerto Rico Department of Education	Puerto Rico
Stanley Litow	IBM	New York
David Allan Little	Rural Schools Association of New York State	New York
Yvette McMahon-Arnold	Virgin Islands Department of Education	U.S. Virgin Islands
Gene Reiber	Hanover Middle School, Massachusetts Teachers Association	Massachusetts
Lauren Sterling	Maine Early Learning Investment Group	Maine
Alan Tenreiro	Cumberland High School	Rhode Island
Santina Thibedeau	New Hampshire Department of Education	New Hampshire
Alan Wagner	School of Education, University at Albany, and Rockefeller Instituted of Government, State University of New York	New York
Alonta Wrighton	New York City Department of Education	New York

Members reviewed a regional profile containing educational statistics and other relevant data to inform their individual assessments of the challenges facing their region. Similar to other regions, the Northeast and Islands region must accommodate students with fewer economic resources, ensure that students complete high school prepared for a career or postsecondary education, address shortages of qualified teachers in specialty areas, and identify sources of funding to create new programs addressing teacher shortages. Containing seven U.S. States and two territories, the region itself is diverse. With the exception of New York, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, the states in the region show poverty rates for children aged 5 to 17 below the U.S. average (see table 1, appendix A). Puerto Rico shows by far the

highest child poverty rate (55.4 percent in 2014 compared to the U.S. average of 20.3 percent). The Northeast and Islands region has fewer formal interventions in place to address college and career readiness. For example, of 25 states in the United States that require districts to offer AP, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, or similarly rigorous coursework to support students' college and career readiness as of 2014, only one of these states (Connecticut) is located in the Northeast and Islands region (Glancy et al. 2014).¹ By contrast, the pupil-to-teacher ratio among all the Northeast and Islands states and territories is lower than the national average of 16.1, consistent with recent trends indicating that the region's elementary and secondary school enrollment rates have begun to level off, or even decline, over the past decade (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2016a). See appendix A for detailed tables on the educational characteristics of the region.

Members also collaborated to develop a plan for soliciting information on the region's educational needs. Members engaged stakeholders and collected information using the following strategies: (1) disseminating an online survey, (2) engaging stakeholders in face-to-face and phone interviews, and (3) holding focus groups. Members focused their efforts on distributing the survey to the widest possible group of stakeholders.

As a result of the committee's outreach efforts, information was collected from 2,146 individuals. A total of 1,978 individuals responded to an online survey, and 168 others provided feedback through interviews and focus groups. Overall, feedback came from 707 teachers, 536 principals, 124 parents, 121 superintendents, and other members of the public (higher education, LEA staff, government employees, students, and businesses).

Each committee member of the Northeast and Islands RAC prepared a report containing a needs assessment and specific recommendations for future technical assistance based on his or her assessment of the region's unique educational environment, the survey results, and the results of other data collection efforts. Committee members identified the following six needs. They are listed in ranked average order of priority as listed by RAC members:

- ▶ preparing students to be college and career ready by high school graduation;
- ▶ improving the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps;
- ▶ developing a workforce of high-quality teachers and administrators;
- ▶ developing strategies for personalized learning and innovative uses of technology;
- ▶ facilitating educators' implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and
- ▶ ensuring equity by addressing disproportionality issues surrounding availability of resources.

Committee members also developed 45 recommendations for technical assistance to better address the region's educational needs, which fall into the following 5 broad categories:

- ▶ **Training and professional development.** Committee members recommended providing teachers and administrators training in topics that included academic interventions for struggling learners, making partnerships with colleges and universities, and securing funding for new programs. This category also includes recommendations regarding teacher preparation programs and ongoing assistance and mentorship for new teachers.

¹ These totals do not include the U.S. Virgin Islands or Puerto Rico.

- ▶ **Creating and disseminating common definitions, tools, and templates.** Several committee members advocated for assistance with establishing common definitions, particularly with respect to college and career readiness. Similarly, several committee members recommended that standard tools and templates would provide a structure to help individual states assess their efforts.
- ▶ **Building and enlarging the educational community.** Committee members emphasized the need for facilitation of cross-system collaborations to encourage parent engagement and to help identify at-risk children and provide them with appropriate supports. Some specific partnerships recommended were those with schools and colleges/universities, industry members, parents, early care providers, and community-based and child and family service agencies.
- ▶ **Improving administrative strategies, budgeting, data collection, and evidence-based practices.** Committee members emphasized the desire for assistance regarding the identification and implementation of data-driven, evidence-based practices. Many committee members recommended training on maximizing and supplementing budgets, including support for identifying other funding sources.
- ▶ **Improving use of technology in the classroom.** Committee members suggested the need for assistance with the development and dissemination of digital learning platforms to address equity issues and to improve individualized learning opportunities for students.

See chapter 2 for the 45 specific recommendations, which fall within these five broad categories. See appendix B for each committee member’s individual needs assessment and recommendations for addressing those needs.

Chapter 1. Introduction

This report represents the regional needs assessment from the Northeast and Islands Regional Advisory Committee (RAC). The Northeast and Islands region includes Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, and the Virgin Islands. The RAC members used statistical data from the Northeast and Islands regional profile (appendix A); conducted data collection and outreach activities to obtain input from various constituencies; and met three times between July 16, 2016, and August 31, 2016, to assess regional needs and how to address those needs.

A. Legislative Background

The RACs are authorized by the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. § 9601 et seq.). Section 203 of Title II of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (P.L. 107–279) directs the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to establish not less than 20 comprehensive centers to provide technical assistance to state, local, and regional educational agencies and to schools. The technical assistance is to be directed toward implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and achieving goals through the use of evidence-based teaching methods and assessment tools for use by teachers and administrators in the following areas:

- ▶ core academic subjects of mathematics, science, and reading or language arts;
- ▶ English language acquisition;
- ▶ education technology;
- ▶ communication among education experts, school officials, teachers, parents, and librarians;
- ▶ information that can be used to improve academic achievement; closing achievement gaps; and encouraging and sustaining improvement for schools, educators, parents, and policymakers within the region in which the center is located; and
- ▶ teacher and school leader in-service and preservice training models that illustrate best practices in the use of technology in different content areas.

B. Regional Background Information

A variety of educational data sources informed the development of the Northeast and Islands regional profile, which provides a descriptive snapshot of the educational landscape in the region. The RAC members used these data to inform their individual assessments of the region’s most pressing needs. The regional profiles include sections on demographics; SEA capacity; educational resources; teacher preparation, qualifications, and certification; and student educational attainment. Summaries of the data presented in each section of the profiles appear below. See appendix A for the descriptive tables and charts that represent this regional profile.

Northeast and Islands represents a diverse set of regional characteristics; what is true for one state may not apply in the same way to another. The region includes two territories, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, which are different culturally and demographically from the states. Below, we provide a brief overview of some of the region’s issues, including (1) poverty and access, (2) college and career readiness, and (3) teacher preparation.

Poverty and Access to Education

The states in the Northeast and Islands region generally show child poverty rates below the U.S. average (table 1, appendix A). Exceptions include New York, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Puerto Rico's child poverty rate is by far the highest, at more than twice the national average (55 percent in 2014 compared to the U.S. average of 20 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2014)). The child poverty rate for the U.S. Virgin Islands is just above the U.S. average at 24 percent in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau 2010).²

With the exception of Connecticut and Massachusetts, states and territories in the Northeast and Islands region have a higher percentage of public schools eligible for Title I funding compared to the national average (table 5, appendix A). New York, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have the highest percentage of schools eligible for Title I funding at 93, 99, and 100 percent, respectively (table 5, appendix A).

States and territories in the Northeast and Islands region work to identify at-risk students and provide additional federal funding for them (Parker and Griffith 2016). Some states and territories in the region have expanded state-funded preschool opportunities, often with intentions to increase access, reduce disparities, and improve outcomes in elementary education across all students. Massachusetts and Connecticut have implemented strategies to ensure school readiness as children transition to kindergarten, either through efforts to facilitate the enrollment process or through written plans on benchmarks for school readiness (Auck and Atchison 2016, Daily 2014). Four states in the Northeast and Islands region have more than a quarter of students enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs, with percentages in 2015 ranging from 29 to 84 percent of 4-year-olds. However, this percentage is considerably lower for some states in the region: rates for Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island range from 3 to 23 percent of 4-year-olds in 2015 (table 7, appendix A). Data on early childhood enrollment rates for state-funded pre-K were not available for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

College and Career Readiness

Education policy highlights the important goal of students' completing high school prepared for a career or postsecondary education. In recent years, more than 80 percent of students in the Northeast and Islands region completed high school, with the exception of New York and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which graduated 78 and 65 percent of students, respectively (Regional Educational Laboratory 2016). The number of students enrolled in degree-granting secondary institutions increased between 2008 and 2013 in all states and territories in the Northeast and Islands region, with the exception of Rhode Island and the U.S. Virgin Islands, where the number enrolled decreased by 0.5 and 3 percent, respectively (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2014). Students in New Hampshire saw the most dramatic increase in postsecondary enrollment in the region, with a change of 29 percent (NCES 2014). Students in all U.S. states in this region performed above the U.S. average on advanced placement (AP) examinations (table 22, appendix A). There are no available statistics on AP examinations for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Components of college and career readiness include exposure to key academic content and improving student performance on assessments. As of 2014 in the United States, 25 states required districts to offer AP, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, or similarly rigorous coursework. Only one of these states, Connecticut, is located in the Northeast and Islands region (Glancy et al. 2014).³ Three of the nine states and territories in the Northeast and Islands region (New York, Connecticut, and

² More recent data are not available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

³ These totals do not include the U.S. Virgin Islands or Puerto Rico.

Massachusetts) offer remedial education policies and course placement to help students succeed at postsecondary institutions (Glancy et al. 2014).

Teacher Preparation

The traditional teacher preparation programs in the Northeast and Islands region also have policies in place to train qualified teachers in specialty areas and sources of funding to create new programs addressing teacher quality. For example, New York established a new alternative teacher certification program in 2000 and funds several teacher training centers for bilingual education. Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands do not have formal policies in place to address teacher quality broadly, but they have developed programs and initiatives to address critical subject area shortages (table 20, appendix A).

In 2013–14 in the Northeast and Islands region, 91 percent of teachers had completed traditional preparation programs. Vermont had the highest percentage of teachers who completed alternative preparation routes, at 16 percent (table 17, appendix A).

The pupil-to-teacher ratio among all the Northeast and Islands states and territories is lower than the national average of 16.1, ranging from 10.6 in Vermont to 14.5 in Rhode Island (figure 2, appendix A). However, recruitment and retention challenges and increased teacher retirements may pose future educational challenges in this area.

C. Challenges Affecting Regional Needs

RAC members' data collection efforts identified several challenges affecting the Northeast and Islands region's education needs. Although the region as a whole faces shared challenges, there are several differences in specific state or territory contexts. A few of these unique challenges are briefly summarized below:

- ▶ **Three of the states in the Northeast and Islands region face challenges related to rural education.** Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont have 79, 68, and 82 percent of their schools in rural areas, respectively (table 4, appendix A). The additional geographic dispersion between home and school may increase challenges for educational policy related to parental involvement, teacher supply and retention, and the implementation of new learning technologies.
- ▶ **The U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico face additional challenges related to infrastructure needs.** In addition to the needs common across the region, stakeholders in these areas disproportionately identified facilities maintenance, new technology, and new instructional materials and equipment (e.g., textbooks) as major needs compared to the rest of the region.
- ▶ **States in the Northeast and Islands region face different funding challenges with access to varying levels of federal, state, and local funding.** For example, Vermont received 89 percent of funding in 2012–13 from state revenue, while the U.S. Virgin Islands received 83 percent of 2012–13 funding from local revenue. Puerto Rico received the largest percentage of funding from federal revenue at 35 percent, compared to the national average of 9 percent.

- ▶ **There is wide variation in states’ policy approaches to college and career readiness and early childhood education.** For example, Massachusetts is the only state in the region with statewide admission policies for public, 4-year postsecondary institutions (Glancy et al. 2014). Massachusetts is one of four U.S. states that offers publicly funded education (within certain districts) for a broad range of 4-year-olds.

D. Data Collection and Outreach Strategies

A main priority of each RAC was to solicit input from numerous constituencies, including teachers, principals, SEA and LEA administrators, governors, institutions of higher education/community colleges, postsecondary technical programs, school boards, parents, education professional organizations, teachers unions, local government, youth organizations, community-based organizations, chambers of commerce, and business leaders.

RAC members received briefs, PowerPoint presentations, and other RAC-related materials that described the purpose of the Comprehensive Centers program and how technical assistance builds the capacity of SEAs and LEAs. These materials were disseminated to their educational organizations and their professional networks. RAC members conducted needs sensing and data collection between July 19, 2016, and August 31, 2016. Data collection methods included disseminating an online survey link (via email and posting on social media and public websites), telephone and face-to-face interviews, and focus groups. The online survey asked respondents to identify their state and affiliation and allowed them to identify needs and make recommendations through open-ended responses.

RAC members had access to a Communities of Practice website to help facilitate interactions and align data collection activities. The website was used to share resources, communicate between members, and gather feedback via a link to the survey. RAC members held three meetings internally to prepare for needs sensing, review the data collected, and discuss the needs and the strategies to address those needs.

A total of 1,978 individuals from the Northeast and Islands region took the online survey. An additional 168 individuals provided feedback through telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews, and focus groups. Table 1 illustrates responses received through the survey and other data collection efforts in each of the states.

Table 1. Members of the public submitting comments by state

State	Number of individuals providing feedback	Percent
Connecticut	85	4
Maine	85	4
Massachusetts	125	6
New Hampshire	149	7
New York	243	11
Puerto Rico	916	43
Rhode Island	291	14
Vermont	18	1
Virgin Islands	230	11
Multiple states within region	4	< 1
Total Northeast and Islands region	2,146	100

Note: Some percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.

Table 2 shows the number of responses received and the self-identified roles of the respondents.

Table 2. Members of the public submitting comments by stakeholder group

Role	Number of individuals providing feedback	Percent
State level	99	5
SEA staff	50	2
State board of education	4	< 1
Other, state or local government	29	1
Other, state level	16	1
Local district or regional level	224	10
Superintendent or director of schools	121	6
School board member	40	2
LEA or central office	55	3
Other, local or regional level	8	< 1
School level	977	46
Principal or other school administrator	536	25
Librarian	170	8
Curriculum specialist or instructional coach	34	2
Parent/grandparent/guardian	124	6
Student	18	1
Other, school level	95	4
Classroom level	707	33
Teacher	707	33
Community level	115	5
Higher education	37	2
Community member	44	2
Business	19	1
Other, community level	15	1
Other or missing	24	1
Total	2,146	100

Note: Some percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.

Chapter 2. Educational Needs and Recommendations for Addressing the Needs

RAC members used information from the regional profile, input from constituencies, and committee members' individual expertise to identify the region's most pressing educational need areas and to make recommendations accordingly. Each committee member chose three priority needs and recommended one or more potential strategy to address those needs (see appendix B). Overall, individual members of the Northeast and Islands RAC identified the following six main needs:

- ▶ **Preparing students to be college and career ready by high school graduation.** College and career readiness continues to be an area of great national emphasis in recent years, and the Northeast and Islands region is no different. Nine of the 11 RAC members indicated a wide variety of stakeholders reported that preparing students for college and career is a priority need in the region.
- ▶ **Improving the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps.** Seven of the 11 RAC members cited the need to assist schools that are struggling, and to help close achievement gaps by providing supports for English language learners (ELLs) and students with individualized education plans (IEPs).
- ▶ **Developing a workforce of high-quality teachers and administrators.** The issue of teacher and administrator quality is inextricably linked to many of the other challenges presented in this report. Four of the 11 RAC members indicated this is a priority need in itself.
- ▶ **Developing strategies for personalized learning and innovative uses of technology.** Four of the 11 RAC members emphasized the need to support personalized learning, either through the use of technology or by introducing new models of schooling altogether.
- ▶ **Facilitating educators' implementation of ESSA.** Many stakeholders, especially teachers and principals, voiced their concerns about implementing ESSA and their perceived need for further support in doing so. Four of the 11 RAC members identified this need. Linked to implementing ESSA was a need for funding unmatched state and federal mandates.
- ▶ **Ensuring equity by addressing disproportionality issues among school districts.** The economic disparity across states and territories within the Northeast and Islands has left the region subject to issues of inequity among individual school districts. Two of the 11 RAC members identified the need to address such inequities. Increasing access to high quality early childhood education and encouraging parent engagement in early childhood education were two needs that were tied to ensuring equity and addressing disproportionality.

The committee members made recommendations in five broad categories to help address the identified needs:

- ▶ training and professional development;
- ▶ creating and disseminating common definitions, tools, and templates;
- ▶ building and enlarging the educational community;

- ▶ improving administrative strategies, budgeting, data collection, and use of evidence-based practices; and
- ▶ improving use of technology in the classroom.

Table 3 provides a high level summary of the recommendations expressed by each RAC member related to the priority need areas.

Table 3. Summary of needs and recommendations by committee member

Member name	Recommendations
<i>Preparing students to be college and career ready by high school graduation</i>	
S. Buck	Provide a common set of standards, assessments, and definitions of college readiness and career readiness Develop partnerships between secondary and postsecondary institutions to enable or expand dual enrollment opportunities Develop partnerships between SEAs and teacher preparation programs to discuss preparing all teachers to help students become college or career ready Assist SEAs (and secondary schools) with understanding and identifying connections between specific subject areas and career opportunities for students Help SEAs to create job banks/career preparation centers to engage and connect industry, community members, educators, students, and parents
B. De Abreu	
H. V. González	
D. A. Little	
Y. McMahon-Arnold	
G. Reiber	
A. Tenreiro	
S. Thibedeau	
A. Wrighton	
<i>Improving the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps</i>	
B. De Abreu	Improve student performance in low performing schools by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing technical assistance on implementing data-driven, evidence-based practices that have been successful in low-performing schools • supporting SEAs efforts to conduct regular onsite support to low-performing schools to more effectively address their unique needs • developing quick access to data on student achievement and improvement • developing easy to use assessment tools so schools, districts and the states have multiple measures of achievement and can target interventions • assisting with the identification and implementation of teacher and administrator recruitment strategies, especially in rural and low-performing districts
H. V. González	
Y. McMahon-Arnold	
G. Reiber	
L. Sterling	
A. Tenreiro	
A. Wrighton	
B. De Abreu	Close achievement gaps by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helping SEAs identify schools in need of wraparound services, and collaborative research for ELLs and students with IEPs • considering the need for culturally relevant learning (and recognizing the skills that already exist) in communities where achievement gaps persist
Y. McMahon-Arnold	
S. Thibedeau	

Member name	Recommendations
<i>Developing a workforce of high-quality teachers and administrators</i>	
S. Buck A. Wagner A. Wrighton	<p>Bring together stakeholders to advance a strategy for developing the teaching workforce that is informed by state and regional forecasts of teacher demand and the profile of supply</p> <p>Help SEAs take a proactive approach to the recruitment of the most effective teachers and administrators</p> <p>Assist with the identification and implementation of strategies to provide incentives to teachers to enter administrative licensing programs</p> <p>Help SEAs design a process for potential administrators to intern with experienced administrators</p>
<i>Developing strategies for personalized learning and innovative uses of technology</i>	
D. A. Little A. Tenreiro S. Thibedeau A. Wagner	<p>Support SEAs provision of technical assistance to rural school districts in the development and implementation of digital learning platforms</p> <p>Support SEAs provision of professional development to teachers in differentiated instruction for students based on individual needs identified by assessment</p> <p>Develop and pilot approaches for supporting personalized learning</p> <p>Help SEAs track the success of personalized learning initiatives and share stories with others</p> <p>Assist SEAs with the provision of professional development to teachers in finding and using digital tools to promote individualized learning with embedded assistance for ongoing support</p> <p>Encourage SEAs to focus on preservice training for teachers that prepares them for success in personalized environments</p> <p>Provide guidance for SEAs to identify desired elements of new models of schooling and develop means to realize those elements</p> <p>Support ongoing guidance, workshops, and professional development to identify, extend, or adapt elements of new models of schooling</p>
<i>Facilitating educators' implementation of ESSA</i>	
B. De Abreu H. V. González Y. McMahon-Arnold G. Reiber S. Buck	<p>Provide materials, such as videos and infographics, workshops, webinars, and conferences to help assist with the transition to ESSA</p> <p>Create a professional learning community to engage stakeholders at all levels, and create explicit accountability standards based on stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Create templates for all the new ESSA reports</p> <p>Provide SEAs with technical assistance in managing budgets to fund state and federal mandates</p>
<i>Ensuring equity by addressing disproportionality issues surrounding availability of resources</i>	
D. A. Little S. Thibedeau A. Wrighton	<p>Provide assistance in identifying, developing, and administering authentic assessments</p> <p>Provide professional development to SEAs on strategies for growing educators' capabilities to teach multiple subject areas</p> <p>Assist the SEAs with developing and using digital learning platforms that can be shared by districts so more students have access to courses and other resources</p> <p>Help SEAs train teachers in academic interventions for struggling learners</p>

Member name	Recommendations
L. Sterling	<p>Support the establishment of shared quality indicators across public school pre-K, Head Start, and private early childhood education systems</p> <p>Emphasize the use of Title I funding to support a collaborative early education local model to ensure adequate enrollment</p> <p>Share with SEAs the knowledge gained from the recently implemented federal Early Head Start Partnership grant projects, as well as the findings related to the broader public/private program partnerships with Head Start</p>
L. Sterling	<p>Assist SEAs in establishing a shared definition of effective family engagement, including established benchmarks of success for targeted populations</p> <p>Encourage SEAs to monitor students' progress throughout a birth through grade 3 continuum</p> <p>Help SEAs ensure effective cross-system collaboration led by school principals/leaders that engage Head Start/early care providers and parents</p> <p>Consult with the 21 Educare Schools across the country on their comprehensive and evidence-based model of quality instruction, teacher coaching/training model, and family engagement</p>
A. Wagner	<p>Assist SEAs in identifying the kinds of partnerships likely to be effective in both identifying at-risk children and providing appropriate supports</p> <p>Support SEAs training of LEA staff on establishing and deepening partnerships through greater engagement of school staff in addressing adverse circumstances and conditions</p>

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Appendix A. Region Educational Profile

Demographics

Understanding the demographic makeup of the states in each region helps to establish the context for the educational issues that are most pressing. This section presents tables from the *Digest of Education Statistics*, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and *American FactFinder* related to

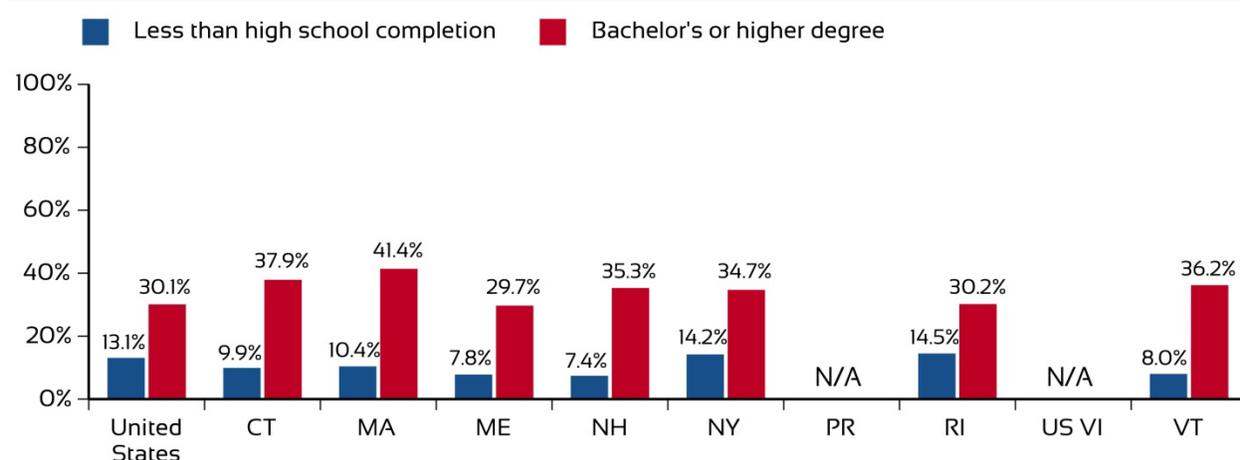
- ▶ the educational attainment of the adult population;
- ▶ the poverty rate, median household income, and unemployment rate;
- ▶ the overall number of students, teachers, and schools, both public and private;
- ▶ the racial/ethnic distribution of students served by public schools;
- ▶ participation in public school services (free or reduced-price lunch program, English language learners, students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, state-sponsored prekindergarten); and
- ▶ the percentage of the population who speak a language other than English at home.

A. Educational Attainment

The highest level of education completed by the adult, working-age population (25- to 64-year-olds) is a proxy for human capital—the skills, knowledge, and experience possessed by an individual or population. Higher educational attainment (a bachelor’s degree or higher) is associated with better income and employment. Figure 1 displays the percentage of the adult population with less than a high school diploma in 2014 and the percentage with a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2014.

Additional information about the **educational attainment of young adults** and differences by race/ethnicity can be found in the latest *NCES Condition of Education*.

Figure 1. Educational attainment by state, 2014



Source: 2015 *Digest of Education Statistics*, table 104.80. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_104.80.asp.

B. Economic Indicators

Table 1 displays socioeconomic indicators such as the percentage of persons and percentage of children below the poverty level in 2014. The table also displays the median annual household income in 2014 and the unemployment rate from in May 2016.

Table 1. Selected economic indicators, by state

State	Percent of Persons in Poverty, 2014 ^a	Percent of Children Ages 5 to 17 in Poverty, 2014 ^a	Annual Household Income (Median), 2014 ^b	Unemployment Rate, May 2016 ^c
United States	15.1	20.3	\$53,700	4.9
Connecticut	9.9	12.8	\$70,000	5.7
Maine	14.2	17.2	\$49,500	3.5
Massachusetts	11.2	14.0	\$69,200	4.2
New Hampshire	9.1	12.6	\$66,500	2.7
New York	15.1	20.9	\$58,900	4.7
Rhode Island	13.7	17.7	\$54,900	5.4
Vermont	9.7	13.2	\$54,200	3.1
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: ^a 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 102.40. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_102.40.asp?current=yes.

^b 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 102.30. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_102.30.asp?current=yes.

^c Bureau of Labor Statistics Monthly Unemployment Report. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from <http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>.

C. Schools and Students

Tables 2 through 5 contain school and student demographics such as the total number of schools, teachers, and students; the racial/ethnic distribution of students in public schools; the percentage of schools by urbanicity; and the percentage of Title I schools.

Number of schools, teachers, and students. Table 2 displays the number of schools, teachers, and students in fall 2013 for public and private schools.

Table 2. Count of schools, teachers, and students, by sector and state, fall 2013

State	Public			Private		
	Schools ^a	Teachers ^b	Students ^c	Schools ^d	Teachers ^d	Students ^d
United States	94,758	3,113,764	50,044,522	33,620	441,500	5,395,740
Connecticut	1,142	43,443	546,200	400	8,560	72,770
Maine	585	15,452	183,995	190	2,040	18,380
Massachusetts	1,860	70,490	955,739	800	15,050	134,560
New Hampshire	481	14,826	186,310	280	2,690	26,700
New York	4,789	206,693	2,732,770	1,870	41,580	452,380
Rhode Island	296	9,824	142,008	130	1,970	22,180
Vermont	301	8,375	88,690	110	1,230	8,890
Puerto Rico	N/A	33,412	423,934	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	1,082	14,953	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: ^a 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 216.43. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_216.43.asp?current=yes.

^b 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 208.30. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_208.30.asp?current=yes.

^c 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 2083.40. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_203.40.asp?current=yes.

^d 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 205.80. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_205.80.asp?current=yes.

Percentage of public school students by race/ethnicity. Table 3 displays the racial/ethnic background of public school students in fall 2013.

Table 3. Percentage distribution of enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity and state, fall 2013

State	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Two or More Races
United States	50.3	15.6	24.8	4.8	0.4	1.0	3.0
Connecticut	58.5	12.9	21.2	4.7	0.1	0.3	2.4
Maine	90.9	3.2	1.8	1.5	0.1	0.8	1.6
Massachusetts	64.9	8.7	17.0	6.1	0.1	0.2	2.9
New Hampshire	88.0	1.9	4.4	3.0	0.1	0.3	2.3
New York	46.5	18.2	24.5	8.8	0.0	0.6	1.5
Rhode Island	61.5	8.1	23.4	2.9	0.2	0.7	3.2
Vermont	91.6	1.9	1.6	1.9	0.1	0.3	2.6
Puerto Rico	0.1	> 0.1	99.9	> 0.1	> 0.1	> 0.1	0.0
U.S. Virgin Islands	1.5	78.5	18.6	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.7

Source: 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 203.70. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_203.70.asp.

Percentage of school districts by urban-centric locale. Table 4 displays the percentage of school districts classified by the Census locale codes. The large, midsize, and small city codes were summed to create the total number of city districts. The large, midsize, and small suburban codes were summed to create

the total number of suburban districts. The fringe, distant, and remote town codes were summed to create the total number of town districts. The fringe, distant, and remote rural codes were summed to create the total number of rural districts. The percentages of districts within each of the four major locale codes are presented.

Table 4. Percentage distribution of public school districts, by urban-centric locale and state, 2013–14

State	City	Suburban	Town	Rural
United States	5.7	22.9	18.4	53.0
Connecticut	8.3	49.7	4.7	37.3
Maine	2.1	8.4	10.5	78.9
Massachusetts	3.8	73.1	6.3	16.8
New Hampshire	1.1	20.1	11.2	67.6
New York	3.2	38.2	14.7	43.9
Rhode Island	5.7	77.1	0.0	17.1
Vermont	0.7	3.1	14.3	82.0
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: *National Center for Education Statistics Rural Education in America*, table A.1.a.-1. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled/tables/a.1.a.-1.asp>.

Percentage of Title I schools. Table 5 presents the total number of schools and the percentage of schools that were eligible for Title I in 2010/11. A Title I eligible school is one in which the percentage of children from low-income families is at least as high as the percentage of children from low-income families served by the local education agency (LEA) as a whole, or because 35 percent or more of the children in the school are from low-income families.

Table 5. Number of schools and percentage by Title I status, 2010–11

State	Number of Operating Schools	Percent of Title I
United States	98,817	67.4
Connecticut	1,157	46.0
Maine	631	83.4
Massachusetts	1,829	55.6
New Hampshire	480	86.5
New York	4,757	92.9
Rhode Island	317	73.2
Vermont	320	75.9
Puerto Rico	1,473	98.8
U.S. Virgin Islands ^a	32	100

Source: *Number and Types of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools from the Common Core of Data: School Year 2010-11*. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/pesschools10/tables/table_02.asp.

^a For the U.S. Virgin Islands “Percent of Title I,” Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey, 2004–05, Version 1a. Retrieved August 30, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/overview04/tables/table_2.asp.

D. Participation in Public School Services

Tables 6 and 7 provide information about participation in public school services.

Public school services. Table 6 provides the percentage of students in public schools who were eligible for free or reduced price lunch, participated in English Language learner programs, were served under the Individuals with Disabilities Act Part B, or participated in programs for gifted and talented students.

Table 6. Percentage of public school students participating in school services

State	Free or Reduced Price Lunch, 2013-14 ^a	English Language Learners, 2013-14 ^b	Students with Disabilities, 2013-14 ^c	Gifted and Talented, 2006 ^d
United States	52.0	9.3	12.9	6.7
Connecticut	37.1	5.9	13.0	3.8
Maine	45.8	2.8	17.5	3.2
Massachusetts	38.3	8.5	17.5	0.7
New Hampshire	27.8	1.9	15.6	2.6
New York	50.2	7.0	16.6	2.9
Rhode Island	46.8	6.8	16.5	1.4
Vermont	39.4	1.5	15.7	0.8
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	29.2	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	8.5	N/A

Source: ^a 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 204.10. Retrieved July 6, 2016 from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_204.10.asp?current=yes.

^b 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 204.20. Retrieved July 6, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_204.20.asp?current=yes.

^c 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 204.70. Retrieved July 6, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_204.70.asp?current=yes.

^d 2014 Digest of Education Statistics, table 204.90. Retrieved July 6, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_204.90.asp?current=yes.

Prekindergarten participation and per-student spending. The National Institute for Early Education Research publishes a yearly *State of Preschool* report with **profiles of each state**. The state profiles provide detailed information on access to preschool, quality standards, and resources. Table 7 displays the percentage of 3-year-old and the percentage of 4-year-old population enrolled in prekindergarten and state spending per child enrolled in prekindergarten.

Table 7. State-funded prekindergarten programs, 2015

State	State Spending per Enrolled Child	Percent of 4-Year-Old Population Enrolled in State-Funded Program	Percent of 3-Year-Old Population Enrolled in State-Funded Program
United States	\$4,489	29	5
Connecticut	\$8,106	23	9
Maine	\$2,732	36	0
Massachusetts	\$3,626	7	7
New Hampshire	N/A	N/A	N/A
New York	\$6,617	49	0

State	State Spending per Enrolled Child	Percent of 4-Year-Old Population Enrolled in State-Funded Program	Percent of 3-Year-Old Population Enrolled in State-Funded Program
Rhode Island	\$9,641	3	0
Vermont	\$6,589	84	26
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: National Institute for Early Education Research. Retrieved July 2, 2016, from <http://nieer.org/research/state-preschool-2015-state-profiles>.

E. Other

Table 8 contains linguistic indicators such as the percentage of the population who speak English only at home, the percentage who speak Spanish at home, the percentage who speak another Indo-European language at home, and the percentage who speak an Asian or Pacific Islander language at home.

Table 8. Percentage of population 5 years and older by language spoken at home and by state

State	Language Spoken at Home, Percent of Population 5 and Older				
	English Only	Spanish	Other Indo-European Language	Asian and Pacific Islander Languages	Other Languages
United States	79.1	13.0	3.7	3.3	0.9
Connecticut	78.4	11.1	7.4	2.3	0.8
Maine	93.3	0.9	4.4	0.8	0.6
Massachusetts	77.8	8.3	8.8	3.9	1.3
New Hampshire	92.1	2.1	4.0	1.3	0.4
New York	69.8	14.9	8.9	4.9	1.5
Rhode Island	78.9	11.1	7.1	2.2	0.8
Vermont	94.7	1.1	3.1	0.8	0.3
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *American FactFinder*.

State Education Agency Capacity

State Education Agencies (SEAs) are the primary customers of the Comprehensive Centers. Understanding the capacity in the SEA, the number of districts served, and the governance structure of each state provides context. Data in this section come from the *2015 Digest of Education Statistics*, the Education Commission of the States report, *50-State Comparison: K–12 Governance Structures*, and Achieve’s report, *Leadership Turnover: 2015 Year of Significant Change in State Education Leadership*.

Table 9 displays the number of agencies in each state. Table 10 displays the governance model (e.g., who is elected, who is appointed). Table 11 shows changes in education leadership over the past 2 years (2015 and 2016).

Table 9. Number of education agencies in 2013–14, by type and state

State	Total	District/LEA	RESA	State	Independent Charter Schools and Other
United States	18,194	13,491	1,522	255	2,923
Connecticut	201	169	6	7	19
Maine	254	237	8	4	5
Massachusetts	409	238	89	1	81
New Hampshire	292	179	95	0	18
New York	970	694	37	6	233
Puerto Rico	1	1	0	0	0
Rhode Island	61	35	4	6	16
Vermont	360	294	59	2	5
U.S. Virgin Islands	2	2	0	0	0

Source: *2015 Digest of Education Statistics*, table 214.30. Retrieved July 6, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_214.30.asp?current=yes.

Note: RESA = Regional Education Service Agency

Table 10. State governance

State	Governance Model	Legislature	Local School Boards
Connecticut	Governor appoints board, board appoints chief	The legislature has a joint education committee.	169 local boards; members elected.
Maine	Appointed board, appointed chief	The legislature has a joint education and cultural affairs committee.	286 local boards; members elected.
Massachusetts	Governor appoints board, board appoints chief	The legislature has a joint education, arts and humanities committee.	315 local boards; members appointed and elected.
New Hampshire	Appointed board, appointed chief	The legislature has a house education committee and a senate education committee.	176 local boards; members elected.

State	Governance Model	Legislature	Local School Boards
New York	Legislature appoints State Board; Appointed Chief	The legislature appoints all of the members of the state board of education. The legislature has an assembly education committee, an assembly libraries and education technology committee and a senate education committee.	705 local boards; members appointed and elected. 32 community school district boards; members elected.
Puerto Rico	Governor-appointed chief	N/A	N/A
Rhode Island	Governor appoints board, board appoints chief	The legislature has a house health, education and welfare committee and a senate health, education and welfare committee.	33 local boards; members appointed and elected.
Vermont	Appointed board, appointed chief	The legislature has a house education committee and a senate education committee.	281 local boards; members elected.
U.S. Virgin Islands	Elected Board; Appointed Chief	N/A	N/A

Source: Education Commission of the States. (2013). *50-State Comparison: K-12 Governance Structures*. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from <http://www.ecs.org/k-12-governance-structures/>.

Table 11. State education leadership changes in 2015 or 2016

State	New Governor	New State Board Members	New Chief State School Officer	New State Higher Education Officer
Connecticut	N/A	3/11 voting members	Dianna Wentzell, May 2015	N/A
Maine	N/A	N/A	Bill Beardsley, Nov 2015	N/A
Massachusetts	Charlie Baker-R, Jan 2015	3/11 voting members	N/A	Carlos Santiago, Jul 2015
New Hampshire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New York	N/A	4/16 voting members	Mary Ellen Elia, May 2015	N/A
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rhode Island	Gina Raimondo-D, Jan 2015	6/11 voting members	Ken Wagner, Jul 2015	N/A
Vermont	* will change in 2016	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Achieve. (2015). *Leadership Turnover: 2015 Year of Significant Change in State Education Leadership*. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from <http://www.achieve.org/files/LeadershipTurnover2015.pdf>.

Educational Resources

Indicators of educational resources include school finance information such as revenues and expenditures, access to fiber and broadband connectivity, and pupil-to-teacher ratios. Data for the tables presented in this section come from the *2015 Digest of Education Statistics, American FactFinder*, and *Education Superhighway's 2015 State of the States* report on broadband connectivity in public schools.

Table 12 provides the total revenue for each state by source of funds.

Table 12. Revenues for public elementary and secondary schools, by source, 2012/13

State	Total Revenue (in Thousands)	Percent Revenue From Federal	Percent Revenue From State	Percent Revenue From Local
United States	\$603,686,987	9.3	45.2	45.5
Connecticut	\$10,549,973	4.4	39.5	56.2
Maine	\$2,584,962	7.6	39.9	52.5
Massachusetts	\$16,436,188	5.7	39.4	54.9
New Hampshire	\$2,875,406	5.7	35.5	58.8
New York	\$59,007,178	5.5	40.1	54.4
Puerto Rico	\$3,577,365	34.5	65.5	< 0.1
Rhode Island	\$2,336,776	8.7	38.9	52.4
Vermont	\$1,641,315	7.1	88.9	4.0
U.S. Virgin Islands	\$206,300	17.0	0.0	83.0

Source: *2015 Digest of Education Statistics*, table 235.20. Retrieved July 6, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_235.20.asp?current=yes.

Table 13 provides the per-pupil expenditures and the percentage of expenditures on instruction, support services (student support, instructional staff, general administration, operations and maintenance, student transportation, and other support services), and other (food services, capital outlay, interest on debt).

Additional data on total current expenditures for elementary and secondary education by function, subfunction, and state is available through NCES. See http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015301/tables/table_03.asp.

Table 13. Per-pupil expenditures, 2012–13, by function

State	Per-Pupil Expenditures	Percent Instruction	Percent Support	Percent Other
United States	\$12,020	54.4	31.3	14.3
Connecticut	\$18,797	58.3	30.8	10.8
Maine	\$13,471	55.9	34.8	9.3
Massachusetts	\$16,483	59.9	30.5	9.6
New Hampshire	\$14,663	61.5	31.7	6.7
New York	\$20,636	65.6	27.1	7.3
Puerto Rico	\$8,125	43.3	41.0	15.7

State	Per-Pupil Expenditures	Percent Instruction	Percent Support	Percent Other
Rhode Island	\$15,476	59.5	34.2	6.3
Vermont	\$18,038	60.4	32.6	7.0
U.S. Virgin Islands	\$10,667	50.6	44.0	5.4

Source: a. 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 236.75. Retrieved July 6, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_236.75.asp?current=yes.

Table 14 provides another look at education expenditures. The last column provides an index of state and local education expenditures (excluding capital outlay) to total expenditures (excluding capital outlay, utilities, and intergovernmental expenditures).

Table 14. State expenditures on education, fall 2013

State	Total Enrollment ^a	Total Direct State and Local Expenditures ^{b,c}	State and Local Education Expenditures ^{b,d}	Percent Education to Total Expenditures
United States	50,044,052	\$2,366,783,591	\$796,049,064	33.6
Connecticut	546,200	\$31,855,294	\$11,275,468	35.4
Maine	183,995	\$10,230,227	\$3,085,815	30.2
Massachusetts	955,739	\$59,382,014	\$18,235,132	30.7
New Hampshire	186,310	\$9,143,239	\$3,547,804	38.8
New York	2,732,770	\$219,275,942	\$64,621,980	29.5
Puerto Rico	423,934	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rhode Island	142,008	\$8,847,203	\$3,104,287	35.1
Vermont	88,690	\$6,131,979	\$2,378,150	38.8
U.S. Virgin Islands	14,953	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: ^a 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 203.20. Retrieved July 5, 2016, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_203.20.asp?current=yes.

^b American FactFinder, United States Census Bureau. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/govs/local/>.

^c Total direct expenditures do not include capital outlay, utilities, and intergovernmental expenditures.

^d Total education expenditures do not include capital outlay.

Note: Not all data available for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands

Table 15 displays school district broadband connectivity for each state. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) set a minimum Internet access goal of 100 Kbps per student. The table provides the percentage of school districts in each state meeting that goal. Districts with access to fiber connections are more likely to meet the minimum connectivity goal. The second column of table 15 presents the percentage of school districts in the state with access to fiber connections. The FCC funds upgrades to fiber networks. The FCC also subsidizes the deployment of wired and wireless networks in schools. Accessing the E-rate budget for Wi-Fi networks is an indicator of whether districts are aware their E-rate budget can be used to upgrade Wi-Fi networks. Lastly, \$3/Mbps is a price target that will enable school districts to meet Internet access goals.

Additional information and maps of district fiber connectivity are available through the Federal Communications Commission website <https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/maps/e-rate-fiber-map/>.

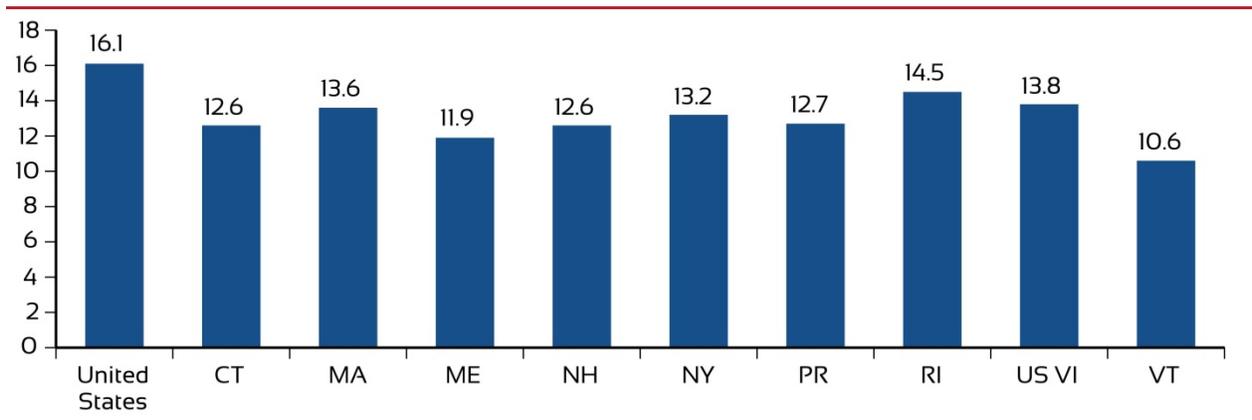
Table 15. School district broadband connectivity, 2015

State	Percent of School Districts			
	Meeting the Minimum 100 Kbps per Student Goal	That Have Fiber Connections To Meet Bandwidth Goals	That Accessed Their E-Rate Budget for Wi-Fi Networks	Meeting the \$3/Mbps Internet Access Affordability Target
Connecticut	97	88	37	N/A
Maine	97	99	17	36
Massachusetts	63	85	43	24
New Hampshire	66	77	35	18
New York	92	93	39	79
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rhode Island	76	98	22	6
Vermont	90	87	64	13
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Education Superhighway. (2015.) *2015 State of the States*. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from http://stateofthestates.educationsuperhighway.org/assets/sos/full_report-55ba0a64dcae0611b15ba9960429d323e2eadbac5a67a0b369bedbb8cf15ddbb.pdf.

Another educational resource is teachers. Figure 2 presents the pupil-to-teacher ratio.

Figure 2. Pupil-to-teacher ratio, fall 2013



Source: *2015 Digest of Education Statistics*, table 208.40. Retrieved July 6, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_208.40.asp?current=yes.

Teacher Preparation, Qualifications, and Certification

Tables 16 through 20 display data on teacher preparation programs, the percentage of teachers who completed their training in a different state from where they are teaching, and ways teacher preparation programs are addressing shortages of highly qualified teachers.

All the data come from the Title II Reports National Teacher Preparation Data file.

Table 16. Number of completers of teacher preparation programs in 2013-14, by program type and state

State	Total Enrollment	Total Completers	Completers by Program Type		
			Traditional	Alternative, IHE-Based	Alternative, not IHE-Based
United States	465,540	180,745	149,369	13,011	18,365
Connecticut	3,558	1,685	1,474	20	191
Maine	1,824	679	519	N/A	160
Massachusetts	14,520	4,947	4,542	N/A	405
New Hampshire	2,767	1,069	983	N/A	86
New York	42,361	17,694	16,283	1,411	N/A
Puerto Rico	12,229	1,489	1,344	145	N/A
Rhode Island	2,151	620	594	N/A	26
Vermont	1,790	478	402	N/A	76
U.S. Virgin Islands	180	20	20	N/A	N/A

Source: 2015 All States Report Data File, Title II Reports: National Teacher Preparation Data. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from <https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Home.aspx>.

Note: IHE = Institute of Higher Education

Table 17. Percentage of completers of teacher preparation programs in 2013-14, by program type and state

State	Total Completers	Program Type		
		Percent Traditional	Percent Alternative, IHE-Based	Percent Alternative, not IHE-Based
United States	180,745	82.6	7.2	10.2
Connecticut	1,685	87.5	1.2	11.3
Maine	679	76.4	0.0	23.6
Massachusetts	4,947	91.8	0.0	8.2
New Hampshire	1,069	92.0	0.0	8.0
New York	17,694	92.0	8.0	0.0
Puerto Rico	1,489	90.3	9.7	0.0
Rhode Island	620	95.8	0.0	4.2
Vermont	478	84.1	0.0	15.9
U.S. Virgin Islands	20	100.0	0.0	0.0

Source: 2015 All States Report Data File, Title II Reports: National Teacher Preparation Data. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from <https://title2.ed.gov/Public/DataTools/2015/AllStates.xls>.

Table 18. Number and percentage of newly licensed teachers who received their credential from a teacher preparation program in a different state

State	Total Number Receiving Initial Credential in the State in 2013-14	Total Number Who Completed Their Teacher Preparation Program in Another State	Percent Who Trained Out of State
United States	254,272	56,718	22
Connecticut	1,182	760	64
Maine	883	200	23
Massachusetts	8,860	1,183	13
New Hampshire	864	355	41
New York	21,152	0	0
Puerto Rico	1,874	12	1
Rhode Island	813	177	22
Vermont	352	152	43
U.S. Virgin Islands	64	35	55

Source: 2015 All States Report Data File, Title II Reports: National Teacher Preparation Data. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Report/DataFiles/DataFiles.aspx?p=5_01.

Table 19. Do teacher preparation programs address shortages of highly qualified teachers by area of certification or licensure, subject, or specialty

State	Area of Certification or Licensure	Subject	Specialty
Connecticut	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maine	Yes	Yes	Yes
Massachusetts	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Hampshire	Yes	Yes	Yes
New York	Yes	Yes	Yes
Puerto Rico	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rhode Island	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vermont	Yes	Yes	Yes
U.S. Virgin Islands	No	Yes	No

Source: 2015 All States Report Data File, Title II Reports: National Teacher Preparation Data. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Report/DataFiles/DataFiles.aspx?p=5_01.

Table 20. Description of ways teacher preparation programs are addressing shortages of highly qualified teachers

State	Description of the Extent to Which Teacher Preparation Programs Are Addressing Shortages of Highly Qualified Teachers
Connecticut	<p>Various preparation institutions have sought approval and are implementing programs targeted at shortage areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central CT State University implemented an Master's of Art in Teaching (MAT) Program in secondary shortage are of Mathematics, English, and all sciences; University of New Haven sought recent approval and is offering programs in world languages; • Southern CT State University received OSEP funding to prepare, between 2006 and 2009, 54 bachelor's level special education teachers; • The DHE Alternate Route Program continues to prepare teachers in shortage areas including Math, All Sciences, English, World Languages, and Technology Education; • CREC Advanced Alternate Route for Special Education prepares certified teachers in general education for an additional endorsement in special education; ACES offers an alternate route program to prepare already certified teachers to obtain an additional endorsement for Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESOL) and/or Bilingual Education; • Charter Oak State College Alternate Route for Early Childhood prepares early childhood/special education teachers to teach students with typical or atypical development from birth to kindergarten; and • Teach for America prepared teachers in shortage areas of Math, Sciences, French, Spanish as well as Elementary and History/Social Studies, all of whom are placed for employment in high-needs districts/schools.
Maine	<p>Maine has designated the areas of special education, world languages, science, mathematics, ESL, gifted and talented education, and industrial arts as teacher shortage areas. Traditional teacher preparation programs are responding to these needs by expanding their recruitment efforts in these areas, and by developing new programs and pathways to increase the capacity for training teachers in these areas. For example, some institutions are offering online courses leading to special education certification, and conducting statewide outreach efforts to support the training needs of special education teachers on emergency certificates. Other institutions are adding program pathways so that students preparing for certification in core content areas can augment with additional courses and clinical experiences to receive additional certification in special education or teaching English language learners.</p>

State	Description of the Extent to Which Teacher Preparation Programs Are Addressing Shortages of Highly Qualified Teachers
Massachusetts	<p>The Department has developed a number of strategies to help teacher preparation programs address the shortages of highly qualified teachers in Massachusetts public schools. These include, but are not limited to:</p> <p>Strengthened new program approval standards that specifically require organizations in the state to support the needs of districts (Standard B) via three indicators that address shortages of highly qualified teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. 1. "Deep interactive partnerships with districts to inform program effectiveness" B. 2. "Strategic plan utilizing feedback and data collected from partner districts that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aligned with Sponsoring Organization's strategic plan b. Focused on meeting district needs" B.3. "Focused recruitment, enrollment, retention and employment that address the needs of districts") <p>Approved and sustains several alternative and practice-based preparation programs designed to focus on shortage areas in critical needs districts with low numbers of highly qualified teachers and/or content shortage areas. Over thirty alternative and practice-based programs are approved by the Department. They are customized to tackle specific highly qualified teacher shortages of partner districts more immediately than can be accomplished by traditional post-baccalaureate programs. Several practice-based programs have sought grants and foundation support to help sustain their efforts to address highly qualified shortages.</p> <p>Accepts proposals for new programs from teacher preparation providers only upon demonstrated need via the Department's Needs Assessment process. Critical shortage is one of three criteria that programs can address to demonstrate need.</p>
New Hampshire	<p>Last year, the New Hampshire Department of Education's new database (EIS) is still in development and continues to be upgraded in its sophistication. Although it does capture HQT counts for another federal report, it does so by School District as a summative count, so currently we are unable to list HQT by licensure and endorsement. In order to tangentially demonstrate some HQT statistics, included you will find the counts for the other report by school district as counts - for teachers who are HQT and not. unable to provide such data since we have not accounted for these variables as of yet. In the future we will be working collaboratively with the Title 2 HQT consultants at the Department to identify these requested data/variables for next year's report. Although New Hampshire identifies Critical Shortages of all teachers, this added layer, of Highly Qualified Teachers has not been on the docket, but will be for next year.</p> <p>New Hampshire identifies critical shortages every year, based on data from all public and private NH schools. Identifying these critical shortages in New Hampshire is the same as the data on HQT submitted for the ESEA report. The core areas of shortages in New Hampshire is in three areas: Mathematics, Sciences, and Foreign Languages. Accompanying this report is the copy of the ESEA HQT for New Hampshire. The New Hampshire Department of Education continues to sophisticate their database system EIS, and intend to address the newer Title 2 requests for data.</p> <p>Please note: All New Hampshire Program Completers from all IHE Teacher Preparation Programs now graduate with their endorsement(s) AND are HQT qualified.</p>

State	Description of the Extent to Which Teacher Preparation Programs Are Addressing Shortages of Highly Qualified Teachers
New York	<p>In 1998, when the Board of Regents enacted the new teaching policy “Teaching to Higher Standards: New York’s Commitment,” the Board of Regents directed the Department to monitor the availability of teachers and take appropriate steps if the supply of certified teachers falls significantly below the demand. To ensure equitable distribution of highly qualified teachers, the Department has engaged in the following activities:</p> <p>Establish Alternative Teacher Preparation Route: In July 2000, the Board of Regents approved the alternative teacher certification (ATC) program. The goal of the Board of Regents in approving avenues of non-traditional teacher preparation was to address the shortage of teachers in certain subject areas and geographic areas by authorizing programs that would enable qualified candidates to begin teaching more quickly, while maintaining the quality of their preparation. ATC programs must meet all of the teacher education standards adopted by the Board of Regents.</p> <p>Develop the Graduate Level Clinically Rich Teacher Preparation Pilot Program: Research shows that clinical approach increases teacher retention and leaves teachers better prepared for the realities of the classroom. In an effort to improve the retention and effectiveness of novice teachers in high need schools, with the support of Race to the Top money, the New York State Education Department issued preliminary awards to 11 program providers to offer the clinically rich graduate level teacher preparation pilot program through a Request for Proposal process. Program providers partner with high needs schools with demonstrated shortages of certified teachers to participate in a pilot project to address the teacher shortage issue. Clinically rich teacher preparation programs require intensive mentoring, supervision and support from the Institution as well as the Local Education Agency, collaboration and integrated coursework. Applicants are encouraged to have a specific focus on the teacher shortage areas of science, mathematics, special education for middle and high schools and English as a Second Language.</p> <p>This year and through 2017 a new initiative began to further develop and support a Clinically-Rich Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language. Grant funds will be distributed to nine Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) around the state: five in NYC and four throughout the rest of the state. The distribution of funding was determined by the number of ELL students in each region. These programs were established to address the shortage of certified bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers throughout New York State</p>

State	Description of the Extent to Which Teacher Preparation Programs Are Addressing Shortages of Highly Qualified Teachers
Puerto Rico	<p>The following teaching areas comprised the top critical shortage teaching areas in Puerto Rico:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education; • Elementary English; • Secondary English; • Secondary Mathematics; • HS Physics • HS Chemistry • Environmental Sciences <p>Puerto Rico has implemented numerous initiatives to address these critical needs. Such initiatives include Mathematics-Science Partnership programs, core content academies, re-certification and certification programs among others.</p> <p>In order to increase supply in certain content areas, RFP's for professional development with Title I and Title II Part A funds are geared towards addressing shortages of Highly Qualified Teachers in the subject areas identified.</p> <p>Although Puerto Rico has not established regulations requiring teacher preparation programs to address HQT shortages, programs are informed of the critical shortages areas and are urged to develop programs and initiatives in efforts to address identified and potential shortages of Highly Qualified Teachers.</p>
Rhode Island	<p>Anyone becoming certified in RI is highly qualified because it's built into the certification process.</p> <p>Traditional programs and alternative programs continue to expand in high need areas such as secondary special education.</p>
Vermont	<p>Vermont preparation programs in core academic areas* require candidates to take a subject specific exam in order to be recommended for licensure. Passage of the required exam meets the content knowledge requirement for candidates to be HQT for the endorsement sought. That being said, Vermont does not have specific shortages in Highly Qualified Teachers and therefore has no need to establish specific strategies to address shortage areas.</p> <p>*excluding Early Childhood Education</p>
U.S. Virgin Islands	<p>The Education Unit at the University of the Virgin Islands received an NCATE visit. Six courses in ESL were approved by the Curriculum Committee and the unit began offering these course in the spring of 2014. The course in educational technology will be enhanced to address the use of technology to collect, manage and analyze data for instructional purposes. Currently the SOE is collaborating with the Virgin Islands Department of Education in an effort to assist in the professional development of practicing teachers.</p> <p>The Elementary Education program will be enhanced by adding concentration areas and courses that address the need for trained teachers to work with ESL and special education students. The course in educational technology will be enhanced to address the use of technology to collect, manage and analyze data for instructional purposes. Greater links will be established with the Virgin Islands Department of Education in an effort to assist in the preparation of practicing teachers to be certified.</p>

Source: 2015 All States Report Data File, Title II Reports: National Teacher Preparation Data. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Report/DataFiles/DataFiles.aspx?p=5_01.

Student Educational Attainment

Indicators of student educational attainment include

- ▶ Fourth grade literacy;
- ▶ Advanced Placement participation and performance;
- ▶ performance on college readiness assessments (ACT and SAT);
- ▶ averaged freshman graduation rates; and
- ▶ college completion rates.

A. Fourth Grade Literacy

Research has shown that students who are not reading well by third grade have a higher probability of dropping out of high school. Each state uses different assessments of reading and literacy. Table 21 presents results from the 2015 4th grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment.

Table 21. Percentage at each achievement level on the 2015 4th grade NAEP reading assessment, 2015

State	Achievement Level				
	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	At or Above Proficient
United States	32	33	27	8	35
Connecticut	26	31	31	13	43
Maine	29	36	28	8	36
Massachusetts	18	32	35	14	50
New Hampshire	21	33	34	12	46
New York	32	33	27	9	36
Rhode Island	28	32	30	10	40
Vermont	24	31	32	12	45
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. *The Nation's Report Card*. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2015/#reading/state/acl?grade=4.

B. Advanced Placement Participation and Performance

Participation in Advanced Placement (AP) courses and performance on AP exams are predictors of college enrollment and performance. By taking AP courses, students are exposed to college-level course material while in high school. There are currently more than 30 AP courses. At the end of the school year, students in AP courses have the opportunity to take the associated AP exam. The exams are scored on a scale of 1 to 5. Many colleges and universities grant college credit, depending on the score. Each college has discretion for awarding credit based on AP exam performance, but generally a student must

earn at least a 3 to receive college-level credit. Table 22 provides the number of students who took an AP course in 2015, the number of exams taken, the average exam score, and the percentage of exams scored 3 or higher. There are more exams taken than students taking AP courses because individual students may take more than one AP course in a given year. The College Board provides detailed reports for each state, available [here](#).

Table 22. AP participation and exam performance, 2015

State	Number of Students Taking AP Course	Total Number of Exams Taken	Average Exam Score (1 to 5 scale)	Percent of Exams Scored 3 or Higher
United States	2,416,329	4,343,547	2.82	57
Connecticut	33,783	62,564	3.22	71
Maine	8,495	15,118	2.86	60
Massachusetts	59,105	107,925	3.16	68
New Hampshire	6,955	11,512	3.23	72
New York	153,623	269,560	2.98	63
Rhode Island	6,281	11,139	2.91	61
Vermont	3,802	6,414	3.06	66
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: *College Board State Summary Reports*. Retrieved July 12, 2016, from <https://research.collegeboard.org/programs/ap/data/participation/Ap-2015>.

C. Meeting College Readiness Benchmarks

The two primary college readiness assessments in the United States are the ACT® and the SAT. Both tests have historically been taken by high school students planning on attending college. The test taken is largely a function of the state where a student attends high school. Recently, several states began providing all students the opportunity to take college readiness assessments. In 2015, 13 states had 100-percent participation of graduates in the ACT assessment: Alabama, Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, and Wyoming. Because not all students participate in the ACT® and/or SAT assessments, it is not appropriate to make comparisons between states. When larger percentages of students in a state participate in the assessment, the average score is generally lower because students from all ability levels are tested. In states with lower participation rates, the students tested are often more likely to be higher achieving.

The ACT® consists of four subject area tests (English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science), which are often combined for a composite score. ACT® sets benchmarks for each subject-area test. The ACT® benchmarks are the scores associated with a 50-percent chance of earning a B or higher in corresponding first-year college courses. The ACT® benchmarks are 18 in English, 22 in both Mathematics and Reading, and 23 in Science.

The SAT consists of three subject area tests (Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing). The College Board sets a benchmark for the SAT composite score associated with a 65 percent probability of obtaining a first-year GPA of a B-minus or higher. The SAT college readiness benchmark is a 1550 composite score. The College Board produces detailed program results for each state. The state reports

provide additional details and breakdowns by student subgroup. See more at <https://www.collegeboard.org/release/2015-program-results>.

Table 23. ACT® and SAT participation and mean scores, 2015

State	Percent of Graduates Taking ACT® ^a	Average ACT® Composite Score (Benchmark 21.25) ^a	Percent of Graduates Taking SAT ^b	Average SAT Composite Score (Benchmark 1550) ^b
United States	51 to 60	21.0	N/A	1,490
Connecticut	31 to 40	24.4	81 to 90	1,514
Maine	0 to 10	24.2	91 to 100	1,392
Massachusetts	21 to 30	24.4	81 to 90	1,552
New Hampshire	21 to 30	24.3	61 to 70	1,566
New York	21 to 30	23.7	71 to 80	1,469
Rhode Island	11 to 20	23.1	71 to 80	1,472
Vermont	21 to 30	23.5	61 to 70	1,554
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: ^a *The Condition of College and Career Readiness 2015*. Retrieved July 2, 2016, from <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/research/condition-of-college-and-career-readiness-report-2015.html?page=0&chapter=9>.
^b *The College Board Program Results, SAT State Profile Reports*. Retrieved July 15, 2016, from <https://www.collegeboard.org/release/2015-program-results>.

Table 24. Percentage of ACT® and SAT test takers meeting college readiness benchmarks, 2015

State	Seniors Taking ACT® ^a	Met ACT® College Readiness Benchmark				Seniors Taking SAT ^b	Met SAT College Readiness Benchmark ^b
		English ^a	Reading ^a	Mathematics ^a	Science ^a		
United States	59	64	46	42	38	N/A	42
Connecticut	32	86	68	68	61	89	47
Maine	10	85	68	66	59	96	31
Massachusetts	28	85	67	71	61	86	50
New Hampshire	23	86	68	68	62	70	51
New York	28	79	63	66	59	75	39
Rhode Island	19	78	63	58	52	77	40
Vermont	29	80	64	61	56	61	50
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: ^a *The Condition of College and Career Readiness 2015*. Retrieved July 2, 2016, from <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/research/condition-of-college-and-career-readiness-report-2015.html?page=0&chapter=9>.
^b *The College Board Program Results, State Reports*. Retrieved July 15, 2016, from <https://www.collegeboard.org/release/2015-program-results>.

D. Public High School Graduation Rates

The adjusted cohort graduation rate (known as ACGR) measures the percentage of public school students who attain a regular high school diploma within 4 years of starting 9th grade for the first time.

Table 25. Adjusted cohort graduation rate for public high school students overall and by race/ethnicity, 2013/14

State	All	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native
United States	82	87	73	76	89	70
Connecticut	87	92	79	74	93	85
Maine	87	87	79	72	95	80
Massachusetts	86	91	75	69	92	76
New Hampshire	88	89	84	77	90	84
New York	78	88	65	64	84	65
Rhode Island	81	85	72	72	88	57
Vermont	88	89	75	78	90	≤50
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, table 219.46. Retrieved July 6, 2016, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_219.46.asp?current=yes.

E. College Completion Rates

One way that secondary schools measure their performance is by the transition of high school graduates into postsecondary education or the labor force. One source of longitudinal data on postsecondary enrollment and completion is the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). Following are data from a new report that shows 6-year outcomes for students aged 20 or younger at time of first entry. A detailed report and data tables are available for download from NSC (see <https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport10-statesupplement/>).

Table 26 shows 6-year completion rates for students aged 20 or younger who were first-time degree-seeking students who started their postsecondary studies in fall 2009. The states refer to the state where a student entered an institution of higher education, not the state where a student graduated from high school.

Table 26. Overall 6-year completion rates for students aged 20 or younger who were first-time, degree-seeking students in postsecondary institutions in fall 2009, by institution type

State	4-Year Public	4-Year Private Nonprofit	2-Year Public
United States	64.97	76.02	40.72
Connecticut	75.67	85.76	34.84
Maine	57.62	81.13	40.78
Massachusetts	71.60	84.17	37.65
New Hampshire	81.50	80.03	*
New York	66.52	78.27	44.20
Rhode Island	*	88.70	*
Vermont	77.09	71.05	*
Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	N/A
U.S. Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Wakhungu, P., Yuan, X., and Harrell, A. (2015, February). *Completing College: A State-Level View of Student Attainment Rates* (Signature Report No. 8a). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

* Fewer than three institutions.

Appendix B. Needs and Recommendations From Committee Members

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Suzanne S. Buck

Affiliation: Vermont

Priority Need 1. *Increase the expertise and abilities of teachers in order to ensure a more equitable education for all students within the classroom. Increase the pool of highly qualified individuals that are administrators to slow down the rate of turnover.*

Justification: Within the survey, the responses varied from the call for more highly trained educators to good teachers to being able to retain quality teachers. Several states have teacher certification programs that are for specific content areas, and proof of ability is based on a praxis exam. Other states do not require the praxis. Through conversations with board members, several noted the rate of turnover in both teacher and administrative roles as being caused by teacher burn out due to increased mandates and paperwork. There were comments and requests in the survey data to increase the level of administrative knowledge and presence within buildings. Building up those with administrative qualities will help to keep the pipeline of qualified individuals flowing. The turnover rate in many districts is quite high. Providing or funding programs that train and prepare these individuals as administrators and allow them to intern with other administrators would be a best practice way to ensure that we have a pipeline of upcoming individuals.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Establish priorities and strategies to hire highly qualified teachers in their area of specialty, especially for technical education. Suggestions include increasing grant-funded administrative licensing programs and working with local colleges and universities to form cohorts of schools that districts can look to for supplying highly trained teachers and administrators. Currently, Cornell is the only teacher preparation program for those in the technical center, and it has just been revived. Provide incentives for teachers to enter these programs and to do so at a minimal cost to them.
- ▶ Increase professional development for teachers and administrators. It is a struggle to find and retain highly qualified and administrators. Suggestions include the following:
 - Develop programs that provide funding for professional development.
 - Increase programs or pathways for individuals to create and participate in internships and mentorships. Mentorships will allow teachers to try on the administrative hat, so to speak, before they make that final leap. Match teachers with other teachers within their respective domains to learn from others.
 - Increase cross curricular professional development in order to fully understand the educational requirements placed on students. These communities could extend beyond school or district boundaries.

- ▶ Streamline paperwork processes. Streamline the paperwork process particularly for special education teachers and allow them more time to work with students. Recommendations include the following:
 - Reduce the amount of forms that are required, providing one or a couple forms that serve several purposes.
 - Write Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for multiple years with goals and objectives spread out over a longer time period, and make more individuals responsible for parts of the IEP.
 - Hire clerical staff that can do much of the paperwork.
 - Use Response to Intervention (RTI) as a method of determining need for specialized services, removing the wait and fail stigma that some states are still adhering to. One example of this is the transition page - which is a required page within the IEP that speaks to what the student wishes to do or become after high school. It requires input from outside agencies such as Youth Employment Specialist (YES), Vermont Student Counseling Services, or Vocational Rehabilitation.

Priority Need 2. Increase the overall numbers of those moving on to college or career readiness programs through both technical center agreements with colleges and current employers.

Justification: According to survey responses and conversations with stakeholders, our world is becoming more and more technological and in order to compete for jobs and be able to make a living, students need to be ready for an ever changing work force. What they might perceive when they enter high school as a job that they could a living at may not be there when they graduate high school or even college. We need to have programs that are cutting edge and are engaging for students to reach their potential and to challenge them. Responses on the survey ranged from making partnerships with colleges/universities to increasing class rigor to making partnerships within the community/workplace.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Develop partnerships to support college enrollment and completion. Consider partnerships between schools, communities, and colleges for dual enrollment.
- ▶ Increase support for career and technical education. Provide hands on experience for students while in high school, and increase programs for those students for whom college is not the right match but wish to learn a trade. Apprenticeship programs are viable resources, but not all states have working programs. Offer technical training for administrators in grant writing, proposal funding and working with colleges and universities in making connections and partnerships.

Priority Need 3. The overall funding scheme for public education needs to be overhauled and revamped due to unmatched or unfunded state and federal mandates that schools must figure a way to pay for.

Justification: Several survey respondents and interviews with stakeholders highlighted problems with state and federal funding to support ESSA initiatives and local educational needs. Due to unfunded/unmatched mandates, the differences between what economically advantaged districts can raise through taxes is creating an ever widening gap between the rich and the poor. Thereby a student's education and ultimately their chances of being successful in life are impacted by these local, state, and

federal decisions. According to stakeholders, mandating programs, and then not funding them, leaves districts in a difficult position of paying for educational practices that they did not create, while staying under mandatory spending caps imposed by state governments. In Vermont, local school boards currently control less than 5 percent of their school budgets. The remaining costs are driven by factors that they really have no control over (cost of oil, underfunded mandates, special education costs, electricity, etc.).

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Create strategies to increase funding to local districts with SEAs. Work with states to figure out a legal method for paying for public education, exploring how local tax funds are distributed across public and private schools. Technical assistance here would be with goals in mind that state and federal governments fully pay for their policy initiatives. Provide strategies for reaching out to the community for various ways that they can help in supporting local schools. Provide strategies for determining when a school is too small to be effective both in cost and in education.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Belinha De Abreu

Affiliation: CT

Priority Need 1. Preparing students to be college and career ready

Justification: Throughout the Northeast RACs and the State of Connecticut teachers, parents, librarians, administrator all cite this aspect as being an area of need for their state. We are at a time when college education while still a priority has also become expensive and beyond the means of many students. There is a recognition that the career ready piece must extend to include vocational resources. Students must be provided with means and understanding what types of careers are available to them and how they can subsidize those expenditures so that they will be able to be a part of the future workforce.

For the last ten years the push for just a college education has motivated the funding in schools as well as the design of curriculums. This has had an adverse effect on many school populations as the job market and the college graduate are not necessarily on the same page. Career ready must expand to include opportunities for students to explore viable career opportunities through internships and apprenticeships.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Provisions should be made to assist teachers with understanding the expansion of careers. There should be opportunities for teachers to be provided with professional development services that help them connect their subject areas to career opportunities. Resources that assist on a state-wide level to help promote career opportunities for students should be a part of the funding provided on statewide basis. A repository for where a school official can make contact in a centralized location would help to make this adjustment more feasible for districts at all levels. Creating a job bank or other opportunities to engage community members, career professionals along with school districts would be an important resource for moving this dimension forward. Recognizing that vocational programs must be a part of the training is vital to the future of our students as well as our nation. The preparation programs should be inclusive not exclusive of careers which may not need necessarily college readiness, but practical/vocational readiness.

Priority Need 2. Supporting the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps

Justification: This area continues to be a pressing need throughout the RAC and in the state of Connecticut in particular. Principals, librarians, and teachers, in particular, noted that the need for continued support in schools that are struggling must be a part of the funding. At the same time, through dialogues with various stakeholders it was noted that all funding should not go solely to the economically disadvantaged schools which tends to be the general direction of where most governmental funding. Each school has potential needs for closing the achievement gaps. They should not go ignored because they don't fall within the parameters of the systematic guidelines currently in force.

The need for reaching ELL students as well as special education students exists within all stakeholder communities and was acknowledged within the data collection. There is a growing population of second language learners which are in need of assistance within educational communities that look at the whole student both in and out of school on a state-wide basis.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Providing funding which allows for partnering of schools which would allow for more equitable distribution would be important. Much of the funding that has come has been solely directed to lowest economic districts. This does not allow for districts that do not fall within this category to receive any monetary gains that would support learning in the classroom.

Comprehensive Centers could provide resources or professional development opportunities that focus in this area, but would be open to all communities. Reviewing past practices with current practices may also be an area for where funding can be directed. This priority need has been at the forefront of education for quite some time. For this reason, it would be important to work with researchers, higher education institutions who collaborate with schools to find ways for implementation to be more successful for these communities of learners.

Priority Need 3. Implementing ESSA and ensuring equity

Justification: Both of these areas were target and had very close numbers in terms of data collection. This area appeared to be a larger concern for administrators versus teachers, but the reverse was true when it came to importance of equity. This discussion included funding for materials which ranged from the traditional items such as textbooks to more current items such as technology. There was also an extension to equity when it came to teacher development and personalized learning.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Professional development for teachers is what will be most impactful for delivering the new ESSA methodology and direction to districts. Teachers must feel invested and believe in the new path that education is taking. There should be a consideration that the last ten years have left teachers concerned and wary about what new benefits will come with the implementation of a new directional approach from the US Government. RACS can provide material support as well as workshops for helping to assist teacher sin growing with this transition. There should also be a consideration for how this will impact how curriculum is driven in schools and how outcomes are derived.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Harry Valentín González

Affiliation: Puerto Rico Department of Education

Priority Need 1. Puerto Rico stakeholders identified that preparing students to be college- and career-ready is the priority for receiving technical assistance and support.

Justification: Eighteen percent of stakeholders identified that the priority need for them is preparing students for college and career readiness. One of the justifications that they established is that increasing the academic achievement of students is the most important step for students to have success in their post-secondary transition. If students have to take remedial courses, the probability of dropout is high. Stakeholders also think there is a need to improve the school facilities and resources. Regarding this need, it is very important to gain parents' commitment. Parents must be part of the process with the student and support them academically. Parents support school, but they are not engaged in what matters: the academic experiences that the students have.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: The recommendations regarding technical assistance and support are:

- ▶ Develop a workshop to support teachers in the implementation of CCRS.
- ▶ Create alliances with industry partners and engage different stakeholders that support the experiences related to the CCRS implementation.
- ▶ Work with IHEs to create opportunities for students, as early as sixth grade, to participate in advanced courses that allow them to explore the transition to college.
- ▶ Prepare teachers with the skills to address college and career awareness by articulating academic policies from the Department of Education to IHEs' teacher preparation programs.
- ▶ Create a statewide model that promotes CCRS awareness.
- ▶ Encourage data-driven decision making.

Priority Need 2. The second priority is the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Justification: Principals and teachers, in particular, selected this priority. Under NCLB, schools felt that regardless of how hard they worked, all the accountability was based on standardized test data. The accountability workbook didn't recognize school climate or other nonacademic indicators (e.g., attendance, retention, parent's engagement) that may show school improvement. ESSA brings new opportunities to strengthen the school culture based on new accountability indicators.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: The recommendations are:

- ▶ Disseminate the key elements of the new law.
- ▶ Provide support to analyze and implement the new guidelines.
- ▶ Create different stakeholders to analyze the possibilities that the law offers regarding the establishment of indicators that best address the state's needs.

- ▶ Create a PLC to engage stakeholders at all levels.
- ▶ Create the new accountability workbook based on stakeholder feedback.
- ▶ Create templates for all the new state reports.

Priority Need 3. The third priority is providing support to the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps

Justification: Principals and teachers lead the data in establishing this priority. Based on the Flexibility Waiver 2013, Puerto Rico began to implement different strategies to support the lowest performing schools. Many of the strategies require fund allocations to support schools with technology, extended time learning, coaching, and parent engagement, among other strategies. The equity plan is very important to provide equal opportunities to all the students. While we have many schools that reach the annual measurable objectives (AMOs), we still have many schools that have achievements gaps.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Improve teacher quality.
- ▶ Create a data-driven decision making culture.
- ▶ Implement the Equity Plan.
- ▶ Strengthen a professional learning communities (PLC) culture.
- ▶ Assist with funds allocations.
- ▶ Facilitate individualized and differentiated learning.
- ▶ Encourage parent engagement.
- ▶ Encourage stakeholders' engagement.
- ▶ Help schools create proposals to compete for grants.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: David A. Little

Affiliation: Rural Schools Association of New York State

Priority Need 1. Preparing Students to be college and career ready

Justification: There are a significant number of rural districts in the Northeast and Islands region. The needs and recommendations presented here focus primarily on serving rural schools. According to interviews with stakeholders, fiscal constraints and a resulting lack of a breadth in curriculum leave rural students at a competitive disadvantage in the marketplace and in the likelihood of postsecondary success. “Change fatigue” has left school districts reeling from constant change (which taxes rural school districts most specifically, since their small structure does not lend itself to flexibility.) Constant change of educational direction, testing and accountability requirements and changing pedagogical methodologies (without needed professional development and sufficient lead time) has prevented rural schools from focusing on a successful approach, planning adequately or responding completely. In rural areas, the business-school connection is vital. The loss of economic activity in rural areas within the region has stressed the schools’ ability to provide meaningful “hands on” learning opportunities for students and to thus meet the demands of remaining business. Rural students tend to stay in the community and providing sound pathways to college and career readiness is vital to student success and rural community and economic development.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Professional development funds and suggested educational models for providing opportunities for college and career readiness.
- ▶ Support of business-school partnerships and internships.
- ▶ Development and support of the Community Schools model.

Priority Need 2. Ensuring Equity

Justification: States within the region pay some of highest costs per student in the nation, on average. This masks a tremendous disparity among individual school districts. In New York State, rural schools lack local resources, local revenue is capped at next to nothing (0% increase last year, an expected 1% allowable increase this year) and the state is several billion dollars behind what its highest court has deemed to be the amount necessary to uphold its constitutional obligation to provide a sound, basic education to each child. The total amount of state and federal resources is not at issue but rather the distribution of revenue within the region. Current distribution within New York State has been deemed the most inequitable in the nation, creating tremendous spending (and thus programmatic) fluctuation between wealthy and impoverished school districts.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Technical assistance in the drafting of funding formulae that address the equity issue.
- ▶ Professional development in each educator being capable of teaching multiple subject areas.

Priority Need 3. Technology/Digital Learning

Justification: Providing digital learning opportunities supports personalized learning, in addition to offering a significant expansion of curricula. According to interviews with stakeholders in rural school districts, the comparative lack of curricula is dramatic. While rural schools graduate a high percentage (over 90%) of students, they often meet significant challenges when pursuing college and/or career due to a lack of contextual learning. Rural schools are often without advanced coursework and the subject areas are reduced to the state mandated minimum in order to meet financial constraints. Suburban districts (categorically) have greater latitude to fund a broad array of curricula and educational experiences that put students at a competitive advantage. Digital content has become highly sophisticated, can be individualized to student need, and is extremely cost effective in a rural setting. It can be the conduit to educational equity.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance

- ▶ Technical assistance in the development and implementation of digital learning platforms.
- ▶ Sharing of instructional staff between districts using the platform and educator oversight of the digital learning methods.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Yvette McMahon-Arnold

Affiliation: Virgin Islands Department of Education

Priority Need 1. The top priority need identified is preparing students to be college and career ready as indicated by teachers, principals, librarians and parents.

Justification: With 409 majority votes, preparing students to be college and career ready is uppermost in the minds of educators within states and territories that have adopted the Common Core State Standards, more correctly referred to as the College and Career Ready Standards. The goal of these standards is to ensure that every student in every state is held to the same level of expectation that other students in the highest-performing countries are held and that students gain knowledge and skills to prepare them for postsecondary success both nationally and globally. It is no wonder then, that preparing students to be college and career ready is considered the highest priority in the needs sensing survey. Educators want to be confident that they are fully equipped with the knowledge and tools to ensure that they are preparing students to meet these expectations.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Based on survey results, there is a strong call for the comprehensive centers to provide consistent and ongoing professional development to ensure “better equipped” teachers and administrators. One respondent specifically requests “top notch” facilitators to develop “turnkey curriculum” to help increase the level of professional development to teachers and administrators to ensure they have “better equipped teachers/administrators.” Another recommendation is to make sure “teachers and instructors have the most up to date expertise and professional development to bring to all students.” There is also a call for increased technology integration, reliable technology infrastructure, technological and digital resources as well as the effective use of technology and digital learning, a recommendation that comes from among the librarians who completed the survey.

Priority Need 2. Supporting the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps is another priority area identified primarily by teachers, principals, and superintendents.

Justification: By supporting the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps, schools and districts are better able to improve learning outcomes for this group of students. One respondent indicated that “we attend to this group through wrap around services to meet social/emotional/health needs of students and families.” Other respondents indicated that improving educational leadership, technology integration and more reliable technology infrastructure, meaningful professional development, higher/better pay for teachers, better infrastructure for schools and more funding will serve to meet the need identified in this priority.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: The recommended strategies for technical assistance training varied and some are captured here by specific role of respondents in their own words.

Provide curriculum resources and effective classroom practices

- ▶ Bring innovative programs “to our school ... “so the kids can be motivated to learn.”
- ▶ Increase the “use of best practices”
- ▶ “Ensuring innovative and effective uses of technology and digital learning”
- ▶ “Create and disseminate media awareness curricula similar to what Canada has been doing for years.”
- ▶ “Providing models, training and support for “what works” in high poverty rural schools.”

Recruitment and retention

- ▶ “See how a retainment [retention] opportunity can be implemented so that effective teachers and highly qualified can stay in the Department of Education”
- ▶ “DE [Department of Education] to help direct their efforts to increase the requirements in the recruitment of staff in general and ensure compliance with the laws but giving greater autonomy to schools”

Provide professional development for teachers and administrators

- ▶ “Help teachers provide high quality teaching so students master grade level expectations to prepare them to be college and career ready”
- ▶ “Professional collaborative research study groups concentrating on what works for our ELL students and supports growth”

Assessment and data collection

- ▶ “Assist schools with quick access to, and easy use of, data collected through assessment tools”
- ▶ “Provide technical assistance with grant writing, data collection.”

Priority Need 3. A third priority need is the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) identified primarily by principals and teachers.

Justification: President Obama’s December 10, 2015 signing ESSA into law galvanized SEAs and LEAs into action to understand the law, educate stakeholders and begin implementation. This priority need is among the top three that respondents identified, particularly by principals and teachers. The data shows this need is not considered a priority in the Virgin Islands, but improving assessment and accountability systems is identified as the third area of priority. Given that improving assessment and accountability systems is a focus of ESSA, this may also be a priority area in the VI.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: The recommendations focused on providing teachers with tangible resources in order to be more effective educators, providing online webinars and links to resources about ESSA, and conducting conferences and supporting staff training toward implementation of the Act.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Gene Reiber

Affiliation: Massachusetts

Priority Need 1. College and Career Ready

Justification: When engaged in effective planning and strategizing, it is necessary to identify the goal and outcomes of an endeavor. Therefore it is no surprise that the survey data reveals an overwhelming number of respondents who identify “college and career ready” as the number one priority need. Starting in pre-K, schools are aware that the goal of education is to enable students to lead productive lives once they leave their formal educational setting. While allowing students to be prepared to begin college and work for a degree, this goal also recognizes that many students will not choose to go to college or complete their degree. Careers in the 21st century are included in this goal and ensure that students leave school with the capacity to engage in an economy requiring a wide range of cognitive and problem solving capacity.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Despite the political problems that have arisen from the introduction of the Common Core Standards, it is necessary for states to be provided guidance documents for expectations. Where the Common Core was written as a set of content standards, a new set of standards for academic behavior could be produced and distributed to State Education Agencies. Being college and career ready in the 21st century requires greater emphasis on higher level thinking and problem solving which must be in the service of content area knowledge. This shift in paradigm will require a specific list of academic behaviors in each of the content areas. Schools need to know what the behaviors look like in a classroom when demonstrated by both educators and students. Providing assessment tools such as observational checklists and rubrics will help evaluators, educators, and students focus clearly on what skills and behaviors need to be worked on.

An example of this kind of strategy already exists in the Standards for Mathematical Practice contained in the Common Core. Providing additional guidance to SEAs to assist districts in explicitly instructing and assessing these content area practices would be immeasurably helpful in reshaping the paradigm and helping to ensure students are actually college and career ready.

Priority Need 2. Lowest Performing Schools and Achievement Gaps

Justification: Those in the greatest need should receive the greatest amount of support. The economy of the 21st century demands an educated work force to compete on a global stage of ideas. The issues associated with the achievement gap have been long known and attempts at correcting the problem of chronic under performance have been vastly unsuccessful. In terms of public policy, most attempts at addressing underperformance have had little impact since serious wide spread federal efforts to close achievement gaps were made under President Johnson in the 1960’s.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Addressing the technical assistance needs of underperforming schools will require two major areas. The first area to address must be early childhood education in the lowest performing districts. Mindfulness training and specific training on scaffolding student behavior could prove immeasurably helpful in allowing students to meet the academic needs of school more effectively. Mindfulness training would provide students with the skills needed to begin to

self-regulate their thoughts and behaviors and allow them to be mentally prepared for learning. Programs such as Responsive Classroom identify the need for scaffolding and instructing student behavior while empowering and recognizing the individual dignity and worth of each student. By providing these skills explicitly and emphatically from pre-K – 2, students will arrive at their upper elementary experience far better prepared for the demands of more content driven learning.

The second area that needs to be addressed in underperforming schools is the need for culturally relevant learning and recognizing the skills that already exist in communities where achievement gaps persist. Many of our chronic under performing schools already possess qualities needed for success in a diverse and interconnected world.

Priority Need 3. Implementing ESSA

Justification: With the end of No Child Left Behind, states and districts will have to navigate the new expectations, requirements, and opportunities contained in ESSA. It took more than a decade for states struggling to address the needs of NCLB before substantial change happened. Providing a clear and achievable rollout of ESSA is essential for its potential to be realized in the lives of students and families.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Materials such as videos and infographics to explain the shifts in thinking and expectations between NCLB and ESSA would be invaluable. Stakeholders at every level need to clearly and quickly be able to understand the most basic aspects of the ESSA legislation.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Lauren Sterling

Affiliation: Maine Early Learning Investment Group (MELIG)

Overview: Poverty, including both generational and situational poverty, rural versus urban differences and challenges, and equity in access and quality are threads running through the data from our NEI factors. Over 50% of the NEI states are defined as at least 50% rural. The 2015 Digest of Education Statistics reports that the poverty rate for children age 5-18 ranges from 12.6% to 20.8% across the NEI states.⁴ All but one (CT) NEI state has well over 50% (mostly between 63% and 93%) of their public schools receiving Title I funding. Unless the USDOE and its contracted TA partners address these factors, it will be impossible to move the needle in improving educational outcomes.

Priority Need 1. Coordinating and maximizing early care and education systems for increased access and quality among private care, Head Start, and public Pre-K programs.

Justification: The U.S. ranks 30th among the OECD nations in preschool enrollment⁵. Nationally, 40% of 4-year olds, and only 12% of 3-year-olds are enrolled in public Pre-K programs and while 83% of children in the highest quartile are enrolled in any type of early care and education, only 50% of the lowest quartile children are receiving any services. Within the NEI states, public school 4-year-old enrollment ranges from RI's low 2.8% to NY's 48.7% enrollment⁶. Quality matters, especially for low-income children. The NIEER report on quality indicators states that the NEI states average a quality score of only 7.25 on a scale of 14. The latest national Head Start study reports just 35% of eligible 3 and 4-year-olds were enrolled and less than 5% of eligible infants/toddlers were enrolled in Early Head Start nationally. In 2014, more than a third (35 percent) of children lived in homes headed by single parents, according to the [Kids Count data center](#). Among single mothers, 70.8 percent worked outside the home in 2015, as did 82.1 percent of single fathers, [according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). And even in the majority (60.6 percent) of families led by married partners, both adults worked. Families of all kind need access to quality care and education based on their child and families' circumstances and needs.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Based on the stated need backed by national and state-level data, raising the quality of and coordination among service provider public and private sectors is critical. State and local LEA TA should include sharing the knowledge gained from the recently implemented federal Early Head Start Partnership grant projects as well as the findings (and strategies) related to the broader Public/Private program partnerships with Head Start (http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/early_care_and_education_partnerships_a_review_of_the_literature.pdf). At the very least, Comprehensive Centers should support establishing shared quality indicators across public school pre-K, Head Start and private systems that include the following as they relate to NIEER's 15 essential elements: teacher requirements; class size and ration; hours/dosage; two adults in the room (minimum); special education and dual language support; child assessment; data driven decision making; and ongoing professional development. The USDOE's TA should emphasize the use of Title I funding to support a collaborative early education local model to

⁴ Table 102.40, retrieved July 5, 2016 from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_102.40.asp?current=yes

⁵ Organization for Economic Co-Operation & Development (OECD) 2015 Report on the Enrollment in Childcare and preschool.

⁶ 2016 National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) State level Quality and Policy Report.

ensure adequate enrollment. Finally, the following are recommendations from a coalition of early education experts in Maine:

- ▶ Ensure **continuity of services**, so states do not drop children from quality early education services due to a change in the parent’s work or education schedules (CCDF);
- ▶ Ensure state alignment for eligibility redetermination between Head Start and Childcare subsidy-CCDF, so at least for the **first three years** of life children receive uninterrupted care; and
- ▶ Ensure any federal to state or to local Pre-K funds support collaboration between Head Start, quality private/public childcare, and public Pre-K to maximize resources, learning environments, expertise, and to build a well-coordinated system of early care and education.

Priority Need 2. Alignment of a birth through grade 3 education and parent engagement system

Justification: The NEI data reports that students who are not reading well by third grade have a higher probability of dropping out of high school. Only one of the NEI states (MA) is at 50% at or above proficiency in reading with all others below according to the 2015 NAEP report. Principals, as educational leaders, are central to systems change success. School leaders are the best resource for establishing transition programs that ensure effective partnership with Head Start programs, family childcare care programs and their public preschools.⁷

Of children with employed mothers, 40% are enrolled in family or center-based care settings.⁸ National Kids Count reports low numbers of qualified early care providers serving both single parents and two-parent families. (E.g. only 8% of Maine’s enrolled licensed providers are at a Level 4 on the Quality Rating System). There are no national Pre-K quality standards, and in fact, many states do not require Pre-K standards at all. Without a robust network of quality educators/providers serving our most disadvantaged students, most will never meet growth measures, be proficient in math and literacy, and demonstrate healthy social and behavioral readiness upon K-entry or completion of grade 3.

In addition, sustained learning is intricately connected to quality early educational experiences, and “school-readiness hinges on the efforts of teachers and principals to engage and educate parents, and raise the quality of education *across all educational settings*.”⁹ Systemic family engagement, from both school leaders and teachers, is lagging, yet, is a core component of improved school readiness, student achievement, and effective school turnaround.¹⁰

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Ensure effective cross-system collaboration led by school principals/leaders that engage Head Start/early care providers, and parents; Support collaborative planning, professional development and teaching evaluation.¹¹ Family engagement policies and practices can begin with a shared definition of effective family engagement and include established benchmarks of success for targeted populations, and monitor progress throughout a *birth through grade 3 continuum*. (See Head Start Family Engagement at: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/sr/approach/pfcef>). Comprehensive Centers should also consult with the 21 Educare Schools across the country (<http://www.educareschools.org/>) on their

⁷ The National Association of Elementary School Principals’ (NAESP) report: *What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do*.

⁸ Child Trends Data, 2011-2013 Report.

⁹ National Education Goals Panel, 2013.

¹⁰ Weiss, Lopez, & Kreider, 2003.

¹¹ Learning from Leadership Project: How Leadership Influences Student Learning (Kenneth Leithwood, Karen Seashore Louis, Stephen Anderson and Kyla Wahlstrom, 2004)

comprehensive and evidence-based model of quality instruction, teacher coaching/training model, and family engagement. In addition, TA could promote cross-training in quality and ongoing teacher assessment guided by reflective practices w/teachers known to improve educational quality (see Educare model). All public Pre-K programs should utilize evidence-based curricula, common K-screening tools, and aligned assessments to maximize successful early education/pre-K goals towards K-readiness. Finally, the FCC E-Rate on broadband should be extended to Head Start and Early Head Start programs to address the budget barriers in providing high-speed and adequate access to those serving the neediest children and families.

Priority Need 3. Replicating proven strategies for low-performing schools to close the achievement gap

Justification: According to **research published** in the journal *Education*, ninth graders have the lowest grade point average, the most missed classes, the majority of failing grades, and more misbehavior referrals than any other high-school grade level. A lengthy, detailed guide from the National High School Center **states** that “more students fail ninth grade than any other grade in high school, and a disproportionate number of students who are held back in ninth grade subsequently drop out.” So the argument to start preventing 9th grade failure in middle school is strongly recommended. Only two NEI states had 50% of their students meeting SAT college-ready benchmarks. And ACT officials report meeting the benchmarks indicates a student has about a 75% chance of earning at least a grade C and a 50% chance of earning at least a B in a first-year college course. The 11th grade scores in 2015 went down in all four subject areas—English, reading, math, and science. The biggest drop was in English, in which 61 percent of students met the benchmark, down from 64 percent a year prior. NEI high school graduation rates range from 78% to 88%, but only between 57% and 81% complete a 4-year public college degree and between only 34% and 44% complete a 2-year college degree.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Review and target successful USDOE i3 Innovation strategies such as the Building Assets, Reducing Risks (BARR) model. BARR is a whole student, whole school model for turning around low-performing schools and increasing teacher effectiveness. The recipient of two US Department of Education “Investing in Innovation” grant awards, both Development and Validation, BARR is a proven, evidence based intervention that can be recommended to schools through a technical assistance process.

BARR was developed as a 9th grade intervention by a guidance counselor at a large school in Minnesota and is now in 44 schools in 9 states including Maine with proposals to serve Massachusetts as an approved “vendor”. The success of the model in high schools has led middle schools to implement the model as well. BARR has been studied by the American Institutes for Research within the i3 projects through four within-school randomized controlled trials (RCTs). The statistically significant results have shown that the students receiving BARR perform better on standardized test scores (NWEA), have fewer failing grades, and earn more credits toward graduation. Research has shown that students who pass courses and earn credits during their freshman year are more likely to graduate.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Alan Tenreiro

Affiliation: Principal, Cumberland High School, Rhode Island

Priority Need 1. College and Career Readiness

Justification: High school graduation rates continue to increase but are more students graduating prepared for life and to tackle the postsecondary challenges of the 21st century. Career readiness is the ultimate goal but we need to expand the potential journey for students to include more than just the college path to career success.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Focus on authentic performance based assessment and instructional delivery strategies that allow for rigor and personalization. Support college and career ready standards and direct the use of these scores. Support programming that allows more students to earn college credit while in high school. Work with higher education to dismantle a remedial and general education system that doesn't work.

Priority Need 2. Closing the Achievement Gap

Justification: Significant differences persist in the rates at which different groups of students successfully complete high school and postsecondary experiences.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Focus on college and career ready standards, ensure rigorous learning experiences, increased instructional time and increasing the pipeline of qualified teachers and teachers from diverse backgrounds. Invest in leadership development, professional development, loan forgiveness and executive coaching of all school leaders especially those in low performing schools.

Priority Need 3. Competency-Based personalized learning

Justification: We need to tailor learning experiences to meet the needs unique to each student to achieve targeted growth.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Develop and pilot approaches for supporting personalized learning. Focus on pre service training for teachers that prepares them for success in personalized environments. Help state leaders provide own source materials and track the success of personalized learning initiatives.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Santana Thibedeau

Affiliation: New Hampshire Department of Education

Priority Need 1. Personalized learning

In order to meet the individual needs of students to increase academic performance and develop characteristics of a life-long learner, administrators and educators need to personalize learning to tailor instruction through a variety of means to promote academic achievement for all students. There is a need for SEAs to assist Local Education Agencies to develop a district-wide, systematic curriculum that also embeds strategies to promote personalized learning and allows teachers the flexibility to tailor instruction to meet individual needs of students in order to increase academic performance.

Justification: Of the stakeholders in the Northeast and Island regions that identified personalized learning as a priority, most were comprised of teachers and administrators. These stakeholders are charged with the oversight or delivery of instruction. Both stakeholder groups recognized the need to shift teaching practices to incorporate a systematic, district-wide curriculum embedded with assessments and strategies to personalize learning for individual learners to increase academic performance and close achievement gaps. Emphasis was placed on the use of technology and other digital resources to aid in promoting personalized education.

Recommended Strategies for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can help the SEAs in locating examples of a district-wide curriculum from other districts both in and out of state that are exemplars to assist in the process of curriculum development as a means to assist teachers and administrators meet the needs of students and increase academic performance by:
 - providing assistance in the development of a district systematic curriculum that embeds evidence-driven assessment ensuring that all standards in core academic areas are taught by means of utilizing professional development and release time built into the school calendar year, as well as time for teachers to meet as teams to develop curriculum, and unified by district-level curriculum coordinators or other administrators;
 - identifying or providing professional development in differentiated instruction and personalized learning for students based on individual needs identified by assessment to increase capacity for teachers to build strategies to use in the classroom;
 - assisting to build relationships with higher education that could lead to assistance or on-going support both for technology systems to have the capacity to use new up-to-date tools and provide on-going assistance for teachers to increase the use of digital tools.
- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can assist to create a repository of digital tools that promote individualized learning.

Priority Need 2. Increasing teacher autonomy to ensure equity

There is a need for SEAs to provide Local Education Agencies the opportunity to increase teacher autonomy. This would ensure equity among all students by improving the assessment and accountability system. By shifting from a yearly administered state-wide universal test to measure accountability that limits academic performance among certain demographic groups, to a more equitable system based upon competency of standards for a diverse student population, we can eliminate the lack of variability in the construct of a single test.

Justification: There has been a change in the Northeast regions involving certain demographic groups because of an increase in a more diverse student population. Stakeholders involving teachers, parents, and administrators see high-stakes testing for accountability as a barrier in assessing student academic achievement. Access to quality education with authentic assessments for a growing population of ELL students and students with physical, learning, and emotional/social needs in school settings has resulted in the need of greater autonomy within the classroom. This involves more opportunities for alternative forms of assessment for accountability. Focusing on a more competency-driven assessment system can allow teachers to use a variety of teaching techniques and tools that meet the educational needs in a classroom consisting of a diverse student population without the necessity to focus on a universal state administered assessment whereby certain students innately perform lower. To aid in a competency-driven, standards-based assessment system, community members, parents, teachers, and principals identified a need for reading and math intervention for low income students, increase support for English language learners, and equal access to early childhood education. Additionally, school administrators provided feedback of a need for recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers, especially in rural and low-income areas.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can help SEAs build relationships with higher institutions of learning to provide training on:
 - academic interventions for struggling learners;
 - incorporating critical thinking skills into instruction; and
 - developing and administering authentic assessments.
- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can help SEAs identify districts with greater or lesser needs for early childhood education and services for early intervention.
- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can assist SEAs capacity to provide resources to Local Education Agencies to create competency-driven assessments based upon standards that result in accurate academic performance results for accountability among various demographic groups.
- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can work with states to support districts in utilizing a teacher mentor system for aid in retaining highly effective teachers.

Priority Need 3. Preparing students to be college and career-ready by high school graduation

Justification: Teacher, parent, and student stakeholders in the Northeast and island regions indicated that schools need to offer advanced courses to prepare students for the rigor of college in order to be successful. Additionally, there is a need for schools to offer vocational training for students to be prepared to enter technical schools and/or working industries to gain quality employment.

Stakeholders, including administrators as well, thought businesses need to offer internships and/or apprenticeships to link education and the workforce for students to explore careers and gain work experience. All stakeholders agreed that students need to be able to understand and use a variety of technology digital tools.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can provide guidance to assist SEAs to increase access to desired vocational courses offered in different regions throughout the state that still allows students to obtain all credits for graduation in 4 years.
- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can identify or provide teacher training and increased school capacity to offer college courses at the high school level to increase college readiness.
- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can identify or provide training to teachers in the use of digital tools for greater emphasis on students learning using technology that is incorporated into instruction.
- ▶ Comprehensive Centers can provide guidance to SEAs in assisting Local Education Agencies to develop relationships with local business that can offer work experience through a variety of means to students.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Alan Wagner

Affiliation: School of Education, University at Albany, and Rockefeller Institute of Government, State University of New York

Priority Need 1. Introduce, extend, or adapt elements of new models of schooling to replace the existing “industrial” model

Justification: The present model of schooling no longer well serves the aims of providing every child the best opportunities for learning, and for eventual success, in a dynamic information society and economy. The need for the young people to be “college and career ready” is identified as the highest educational priority by the largest relative numbers of responses across most stakeholder groups in the RAC’s on-line survey. A new model of schooling also is called for by the TeachNY Advisory Council, with representation from a full range of stakeholder groups in NY and by a major foundation that has launched and supported through funding and work with stakeholders in five states, one being NJ.

New models of schooling, as described in interviews, depart from the existing “industrial” model by focusing on outcomes as opposed to a fixed process and fixed time; on learning as opposed to teaching; on individualized education, with instruction that follows the learner not the teacher; on “wide-open” education as opposed to “walled” education. The stakeholders most directly involved in delivering education show some support: relatively large numbers of teachers and principals responding to the RAC’s on-line survey identified personalized learning as a priority need. The departures go beyond what is found in the most common alternatives to conventional schooling now in place across the region, although examples of elements of what a new model of schooling might look like and how it might be supported do exist within and outside the region. The challenge is to both continue to improve the existing model and introduce more widely approaches that replace that model with new approaches that support each learner. Additional flexibility is needed.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: With grounded knowledge and expertise in the region, the Comprehensive Regional Center can provide both technical assistance for convenings of stakeholders at state-level to lay out desired elements of new models of schooling and to develop means (especially through greater margins for flexible arrangements) to realize those elements. The Comprehensive Regional Center can assist an SEA in supporting technical assistance, workshops, and professional development for stakeholders at the level of LEA’s to identify, extend or adapt elements of new models of schooling. The assistance provided through the Comprehensive Regional Center might bring specific, sustained and grounded support to an SEA as a complement to a state’s efforts advanced under other programs in the Office of School Support and Rural Program (e.g. Innovative Programs or Ed-Tech funding; expertise and support provided under several of the nation-wide Comprehensive Content Centers). To the extent that this priority within the criteria for the new Comprehensive Regional Centers, there are implications for a Center’s staffing and partnerships.

Priority Need 2. Extend the capacities and knowledge of the teaching workforce

Justification: Teachers are the heart of the matter. With a recognition that the achievement gaps remains an important and critical concern (not least by relatively large numbers of educators in schools and school districts, as evidenced by responses to RAC’s on-line survey), strategies to address the gaps

will need to rely on teachers. Teachers should manifest (and apply) capacities and knowledge that extend beyond what has framed conventional teacher preparation, to include (among others) capacities: to more fully individualize instruction using ongoing “real-time” assessments and drawing from an array of methods to support learning (incorporating technology for both assessment and instruction, in new ways); to identify, and use means to address, the needs of children that can affect learning; to work in partnership with families, community groups and agencies, as suggested by children and family service organizations to support learning; and to assume both a leading role in identifying how challenges in student learning can be addressed more widely than in the classroom or grade level and the responsibility for advancing those changes. The directions have been identified as priorities, both by the educators themselves in responses in the RAC on-line survey (for personalized learning) and by other stakeholders in interviews and commissioned reports (TeachNY).

The development of a teaching workforce with a broadened profile of capacities and knowledge implicates several aspects state and local education policy, among which: criteria and means for recruitment and selection into teacher preparation and teaching; new approaches to teacher preparation; and incentives and support for new teacher roles and responsibilities. The challenges, issues and possible approaches are identified in the information obtained in interviews and reports assembled for the RAC.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: The Comprehensive Regional Center can assist and advise the SEA in advancing a broad, forward-looking strategy for developing the teaching workforce. Such a strategy could be developed through convenings that bring together stakeholders, including teachers, principals, district officials and school boards as well as representatives from non-profit and community groups at regional and local levels, parents and employers with technical support and specific, grounded knowledge of the Comprehensive Regional Center. The strategy would be informed by state and regional forecasts of teacher demand and the profile of supply. It could incorporate (among others): pro-active recruitment of those who are likely to be the best teachers; teacher preparation that is located in part in those schools and communities where needs are particularly great (rural schools, inner ring suburban schools, and the urban core); teacher preparation and professional development that equips all teachers to draw widely on support of families and through partnerships as well as on a range of methods informed by “real-time” assessments; assessment and accountability approaches that encourage and provide support for teachers to assume responsibility for identifying and advancing ways to improve learning from the classroom to the school.

The assistance provided through the Comprehensive Regional Center might bring specific, sustained and grounded support to an SEA as a complement to a state’s efforts supported by other programs in the Office of School Support and Rural Program (e.g. the nation-wide Comprehensive Content Centers).

Priority Need 3. Establish, extend, and strengthen partnerships

Justification: Learning now is understood to take place and be supported at times and in places other than the school year and in classrooms. ESSA gives emphasis to early childhood education, to a greater extent than in the legislation it replaces. There is a substantial knowledge base that provides convincing evidence of the importance of experiences – including intentional developmental efforts and learning-related activities – up to age three on subsequent learning. Moreover, adverse circumstances and challenges of trauma, social/emotional and health needs faced by children from early years and later stand as a “roadblock” to learning, as reported in interviews with child and family service stakeholders.

Early childhood education and socio/emotional and health support for children (and their families) at present lie largely beyond the “formal” attention of schools, teachers and school leaders, according to child and family service stakeholders. The present situation may help to explain relatively low numbers of teachers, principals and superintendents rating early childhood education or community engagement (by implication to include engagement with organizations and agencies) as high priority needs. Stronger partnerships with community-based and child and family service agencies represent an important growth point in efforts to improve learning. According to child and family service stakeholders, strong and effective partnerships are those initiated, welcomed and integrated within schools and by educators. The leading role asserted for the school is intentional. Every child leaving early childhood education transitions into a school. Every school-age child has daily contact with the school. The same cannot be said for other public and private agencies and services providing support to children and families.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: The Comprehensive Regional Center can assist an SEA to lay out the kinds of partnerships likely to be effective in both identifying children with socio/emotional, health and other needs and marshalling appropriate supports, to better enable learning. Both the kinds of partnerships and the means to establish, extend or strengthen them might be worked out, in the first instance, through convenings that bring together a state’s agency and program directors in health, criminal justice, and social services as well as representatives from non-profit and community groups and schools and LEAs with technical support and specific, grounded knowledge of the Comprehensive Regional Center. Technical assistance could be directed at the LEA level, to establish and deepen partnerships through greater engagement of and with school staff in addressing adverse circumstances and conditions. The Comprehensive Regional Center could assist an SEA in helping preparation programs provide relevant training and making available appropriate professional development for partnerships. The Comprehensive Regional Center also could assist the SEA in developing and providing training to the early education workforce. To the extent that this priority within the criteria for the new Comprehensive Regional Centers, there are implications for a Center’s staffing and partnerships.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Alonta Wrighton

Affiliation: New York City, New York City Department of Education

Priority Need 1. Preparing students to be college and career ready

Justification: *Preparing students to be College and Career ready* is the call across the country and at the core of practice in New York State and the City of New York. It is impossible to separate the preparation of students to be college and career ready from teacher quality. It is a given that the best prepared educators, from classroom teachers to school based leaders, grow and develop the strongest students and leaders. Adequately preparing teachers to educate all children is at the core of producing students who are college and career ready.

Preparing students to be college and career ready (41) ranked 2nd to *ensuring equity, including addressing issues of disproportionality* (48) in the NY survey.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Document a common, shared interpretation and understanding of the common core standards, and what is required to be college and career ready, must be clearly established and articulated to all stakeholders charged with the role of producing college ready and career ready individuals. The term, “college and career ready” is on the verge of becoming a cliché without a clearly defined understanding of “*the what*” and especially “*the how*” coming together.
- ▶ Help SEAs use existing data to identify needs within schools to grow and develop highly intellectual readers, writers, mathematicians, thinkers and problem solvers.
- ▶ Create statewide parent centers supporting families in low performing districts. Provide research support to unpack what it means to prepare children for college and careers and how to do so. These supports must come to the communities providing parents with the tools they need to support college and career readiness from early childhood to grade 12 and beyond.

Priority Need 2. Teacher quality

Justification: A vast number of school leaders express the need for better trained and prepared teachers to deliver the high level and quality of teaching required to meet the demands of the rigorous common core state standards. A thorough understanding of mathematics and literacy content and strategies to teach all children including ELLs and SWDs is critical to achieving the goal of college and career readiness for all children. In short, funds should be allocated for content specialists in literacy and mathematics in all low-performing to mid-level schools to ensure the individuals (teachers and leaders) charged with developing college and career ready students are adequately prepared to do this work effectively. Educators I spoke with believe, you give a child a smart well-prepared teacher, you put him/her on track for success. Otherwise, you set him up for failure.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance:

- ▶ Assist SEAs with the oversight of all teaching universities and colleges is highly recommended. Centers can create an instructional guide for teaching universities and colleges, clearly defining the *what* and the *how* of college and career readiness as well as outline baseline course and syllabus expectations for education majors around a teacher's role in preparing students for college and career readiness.
 - With an interpretation and understanding of college and career readiness clearly established, universities and colleges must incorporate this understanding and work (the *what* and *how* of developing students who are college and career ready with a thorough understanding of how to accomplish this feat along with a thorough understanding of each CCL standard and how to teach each CCLS) in their course syllabus. In many schools, this is left to the interpretation of the individuals charged with this work. In short, which has long been expressed, teaching universities must carve out a major portion of their syllabus to this work in their training of teachers and leaders. Less theory, more practice. All teaching universities and colleges must be on the same page with the instructional goals of the USDOE as a vital stakeholder in this most important and difficult work. Merely stating all students must be college and career ready alone will not make it come to fruition.
- ▶ Help SEAs identify partnerships and teacher mentoring programs. Professional development centers and opportunities are plentiful across the region and beyond, however, what teachers require are experts in literacy, mathematics and pedagogy working with them side by side on a daily/weekly basis as they internalize and practice what they have learned. Job-embedded coaching by an expert is the key to quality teaching, teachers and well educated students, thus students who are adequately prepared for college and careers.

Priority Need 3 and 4. Supporting the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps and ensuring equity, including addressing issues of disproportionality

Justification: There is a clear correlation between *supporting the lowest performing schools and closing the achievement gap; preparing students to be college and career ready; and equity*. Those surveyed expressed a recommendation to adequately prepare teachers assigned to low performing schools; supply adequate funding to low performing schools; provide incentives to attract students to the field of education; and level the playing field.

The connection between teacher and school leader preparedness and closing the achievement gap seems obvious, however in many of the low to lowest performing schools, the resources required to close performance gaps are not necessarily adequate. Resources in the form of the required number of highly trained personnel (teachers and leaders especially, including on-site teacher trainers); adequate up to date instructional technology and bandwidth; and funding to provide rich programs in The Arts and STEM are required.

Additionally, middle and high school educators and mostly parents I spoke to voice the need for required funding in low performing schools for regents courses, regents prep, courses and SAT prep. Several voiced concern that our low and lowest performing schools do not have adequate funding to make the required moves stated above to close achievement gaps but should have, regardless of student registers.

34 respondents to the survey indicated supporting the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps was a priority need. Another 48 respondent to the survey indicated ensuring equity, including addressing issues of disproportionality was a priority need.

- ▶ As one surveyed states, “continuous high quality professional development for teachers” to grow and develop highly intellectual readers, writers, mathematicians, thinkers and problem solvers is critical to closing the achievement gap, especially in low performing schools. Professional development opportunities are plentiful across the region, however what teachers require are experts in literacy, mathematics and pedagogy, **working with them side by side on a daily/weekly basis** as they internalize and practice what they have learned. Job-embedded coaching by an expert is the key to quality teaching, teachers, and well educated students—thus making it more likely to develop students who are adequately prepared for college and careers.
- ▶ In short, funds should be allocated for content specialists in literacy and mathematics in all low-performing to mid-level schools to ensure the individuals (teachers and leaders) charged with developing students who are college and career ready are adequately prepared to do this work effectively. Educators I spoke with believe, you give a child a smart well-trained and prepared teacher, you put him/her on track for success. Otherwise, you set him up for failure.
- ▶ A recommendation to, “supply tuition funding to attract students to high needs areas” was voiced. Paid tuition incentives to attract students to the field of education may need to resurface, but at the undergraduate level. Those educators who are then placed in schools should serve a minimum of 5 years in a low performing school before moving on. There have been such programs, but their service agreement spanned a mere two years, however change requires 5 to 10 years.
- ▶ Those surveyed also called for equitable, fair and adequate funding to low performing schools. Many voiced concerns about inequitable funding between urban and suburban communities and schools. With the requirements and demands of the common core state standards towards college and career readiness, all schools, especially low performing schools, should be supported with every resource required to grow and develop students to be prepared academically, socially and emotionally, void of student register dictates.

Survey respondents commented,

“...The “playing field” is not level in terms of the ability of such schools and districts to prepare ALL students for productive futures - whether that implies attending college or directly entering into the workforce...”

“Ensure equity in school funding ensuring lower performing schools receive more funds and highly effective teachers.”

“Encourage the passage of legislation to retool the entire public education funding process to include a level playing field taking into account economic conditions.”

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: As recommended above, teacher quality is an investment that crosses several of the priority needs.

In total, the recommendation is for Centers to support SEAs with clearly defined interpretations of what it means for a student to be college and career ready, but more importantly, suggestions for how colleges can train teachers to carry out this important ask.

In the absence of Centers' capacity to fulfill the actual needs voiced, Centers could provide SEAs support with:

- ▶ **How to effectively utilize** existing school-based budgets and grow and supplement these budgets (including identifying appropriate grants and grant writing, samples of awarded grants and templates, free/low cost programs and supports, etc.) to fund all requirements towards college and career readiness, closing achievement gaps and developing appropriate standards-based curriculum to reach and impact all students including ELLs and SWDs.
- ▶ **Designing high quality**, ongoing and impactful professional development for teachers and school leaders in low performing schools towards closing the achievement gap and college and career readiness. On-going on-site support is more effective, uniquely geared to the needs of identified schools.
- ▶ **Developing College and Career Prep Centers for parents and families.** Families in more affluent, informed and connected communities tend to have access to vital information to successfully prepare their children for middle school, high school and college. Parent support centers in low performing districts and communities should be established, carefully walking parents and families through the timely process of pre-college preparations, from college research, the application process, financial aid options, filling out financial aid applications, tuition and supplies assistance options, special low-cost and free programs, preparing the college essay, application fee waivers, reference letters, SAT preparation and funding, selecting the best major, saving for college, etc.

