

Identifying and Addressing Regional Education Needs

U.S. Department of Education



Pacific Regional Advisory Committee



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The Pacific Region:

A Report Identifying and Addressing the Region's Educational Needs

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Contents

Executive Summary.....	i
Chapter 1. Introduction	4
A. Legislative Background	4
B. Regional Background Information	4
C. Challenges Affecting Regional Needs	8
D. Data Collection and Outreach Strategies.....	8
Chapter 2. Educational Needs and Recommendations for Addressing the Needs.....	11
References	14
Appendix A. Region Educational Profile	A-1
Appendix B. Needs and Recommendations From Committee Members.....	B-1

Tables

Table A. Pacific RAC members	i
Table 1. Members of the public submitting comments by state.....	9
Table 2. Members of the public submitting comments by stakeholder group	10
Table 3. Summary of needs and recommendations by committee member	12

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the activities and results of the Pacific 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 Pacific RAC, represented in this report, includes American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Guam, Hawaii, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

Committee members convened three times and reached out to their respective constituencies between July 19, 2016, and August 31, 2016. Members of the Pacific RAC represented a variety of stakeholders, including SEAs, institutions of higher education, and schools. The members collaborated, communicated, and shared resources using Communities360°, an interactive online platform hosted within the larger GRADS360° system housed within the secure U.S. Department of Education environment. Table A shows the three Pacific committee members and their affiliations. Two representatives from FSM were invited to participate, but did not respond to the invitation.

Table A. Pacific RAC members

Member name	Affiliation	State/Area
Sheena Alaiasa	Kamehameha High School	Hawaii
Kevin Gee	University of California, Davis	Outlying territories
Rita A. Sablan	Northern Mariana Islands Public School System	CNMI

Members reviewed a regional profile containing educational statistics and other relevant data to inform their individual assessments of the challenges facing their region. The island states, territories, and nations in the Pacific region cover an expansive geographic area remote from the continental United States (and from one another). With the exception of Guam, each area is composed of multiple islands with unique challenges relative to mainland states. Together, the populations of the island states and territories in the Pacific region are scattered over more than 100 inhabited islands that cover a geographic area larger than the continental United States. Each area has distinct and variable political, economic, and educational systems; diverse cultural, ethnic, and linguistic heritages; and unique and complex historical ties to the United States. While Hawaii is among the 50 United States, American Samoa, the CNMI, and Guam are U.S. territories. The Freely Associated States—made up of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau—are sovereign nations affiliated with the United States. The Federated States of Micronesia are made up of the nations of Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap.

As a result of the diversity in the region, the educational needs vary significantly. Hawaii’s student population includes a slightly higher proportion of English language learners relative to the national average, but otherwise its demographics, educational resources, and teacher preparation efforts are similar to national averages. Hawaiian student proficiency rates on state assessments and the ACT are lower than the national averages. However, the profiles of American Samoa, the CNMI, the FSM, Guam,

the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau differ substantially from Hawaii and the rest of the United States. English is rarely students' native language; employment opportunities are limited for high school and postsecondary graduates; and recruiting, retaining, and training high-quality educators are significant challenges. Postsecondary educational opportunities are more limited in many of these island areas, and some islands experience "brain drain" when students attend postsecondary education elsewhere and fail to return home because of weaker economies, lower wages, and fewer opportunities in the labor markets. See appendix A for detailed tables on the educational characteristics of the region.

Members collaborated to develop a plan for soliciting information on the region's educational needs. They engaged stakeholders and disseminated information by administering an online survey; conducting focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews with stakeholders; and reviewing extant literature on the educational needs of the region, including recently conducted educational needs assessments in Hawaii and American Samoa. Members focused their efforts on distributing the survey to the widest possible group of stakeholders.

As a result of the committee's outreach efforts, a total of 138 individuals responded to the survey and 91 responded through focus groups, telephone interviews, and email correspondence. Of the 229 total respondents, 6 were from the state level, 16 were from the local or regional level, 57 were from the school level, 136 were from the classroom level, and 14 were from the community level. Teachers represented the largest group of respondents.

Each committee member 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 of the Pacific RAC identified the following six needs in order of priority:

- ▶ preparing students to be college and career ready;
- ▶ improving classroom instruction, instructional leadership, teacher quality;
- ▶ implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Common Core State Standards;
- ▶ supporting the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps;
- ▶ improving measurement and support systems to assess educational needs and effectively implement improvements; and
- ▶ promoting community and stakeholder engagement.

Committee members also developed the following five broad recommendations for technical assistance to better address the educational needs:

- ▶ **Develop and disseminate common standards, tools, and templates.** Develop benchmarks and criteria for defining college readiness and career readiness in the context of each Pacific state, territory, and nation, and provide guidance on measuring students' progress toward meeting the benchmarks and criteria. Support the development of first-year English and math transition courses to prepare students for postsecondary English and math courses.

- ▶ **Facilitate or create partnerships between K–12 systems and institutions of higher education.** Assist with the alignment of secondary and postsecondary standards, and provide students with an opportunity to earn college credit while in high school.
- ▶ **Compile resource and best practice guides.** Compile tools and resources on teacher practice, instructional leadership, classroom instruction for English language learners and students with disabilities, and teacher and student assessment. Tools and resources should be specific to the distinctive demographics, culture, and educational characteristics of each state, territory, and nation.
- ▶ **Provide professional development and training.** Develop online and in-school professional development to help educators unpack the Common Core State Standards, assess student achievement, identify persistent achievement gaps, and improve instruction. Train school leaders (e.g., principals) in strategies to systematically identify underprepared and underperforming teachers, and equip the region with comprehensive strategies for improving the skill sets of those teachers.
- ▶ **Provide guidance on allowable and effective uses of federal funds.** Create or identify resources and guidance to help ensure the efficient use of funds, especially as related to the provision of professional development and the implementation of ESSA in the outlying territories and nations.

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 of the Pacific Regional Advisory Committee (RAC). The Pacific region includes American Samoa, the CNMI, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Guam, Hawaii, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The RAC members used statistical data from the Pacific 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 to 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 Pacific 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.

The Pacific region comprises the state of Hawaii; the U.S. territories of Guam, the CNMI, and American Samoa; and the Freely Associated States, which are the Republic of Palau, the FSM, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Each of the island states and territories in the Pacific Region has its own independent government and educational system. While not states, the U.S. territories of Guam, the CNMI, and American Samoa are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. federal government and are

considered part of the United States. The territories have democratic governments and nonvoting representatives in the U.S. Congress.

The nations in the Freely Associated States entered into a Compact of Free Association with the United States. The Compact affirms the “close and mutually beneficial” relationship between the Freely Associated States and the United States (U.S. Department of Education 2014). Under the provisions of the Compact, the Freely Associated States receive financial assistance from the United States in exchange for U.S. defense rights, which include military access and the right of strategic denial (i.e., the right to prevent access to the islands and their territorial waters by military personnel of other countries or the use of the islands for military purposes). The Compact also allows citizens of the Freely Associated States to live and work in the United States (U.S. Department of Education 2014).

Highlights about each of the areas, their basic demographics, and the scope of their educational systems are summarized below. Because of limited data collection infrastructure in many jurisdictions in the Pacific region, relatively few data are available on the demographic and educational characteristics of the territories and nations.

State of Hawaii

Hawaii is made up of eight islands covering 28,311 square kilometers. The population of the islands is 38 percent Asian, 23 percent mixed race, 23 percent White, 10 percent native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 10 percent Hispanic. The official languages are English and Hawaiian, with English as the language of instruction. The Hawaii Department of Education is the only statewide school district in the United States (U.S. Department of Education 2014). The school system includes 11,069 teachers and 215,345 students in 439 schools (247 public, 143 private, and 49 multi/charter) (U.S. Department of Education n.d.a).

Many teachers in Hawaii receive training from alternative teacher preparation programs. In 2014, the percentage of teachers completing a traditional teacher preparation program (54 percent) was much lower than the national average (83 percent). Thus, the percentage who received training from an institute of higher education (IHE) and non-IHE-based alternative teacher preparation programs (31 percent and 15 percent, respectively) was significantly higher than the national averages (7 percent and 10 percent, respectively). Hawaii also recruits many of its teachers from out of state institutions. Of the 1,425 newly licensed teachers in 2014, 57 percent received their training outside of Hawaii (U.S. Department of Education 2016b).

Hawaii surveys the junior class statewide each year as part of the ACT testing process. According to Hawaii’s State Department of Education’s most recent survey, 69 percent of Hawaii’s class of 2017 wants to go to college. However, only 56 percent the class of 2015 actually enrolled in college. This is a concern considering the most recent national report on job projections and education requirements through 2020 shows 69 percent of jobs in Hawaii require some postsecondary training or education (Hawaii Department of Education n.d.).

This year (2016) the Hawaii Board of Education and the Department of Education are reviewing and extending the state’s Strategic Plan, last updated in 2012. The revised Strategic Plan is due to the Board of Education December 6, 2016, and will inform the Board of Education and the Department of Education’s priorities for action and resources in the next few years, including the state’s ESSA plan to receive federal funds (Hawaii Department of Education 2016).

American Samoa

American Samoa is a U.S. territory made up of five islands covering 199 square kilometers. The population of the islands is more than 90 percent native Pacific islander. The official languages and the languages of instruction are English and Samoan as of the 2014–2015 school year. The educational system includes 811 teachers and 12,692 students in 30 public and 11 private schools (U.S. Department of Education n.d.a). In 2013, federal funds accounted for 84 percent of the territory’s education revenue. Tuna fishing and tuna processing account for 80 percent of employment in American Samoa (U.S. Department of Education 2014).

In general, teachers in American Samoa attend one of two traditional preparation programs offered within the territory: the University of Hawaii-Manoa: American Samoa Cohort offers a Bachelor’s degree in elementary education to approximately 50 American Samoa teachers each year, and American Samoa Community College offers an Associate of Arts degree in elementary education. In 2014, 261 people were enrolled across the two programs, of which 173 completed the program at American Samoa Community College and 51 completed the program at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. In the same year, 79 teachers received their initial teaching credential from the state, all of whom trained at one of American Samoa’s teacher preparation programs. These teacher preparation programs help address shortages of highly qualified teachers by area of certification or licensure (U.S. Department of Education 2016b).

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

The CNMI is a U.S. territory composed of 14 islands with a total land area of 464 square kilometers (U.S. Department of the Interior n.d.). Half of the CNMI’s population is of Asian descent, and 35 percent are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. English, Chamorro, and Carolinian are all official languages, but only English is the language of instruction. The educational system includes 40 schools (20 public and 20 private) with 464 teachers and 11,022 students (U.S. Department of Education n.d.a). The CNMI has one local education agency funded almost equally through state and federal sources. The economy of the CNMI depends greatly on financial assistance from the United States, trade, and tourism. A small agriculture sector includes cattle ranches and small farms producing coconuts, breadfruit, tomatoes, and melons (U.S. Department of Education 2014).

The CNMI primarily relies on teachers trained outside of the territory to fill its classrooms. In 2014, 72 percent of the CNMI’s newly licensed teachers received training from out of state teacher preparation programs. All 34 teachers licensed in 2014 who trained in the CNMI completed the traditional teacher preparation program at the College of the Mariana Islands. The teacher preparation program at the College of the Mariana Islands addresses shortages of highly-qualified teachers by area of certification or licensure, subject, and specialty (U.S. Department of Education 2016b).

Guam

The island of Guam is an organized, unincorporated territory of the United States covering 544 square kilometers. Thirty-seven percent of its population is Chamorro, and 26 percent is Filipino, with the remaining 37 percent almost equally divided among Pacific Islanders, mixed race, Whites, and other races. The official languages and languages of instruction are Chamorro and English. A board of education consisting of both elected and appointed members governs the school system on the island, which includes 2,472 teachers and 46,486 students in 60 schools (40 public and 20 private) (U.S. Department of Education n.d.a). In 2013, the majority of Guam’s education revenue (76 percent) came

from local sources, but funding from the United States accounted for the remaining 24 percent. In the same year, Guam spent \$10,928 per pupil on education, which was \$1,092 less than the United States average and \$1,635 less than in Hawaii. The primary driver of the Guamanian economy is the U.S. military. The secondary industry is tourism; each year the island is host to more than 1 million visitors from Japan and other Asian nations (U.S. Department of Education 2014).

The majority of teachers in Guam receive training from the traditional teacher preparation program at the University of Guam. In 2013-14, 362 teachers were enrolled in the program and 90 completed it. In the same year, Guam issued 91 initial teaching licenses, of which only 21 percent were to teachers who received training from programs outside of the territory (U.S. Department of Education 2016b).

Republic of Palau

The Republic of Palau is a sovereign nation among the Freely Associated States and is made up of 250 islands totaling 181 square kilometers (U.S. Department of Education n.d.b). Seventy-three percent of the population is Palauan, and the official languages are Palauan and English. Palauan is the language of instruction for grades K–3; Palauan and English are the languages of instruction for grades 4–5; and, English is the language of instruction for grades 6–12 (U.S. Department of Education n.d.b). Palau’s educational system includes 359 teachers and 4,151 students in 29 schools (21 public and 8 private) (U.S. Department of Education n.d.a). The economy of Palau depends on government employment, tourism, trade, subsistence agriculture, and fishing (U.S. Department of Education 2014).

Federated States of Micronesia

The Federated States of Micronesia are members of the Freely Associated States and include the states of Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap. The nation’s 607 islands total 702 square kilometers and span 2,736 kilometers. Approximately half of the population is Chuukese and one quarter is Pohnpeian (U.S. Department of Education n.d.a). Although English is the official language and the primary means of communication among the citizens of the nation’s different states, more than 13 languages and dialects are commonly spoken in the FSM. Fewer than 2 percent of FSM students speak English as their first language, and most are classified as Limited English Proficiency (Federated States of Micronesia 2016). The educational system is made up of 169 schools with 1,855 teachers and 27,299 students (U.S. Department of Education n.d.a). The economy is based in large part on subsistence farming and fishing (U.S. Department of Education 2014).

The Republic of the Marshall Islands

The final member of the Freely Associated States, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, is a group of 29 coral atolls (24 inhabited) and 5 islands with a total land area of approximately 181 square kilometers (Republic of Marshall Islands Ministry of Education 2014). The official languages and the languages of instruction are Marshallese and English. The population of the Republic is 92 percent Marshallese, 6 percent mixed Marshallese, and 2 percent other. Approximately 1,000 teachers work to educate slightly more than 10,000 students in 124 schools (83 public and 41 private) (U.S. Department of Education n.d.a). The economy is based primarily on U.S. assistance and lease payments for the use of Kwajalein Atoll as a U.S. military base. Agricultural production, primarily for subsistence, is concentrated in small farms. Commercial crops include coconuts and breadfruit. Industry is limited to handicrafts, tuna processing, and copra (Central Intelligence Agency n.d.).

C. Challenges Affecting Regional Needs

RAC members' data collection efforts identified several challenges affecting the Pacific region's educational needs. Three challenges affecting the region are:

- ▶ **Developing and retaining a highly skilled workforce.** Stakeholders from across the region overwhelmingly believe that the top educational need is preparing high school graduates to enter the labor market or pursue postsecondary education opportunities. However, many of the states and territories provide limited economic opportunities and do not have well-developed postsecondary education systems. Consequently, many students pursue economic and postsecondary opportunities in other U.S. territories and/or states. Often these graduates do not return home because of the attraction of higher wages and more plentiful work opportunities abroad. As a result, it is difficult for the region to develop and sustain a highly skilled workforce.
- ▶ **Recruiting, training, and retaining highly effective educators.** The Pacific region faces significant barriers to ensuring an education workforce of highly qualified public school teachers with the requisite pedagogical skill and core competencies to effectively foster student learning. Hawaii and the outlying territories and nations have difficulty recruiting teachers from the mainland United States, and the teacher pipelines from local schools of education are insufficient to meet the demand for highly skilled educators.
- ▶ **Addressing language and cultural differences in standards, curriculum, and instruction.** Each of the states, territories, and nations in the region has its own unique culture and native languages, resulting in many nonnative English-speaking students with unique cultural experiences and values. The region struggles to develop standards, curriculum, and instructional strategies that support and enhance the specific cultural contexts.

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 describe the purpose of the Comprehensive Centers program and how technical assistance builds the capacity of SEAs and LEAs. The RAC members disseminated materials to their educational organizations and their professional networks.

RAC members conducted needs sensing and data collection between July 19, 2016, and August 31, 2016. Their strategies included disseminating the needs-sensing survey; conducting focus groups with principals, teachers, and parents in Hawaii; leading a telephone interview with the director of a nongovernmental organization in the region; corresponding through email with a representative from a regional education nonprofit organization and a representative from the Department of Health in American Samoa; and conducting an environmental scan of the literature on the educational needs in the region. The online survey asked respondents to identify their state and stakeholder group affiliation and allowed them to identify needs and make recommendations through open-ended responses in comment boxes.

RAC members had access to a Pacific region specific community of practice platform, Communities360°, to help facilitate interactions and align data collection activities. Committee members used Communities360° to share resources, organize committee activities, and submit notes on their outreach efforts to the regional facilitator. RAC members held three meetings internally to review the data collected and discuss the needs and the strategies to address those needs.

A total of 138 stakeholders responded to the online survey. An additional 91 provided feedback through focus groups, telephone interviews, and email correspondence. 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 or territory

State	Number of individuals providing feedback	Percent
American Samoa	6	3
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	105	46
Federated States of Micronesia	6	3
Guam	1	< 1
Hawaii	104	45
Republic of the Marshall Islands	2	1
Republic of Palau	4	2
Multiple states within region	1	< 1
Total Pacific region	229	100

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

Table 2 shows the number of responses received by members of different stakeholder groups.

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

Role	Number of individuals providing feedback	Percent
State level	6	3
SEA staff	3	1
State board of education	1	< 1
Other, state or local government	2	1
Other, state level	0	0
Local district or regional level	16	7
Superintendent or director of schools	3	1
School board member	1	< 1
LEA or central office	9	4
Other, local or regional level	3	1
School level	57	25
Principal or other school administrator	30	13
Parent/grandparent/guardian	15	7
Other, school level	12	5
Classroom level	136	59
Teacher	136	59
Community level	14	6
Higher education	7	3
Community member	4	2
Business	1	< 1
Other, community level	2	1
Total	229	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 up to five priority needs and recommended one or more potential strategy to address those needs (see appendix B). Overall, individual members of the Pacific RAC identified the following six needs:

- ▶ **Preparing students to be college and career ready.** RAC members prioritized the need to prepare students for college or a career. Specifically, members identified a need to create customized definitions of college and career readiness standards and criteria for each state, territory, and nation in the Pacific Region, based on their unique economic and postsecondary opportunities and constraints. Members also identified the need to reduce the number of students requiring remediation in English and math at the postsecondary level and to expand the number of options students have for earning postsecondary credits.
- ▶ **Improving classroom instruction, instructional leadership, and teacher quality.** RAC members identified the need to improve classroom instruction and teacher quality through improved recruitment, retention, and development of high-quality educators. To assist with teacher development, members identified a need for better quality tools and resources for professional development framed by the specific educational contexts of the different states, territories, and nations in the region. A RAC member also cited a need for strengthened instructional leadership among teachers and school administrators in the CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, and the Freely Associated States
- ▶ **Implementing ESSA and the Common Core State Standards.** RAC members cited the need for an improved understanding of how to implement ESSA in the outlying territories and nations in the region, particularly how to use federal funds. Members also highlighted the need for an improved understanding of the Common Core State Standards and their alignment with student achievement goals in Hawaii.
- ▶ **Supporting the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps.** RAC members identified the need to identify persistent achievement gaps within and across states, territories, and nations in the region. Members also emphasized the need to support the region's lowest performing schools and close persistent achievement gaps.
- ▶ **Improving measurement and support systems to assess educational needs and effectively implement improvements.** RAC members noted the lack of high quality data and data systems in the region, particularly systems that track teachers (e.g. teacher qualifications/credentials), students (e.g. test score data), and educational finance data. This dearth of data constrains the region's ability to comprehensively track, understand, and plan for their student achievement and teacher quality needs. In addition, RAC members cited the need for states, territories, and nations in the region to enhance their capacity to efficiently leverage federal funding to implement interventions that address the region's educational needs.
- ▶ **Promoting community and stakeholder engagement.** RAC members highlighted the need for improved parental and community engagement in K–12 education in the CNMI and the other outlying territories and nations in the region.

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

- ▶ develop and disseminate common standards, tools, and templates;
- ▶ facilitate or create partnerships between K-12 systems and institutions of higher education;
- ▶ compile resource and practice guides;
- ▶ provide professional development and training; and
- ▶ provide guidance on allowable and effective uses of federal funds.

Table 3 provides a high-level summary of the recommendations expressed related to the priority need areas.

Table 3. Summary of needs and recommendations by committee member

Member name	Recommendation
<i>Preparing students to be college and career ready</i>	
Sheena Alaiasa	Assist with the design of a bridge curriculum in math and English language arts (provided at the postsecondary level for high school graduates at risk of needing remediation) to reduce the need for remedial education at the postsecondary level
Sheena Alaiasa	Help SEAs create networking opportunities between secondary and postsecondary institutions in the region that will expand the postsecondary course options for high school students
Kevin Gee Rita Sablan	Help set college and career readiness standards by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing guidance on strategies for establishing clear college and career readiness benchmarks and criteria for each state, territory, and nation in the region • assisting with the creation of partnerships between K–12 schools and local colleges and universities to align standards, particularly around preparing students for 1st year college courses • promoting coordination and partnerships (e.g., the Long Beach College Promise) to establish a shared vision and goals of college readiness among systems
<i>Improving classroom instruction, instructional leadership, and teacher quality</i>	
Rita Sablan	Create or aggregate resources on teacher practice, instructional leadership, and teacher and student assessment that are specific to the unique demographics, culture, and educational characteristics of each state and territory in the region
Kevin Gee	Provide training to the states, territories, and nations on strategies to systematically identify underprepared and underperforming teachers
Rita Sablan	Provide leadership training to school administrators on supporting collaboration and cultural values
Sheena Alaiasa Kevin Gee Rita Sablan	Provide culturally relevant professional development for teachers and principals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tailor resources and strategies to the specific needs of the state, territory, or nation • provide hands-on and onsite technical assistance—as opposed to webinars and online sessions—on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Work with SEAs to ensure that the information is effectively disseminated to all education stakeholders, including parents and boards of directors that oversee governance • include training and resource materials on effective classroom instruction and promoting safe learning environments

Member name	Recommendation
<i>Supporting the lowest performing schools and closing achievement gaps</i>	
Kevin Gee Rita Sablan	Provide assistance to enhance the region’s ability to systematically identify and document persistent gaps. Identify schooling-related factors contributing to achievement disparities
Kevin Gee Rita Sablan	Help SEAs develop plans for remedying achievement gaps that account for the cultural and non-school related factors contributing to the gaps Provide instructional coaching and coordinate efforts among states, territories, and nations to implement evidence-based practices for improving student achievement
<i>Implementing ESSA and the Common Core State Standards</i>	
Rita Sablan	To help implement ESSA, provide school districts in the outlying areas and other states briefs and guidelines on interpreting and implementing ESSA. The briefs may focus on some of the key components of ESSA, including the funding streams available to the outlying areas, the allowable uses of those funds, and the requirements that must be met to comply with the law
Sheena Alaiasa	To help implement the CCSS, develop online resources that are produced using local schools to clarify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to unpack the Common Core State Standards • pedagogical and student achievement expectations created by the Common Core The online courses and resources should be accompanied by an online chat feature that allows for immediate feedback on questions
<i>Improving measurement and support systems to assess educational needs and effectively implement improvements</i>	
Kevin Gee	Promote ways to properly and efficiently manage and allocate existing funding sources and streams, particularly federal monies
Kevin Gee	Help SEAs develop or improve data systems and processes by providing assistance on establishing best practices for developing data systems, data collection, data use, and data sharing. In particular, technical assistance may focus on how data can be used to enhance learning and instruction
<i>Promoting community and stakeholder engagement</i>	
Rita Sablan	Provide training, resources, and available facilities for helping education agencies support parental engagement and community partnership
Rita Sablan	Assist the states, territories, and nations efforts to engage community organizations and create partnerships to better serve all students

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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

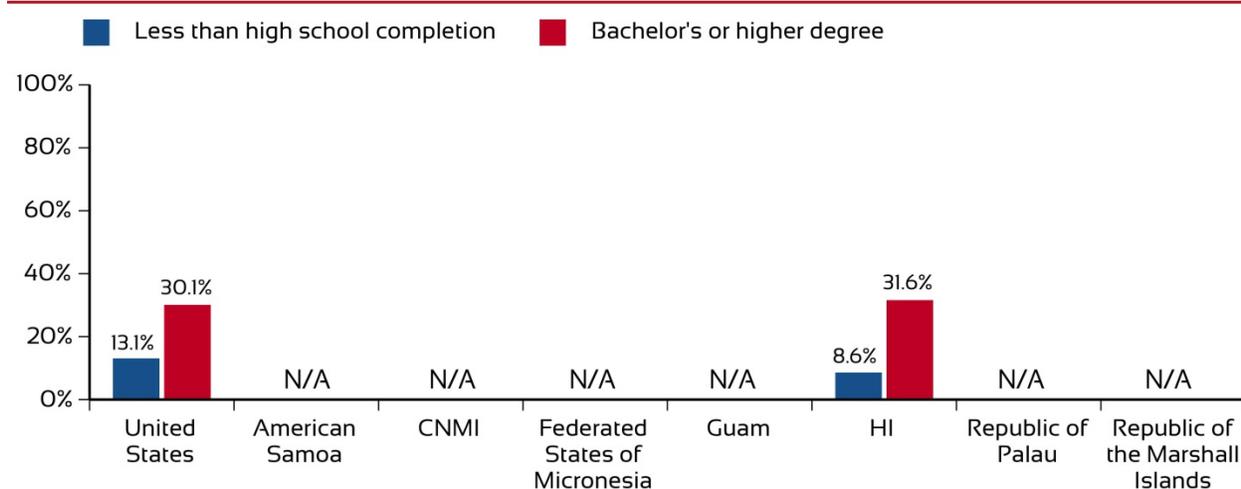
- ▶ the educational attainment of the adult population;
- ▶ the poverty rate, median household income, and unemployment rate;
- ▶ the overall number of students, teachers, and schools, both public and private;
- ▶ the racial/ethnic distribution of students served by public schools;
- ▶ participation 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 in May 2016.

Table 1. Selected socioeconomic 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
Hawaii	11.0	14.9	\$70,000	3.2
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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
Hawaii	288	11,781	186,825	130	2,850	33,820
Guam	N/A	2,291	33,414	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	417	10,638	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A	N/A	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 208.40. 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
Hawaii	13.6	2.1	10.0	32.0	32.0	0.4	9.9
Guam	0.6	0.2	0.2	25.1	71.6	N/A	2.2
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	0.6	N/A	0.1	40.0	56.8	0.0	2.4
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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
Hawaii	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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 Title I
United States	98,817	67.4
Hawaii	289	70.9
Guam	40	N/A
American Samoa	28	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	30	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A

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/pessschools10/tables/table_02.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
Hawaii	50.5	8.5	10.3	6.2
Guam	N/A	N/A	5.9	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	8.5	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A	N/A	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
Hawaii	\$7,671	2	N/A
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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
Hawaii	74.7	1.9	1.4	21.7	0.2
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia					
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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
Hawaii	1	1	0	0	0
Guam	1	1	0	0	0
American Samoa	1	1	0	0	0
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	1	1	0	0	0
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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
Hawaii	Governor appoints board, board appoints chief	The legislature has a house education committee and a senate education and technology committee	No local boards
Guam	Joint elected/appointed board	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	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
Hawaii	David Ige-D, Jan 2015	3/9 voting members	N/A	N/A
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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
Hawaii	\$2,331,839	13.3	84.2	2.5
Guam	\$290,408	23.8	0.0	76.2
American Samoa	\$64,420	84.2	15.4	0.4
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	\$61,275	45.7	54.3	0.0
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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
Hawaii	\$12,536	55.2	32.9	11.9
Guam	\$10,928	42.3	34.9	22.8
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: 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
Hawaii	186,825	\$10,934,242	\$2,913,265	26.6
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	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

Table 15 displays school district broadband connectivity for each state. The Federal Communication 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.

Assessing 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/>).

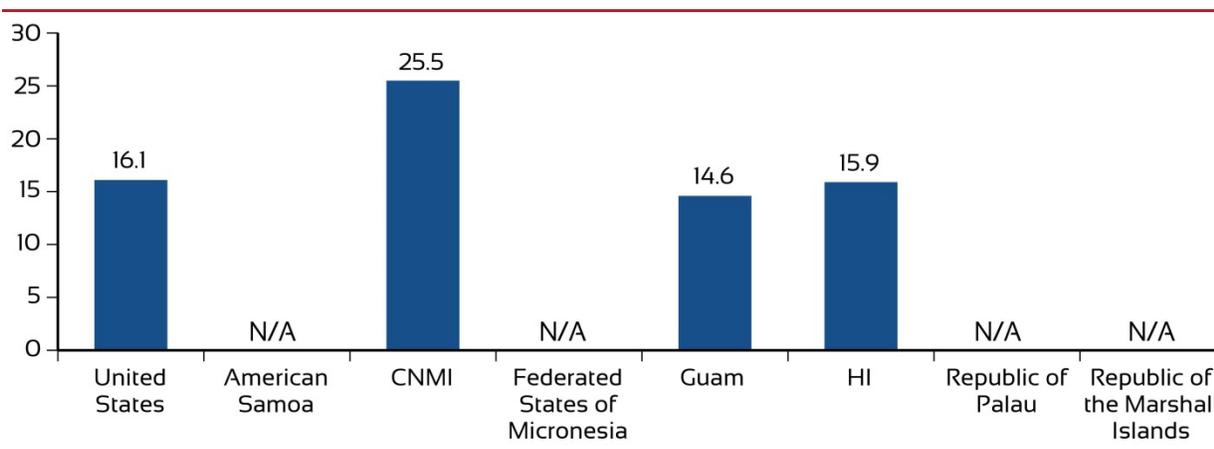
Table 15. School district broadband connectivity, 2015

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
Hawaii	100	100	100	2
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshal Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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-55ba0a64dcae0611b15ba9960429d323e2eadbac5a67a0b369bedbb8cf15dddbb.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
Hawaii	1,412	563	305	174	84
Guam	362	90	90	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	261	224	224	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	74	34	34	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	1,040	96	96	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	320	95	95	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A	N/A	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
Hawaii	563	54.2	30.9	14.9
Guam	90	100.0	0.0	0.0
American Samoa	224	100.0	0.0	0.0
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	34	100.0	0.0	0.0
Federated States of Micronesia	96	100.0	0.0	0.0
Republic of the Marshall Islands	95	100.0	0.0	0.0
Republic of Palau	N/A	N/A	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/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
Hawaii	1,425	819	57
Guam	91	19	21
American Samoa	79	0	0
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	123	89	72
Federated States of Micronesia	1,040	0	0
Republic of the Marshall Islands	27	13	48
Republic of Palau	N/A	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/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
Hawaii	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guam	No	No	No
American Samoa	Yes	No	No
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	Yes	Yes	Yes
Federated States of Micronesia	No	No	No
Republic of the Marshall Islands	Yes	No	No
Republic of Palau	N/A	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/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
Hawaii	The Hawai'i Department of Education reported the following shortage areas: shortage areas for 2013-14 SY are SPED, English, Math, Science, and Vocational Technical. Hawai'i State Approved Teacher Education Programs and the Department of Education report the following efforts to address some HQT shortage areas: Special Education: Tuition stipends for candidates who agree to teach special education for the Hawai'i Department of Education for three years; Continuous acceptance of candidates into Special Education programs; Increased advising, both in person and online; All candidates learn strategies to work with Special Education students. Out of state relocation bonus given to those applicants that interview with a recruiter on a mainland recruitment trip. Mathematics and Science: Linked with Mathematics Department in their institution to connect with possible mathematics candidates; Partnerships with technology, science and mathematics departments and joint grants; National Science Foundation grants and partnerships with community colleges. Out of state relocation bonus given to those applicants that interview with a recruiter on a mainland recruitment trip.
Guam	N/A
American Samoa	There are at least 50 teachers per year who earn their Bachelor in Elementary Education degree from the University of Hawaii. These teachers are on their way toward attaining the Highly Qualified Teacher status when they pass the Praxis II Test in the Content Knowledge area. The UH College of Education is ranked in the top 50 teacher education institutions in the United States and they earnestly continue to offer the same high-quality undergraduate and graduate education degrees to candidates in Hawaii and American Samoa.
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	The State Board of Education has approved the Highly Qualified Teacher deadline until July 31, 2011. To date, all teachers in the CNMI are HQT. With the approved five (5) year trajectory since 2007, the state has offered two summer institutes to prepare the teachers for the rigorous exams. Teachers are given two (2) years under Basic I certification to fulfill the course requirements for Basic II. Under Basic II, teachers are given three (3) years to meet the Standard with Endorsement certification requirements. The recruitment effort

State	Description of the Extent to Which Teacher Preparation Programs Are Addressing Shortages of Highly Qualified Teachers
	<p>have been made through colleges and universities such as Northern Marianas College, Guam, Hawaii, California, Arizona, Washington, Oregon, Minnesota, and Idaho. Other source of recruitment include Teachers-to-Teachers.com, American Speech & Hearing Association (ASHA) magazine, local newspapers and job fairs. Through the Building Local Capacity Comprehensive Plan, the CNMI Public School System will develop human capital and local capacity to increase student learning through the allocation of highly qualified human resources to schools and programs. Currently teacher aides and teacher assistant are encouraged to take college courses in Special Education and/or other content areas. Secondary students in the Education and Training Career Pathway will take Teacher Academy courses at the high school level. As they continue in this pathway, students will be able to continue building their knowledge and skills through programs such as the Future Teacher Organization, School to Apprenticeship and the 2+2+2 Program. The School to Apprenticeship program will offer students the work experience and hands-on training in their field and provide opportunities for students to enter the Registered Apprenticeship Program at the post-secondary level. The 2+2+2 Program allows for students to obtain credentials at the high school, community college (Associate’s Degree), and university level (Bachelor’s Degree). Lastly, CNMI has been designated as a teacher shortage area for those teaching in Special Education and Secondary Education in content area. Hence, pay differentials are given to highly qualified teachers for hard to fill positions in Tinian and Rota and special education for all three islands. In addition, degrees in special education and related service national certification are also given pay differentials.</p>
Federated States of Micronesia	Not applicable as all of the above questions are answered NO
Republic of the Marshall Islands	CMI provides teacher preparation programs for Elementary education. It is a 2 year program with a third year practicum USP provides early childhood preparation program. It is a three year program.
Republic of Palau	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/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
Hawaii	39	32	23	6	29
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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
Hawaii	8,263	13,122	2.75	53
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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/participationN/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
Hawaii	91 to 100	18.5	61 to 70	1,472
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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
Hawaii	93	45	30	29	23	61	38
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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
Hawaii	82	80	76	76	83	72
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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
Hawaii	60.16	N/A	36.62
Guam	N/A	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	N/A	N/A	N/A
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of the Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Republic of Palau	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.

Appendix B. Needs and Recommendations From Committee Members

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Sheena Alaiasa

Affiliation: Principal at Kamehameha High School

Priority Need 1. Teachers are seeking support in providing opportunities to collaborate with their peers to triangulate specific instructional tools and strategies that will build and create clear targets for student achievement

Justification: Hawaii is transitioning from the Hawaii content and performance standards to the Common Core State Standards. The transition occurred in seven phases. What is needed is collaborative time to process and adapt to the transition.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Technical assistance to the Pacific region could focus on the development of online courses or videos that are produced using local schools. The trainings should focus on topics to help principals and teachers more effectively implement the Common Core State Standards. Technical assistance may focus on:

- ▶ Assistance with unpacking the standards;
- ▶ Providing examples of resources that successfully communicate the standards to principals and teachers.
- ▶ Designing evaluation rubrics and providing examples of practice that align to the standards.

The training materials could include webinars, training manuals, and practice guides. It would also be helpful to have an online chat feature that allows educators to ask questions and receive immediate feedback.

Priority Need 2. Alignment of K-12 curriculum, including the quality of standards and expectations, with post-secondary requirements.

Justification: Over 50 percent of survey respondents from the Pacific region listed college and career readiness as the top educational priority. Although ACT scores are slowly increasing, more than half of Hawaiian students fail to meet ACT benchmarks in English, reading, mathematics, and science. As such, many students require remediation from placement tests to support them for the rigor of college expectations. For example, in Hawaii:

- ▶ 46% of students are prepared for English in college;
- ▶ 30% of students are prepared for Algebra in college; and,
- ▶ 23% of students are prepared for Reading in college.

During focus group discussions, teachers stressed the importance of aligning P-20 expectations, standards, and pedagogical practice. Focus group participants also hoped to see an expansion in the number of programs and courses offered at the post-secondary level, as well as an increase in the number of dual credits students earn while in high school.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: To help prepare students for college or career, technical assistance should focus on:

- ▶ Designing and disseminating materials to help align K-12 and post-secondary curriculum and expectations. The alignment should focus on the skills students need to develop in order to succeed after graduation.
- ▶ Providing examples of high school and college collaboration in aligning standards and expectations. The examples should highlight the structures put in place and how the alignment was facilitated.
- ▶ Facilitation of networking opportunities with other colleges that will open further courses for students that their local colleges and universities do not provide.

Priority Need 3. Collaboration with other educators (principals, superintendents, etc.) to share practices to maximize time and efficiencies

Principals and assistant principals routinely mentioned a dearth of resources and time. With the resource availability it became an issue of budgetary issues where they would like to provide PD for specific needs for teachers, but do not have the resources to either bring in a consultant or to purchase books, programs or electronic devices. In regards to time management the issue is needing more time and not professional development on how to manage time as they seem to be inundated with initiatives that are listed as priority #1. The need to collaborate with others not only here in Hawaii but nationally to network and develop a cohort of professionals to discuss best practices and ideas that have worked specifically for schools with similar demographics.

Justification: Administrators are seeking for ways to be more efficient with the roll out of best practices which are research-based and have proven success rates for similar demographics. Working with each other in complex areas has been highly effective, and to ensure schools and practices are on par with counterparts across the nation has been of topic in the last couple of years. Hawaii is striving to close the gap on learning to provide opportunities to students entering into colleges and higher learning institutes across the nation and abroad and have been challenged with making that transition.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Administrators are challenged with issues of time. However some thoughts that were presented were:

- ▶ Group schools by demographics/strengths and what supports they are seeking so administrators have a smaller base to research from thus focusing the efforts of similarities
- ▶ Build a network of schools with similar demographics to develop ideas and systems that will allow all schools to gather strength in providing resources for student success and teacher development
- ▶ To build an administrators bank of support that is available when needed along with a cohort to strengthen relationships and professional development
- ▶ There is so much information and opportunities for administrators and teachers to research and pull from, but sometimes there is too much and you do not know where to start.

Individual Needs Assessment

Name: Kevin Gee

Affiliation: University of California, Davis

Priority Need 1. Developing and ensuring an equitable distribution of highly effective teachers.

High quality teachers form the cornerstone of any effective education system (Darling-Hammond, 2000). However, the Pacific Region faces significant barriers in ensuring that all children are educated by highly qualified public school teachers who possess the requisite core competencies (both in terms of content knowledge and pedagogical techniques) to effectively support children’s learning needs.

Justification: A review of existing planning documents for select entities in the region as well as individual stakeholder interviews and responses from the RAC online survey provide strong and compelling evidence for this priority need.

For example, based on American Samoa’s most recent Five-Year Comprehensive School Based Improvement Plan (CSBIP 2014-2019), in 2011-2 nearly a quarter of teachers in American Samoa did not possess a post-secondary degree (either an Associate’s degree or above) (p. 17) and only 1% passed the PRAXIS II (p. 16). Further, “...most teachers in American Samoa struggle with English Language Literacy” (p. 17). Based on 2004-5 data from the Education for All 2015 Planning documents, in RMI, more than half of its teachers have only a high school diploma (p. 35). Similarly, for Palau, 43% of teachers have only a high school education (Palau Education Master Plan 2006-2016, p. 24). Finally, the Education for All (EFA) 2015 report for Micronesia notes that “local teaching staff in the schools are untrained or under-trained” (p. 22).

Moreover, according to one key stakeholder from the non-profit sector who manages region-wide educational initiatives, the region, as a whole, needs a “**well-trained teacher workforce**”. Further, this respondent strongly advocates for developing a pool of highly qualified teachers who can teach well and apply innovative pedagogical methods in the classroom. Another key stakeholder with extensive experience in the Pacific Region noted in an interview that the first priority area needs to be aimed at “developing and supporting **high quality teaching** and learning.”

Data from the RAC online survey shows that needing “highly effective teachers” was selected by 12 individual respondents while a handful (6 respondents) noted some aspect of teacher quality, including: “Improving the quality of teaching” (Teacher from CNMI); “The retention of quality teachers” (Teacher from CNMI) and “Holding teachers accountable to quality teaching” (Librarian from Hawaii). Finally, 7 respondents indicated the top educational need as “Developing and ensuring the equitable distribution of highly effective teachers and leaders”.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance Training: Overall strategies to enhance teacher quality and effectiveness across the Pacific Region come down to strategic long-term investments and reforms that are beyond the scope and resource capacity/constraints of the Comprehensive Assistance Centers. However, given the existing pool of teachers in the Region who are in of need supplemental supports and training—both pedagogically and content-wise—I recommend that strategies should be aimed at: (1) first training school leaders (e.g., principals) in strategies to systematically identify underprepared and underperforming teachers; (2) then equipping the region with comprehensive strategies (e.g.,

Lemov's Taxonomy of Effective Teaching Practices (Lemov, 2010)) aimed at boosting the existing skill sets of underprepared/underperforming teachers. Assistance should include ways that such strategies can be tailored to the region's and each entities' needs.

Priority Need 2. Preparing students to be college and career ready.

Across the Pacific Region, there is a strong imperative among stakeholders to ensure that high school graduates are well-equipped to either enter the labor market and/or pursue post-secondary education opportunities. Promoting and investing in strategies to enhance students' college and career readiness in the region will need to be balanced with the realities of regional post-secondary education opportunities as well as labor market opportunities and constraints.

Justification: Evidence and the justification of this priority need come from a review of existing planning documents, stakeholder needs sensing data, and the RAC online survey.

Based on American Samoa's Five-Year Comprehensive School Based Improvement Plan (CSBIP 2014-2019), the lack of college readiness is pervasive, impacting the majority of high school graduates: "Over 90% of ASDOE students need college remediation" (p. 6). Moreover, students who directly enter the labor market lack preparation as well. The Plan notes, "Students exiting high school are not adequately prepared with skills to enter the workforce" (p. 6). According to Hawaii's 2011-2018 Strategic Plan, Objective IB is to ensure that students gain the skills they need not only for their formal K-12 education, but beyond (p. 12). Yet, a third of students graduating from Hawaii's public schools and entering the flagship University of Hawai'i system need remediation in math and reading (Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education, 2013). FSM notes in their Education for All 2015 plan that there is a "Lack of elementary and secondary vocational programs that promote and support career education development..." (p. 30). Finally, for RMI, their EFA 2015 National Review report states that "The TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training)...has great urgency in the Marshall Islands because surveys and interviews with employers consistent[ly] reveal their *dissatisfaction with the number and quality of applicants* [emphasis added]..." (p. 40). In sum, across the region, career and college readiness is a critical need.

Two key stakeholders with extensive experience across the region supported a focus on college and career readiness. One noted the importance of career-readiness over college preparation, citing that the region needs to "Prepare students to **work and succeed in local economies** rather than just college preparation." Another stakeholder from the NGO sector in the region also emphasized career-readiness, expressing that the region needs to ensure that all **students are career-ready** and "...needs to think more critically about vocational tracks within the educational system that promotes economic opportunities for students."

Finally, data from the RAC online survey further bolsters the need to promote college- and career-readiness across the region. Overall, 52 of the 138 respondents (38%) noted that "Preparing students to be college- and career-ready" was the top education need.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: One potential technical assistance strategy to promote college- and career-readiness is to assist the region in (1) establishing clear benchmarks and criteria for what "college-readiness" and "career-readiness" mean; as well as (2) providing guidance on how those constructs should be defined and measured within the context of the post-secondary and labor market opportunities of each distinct entity. In other words, the notion of college readiness in Guam is likely to look very different than college readiness in Palau. Assistance should also be provided to develop realistic readiness goals that are salient to the unique higher education and labor market

contexts across the region. Regarding college readiness, there needs to be stronger articulation between the K-12 and higher education systems and assistance can target ways to promote coordination and partnerships (e.g., the Long Beach College Promise) in order to establish a shared vision and goals of college-readiness between systems.

Priority Need 3. Maximizing federal funding streams and creating organizational efficiencies.

The region needs to consider ways to enhance their capacity in leveraging federal funding in efficient ways. As evidence shows (Hanushek, 2003), increasing educational resources (i.e., inputs) is not a silver bullet that will lead to enhanced student performance; however, the ways in which the existing pool of educational resources are properly allocated as well as how those resources are used in the context of existing incentive structures matter tremendously.

Justification: Evidence for this need comes from both a stakeholder interview as well as responses to the RAC online survey. A stakeholder with substantial experience in American Samoa noted that one key priority area was the need to enhance the **capacity to carry out interventions efficiently** and increase capacity and knowledge of **use of federal funding** (i.e., creating organizational efficiencies). On a related note, the informant also noted that addressing **cultural barriers** in implementing interventions efficiently was important. Finally, in the RAC online survey for the Pacific Region, 38 respondents mentioned “funding”, with the majority of those respondents expressing a need for “increased” and/or “more” funding. Respondents articulated the need for more funding in the following areas (not listed in any particular order): afterschool programs, school renovation/infrastructure, curriculum development, teacher salaries, and technology.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: As mentioned above, increasing funding, though a popularly expressed need among respondents from across the region, is not necessarily causally linked to better student outcomes. However, technical assistance strategies can focus on promoting ways to properly manage and allocate existing funding sources and streams, particularly federal monies.

Priority Need 4. Developing a culture of data use to inform planning, learning, and instruction can be a critical component of a well-functioning education system that promotes collaboration (Boudett, City, & Murnane, 2013).

Justification: Across the region, there is a lack of high quality data and data systems. In particular, the region lacks systems that track teachers (e.g., teacher qualifications/credentials), students (e.g., test score data), and educational finance data. This dearth of data severely constrains the ability of the region to comprehensively understand and plan for its needs. The evidence for the need for data is clear—the most recent REL Pacific report capturing the needs of the region is replete with empty data tables because data is simply not available. Most of the unavailable data is for American Samoa, Guam, Palau, RMI, and FSM. Given this dearth of data, the need for data to inform decision making is a growing regional need. Further evidence from a review of planning documents supports this need. The desire for data driven decision making and data is articulated in American Samoa’s Improvement Plan—Goal 6 notes that, “*Data driven planning* of professional growth activities will be responsive to teacher and student needs [emphasis added]” (p. 19). Similarly, Hawai’i notes in its recent Strategic Plan the need to focus on “formative assessment data” (Data for School Improvement (DSI), p. 7) to inform instruction and develop early intervention strategies for struggling learners. Finally, the term “data” was mentioned 8 times in the RAC survey, with respondents noting the need for “seamless data collection and sharing” (Curriculum Developer in CNMI); “improving education system by data driven best practice” (Staff

Development Coordinator in FSM); and “help[ing] us create a framework that will help the system meet challenges in the areas of assessment, data collection, and using data to improve practices” (Principal from CNMI).

Recommended Strategy: Assistance strategies around data should focus on establishing best practices around data collection, use and sharing particularly as data can be used to enhanced learning and instruction (which can also support several other priority goals, notably college and career-readiness as well as closing achievement gaps).

Priority Need 5. Ensuring an equitable education for children is a critical need, albeit a need that will require systemic reforms.

Justification: Achievement gaps are persistent phenomena affecting several parts of the region—there are documented gaps by race/ethnicity, Native versus non-Native populations, and broader educational equity issues that exist between and within entities in the region. In Hawaii, results from the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) show that the Black-White test score gap significantly increased between 2011 and 2013. Further, gaps between Native and non-Native Hawaiians persist with 8th grade non-Native Hawaiian students outperforming their Native Hawaiian counterparts in both math and reading (Hammond, Wilson, & Barros, 2011). One respondent to an interview noted that there are **educational equity issues linked to economic inequalities across and within the entities**. In particular, there is between entity inequality (i.e., RMI/FSM vs. Guam/CNMI) as well as within entities. For example, the respondent has observed persistent economic disparities in Guam/CNMI such that wealthier parents can send children to private/religious schools, creating a two-tiered educational system. These schools are, unfortunately, out of reach for more socioeconomically disadvantaged children. Finally, approximately 25 respondents (18%) to the online RAC survey from the Pacific Region mentioned the need to support the lowest performing schools and close achievement gaps.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Strategies to address achievement gaps need to examine the underlying systemic issues feeding into the achievement gaps that fall within the purview of the education system itself (i.e., teacher quality). Technical assistance for this priority need should focus squarely on enhancing the region’s ability to (1) systematically identify and document where persistent gaps exist (i.e., Native vs. non-Native students); (2) identify schooling related factors contributing to such achievement disparities; and (3) develop plans—grounded in rigorous evidence—to remedy such factors.

Individual Needs Assessment

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

Justification: A plurality (38 percent) of survey respondents indicated the preparing students for college or a career was the top educational need in the region. College and career readiness is about preparing students to meet performance expectations at institutions of higher education or in the workforce. Each year, secondary schools exit approximately 2000 plus high school students from the various pacific states (Guam, CNMI, FSM, ROP and ROM). By preparing students to transition to college and career, the region will have sufficient individuals that will enter the workforce following high school and college.

The Pacific region is experiencing a shortage in various professions such as in the health field, in clinical therapy such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, and specialized fields for students with disabilities, classroom teachers, counseling, and social work. In the occupational field – construction management is in high demand, gaming industry in the CNMI, fisheries and environmental specialists, and coastal resources management. Build local capacity within the region so that students will transition into college and career within their own states to prevent brain-drain in the islands.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Students must be prepared to be college and career ready so that upon admission students are taking college bearing courses and that upon hire students are placed in either entry level or mid-level positions in the workforce. To achieve this, the respondents would like to see professional development on curriculum, instruction and assessment for all education stakeholders, including parents and board of directors that oversee governance. The respondents also would like to see more hands on and onsite technical assistance versus webinars and online sessions.

Technical assistance can focus on professional development in English Language Arts and math for high school teachers so that students will be prepared to be enrolled in college bearing courses. Another technical assistance need is the development of first year English and math courses to be offered at colleges and universities in the Pacific region so that students will transition to these college courses successfully and into their English and math courses throughout their post-secondary education.

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

Justification: Survey respondents indicated that the majority of students served in schools are English Language Learners, and teachers are not sufficiently trained to provide reading instruction for students to be on grade level or college/career ready. Most classrooms exceed student teacher ratio, thereby making it difficult for teachers to provide effective instruction to the unique needs of students. The achievement gap among subgroups include pacific islanders/Asian/Caucasian; and students with special needs and ELL.

The data in the CNMI indicates that out of the 9 elementary schools, 7 are identified as lowest performing. Student data in STAR Reading and STAR Math shows that approximately 51% of the students are below the grade equivalent in their reading and math.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Survey respondents have indicated the need for resources (such as instructional materials and funds), training on best practices, instructional strategies for teaching all students, including struggling students, special needs students, and ELL students. Specifically, technical assistance may focus on instructional coaching and coordinating efforts among low-performing schools to effectively implement evidence based practices.

Priority Need 3. Implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act

Justification: The recent enactment of The Every Student Succeeds Act is a new regulation that has an impact on the territories, and therefore, the respondents need to understand the implications on how this new law will apply to the territories in terms of funding from the federal government, and programs to support student learning outcomes and teachers. There are 7 components of ESSA that are connected to the work that are expected in any school district. The components of ESSA that are critical to the pacific region are accountability, assessment, ELL, School Improvement Supports, and Teachers and Leader Quality.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: The school districts in the outlying areas and other states that are affected by ESSA should be provided briefs and guidelines on how they should comply with the implementation of ESSA. The technical assistance should address the key components of ESSA (as indicated in the justification above), the funding stream available to the outlying areas in terms of allocation by percentages and use, and the requirements that must be met relative to ESSA.

Priority Need 4. Promoting Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Justification: Research is clear that parental engagement and community support has a positive relationship with student outcomes. The islands in the Pacific region are geographically isolated. This in itself presents a challenge for schools to reach out to stakeholders. Many islands are visited infrequently by school district management because, only accessible by boat or plane, central office representatives cannot easily travel to remote islands. Another key issue is that many—if not all—parents do not have a post-secondary degree, so the importance of education is lost on many in the region.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: Technical assistance on engaging broadly dispersed stakeholder sand community organizations. The technical assistance could provide training, resources and available facilities for engaging parents and partnering with community organizations.

Priority Need 5. Improving Instructional Leadership

Justification: The respondents indicated that improving leadership among teachers and school administrators will close the achievement gap, will support the goals of the schools and their students for college and career ready.

Recommended Strategy for Technical Assistance: The technical assistance to support this priority is training for teachers, making available resource materials for classroom instruction, promoting safe learning environment, and leadership training that will support collaboration and cultural values.

Some of the specific technical assistance may include instructional coaching, training in the area of classroom observation, data collection and use of these data to improve instructional leadership and capacity.

