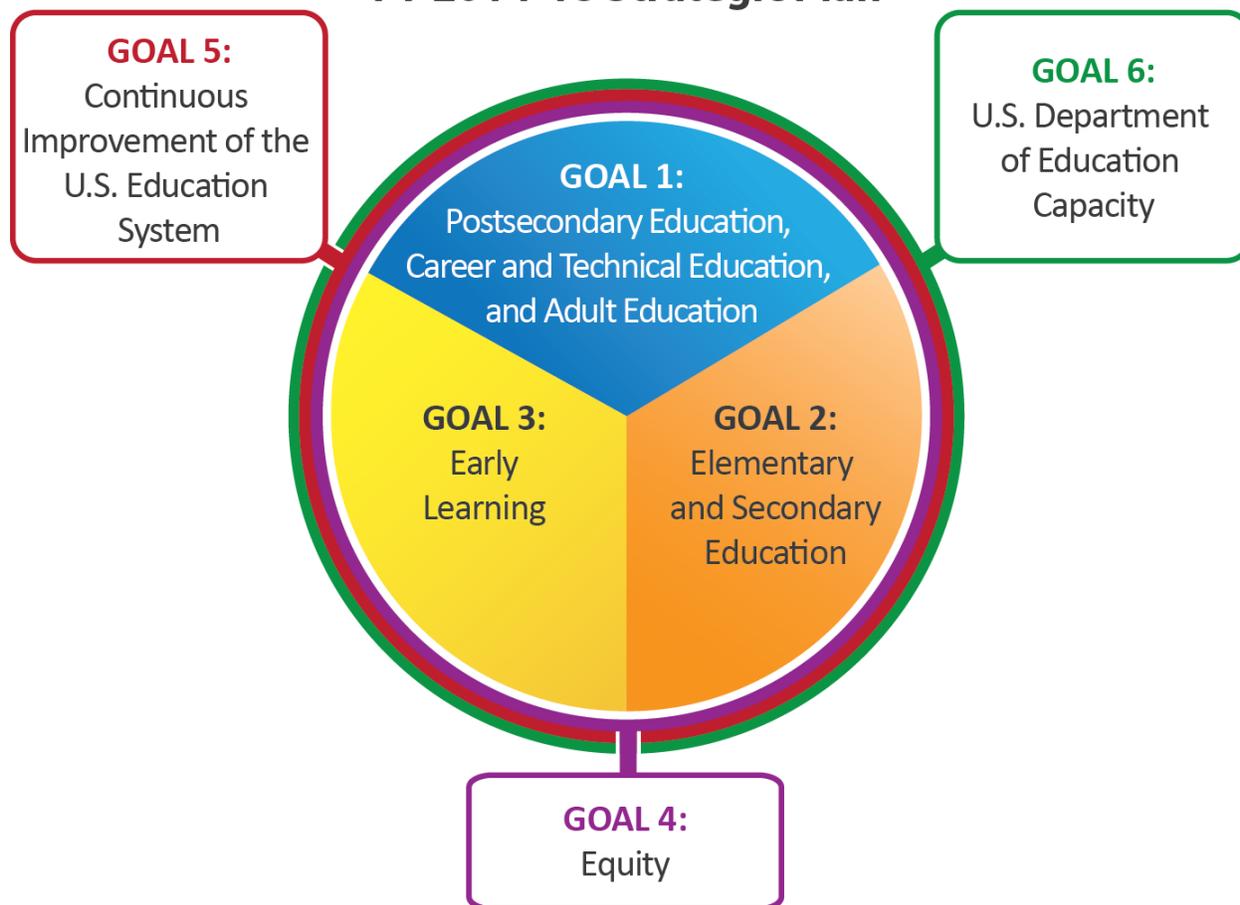

Performance Results Details

Performance Management Framework

In accordance with the [GPR Modernization Act of 2010](#), the Department's framework for performance management starts with the *Strategic Plan*, including its Agency Priority Goals (APGs), which serve as the foundation for establishing long-term priorities and developing performance goals, objectives, and metrics by which the Department can gauge achievement of its stated outcomes. Progress toward the Department's *Strategic Plan* is measured using data-driven review and analysis. This focus promotes active management engagement across the Department. Additional information is available in the [Department's Annual Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports](#).

The [FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan](#) is comprised of six strategic goals that influence the day-to-day work of the Department's staff. The Department continues to welcome input from Congress, state and local partners, and other education stakeholders about the *Strategic Plan*. Questions or comments about the *Strategic Plan* should be e-mailed to APP_APRComments@ed.gov.

FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan



FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan

AGENCY MISSION		
<p>Mission: To promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access</p>		
FY 2014–18 STRATEGIC PLAN		
Strategic Goals	Strategic Objectives	Agency Priority Goals
<p>Goal 1: Postsecondary Education, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education. Increase college access, affordability, quality, and completion by improving postsecondary education and lifelong learning opportunities for youths and adults.</p>	<p>Objective 1.1: Access and Affordability. Close the opportunity gap by improving the affordability of and access to college and/or workforce training, especially for underrepresented and/or underprepared populations (e.g., low-income and first-generation students, English learners, individuals with disabilities, adults without high school diplomas, etc.).</p> <p>Objective 1.2: Quality. Foster institutional value to ensure that postsecondary education credentials represent effective preparation for students to succeed in the workforce and participate in civic life.</p> <p>Objective 1.3: Completion. Increase degree and certificate completion and job placement in high-need and high-skill areas, particularly among underrepresented and/or underprepared populations.</p> <p>Objective 1.4: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Pathways. Increase STEM pathway opportunities that enable access to and completion of postsecondary programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase college degree attainment in America
<p>Goal 2: Elementary and Secondary Education. Improve the elementary and secondary education system's ability to consistently deliver excellent instruction aligned with rigorous academic standards while providing effective support services to close achievement and opportunity gaps, and ensure all students graduate high school college- and career-ready.</p>	<p>Objective 2.1: Standards and Assessments. Support implementation of internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards, with aligned, valid, and reliable assessments.</p> <p>Objective 2.2: Effective Teachers and Strong Leaders. Improve the preparation, recruitment, retention, development, support, evaluation, recognition, and equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders.</p> <p>Objective 2.3: School Climate and Community. Increase the success, safety, and health of students, particularly in high-need schools, and deepen family and community engagement.</p> <p>Objective 2.4: Turn Around Schools and Close Achievement Gaps. Accelerate achievement by supporting states and districts in turning around low-performing schools and closing achievement gaps, and developing models of next-generation high schools.</p> <p>Objective 2.5: STEM Teaching and Learning. Increase the number and quality of STEM teachers and increase opportunities for students to access rich STEM learning experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support implementation of college- and career-ready standards and assessments • Improve learning by ensuring that more students have effective teachers and leaders

FY 2014–18 STRATEGIC PLAN		
Strategic Goals	Strategic Objectives	Agency Priority Goals
<p>Goal 3: Early Learning. Improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through 3rd grade, so that all children, particularly those with high needs, are on track for graduating from high school college- and career-ready.</p>	<p>Objective 3.1: Access to High-Quality Programs and Services. Increase access to high-quality early learning programs and comprehensive services, especially for children with high needs.</p> <p>Objective 3.2: Effective Workforce. Improve the quality and effectiveness of the early learning workforce so that early childhood educators have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to improve young children’s health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes.</p> <p>Objective 3.3: Measuring Progress, Outcomes, and Readiness. Improve the capacity of states and early learning programs to develop and implement comprehensive early learning assessment systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support comprehensive early learning assessment systems
<p>Goal 4: Equity. Increase educational opportunities for underserved students and reduce discrimination so that all students are well-positioned to succeed.</p>	<p>Objective 4.1: Equitable Educational Opportunities. Increase all students’ access to educational opportunities with a focus on closing achievement gaps and remove barriers that students face based on their race, ethnicity, or national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; disability; English language ability; religion; socioeconomic status; or geographical location.</p> <p>Objective 4.2: Civil Rights Compliance. Ensure educational institutions’ awareness of and compliance with federal civil rights obligations and enhance the public’s knowledge of their civil rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure equitable educational opportunities
<p>Goal 5: Continuous Improvement of the U.S. Education System. Enhance the education system’s ability to continuously improve through better and more widespread use of data, research and evaluation, evidence, transparency, innovation, and technology.</p>	<p>Objective 5.1: Data Systems and Transparency. Facilitate the development of interoperable longitudinal data systems for early learning through employment to enable data-driven, transparent decision-making by increasing access to timely, reliable, and high-value data.</p> <p>Objective 5.2: Privacy. Provide all education stakeholders, from early childhood to adult learning, with technical assistance and guidance to help them protect student privacy while effectively managing and using student information.</p> <p>Objective 5.3: Research, Evaluation, and Use of Evidence. Invest in research and evaluation that builds evidence for education improvement; communicate findings effectively; and drive the use of evidence in decision-making by internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>Objective 5.4: Technology and Innovation. Accelerate the development and broad adoption of new, effective programs, processes, and strategies, including education technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable evidence-based decision making
<p>Goal 6: U.S. Department of Education Capacity. Improve the organizational capacities of the Department to implement the Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Objective 6.1: Effective Workforce. Continue to build a high-performing, skilled, diverse, and engaged workforce within the Department.</p> <p>Objective 6.2: Risk Management. Improve the Department’s program efficacy through comprehensive risk management, and grant and contract monitoring.</p> <p>Objective 6.3: Implementation and Support. Build Department capacity and systems to support states’ and other grantees’ implementation of reforms that result in improved outcomes, and keep the public informed of promising practices and new reform initiatives.</p> <p>Objective 6.4: Productivity and Performance Management. Improve workforce productivity through information technology enhancements, telework expansion efforts, more effective process performance management systems, and state-of-the-art leadership and knowledge management practices.</p>	

The Department's Agency Priority Goals

The Department identified six APGs for FY 2014–15 that serve to focus its activities, with a particular emphasis over the next two years. These goals are consistent with the Department's five-year strategic plan, which will be used to monitor and report regularly on progress, reflect the Department's cradle-to-career education strategy, and help concentrate efforts on the importance of teaching and learning at all levels of the education system. Quarterly updates for the APGs are available on performance.gov.

Progress on the Department's FY 2014–15 Agency Priority Goals

Agency Priority Goal: Increase college degree attainment in America

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, 45.6 percent of adults ages 25–34 will have an associate degree or higher, which will place the nation on track to reach the President's goal of 60 percent degree attainment by 2020.

Supports Strategic Goal 1.

Overview: In 2009, the President set a goal that the United States will have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. Meeting this goal will require millions of additional Americans to earn a postsecondary degree by the end of this decade. The President's focus on the educational attainment among adults ages 25–34 allows the Department to assess progress in preparing the next generation of workers and to benchmark for international comparisons.

In August 2013, the President outlined an ambitious new agenda to combat rising college costs and make college affordable for American families. The Department's strategy to implement the President's College Value and Affordability Agenda comprises three areas of focus: (1) promoting evidence-based innovation and competition so that colleges offer students a greater range of affordable, high-quality options; (2) fostering institutional and student accountability in tandem with better consumer awareness; and (3) helping borrowers who are struggling with their student loan debt. These strategies aim to support college attainment by reducing the cost and amount of time necessary to attain a degree; measuring college performance and providing consumer information about access, affordability, and outcomes; supporting the use of open educational low-cost textbooks; and incentivizing state, institutional, and student behavior to increase college access and success.

Progress: Starting from a baseline of 44.0 percent in 2012, the Department projected that the annual increase of educational attainment among ages 25–34 would grow progressively each year above the four-year historical average of 0.7 percentage points. Based on this projection, the Department established performance targets of 44.7 percent for 2014 and 45.6 percent for 2015. The Department is on pace to achieve this APG as 44.8 percent of adults ages 25–34 have an associate's degree or higher, exceeding the 2014 performance target (note that the rate reflects prior year data, in this case from 2013, but is reported in 2014 when data are available). Examples of the Department's activities that support this goal include collaborating with the White House to plan and host College Opportunity Summits that announced institutional commitments to expand college opportunity; updating and refining the College Scorecard; announcing regulations that will bring accountability to institutions offering career training programs; developing draft regulations to help ensure teacher training programs are preparing educators who are ready to succeed in the classroom; expanding the reach of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Completion Initiative; implementing a new

First in the World grant program to support college access and completion through innovation and evidence-based practices; and redesigning existing programs to encourage efforts to improve college fit, reduce the need for remediation, increase the availability of open educational resources, and implement evidence-based practices. These activities promote innovation, competition, and accountability in the postsecondary sector, which will boost completion rates and educational attainment.

Opportunities and Challenges: The administration’s landmark investments in Pell Grants, coupled with the creation of more generous tax credits and loan repayment options, have helped more Americans access a college education. However, the Department is concerned that federal student aid may not be able to keep pace with rising college costs indefinitely. Instead, systemic state and institutional reforms are necessary to address the root causes affecting college affordability, while also creating incentives to provide greater quality at a lower cost to students. This task is not one that the federal government can take on alone. As such, success will also depend largely on the extent to which states invest in higher education and whether institutions pursue practices and policies that will help improve affordability and student outcomes. Specifically, whether and to what extent states and institutions (a) implement policies and programs to increase college access and success; (b) reduce costs and time to completion; (c) support accelerated learning opportunities, including dual enrollment; (d) develop and adopt effective and innovative practices that improve student outcomes; and (e) promote seamless transitions from secondary to postsecondary education and among higher education institutions will influence the Department’s success in achieving this APG. While some of the Department’s budgetary proposals that would more fully address these areas have not received traction in Congress, the Department has some limited leverage to influence states’ policies and the practices of postsecondary institutions, and the Department will use its available resources, including grant programs and technical assistance, and the ability to convene stakeholders to encourage collaboration and best practices.

Agency Priority Goal: Support implementation of college- and career-ready standards and assessments

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, at least 50 states/territories will be implementing next-generation assessments, aligned with college- and career-ready standards.

Supports Strategic Goal 2.

Overview: The adoption of internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards is the foundation to improving educational outcomes for all students and a fundamental step toward increasing the number of college graduates in the United States. Moreover, these standards must be coupled with high-quality formative and summative assessments that will measure the extent to which students are mastering them.

Progress: Most states have adopted college- and career-ready standards and have developed assessments aligned with those standards. The Race to the Top - Assessment (RTTA) consortia and the consortia developing alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards completed the field testing of their assessments in preparation for operational administration in spring 2015. The Department supported states in addressing challenges in this area in their *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) Flexibility extension requests, through which an SEA can request renewal of its ESEA Flexibility request for an additional three or four years.

Opportunities and Challenges: State capacity to develop and implement college- and career-ready standards and assessments aligned with those standards varies. To provide support in this area, the Department is developing and targeting technical assistance activities that will, in part, increase state capacity to leverage resources effectively and continue to identify promising practices across multiple states. For example, the Department will build a “bank” of resources that support the implementation of college- and career-ready standards. Included in such a bank will be materials to assist in full and effective transition to college- and career-ready standards.

The Department will continue to leverage the ESEA Flexibility monitoring and renewal process to support implementation of college- and career-ready standards and aligned, valid, and reliable assessments. By using the ESEA Flexibility monitoring process, the Department can work with states to support implementation and identify areas where technical assistance is needed. This approach follows the different kind of relationship the Department has built internally across its offices and externally with states during the ESEA Flexibility approval process, including the use of cross-Departmental teams, which reduces burden and duplication between other Department programs and ESEA Flexibility.

Agency Priority Goal: Improve learning by ensuring that more students have effective teachers and leaders

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, at least 37 states will have fully implemented teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that consider multiple measures of effectiveness, with student growth as a significant factor.

Supports Strategic Goal 2.

Overview: Teacher and principal evaluation and support systems enable the development and identification of effective educators and provide information to improve the educator workforce. The nation needs to do more to ensure that every student has an effective teacher, every school has an effective leader, and every teacher and leader has access to the preparation, ongoing support, recognition, and collaboration opportunities he or she needs to succeed. The Department will help strengthen the profession by focusing on meaningful feedback, support, and incentives at every stage of a career, based on fair evaluation and support systems that look at multiple metrics, including, in significant part, student growth.

The Department will support the development and adoption of state requirements for comprehensive teacher and principal evaluations and support systems as well as the district development and implementation of comprehensive evaluation systems. This additional support is necessary, for example, in helping teachers and educator evaluators develop and use student learning objectives to measure student growth and to implement new classroom observation tools.

Progress: The performance targets for this APG are based on the implementation timelines that states were required to meet under their original ESEA Flexibility requests, which indicated that 37 states were expected to implement high-quality systems by September 30, 2015. However, as states and districts are moving forward, they are encountering challenges with implementation of these systems. As a result, they are making adjustments to timelines, sequencing, and implementation steps that may not align with their original plans but will ultimately result in the implementation of high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and

support systems. As of September 30, 2014, seven states have fully implemented teacher and principal evaluation and support systems.²

Opportunities and Challenges: Providing support to states to do this work well is resource-intensive. In a September 2013 letter, the Department outlined ways in which SEAs and LEAs can use Title I, Title II, and IDEA funds to conduct activities related to implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, such as training evaluators, providing professional development to assist teachers in using evaluation data to improve instruction, and recruiting and retaining effective and highly qualified teachers using differential pay. Additionally, states have experienced a range of political challenges to their original plans for this work and with further changes in leadership, those challenges are likely to continue. However, as states continue work to implement teacher and leader evaluation systems, the Department will continue to provide robust technical assistance. In addition to monitoring, the Department designed and implemented a one-year ESEA Flexibility extension process for [Windows 1 and 2 states](#). Through that process, the Department committed to working with states that have requested changes to their timelines or sequencing of implementation to ensure that they are continuing to make progress toward full implementation of their evaluation systems.

Agency Priority Goal: Support comprehensive early learning assessment systems

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, at least nine states will be collecting and reporting disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure.

Supports Strategic Goal 3.

Overview: Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEAs) should be included in a state’s comprehensive early learning assessment system. When properly designed and implemented, KEAs may improve student outcomes, increase program effectiveness, and inform professional development and support to improve the early learning workforce. KEAs also can inform instruction and support students’ educational success by identifying the early learning needs of each child. Further, KEAs can provide an opportunity for teachers and families to understand the status of children when they enter kindergarten and an opportunity to provide policy makers with information needed to support high-quality early learning programs that ensure children enter school prepared for success.

Progress: The Department is on track to achieve this APG. As of June 30, 2014, the [Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance Center \(ELC TAC\) reported](#) that six states are collecting and reporting disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure. Additionally, the Department’s Office of Early Learning conducted an analysis of the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grantees’ annual performance reports and found that four states are in the process of revising their current statewide KEAs, five other states are beginning a phased-in implementation of KEAs, and six

² “Fully implemented” is defined as the school year in which teachers and principals receive effectiveness ratings, which include data on student growth for all students as a significant factor for all teachers and principals, and other measures of professional practice. Note that the Department reported 10 states having fully implemented systems in the FY 2014 AFR based on data available as of Quarter 3 of FY 2014. However, subsequent to that reporting, the Department provided flexibility to states regarding the timing of their implementation and three states elected to delay full implementation until the 2015–16 school year. As such, the FY 2014 APR reports 7 states instead of 10 states.

others are pilot testing their KEAs. Although there are challenges with the implementation of KEAs, the Department is on track to achieve the APG.

Opportunities and Challenges: In December 2014, the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services (Departments) released an [annual report](#) about RTT-ELC grantees that includes information on how states are engaging stakeholders in KEA development, providing more professional development to teachers, and evaluating what is and is not working in order to improve the KEA process. The sharing of these lessons learned will advance progress toward this goal. Additionally, the Departments will reach out to external organizations that share our interest in advancing quality KEAs to develop strategies that may increase our collective impact.

Because assessment in early learning is evolving, many states are in the early stages of developing valid and reliable measures for KEAs. Constructing and testing these instruments and implementing them across every school in the state will be challenging and will take time. In addition, new measures and systems require significant investment, and state budget cuts could impact deployment. The Departments will continue to convene states and share resources that support states in their collecting and reporting of disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common statewide measure, in an effort to continue the push for progress in this area.

Agency Priority Goal: Ensure equitable educational opportunities

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, the number of high schools with persistently low graduation rates will decrease by 5 percent annually. The national high school graduation rate will increase to 83 percent, as measured by the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate, and disparities in the national high school graduation rate among minority students, students with disabilities, English learners, and students in poverty will decrease.

Supports Strategic Goal 4.

Overview: Equality of opportunity is a core American value. All students in this country—regardless of their race, ethnicity, or national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; disability; English language ability; religion; socioeconomic status; or geographical location—must have the chance to learn and achieve. Through Race to the Top (RTT), the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, ESEA Flexibility, and other federal initiatives, the Department dedicates significant effort and resources to improve the nation’s lowest-achieving schools dramatically by using intensive turnaround models and targeted interventions, and also by identifying the low-achieving schools that are successfully turning around their performance. The Department continues to focus on supporting innovation and data-driven decision-making, not just compliance monitoring, and on spurring growth in achievement, not just absolute achievement measures, as was done in the past.

Increasing the national high school graduation rate and decreasing disparities in the graduation rate among minority students, students with disabilities, English learners, and students in poverty is critical not only to ensure greater attainment in secondary education but also a necessary step toward achieving the President’s college graduation goal. The nation has made significant progress in increasing high school graduation rates, but gaps between rates for different student groups continue to persist. This APG aims to reduce that gap.

Progress: Although the Department just missed the FY 2014 performance targets for the two metrics associated with this APG, the Department has taken a number of steps to ensure equitable educational opportunities and increase graduation rates for all students. For example, the Department announced the Excellent Educators for All initiative, a 50-state strategy to support state efforts to ensure that low-income students and students of color have equal access to qualified and effective teachers and leaders. This initiative includes a new technical assistance network, educator equity data profiles for every state, and guidance for states on developing plans to ensure equitable access to excellent educators. Recognizing that inequities in educational opportunities begin early, the Department also has dedicated significant resources to increase access to early childhood education through programs such as RTT-ELC and Preschool Development Grants. The Department also granted extensions of [ESEA Flexibility](#) for the 2014–15 school year for 34 states, ensuring that those states continue to hold districts and schools accountable for subgroup performance, including graduation rates. The Department has also issued policy guidance and enforced civil rights laws to encourage civil rights awareness and compliance and remove barriers to high school graduation, such as discriminatory discipline practices, sexual violence, or inequitable access to school resources. A more thorough description of programs contributing to student academic achievement and attainment appears in the Explanation and Analysis of Progress for objective 4.1.

Opportunities and Challenges: One key challenge in achieving this APG is providing differentiated support to states based on their current status and progress in increasing graduation rates. While all states have room for improvement, some states are farther behind than others, particularly for different subgroups of students. Recently, the Department addressed one major barrier, which was the incomparability of graduation rate data across states. All states are now required to use an adjusted cohort graduation rate, and the Department is releasing these data at the state, district, and school levels. However, differences in how states define a regular high school diploma, and other technical features of their calculations, continue to make comparisons challenging. The Department will continue to improve its data release processes to ensure that data on graduation rates are released to the public on a regular schedule, and on a timely basis, to help states and districts better use data to drive improvement. The Department will also use the upcoming ESEA Flexibility renewal process as an opportunity to support states in continuously improving their systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support to ensure that they are effectively supporting schools with low graduation rates for all students and for particular subgroups of students.

Another challenge for this APG is sustaining the reforms in schools after SIG and RTT funding ends. Insufficient focus or funding for comprehensive turnaround efforts at the state and local levels compounds this challenge. As such, the Department recently proposed new requirements for the SIG program that, among other things, proposed parameters for implementing recent legislative changes to the SIG program that extended the length of the SIG grants that a state educational agency (SEA) can award to its local educational agencies (LEAs). The proposed requirements gave SEAs the flexibility to use the additional time for planning and sustainability activities during the grant period. Once the Department issues final requirements, it will develop and disseminate guidance and technical assistance on the requirements, including sustainability strategies to help states and districts continue reforms after federal funding ends.

Agency Priority Goal: Enable evidence-based decision making

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, the percentage of select new (non-continuation) competitive grant dollars that reward evidence will increase by 70 percent.

Supports Strategic Goal 5.

Overview: There is an increasing emphasis from the Department and among stakeholders on the importance of using evidence to support government program funding decisions. In support of this APG, the Department is increasing its internal capacity to make competitive grant awards based on the existing strength of evidence. For example, with the inclusion of a common evidence framework in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), the Department may select from four tiers of evidence to use as priorities³ or selection criteria in competitive grant programs, as appropriate. Additionally, through its mix of grants, contracts, and internal analytic work, the Department aims to support the use of research methods and rigorous study designs of grants to contribute to the evidence base.

Progress: The Department surpassed the FY 2014 performance target for increasing the percentage of select new (non-continuation) discretionary grant dollars that reward evidence. In FY 2014, 15.92 percent of the Department's discretionary dollars was awarded to new projects with supporting evidence of effectiveness, with five competitions in OII, OESE, and OPE incentivizing evidence through eligibility requirements, competitive preference priorities, and selection criteria.

Opportunities and Challenges: The Department is exploring ways to support and build the capacity of program offices as they shift to evidence-based funding models. For example, the Department shares the Regional Educational Laboratories' (RELs) resources about logic models and evaluation design with applicants, grantees, and program offices. Although these resources support both internal and external stakeholders, the Department has limited resources for providing direct and targeted technical assistance to applicants and grantees, which vary in their comfort with and understanding of evaluation and use of evidence. To continue building the capacity of the education field to use and generate evidence, it is important that the Department is able to provide appropriate technical assistance to its grantees and applicants.

³ The Department may use a priority as an absolute priority, meaning applicants must propose projects that meet it to be eligible to receive funds, or as a competitive preference priority, meaning applicants may choose to address it and could receive additional points depending on how well the priority is addressed.

Cross-Agency Priority Goals

In accordance with the *GPRRA Modernization Act of 2010*, Cross-Agency Priority Goals (CAP Goals) were published on performance.gov in March 2014. The CAP Goals are divided into two categories:

Mission CAP Goals	Management CAP Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cybersecurity • Climate Change (federal actions) • Insider Threat and Security Clearance • Job-creating Investment • Infrastructure Permitting Modernization • STEM Education • Service Member and Veterans Mental Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service • IT Delivery • Strategic Sourcing • Shared Services • Benchmarking and Mission-support Operations • Open Data • Lab-to-Market • People and Culture

Each CAP Goal has a goal leader(s) and deputy goal leader(s) who will manage the processes by which goals are executed. Goal leaders are given flexibility when managing CAP Goals and are encouraged to leverage existing structures as much as practicable (e.g., existing working groups, interagency policy committees, councils). Every CAP Goal will have a governance team chaired by the goal leader, a deputy goal leader, and representatives from agencies contributing to the goal, OMB, and others as determined by the goal leader. Each governance team will develop an action plan explaining how the federal government will execute on the goal, including agencies’ contributions, areas where cross-agency coordination is needed, and anticipated risks or obstacles. The action plan will be updated as experience is gained and new information is learned.⁴

The Department currently contributes to the following CAP Goals:

Customer Service: Deliver world-class customer services to citizens by making it faster and easier for individuals and businesses to complete transactions and have a positive experience with government.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education: In support of the President’s goal that the United States have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world, the federal government will work with education partners to improve the quality of STEM education at all levels to help increase the number of well-prepared graduates with STEM degrees, the number of STEM teachers with corresponding undergraduate degrees, and students’ access to quality STEM learning experiences.

Real time information on [Cross-Agency Priority Goals](http://performance.gov) is available at performance.gov. The CAP Goal Leader, the Performance Improvement Council (PIC), and OMB coordinate quarterly updates to the website, which will reflect the overall action plan and will describe how the agency’s goals and objectives contribute to the CAP Goal.⁵

⁴ OMB Circular A-11, *Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*, Part 6, Section 220.9, 2014.

⁵ OMB Circular A-11, *Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*, Part 6, Section 220.5, 2014.

The Department's Approach to Data Collection and Analysis

In FY 2014, the Department continued to support programs to help the education system by facilitating the development of the infrastructure necessary to collect and disseminate high-value education information for the improvement of student outcomes.

EDFacts. The [EDFacts](#) system enables the consolidation of separate data collections and reduces the reporting burden for states by eliminating redundant data requests.

Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems. The [Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems \(SLDS\) grant program](#), as authorized by the *Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002*, is designed to aid SEAs in developing and implementing longitudinal data systems. Most SLDS funds are awarded as state grants, but a portion of the funds are used for activities to improve data quality, coordination, and use. Activities include the Education Data Technical Assistance program, the [Privacy Technical Assistance Center](#), and work on common education data standards.

Data Strategy Team. The Department's Data Strategy Team (DST) develops and promotes coordinated and consistent data strategies among the various principal offices within the Department. The mission of the DST is to coordinate the Department's public-facing data initiatives by building cohesiveness in internal processes and data policies and by improving transparency in matters related to the Department's collection of data.

Civil Rights Data Collection. The Department collects data on key education and civil rights issues in our nation's public schools for use by OCR in its enforcement and monitoring efforts, by other Department offices, and by policymakers and researchers outside of the Department.

Enhancing Education Systems and Supports. The Department strives to leverage its data, evaluation, performance, and financial systems to meet four important aspects of its mission:

- To contribute to the Department's ability to build customer relations by providing timely responses to customer inquiries.
- To empower employees to make informed decisions by increasing their access to data.
- To increase accountability through improved financial management.
- To keep Department employees informed of the project status and ensure that all users receive proper training on the new system.

The Department's Evaluation and Evidence Planning Initiatives

To determine the effectiveness of programs, policies, and strategies for improving education outcomes, funding is directed toward evaluations that will yield valid, reliable, and useful information for the field. For a list of evaluations completed in FY 2014 and of those planned through FY 2016, see appendix C.