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STATE OF ALABAMA

October 12, 2017

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Office of the Secretary
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos:

Over the past 30 days, my Administration, the Alabama State Board of Education and our education community have coalesced around Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan we are submitting today.

Certainly, we have more work to do in partnering with Alabama's stakeholders to take full advantage of the innovation and flexibility that ESSA provides. However, we believe Alabama's ESSA plan meets the standard for approval set by your Department with the first round of approved ESSA plans. Once approved, we look forward to taking full advantage of the state plan amendment process. Doing so will ensure that Alabama's plan is malleable and responsive to our students' needs, while also being reflective of steps we will take at the state and local levels to bolster educational excellence for all students.

Thank you for providing our state additional time to work toward an effective ESSA plan. We hope that the U.S. Department of Education will build upon the strong role for governors that the ESSA Secretarial approval process creates, by engaging my office throughout the review process, so we may refine our state's plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my office for any additional information. We look forward to working with you in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

Kay Ivey

Kay Ivey
Governor

KI/cb

Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act

U.S. Department of Education
Issued: March 2017

OMB Number: 1810-0576
Expiration Date: September 30, 2017

Paperwork Burden Statement According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0576. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 249 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this collection, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this collection, write directly to: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20202-3118.

Introduction

Section 8302 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA),[1] requires the Secretary to establish procedures and criteria under which, after consultation with the Governor, a State educational agency (SEA) may submit a consolidated State plan designed to simplify the application requirements and reduce burden for SEAs. ESEA section 8302 also requires the Secretary to establish the descriptions, information, assurances, and other material required to be included in a consolidated State plan. Even though an SEA submits only the required information in its consolidated State plan, an SEA must still meet all ESEA requirements for each included program. In its consolidated State plan, each SEA may, but is not required to, include supplemental information such as its overall vision for improving outcomes for all students and its efforts to consult with and engage stakeholders when developing its consolidated State plan.

Completing and Submitting a Consolidated State Plan

Each SEA must address all of the requirements identified below for the programs that it chooses to include in its consolidated State plan. An SEA must use this template or a format that includes the required elements and that the State has developed working with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Each SEA must submit to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) its consolidated State plan by one of the following two deadlines of the SEA's choice:

- **April 3, 2017**; or
- **September 18, 2017**; or
- **October 13, 2017 (Alabama has been granted a 30 day extension by the Secretary of Education)**.

Any plan that is received after April 3, but on or before September 18, 2017, will be considered to be submitted on September 18, 2017. In order to ensure transparency consistent with ESEA section 1111(a)(5), the Department intends to post each State plan on the Department's website.

Alternative Template

If an SEA does not use this template, it must:

1) Include the information on the Cover Sheet;
2) Include a table of contents or guide that clearly indicates where the SEA has addressed each requirement in its consolidated State plan;
3) Indicate that the SEA worked through CCSSO in developing its own template; and
4) Include the required information regarding equitable access to, and participation in, the programs included in its consolidated State plan as required by section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act. See Appendix B.

Individual Program State Plan

An SEA may submit an individual program State plan that meets all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements for any program that it chooses not to include in a consolidated State plan. If an SEA intends to submit an individual program plan for any program, the SEA must submit the individual program plan by one of the dates above, in concert with its consolidated State plan, if applicable.

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, citations to the ESEA refer to the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA.

Consultation

Under ESEA section 8540, each SEA must consult in a timely and meaningful manner with the Governor, or appropriate officials from the Governor's office, including during the development and prior to submission of its consolidated State plan to the Department. A Governor shall have 30 days prior to the SEA submitting the consolidated State plan to the Secretary to sign the consolidated State plan. If the Governor has not signed the plan within 30 days of delivery by the SEA, the SEA shall submit the plan to the Department without such signature.

Assurances

In order to receive fiscal year (FY) 2017 ESEA funds on July 1, 2017, for the programs that may be included in a consolidated State plan, and consistent with ESEA section 8302, each SEA must also submit a comprehensive set of assurances to the Department at a date and time established by the Secretary. In the near future, the Department will publish an information collection request that details these assurances.

For Further Information: If you have any questions, please contact your Program Officer at OSS.[State]@ed.gov (e.g., OSS.Alabama@ed.gov).

Important Note

This document includes Alabama's response to the specific questions posed in the *Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan*. It is not meant to limit use of federal funds to programs or initiatives named or discussed within each response. Please refer to Appendix D for a list of Allowable Uses of federal funds.

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Contact Information and Signatures	
SEA Contact (Name and Position): Ed Richardson Interim State Superintendent of Education Alabama State Department of Education	Telephone: 334-242-9704
Mailing Address: 50 North Ripley St. P.O. Box 302101 Montgomery, AL 36130	Email Address: erichardson@alsde.edu
By signing this document, I assure that: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this plan are true and correct. The SEA will submit a comprehensive set of assurances at a date and time established by the Secretary, including the assurances in ESEA section 8304. Consistent with ESEA section 8302(b)(3), the SEA will meet the requirements of ESEA sections 1117 and 8501 regarding the participation of private school children and teachers.	
Authorized SEA Representative (Printed Name) Ed Richardson	Telephone: 334 242 9704
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative (b)(6)	Date: 4-17-18
Governor (Printed Name) KAY IVEY	Date SEA provided plan to the Governor under ESEA section 8540:
Signature of Governor Kay Ivey	Date: 10-12-17

Programs Included in the Consolidated State Plan

Instructions: Indicate below by checking the appropriate box(es) which programs the SEA included in its consolidated State plan. If an SEA elected not to include one or more of the programs below in its consolidated State plan, but is eligible and wishes to receive funds under the program(s), it must submit individual program plans for those programs that meet all statutory and regulatory requirements with its consolidated State plan in a single submission.

☒ Check this box if the SEA has included all of the following programs in its consolidated State plan.

or

If all programs are not included, check each program listed below that the SEA includes in its consolidated State plan:

☐ Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies

☐ Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children

☐ Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk

☐ Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

☐ Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement

☐ Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

☐ Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

☐ Title V, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income School Program

☐ Title VII, Subpart B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act: Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (McKinney-Vento Act)

Instructions

Each SEA must provide descriptions and other information that address each requirement listed below for the programs included in its consolidated State plan. Consistent with ESEA section 8302, the Secretary has determined that the following requirements are absolutely necessary for consideration of a consolidated State plan. An SEA may add descriptions or other information, but may not omit any of the required descriptions or information for each included program.

Important Note

This document includes Alabama's response to the specific questions posed in the *Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan*. It is not meant to limit use of federal funds to programs or initiatives named or discussed within each response. Please refer to Appendix D for a list of Allowable Uses of federal funds.

Overview of Development of Alabama Consolidated State Plan

Prior to the development of the ESSA Consolidated State Plan, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) developed accountability systems to meet the requirements of two state laws; Act No. 2012-402 (A-F Report Card) and Act No. 2015-434 (Alabama Accountability Act).

Alabama Act No. 2012-402, requires the State Superintendent of Education to develop a school grading system reflective of school and district performance and to create the Legislative School Performance Recognition Program. Alabama's goal is to provide another transparent layer of accountability as it relates to elementary and secondary education in the State. This law requires the state to use state-authorized assessments and other key performance indicators that give a total profile of the school or school system, or both, a school's grade, at a minimum shall be based on a combination of student achievement scores, achievement gap, college and career readiness, learning gains, and other indicators as determined by the State Superintendent of Education to impact student learning and success.

Alabama Act No. 2015-434 requires the identification of public K-12 schools as failing to be based on either of the following:

a. Is designated as a failing school by the State Superintendent of Education.
b. Does not exclusively serve a special population of students and is listed in the lowest six percent (6%) of public K-12 schools, based on the state standardized assessment in reading and math.

Act No. 2015-434 was an amendment to the original Act, Alabama Act No. 2013-64, which was deemed the Alabama Accountability Act of 2013. As a result of the Alabama Accountability Act, Alabama students who are eligible to attend a school identified as a failing school can receive educational choice options as specified in the law.

With Acts No. 2012-402 and No. 2015-434 already in place and constituting existing accountability requirements, in January, 2016 an agency task force was created to review the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A month later the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) conducted a webinar with city and county Superintendents to explain the requirements of the new law.

On March 14, 2016, the Governor issued Executive Order Number 16 (Appendix A) establishing an ESSA Implementation Committee.

The Alabama ESSA Committee appointees were:

- Two vice chairs, appointed by the State Superintendent of Education
- Two appointments by each Alabama State Board of Education member, excluding the Governor
- The Secretary, Department of Early Childhood Education
- The Education Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor
- Director, Governor's Office of Minority Affairs
- Three representatives in workforce development programs or related entities, appointed by the Governor
- A representative of the Alabama Public Charter School Commission, appointed by the Governor
- One member from the Alabama Senate, appointed by the Senate President Pro Tem
- One member from the Alabama House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives

- Additional members as needed, appointed by the Governor

The committee chair, Secretary of Early Childhood Education, Ms. Jeana Ross, was appointed by the Governor from among the members.

The committee was organized into six workgroups each with a specific focus. The workgroups addressed the following areas:

- Standards, Assessment, and English Learners
- Accountability
- Schools and District Improvement
- Educator Effectiveness
- Early Learning
- Title Programs, Grants and Requirements
- Data Collection and Reporting

On May 9, 2016, the initial Implementation Committee meeting was convened. Multiple workgroup sessions were held during May, June, July and August culminating in a summary of progress meeting on August 18 in the Auditorium of the Alabama State Capitol.

Individuals from across the state were introduced to the original components of the ESSA consolidated state plan when the ALSDE conducted an eight-stop *Community Engagement Tour* to share it with the public and solicit input for improvements. The engagement tour stops and dates were as follows:

- August 9, 2016 Carver High School, Montgomery
- August 16, 2016 Auburn High School, Auburn
- August 18, 2016 Helena High School, Helena
- August 23, 2016 Parker High School, Birmingham
- August 25, 2016 Davidson High School, Mobile
- September 6, 2016 The Academy for Academics and Arts, Huntsville
- September 13, 2016 Tuscaloosa Career Academy, Tuscaloosa
- September 20, 2016 Anniston High School, Anniston

The Implementation Committee accepted additional ideas and comments from the public via a jotform link provided by the Office of the Governor that was active through October 30, 2016. The first draft of the ESSA key decisions document was presented to the Alabama State Board of Education on November 10, 2016, and serves as the foundation of this document.

Throughout this process, citizens representing a number of communities have contributed valuable feedback on critical topics including the role of the arts, physical education, health and library sciences, among others, as well as the importance of special education for students of all backgrounds. This input has been critical in the development of Alabama's path forward and will be referred to as the state develops in further detail the specifics of its future plans for educating all students equitably.

Stakeholder groups including the School Superintendents of Alabama, Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools, Alabama Association of School Boards, A+ Education Partnership, Alabama Education Association, Business Education Alliance and the Governor expressed concerns about the content of the ESSA Plan. ALSDE staff worked responsively to address those concerns and make changes to the plan as appropriate. As a result of the collaboration, all of the groups support the current ESSA plan as submitted. The formal communication from the stakeholder groups and the Governor can be found in Appendix E.

It is important to note that the work of the ESSA Implementation Committees, in conjunction with the work of the Math, Reading, and Science Strategic Planning committees, provided the core components that will support and drive the state's future educational success. Looking ahead, the ALSDE will work closely with the recently created Assessment Advisory Committee as it considers and selects a new annual state assessment system for Alabama that will serve as the basis for the state's accountability system in future years.

In the knowledge-based economy of the future, a dynamic, healthy and prosperous Alabama will increasingly rely on the education of its population. The first step to realizing that vision is a high-performing system of public schools that challenges all children with world-class expectations for understanding English and its rich literature, mathematics, history and the requirements of a democracy, the sciences and the arts. Such a system demands educators with a deep understanding of the subject being taught, a personal allegiance to continuous self-improvement and a commitment to helping all children find their success in school, careers, and their lives thereafter. Recognizing that our students and teachers need access to technology to personalize instruction and learning, Alabama recently funded, with the help of E-Rate, wireless access to support 30 devices in every classroom in every school to provide the essential infrastructure for technology-rich learning. Our next step is to increase the number of portable devices and technology tools for students in those classrooms for use in coding, robotics and other STEM courses. Teachers will need quality professional development in the use of these 21st century learning tools and resources.

Additionally, Alabama is committed to providing a strong educational foundation built by a high quality early childhood education (birth through third grade). The Every Student Succeeds Act provides an opportunity to address the importance of high quality early learning experiences, and to support the development of a seamless learning continuum providing the fundamental skills needed to succeed in later years. Alabama will work with LEAs to enhance early learning and improve coordination and alignment of early learning programs from birth through third grade across Titles I, II, III, IV, V, and VII. Please refer to Appendix D for all allowable uses of Title funds.

Alabama fully embraces the Every Student Succeeds Act. We believe every student should have the full opportunity to succeed in school and be prepared to succeed in life. Alabama believes in fairness for all students through program applications and access. We believe every student should be prepared to succeed through the guidance of skillful and professional teachers, who are led in their respective schools and school systems by highly skilled and professional school leaders. Alabama believes that every level of education, Pre-K-Grade 12, should be a successful stair-step to the next level of student success, be that transitioning from first to second grade or from high school to work or postsecondary/higher education. Alabama believes in career development, the joy of learning for students, the thrill and devotion to their careers by teachers and school leaders. We believe the Alabama ESSA Plan is a step towards identifying how Alabama can successfully utilize federal dollars with state and local dollars to fit the needs of Alabama's students. Alabama supports this plan as it creates opportunities for students and teachers alike in each school's climate in the following critical areas:

Educating students with disabilities;
Educating students in various at-risk categories and designations;
Teaching the Arts;
Promoting health and well-being of all students;
Participation in and promotion of Career Tech education;
Creating opportunities for professional development and advancement through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and other programs;
Creating quality assessments through input from a Stakeholder Advisory Group;
Reducing remediation rates for students graduating from high school and attending college;
Removing any barriers to learning facing students from military families.

A. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

1. Challenging State Academic Standards and Assessments *(ESEA section 1111(b)(1) and (2) and 34 CFR §§ 200.1−200.8.)*[1]

   Under Alabama law, the Alabama State Board of Education appoints Courses of Study Committees. The Courses of Study Committees are responsible for developing the standards that determine the curriculum content for all subjects at all grade levels. As such, the Courses of Study Committees are responsible for the development of the College and Career Ready Standards. Based upon the submitted recommendations of the Courses of Study Committees, along with the State Superintendent of Education the State Board is then responsible for prescribing the minimum contents of Courses of Study for all public, elementary and high schools in the state. The State Courses of Study Committees consist of 28 members to be selected as follows:

   (1) One elementary teacher (grades K through 6) and one secondary teacher (grades 7 through 12) from each of the seven congressional districts who are teaching in the Course of Study areas to be revised during their terms of office;

   (2) Four members from the state-at-large, actively engaged in a supervisory or administrative capacity in the field of education and who are knowledgeable or who have had previous teaching experience in the Course of Study areas to be revised during their term of office;

   (3) Three members who are employees of state institutions of higher learning and who are specialists in the Course of Study areas to be revised during their terms of office; and

   (4) Seven additional members appointed by the Governor, one from each of the seven congressional districts, each of whom shall be either a business or professional representative not employed in the field of education. The Governor's appointees shall have expertise and be actually involved in the course of study field under consideration and shall be confirmed by the Senate. Courses of Study contain the content standards for each content area.

   The following list shows the adoption dates for the most recent content standards in each content area:

   - Arts Education Course of Study adopted 2017
   - Career and Technical Education Course of Study adopted 2008
   - English Language Arts Course of Study adopted 2016
   - World Languages Course of Study adopted 2017
   - Health Education Course of Study adopted 2009
   - Mathematics Course of Study adopted 2016
   - Physical Education Course of Study adopted 2009
   - Science Course of Study adopted 2015
   - Social Studies Course of Study adopted 2013

   The standards revision procedure that is a part of the Courses of Study development process supports Alabama's commitment to equity of opportunity for all students and is the foundation for an education

[1] The Secretary anticipates collecting relevant information consistent with the assessment peer review process in 34 CFR § 200.2(d). An SEA need not submit any information regarding challenging State academic standards and assessments at this time.

system that challenges all children with world-class expectations for understanding English and its rich literature, mathematics, history and the requirements of a democracy, the sciences and the arts. Such a system demands educators with a deep understanding of the subject being taught, a personal allegiance to continuous self-improvement and a commitment to helping all children find their success in school, careers, and their lives.

Alabama believes assessments are important measuring tools that provide students, parents, educators, community members, officials and advocates with the assurance that students are achieving the state standards and are on a pathway to graduate from high school college- and career-ready.

The Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE) is currently in the process of crafting an RFB that will ensure Alabama's statewide assessment system meets the requirements of ESSA § 1111(b)(2)(B) by requiring all students in Grades 3–8 and once in high school to complete annual assessments in mathematics and English language arts/reading. Science is required once per grade span (i.e., elementary, middle and high school). Alabama will continue to require all 11th grade students to take the ACT. The anticipated release date for the RFB is mid-April.

In an effort to develop an assessment system that best serves the needs of our students, ALSDE has partnered with the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment to design and develop the new Alabama assessment system. The goal of the statewide assessment system is to measure student acquisition of important academic outcomes in selected academic content areas and to provide useful, timely feedback to students, teachers, principals, and other stakeholders. The new assessment will be designed to measure higher expectations and critical thinking skills for all Alabama students.

An Assessment Advisory Committee has been established in response to ESSA's call for states to improve assessment transparency and ensure statewide assessments are of high quality and aligned to state academic standards. The Assessment Advisory Committee is a diverse group of knowledgeable and interested volunteers who represent the community, its businesses, and families. The members do not have administrative or policy-making authority, but they serve as valuable partners in the assessment process. The committee shall meet as often as necessary to perform its tasks. The ALSDE is committed to involving stakeholders in the process of selecting a statewide assessment. A list of Advisory Committee members may be found in Appendix F.

Alabama also employs a Technical Advisory Committee that supplies background knowledge on matters of psychometrics, best testing practices, and education. Committee members are highly regarded state and national experts who provide multiple perspectives from diverse skill sets including, but not limited to:

- the technical aspects of large-scale assessments;
- methodologies and practices;
- test alignment;
- design;
- validity; and
- technical quality - accuracy and fairness.

Alabama's new statewide assessment system will be revised annually as needed to ensure alignment between assessments and revised academic standards.

2. Eighth Grade Math Exception (*ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C) and 34 CFR § 200.5(b)(4)*):
   i. Does the State administer an end-of-course mathematics assessment to meet the requirements under

section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA?

☐ Yes

☒ No

ii. If a State responds "yes" to question 2(i), does the State wish to exempt an eighth-grade student who takes the high school mathematics course associated with the end-of-course assessment from the mathematics assessment typically administered in eighth grade under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(aa) of the ESEA and ensure that:

a. The student instead takes the end-of-course mathematics assessment the State administers to high school students under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA;

b. The student's performance on the high school assessment is used in the year in which the student takes the assessment for purposes of measuring academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i) of the ESEA and participation in assessments under section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the ESEA;

c. In high school:

1. The student takes a State-administered end-of-course assessment or nationally recognized high school academic assessment as defined in 34 CFR § 200.3(d) in mathematics that is more advanced than the assessment the State administers under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA;
2. The State provides for appropriate accommodations consistent with 34 CFR § 200.6(b) and (f); and
3. The student's performance on the more advanced mathematics assessment is used for purposes of measuring academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i) of the ESEA and participation in assessments under section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the ESEA.

☐ Yes

☐ No

iii. If a State responds "yes" to question 2(ii), consistent with 34 CFR § 200.5(b)(4), describe, with regard to this exception, its strategies to provide all students in the State the opportunity to be prepared for and to take advanced mathematics coursework in middle school.

3. Native Language Assessments *(ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(F) and 34 CFR § 200.6(f)(2)(ii)) and (f)(4)*:

i. Provide its definition for "languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population," and identify the specific languages that meet that definition.

Alabama defines *languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population* as those languages that account for 2% or more of the student population. In Alabama, the only language that meets this criteria is Spanish.

Most commonly spoken languages in Alabama for LEP students

1. Spanish: 17,160
2. Korean: 512
3. Arabic: 472
4. Chinese: 415
5. Vietnamese: 350

ii. Identify any existing assessments in languages other than English, and specify for which grades and content areas those assessments are available.

At the present time, Alabama does not provide assessments in languages other than English.

iii. Indicate the languages identified in question 3(i) for which yearly student academic assessments are not available and are needed.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, Alabama will provide Spanish assessments for those students who are not English proficient.

iv. Describe how it will make every effort to develop assessments, at a minimum, in languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population including by providing

a. The State's plan and timeline for developing such assessments, including a description of how it met the requirements of 34 CFR § 200.6(f)(4);

Alabama's timeline for developing a Spanish assessment is currently in progress. In spring of 2019, Alabama plans to offer assessments to English Learners in Spanish.

b. A description of the process the State used to gather meaningful input on the need for assessments in languages other than English, collect and respond to public comment, and consult with educators; parents and families of English learners; students, as appropriate; and other stakeholders;

An EL Advisory Committee will be convened in the 2017-2018 school year to request input as we move forward in the development of a content assessment in Spanish. Committee members will represent different ethnicities and geographical areas of the state so that we may receive a variety of input.

c. As applicable, an explanation of the reasons the State has not been able to complete the development of such assessments despite making every effort.

Not applicable.

4. Statewide Accountability System and School Support and Improvement Activities *(ESEA section 1111(c) and (d))*:

i. Subgroups *(ESEA section 1111(c)(2))*:

a. List each major racial and ethnic group the State includes as a subgroup of students, consistent with ESEA section 1111(c)(2)(B).

Major racial and ethnic subgroups that will be included in the ALSDE accountability system include:

1) American Indian/Alaska Native
2) Asian
3) Black or African American
4) Hispanic/Latino
5) Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
6) Two or more races
7) White

b. If applicable, describe any additional subgroups of students other than the statutorily required subgroups (*i.e.*, economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups,

children with disabilities, and English learners) used in the statewide accountability system.

Alabama has not identified any additional subgroups of students other than those that are statutorily required.

c. Does the State intend to include in the English learner subgroup the results of students previously identified as English learners on the State assessments required under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I) for purposes of State accountability (ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(B))? Note that a student's results may be included in the English learner subgroup for not more than four years after the student ceases to be identified as an English learner.
☒ Yes

☐ No

d. If applicable, chooseone of the following options for recently arrived English learners in the State:

☒ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(i); or
☐ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(ii); or
☐ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(i) or under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(ii). If this option is selected, describe how the State will choose which exception applies to a recently arrived English learner.

ii. Minimum N-Size *(ESEA section 1111(c)(3)(A))*:

a. Provide the minimum number of students that the State determines are necessary to be included to carry out the requirements of any provisions under Title I, Part A of the ESEA that require disaggregation of information by each subgroup of students for accountability purposes.

The minimum number of students that Alabama has determined is necessary to carry out requirements under Title I, Part A of the ESEA for accountability purposes is 20.

b. Describe how the minimum number of students is statistically sound

ESSA Section 200.17(a) (A) prohibits a state from using disaggregated data for reporting purposes or accountability determinations if the number of students in the subgroup is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information. After conducting analysis of various minimum N counts over all accountability reportable subgroups, stakeholders determined that for maximum district and school level support, using the minimum N of 20 was sufficient as opposed to the reporting minimum N of 10. In addition, Alabama utilized an N count of 20 in its July 2015 approved renewal request for accountability reporting. Reporting accountability data in this manner creates consistency as well as the opportunity for true data comparison among stakeholders. Lastly, using a minimum N count of 20 for accountability reporting provides both statistical reliability across accountability measures and protects the privacy of those subgroups that are too small to report without disclosing personally identifiable information.

c. Describe how the minimum number of students was determined by the State, including how the State collaborated with teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, and other stakeholders when determining such minimum number.

Alabama held listening tours across the state related to the development of the ESSA State Plan and collaborated with the ESSA Accountability Workgroup to determine a minimum N count for accountability reporting purposes. The ESSA Accountability Workgroup represented

superintendents, legislators, principals, teachers, parents, educational organizations as well as the Governor's office. Feedback was received throughout the state. Discussions were held among the members of the Accountability Workgroup with data comparisons being completed for various N counts. Conversations took place relative to changing from the minimum N count of 20, which was used in the ESEA Renewal Request, to utilizing a minimum N count of 30. However, after data comparisons revealed the loss of the opportunity to report and support 636 subgroups throughout the state, the decision to continue utilizing the N count of 20 was recommended for the ESSA Plan. Below you will find the comparison between the 20 and 30 N count utilizing 2015-2016 data.

Table 1: N Count Comparison

N Count = 20					N Count = 30			
Subgroups	**Schools with a Subgroup**	**Schools without a Subgroup**	**Total**		**Subgroups**	**Schools with a Subgroup**	**Schools without a Subgroup**	**Total**
All Students	1325	0	1325		All Students	1325	0	1325
American Indian	73	745	818		American Indian	56	762	818
Asian/Pacific Islander	139	866	1005		Asian/Pacific Islander	90	915	1005
Black	1072	218	1290		Black	1024	266	1290
Hispanic	666	607	1273		Hispanic	500	773	1273
Multi-Race	251	911	1162		Multi-Race	111	1051	1162
Special Education	1265	59	1324		Special Education	1176	148	1324
White	1149	153	1302		White	1112	190	1302
Poverty	1313	6	1319		Poverty	1309	10	1319
English Learners	310	801	1111		English Learners	224	887	1111
Grand Total	7560	4369	11929		Grand Total	6924	5005	11929

d. Describe how the State ensures that the minimum number is sufficient to not reveal any personally identifiable information.[2]

Alabama suppresses aggregate data reporting for subgroups smaller than the minimum N count.

e. If the State's minimum number of students for purposes of reporting is lower than the minimum number of students for accountability purposes, provide the State's minimum number of students for purposes of reporting.

Alabama's minimum number of students for reporting purposes is lower than the minimum number of students for accountability purposes. The reporting minimum number is 10.

iii. Establishment of Long-Term Goals *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A))*:

a. Academic Achievement. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(i)(I)(aa))*

[2] Consistent with ESEA section1111(i), information collected or disseminated under ESEA section 1111 shall be collected and disseminated in a manner that protects the privacy of individuals consistent with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g, commonly known as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974"). When selecting a minimum n-size for reporting, States should consult the Institute for Education Sciences report "Best Practices for Determining Subgroup Size in Accountability Systems While Protecting Personally Identifiable Student Information" to identify appropriate statistical disclosure limitation strategies for protecting student privacy.

1. Describe the long-term goals for improved academic achievement, as measured by proficiency on the annual statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments, for all students and for each subgroup of students, including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

   Alabama aspires to have prepared graduates, create multiple pathways to careers and higher education, maintain superior educator preparation programs, support continuous improvement of world-class educators, create equitable and accountable systems, promote healthy and safe students and schools and to truly engage families and communities.

   The Alabama State Department of Education has been diligently engaging stakeholders in conversations surrounding the selection of long-term goals for academic achievement measured by annual state authorized summative assessments.

   In Alabama's July 14, 2015, ESEA Renewal Request, the goal was to decrease the percentage of non-proficient students in each ESEA accountability subgroup by 50% in reading and mathematics. In reviewing the data, a strong focus was placed on the various gaps that existed throughout the subgroups in comparison to the all students subgroup.

   As outlined in ESSA, we have the opportunity to revisit past practices for identification and accountability reporting purposes. Based on supporting data and feedback, it was decided that Alabama should continue using this methodology while focusing on the educational lifespan of students entering Kindergarten in the fall of 2017 and that cohort of students actually graduating in 2030. Therefore, Alabama will decrease by 50% the number of students not proficient in 2030 through a non-proficient reduction method. The non-proficient reduction method is calculated by determining the percent of proficient students on the state authorized assessments, then subtracting the percent proficient from 100 to determine the percent of non-proficient students. The percent of non-proficient students will be divided by two to obtain the improvement needed in the academic achievement indicator section of the overall accountability system. The improvement needed will then be added to the percent of students proficient to determine the long-term goal. This methodology will be utilized to determine the long-term goal for the All Students group and each applicable accountability subgroup. Because subgroups with lower baselines will have trajectories that include larger annual increases, this constitutes an ambitious approach to determining our long term goals.

2. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward meeting the long-term goals for academic achievement in Appendix B.

   Measurements of interim progress toward long-term academic goals, detailed in Appendix B, and outlined in Table 2 that follows, have been determined utilizing the state's previous standardized assessments. Though the actual goal of lowering the achievement gap by decreasing the number of non-proficient students in each sub-group by 50% by the end of the 2030 school year will not change, new baselines will be reviewed after the rollout of our new accountability assessment in 2018-2019.

Table 2: Student Achievement Measures of Interim Progress, Combined Proficiency

Reading and Math Student Achievement Measures of Interim Progress
2016-2017 Baseline Proficiency Numbers
n-count = 20 or more

System Code	System Name	School Code	School Name	Subgroup	2016-2017 Baseline Reading and Math Proficiency	2019-2020 Reading and Math Target	2022-2023 Reading and Math Target	2025-2026 Reading and Math Target	2028-2029 Reading and Math Target	2029-2030 Reading and Math Goal
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	All Students	41.61	48.36	55.11	61.86	68.61	70.86
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	American Indian/Alaska Native	45.94	52.18	58.42	64.66	70.90	72.98
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Asian	71.69	74.96	78.23	81.50	84.77	85.86
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Black or African American	24.69	33.39	42.09	50.79	59.49	62.39
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Economically Disadvantaged	29.85	37.95	46.05	54.15	62.25	64.95
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Hispanic/Latino	31.42	39.34	47.26	55.18	63.10	65.74
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	36.97	44.23	51.49	58.75	66.01	68.43
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Students with Disabilities	14.51	24.38	34.25	44.12	53.99	57.28
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Students with Limited English Proficiency	19.87	29.11	38.35	47.59	56.83	59.91
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Two or More Races	47.58	53.64	59.70	65.76	71.82	73.84
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	White	51.84	57.39	62.94	68.49	74.04	75.89

System Code	System Name	School Code	School Name	Subgroup	2016-2017 Baseline Math Proficiency	2019-2020 Math Target	2022-2023 Math Target	2025-2026 Math Target	2028-2029 Math Target	2029-2030 Math Goal
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	All Students	44.00	50.45	56.90	63.35	69.80	71.95
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	American Indian/Alaska Native	48.31	54.28	60.25	66.22	72.19	74.18
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Asian	77.45	80.06	82.67	85.28	87.89	88.76
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Black or African American	25.97	34.52	43.07	51.62	60.17	63.02
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Economically Disadvantaged	32.38	40.18	47.98	55.78	63.58	66.18
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Hispanic/Latino	36.20	43.55	50.90	58.25	65.60	68.05
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	41.73	48.45	55.17	61.89	68.61	70.85
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Students with Disabilities	16.53	26.16	35.79	45.42	55.05	58.26
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Students with Limited English Proficiency	28.27	36.55	44.83	53.11	61.39	64.15
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Two or More Races	51.08	56.72	62.36	68.00	73.64	75.52
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	White	54.42	59.67	64.92	70.17	75.42	77.17

System Code	System Name	School Code	School Name	Subgroup	2016-2017 Baseline Reading Proficiency	2019-2020 Reading Target	2022-2023 Reading Target	2025-2026 Reading Target	2028-2029 Reading Target	2029-2030 Reading Goal
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	All Students	39.22	46.24	53.26	60.28	67.30	69.64
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	American Indian/Alaska Native	43.57	50.08	56.59	63.10	69.61	71.78
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Asian	65.92	69.85	73.78	77.71	81.64	82.95
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Black or African American	23.41	32.26	41.11	49.96	58.81	61.76
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Economically Disadvantaged	27.31	35.71	44.11	52.51	60.91	63.71
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Hispanic/Latino	26.62	35.08	43.54	52.00	60.46	63.28
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	32.14	39.97	47.80	55.63	63.46	66.07
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Students with Disabilities	12.49	22.60	32.71	42.82	52.93	56.30
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Students with Limited English Proficiency	11.43	21.66	31.89	42.12	52.35	55.76
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	Two or More Races	44.08	50.53	56.98	63.43	69.88	72.03
0	State of Alabama	0	State of Alabama	White	49.26	55.11	60.96	66.81	72.66	74.61

3. Describe how the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goals for academic achievement take into account the improvement necessary to make significant progress in closing statewide proficiency gaps.

   ALSDE's goal is to lower the achievement gaps by decreasing the percentage of non-proficient students in each subgroup by 50% by the end of the 2030 school year. Long-term goals as well as annual targets for improvement have been established for the state as well as each district and school for all applicable subgroups. Because Alabama's goal is to halve the difference between subgroup baselines and 100% proficiency, subgroups with lower baselines have trajectories that include larger annual increases. As such, proficiency gaps will progressively decrease over time. Specific accountability data results will be published annually as required

by federal regulations; however, progress toward meeting the 2030 overall goal will be monitored by measurement of actual progress toward periodic targets every three years.

b. Graduation Rate. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(i)(I)(bb))*

1. Describe the long-term goals for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students and for each subgroup of students, including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi- year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

   The ALSDE, in keeping with input from multiple stakeholder groups, has established ambitious long-term goals with measurements of interim progress for all students and subgroups for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rates. Alabama's long-term goal is to decrease the percentage of non-graduating students by 50% by 2030. This is calculated by identifying the 2015-2016 baseline four-year cohort graduation rate, then subtracting the graduation rate from 100 to determine the percent of non-graduates. The percent of non-graduates will be divided by two to obtain the improvement needed. The improvement needed will then be added to the baseline four-year cohort graduation rate to determine the long-term goal. This methodology will be utilized to determine the long-term goal for the All Students and each applicable accountability subgroup.

   Table 3: Graduration Rate Comparison

Graduation Rate Measures of Interim Progress
2015-2016 Baseline Rate
n-count = 20 or more

4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate										
System Code	System Name	School Code	School Name	Subgroup	2015-2016 Baseline for Graduation Rate	2019-2020 Target	2022-2023 Target	2025-2026 Target	2028-2029 Target	2029-2030 Goal
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	All Students	87.12	88.62	90.12	91.62	93.12	93.62
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	American Indian/Alaska Native	90.38	91.49	92.60	93.71	94.82	95.19
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Asian	91.62	92.58	93.54	94.50	95.46	95.78
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Black or African American	84.51	86.31	88.11	89.91	91.71	92.31
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Economically Disadvantaged	80.92	83.11	85.30	87.49	89.68	90.41
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Hispanic/Latino	86.52	88.08	89.64	91.20	92.76	93.28
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	86.36	87.92	89.48	91.04	92.60	93.12
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Students with Disabilities	54.05	59.36	64.67	69.98	75.29	77.06
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Students with Limited English Proficiency	64.41	68.52	72.63	76.74	80.85	82.22
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Two or More Races	89.48	90.68	91.88	93.08	94.28	94.68
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	White	88.61	89.93	91.25	92.57	93.89	94.33

5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate										
System Code	System Name	School Code	School Name	Subgroup Name	2015-2016 Baseline for Graduation Rate	2019-2020 Target	2022-2023 Target	2025-2026 Target	2028-2029 Target	2029-2030 Goal
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	All Students	86.86	89.20	91.54	93.88	96.22	97.00
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	American Indian/Alaska Native	85.29	87.99	90.69	93.39	96.09	96.99
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Asian	93.65	94.43	95.21	95.99	96.77	97.03
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Black or African American	84.37	87.28	90.19	93.10	96.01	96.98
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Economically Disadvantaged	81.52	85.09	88.66	92.23	95.80	96.99
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Hispanic/Latino	87.62	89.78	91.94	94.10	96.26	96.98
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	90.91	92.32	93.73	95.14	96.55	97.02
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Students with Disabilities	46.71	58.32	69.93	81.54	93.15	97.02
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Students with Limited English Proficiency	69.08	75.53	81.98	88.43	94.88	97.03
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Two or More Races	86.05	88.57	91.09	93.61	96.13	96.97
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	White	88.18	90.22	92.26	94.30	96.34	97.02

2. If applicable, describe the long-term goals for each extended- year adjusted cohort graduation rate, including (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; (iii) how the long- term goals are ambitious; and (iv) how the long-term goals are more rigorous than the long-term goal set for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

   Alabama will include five-year cohort graduates in the new accountability system to obtain the summative score. The formula utilized to determine the five-year cohort graduation rate equates to the number of on-time graduates in a given year divided by the number of entering first-time ninth graders five years earlier, adjusting for transfers in and out. Students are monitored individually from the time they start ninth grade. The goal is to increase the five-year cohort graduation rate to 97% by 2030. The graduation rate indicator score within the overall accountability system will be calculated using 80% of the four-year cohort score and 20% of the five-year cohort score. The sum will be the final graduation rate indicator score.

3. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward the long- term goals for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate in Appendix B.

   Please see Appendix B.

4. Describe how the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate take into account the improvement necessary to make significant progress in closing statewide graduation rate gaps.

   Because the goal is to halve the difference between subgroup baselines and 100% graduation rates, subgroups with lower baselines have trajectories that include larger annual increases. As such, graduations gaps will progressively decrease over time.

c. English Language Proficiency. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii))*

1. Describe the long-term goals for English learners for increases in the percentage of such students making progress in achieving English language proficiency (ELP), as measured by the statewide English language proficiency assessment including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the State-determined timeline for such students to achieve English language proficiency; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

   To fulfill ESSA requirements, ALSDE has created long-term goals for English learners to determine increases in the percentage of students making progress in achieving English proficiency that are both ambitious and achievable.

   Alabama considers a student's initial English proficiency level at the time of identification and the amount of time the student has spent in the language instruction education program in establishing the expected timeline for English language acquisition. Alabama completed the process of setting ELP goals by reviewing current research related to growth in proficiency among English learners, investigating models proposed by other states, and reviewing data from the Alabama's English proficiency assessment.

   Baseline Data

   Alabama's English proficiency assessment went through a standards setting study in 2016 in order to meet the rigorous language demands of College and Career Readiness standards.

Alabama will use the 2016-2017 school year test results for baseline data.

Expected timeline to English Language Proficiency

Alabama has defined "growth" or "progress" as an increase by equal intervals each year so all students meet the proficient cut score within seven years after their initial year. This model uses cumulative growth to determine the students expected level of proficiency based on his/her number of years in the district. The previous year's growth is counted toward the current year's growth target.

The EL Committee reviewed research regarding English language acquisition in development of the expected timeline for English language development. The research indicated that the average time for English learners to achieve academic English language proficiency was five to seven years. The studies included:

Collier, V. (1987). Age and rate of acquisition of second language for academic purposes. TESOL Quarterly, 21: 617-641.

Collier, V. (1988). The effect of age on acquisition of a second language for school. New Focus: Occasional Papers in Bilingual Education, No. 2.

Cummins, J. (1981b), Immigrant second language learning. Applied Linguistics, 11, 132-149.

Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency

Alabama will use the state English language proficiency assessment to evaluate progress toward English language proficiency. To calculate the progress ELs make in learning English, a student's overall proficiency level of the two most current test scores are compared student growth expectations will increase each year so students meet the proficient cut score within seven years after their initial year. The number of years to achieve proficiency varies based on the student's starting level of proficiency. Students at lower levels of English language proficiency will have more ambitious annual growth targets.

2. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goal for increases in the percentage of English learners making progress in achieving English language proficiency in Appendix A.

   Alabama has adopted the definition for English language proficiency as the achievement of a 4.8 composite score on Alabama's English language proficiency assessment which:

   - assesses each of the four language domains (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)
   - addresses the different proficiency levels of ELs, and
   - is aligned with our State's challenging academic standards.

   The cohort for this analysis includes all English learners. The 4.8 composite score is the one that is currently in place using the previous version of the assessment data. Once Alabama has two years of data from the current EL assessment, the 4.8 composite score will be re-evaluated to ensure this score remains ambitious yet is feasible and grounded in research.

Table 4: Interim progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency

Progress Targets Based on Previous Year's Data	
Year	**Targets**
2017	40%
2018	47.5%
2019	55%
2020	62.5%
2021	70%
2022	77.5%
2023	85%

*Alabama will re-calculate the target percentages with the 2016-2017 baseline data once we have two years of data.

Alabama's English proficiency assessment went through a standards setting study in 2016 in order to meet the rigorous language acquisition demands of College and Career Readiness standards. Therefore, Alabama will re-calculate the target percentages with the 2016-2017 baseline data once we have two years of data. Alabama's EL committee compared our English language proficiency assessment to other states that use the same assessment to set targets for growth.

As a part of ensuring that English learners succeed and meet the long-term goals, the ALSDE has collaborated with the Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC). The SECC will support ALSDE with co-developing an EL plan that will guide local education agencies and schools with supports designed to enhance and improve instructional programs for EL students. This project will include co-planning and co-facilitation of EL stakeholder meetings for developing the plan. SECC will provide ALSDE with expertise, resources, strategies, and tools for working with ELs. In addition to developing an EL plan and resources, the SECC support will enable the ALSDE to measure the impact professional learning has on EL students and the change in practice at the local level.

iv. Indicators *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(B))*

a. Academic Achievement Indicator. Describe the Academic Achievement indicator, including a description of how the indicator (i) is based on the long-term goals; (ii) is measured by proficiency on the annual Statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments; (iii) annually measures academic achievement for all students and separately for each subgroup of students; and (iv) at the State's discretion, for each public high school in the State, includes a measure of student growth, as measured by the annual Statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments.

Alabama embraces utilizing multiple measures for student success and is working to create a system of public education that is equitable, accountable and just. Through meetings with various stakeholders, the Alabama ESSA Accountability Workgroup, and other state-wide meetings, it was apparent that stakeholders shared an interest in having indicators supportive of Alabama's personal allegiance to the continuous self-improvement and commitment to helping children find their success not only in school but in their careers and lives thereafter.

As a measure for academic achievement, Alabama will measure student proficiency for both reading and mathematics in Grades 3-8 and once in high school. The percent of students who are proficient in reading and mathematics on the state administered assessments will be calculated

annually for Grades 3-8 and high school and reported within the Alabama accountability system. Alabama's commitment to success extends to high schools and success thereafter. As a result, we will include growth at the high school level focusing on actual learning gains of students within our high school academic achievement indicators.

For the 2017-2018 school year, Academic Achievement for schools with a Grade 12 will be based on the 11th grade administration of the ACT and the Alabama Alternate Assessment.

The growth of students in schools with a Grade 12 will be calculated using the student scores of the ACT Aspire in the 10th grade compared to the 11th grade ACT. The percentage of students who make required growth will be divided by the total number of students to determine the Academic Growth Indicator Score.
For the 2017-2018 school year, Academic Growth, which is the Other Academic Indicator for schools without a Grade 12, will be calculated utilizing the Scantron assessment for Grades 3-8. The Academic Growth Indicator score will be calculated based on the amount of growth students obtain from the fall 2017 administration of the Scantron assessment to the spring 2018 administration of the assessment. The percentage of students who make required growth will be divided by the total number of students to determine the Academic Growth Indicator Score.

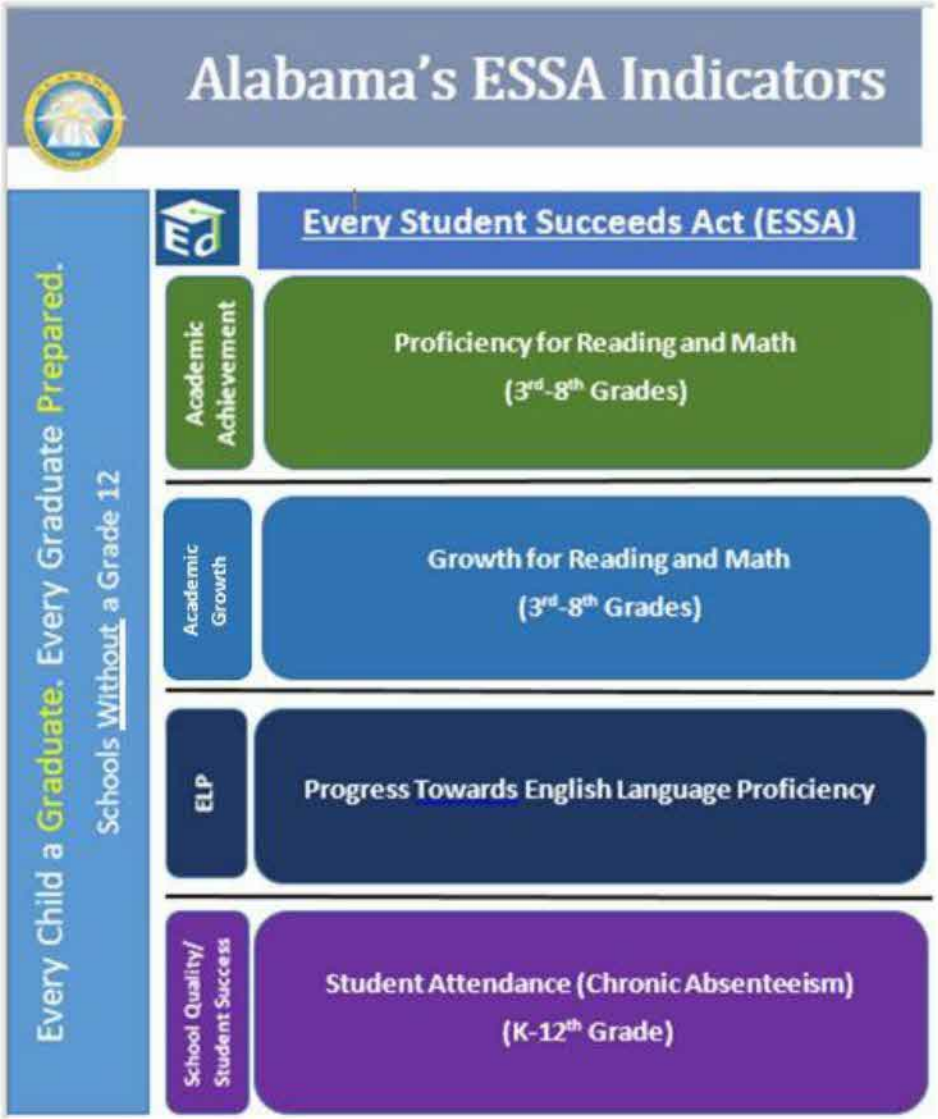
For the growth indicator, a student Gain score is computed as the difference between scaled scores (SS) from the fall and spring administrations of a Performance Series exam. If a student takes an exam more than once during a testing window, ALSDE will use the scaled score earned for the first administration as part of the growth measurement.

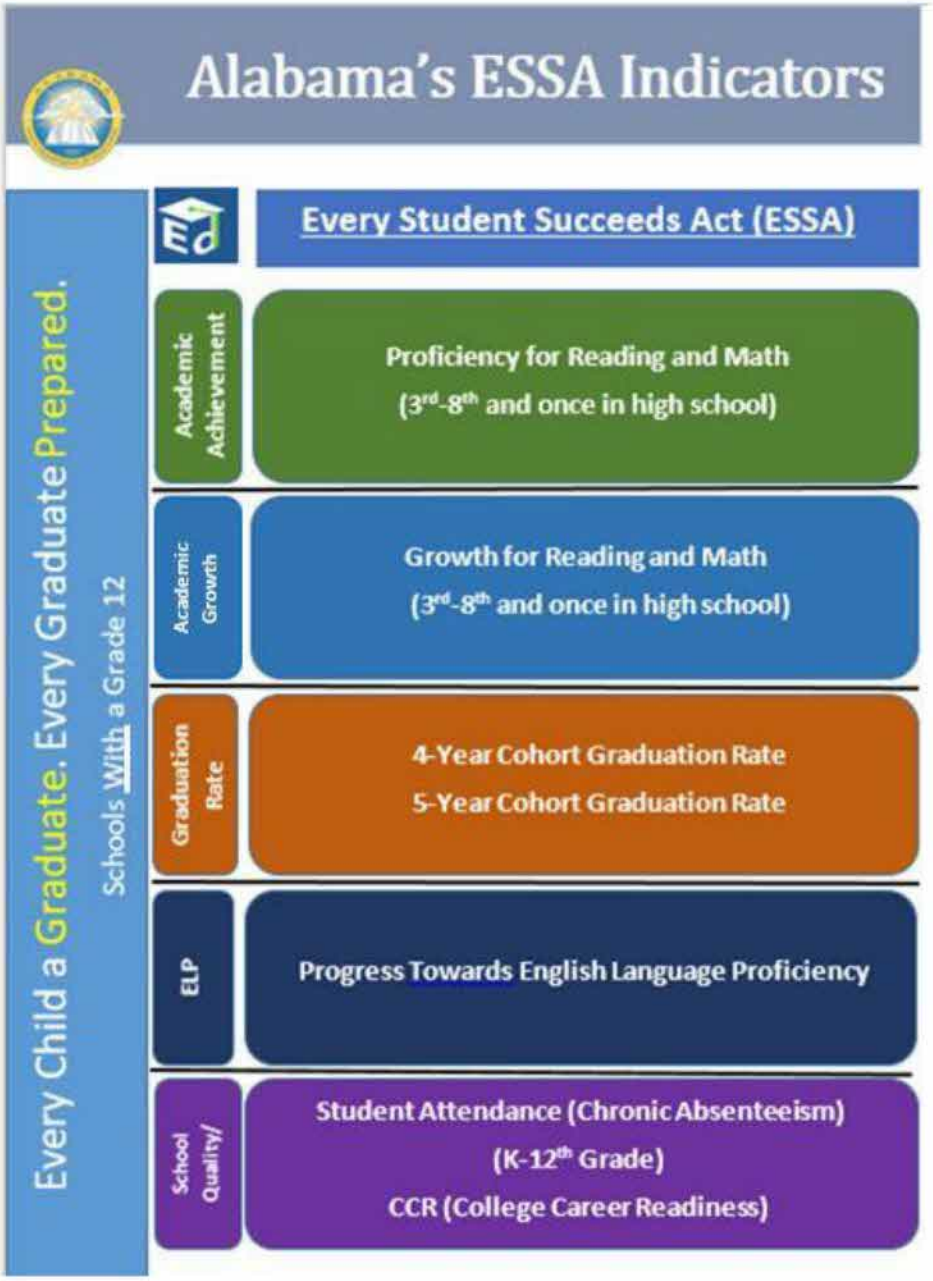
As required by federal law, the ALSDE is committed to all schools meeting 95% student participation in statewide mathematics and reading/language arts assessments. The ALSDE will report the participation rates for schools based on ESSA requirements and utilize this information in the calculation of the academic achievement indicator.
Participation Rate Numerator – This is the total number of students enrolled at the time of the test who passed the test.

Participation Rate Denominator – The **greater** of 95% of all students (or 95 percent of each subgroup of students) or the actual number of all students participating in the assessments will be used as the denominator for the formula within the academic achievement calculations.

Alabama has developed a visual supporting the use of multiple measures within its accountability system. This visualization identifies our commitment to growth at all levels of performances, in addition to measuring student achievement based on proficiency.

Alabama's accountability system, beginning in 2017-2018, will include the indicators identified in the chart below to calculate a formative score for identification purposes:


Every Child a Graduate. Every Graduate Prepared.
Schools Without a Grade 12
Alabama's ESSA Indicators
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
Academic Achievement
Proficiency for Reading and Math
(3rd-8th Grades)
Academic Growth
Growth for Reading and Math
(3rd-8th Grades)
ELP
Progress Towards English Language Proficiency
School Quality/ Student Success
Student Attendance (Chronic Absenteeism)
(K-12th Grade)



b. Indicator for Public Elementary and Secondary Schools that are Not High Schools (Other Academic Indicator). Describe the Other Academic indicator, including how it annually measures the performance for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. If the Other Academic indicator is not a measure of student growth, the description must include a demonstration that the indicator is a valid and reliable statewide academic indicator that allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance.

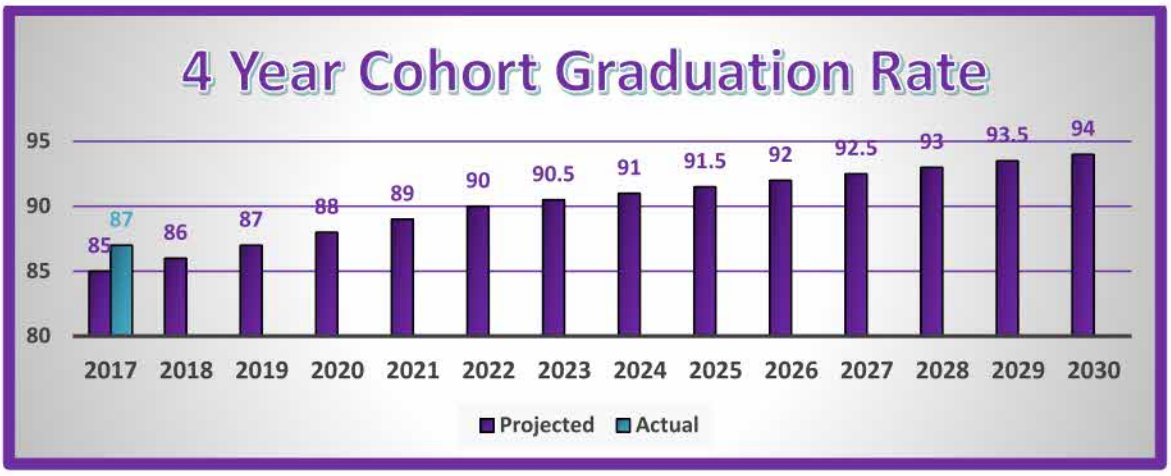
Alabama embraces the concept that creating prepared graduates does not start in high school. Growth will be used as the indicator for public elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools. This indicator will be calculated by determining the percent of students who demonstrated annual growth as determined on the state administered assessments. Understanding that all students at all grade levels will benefit from challenging, world-class standards in all subjects, we are

refocusing statewide support and resources on early grades in reading/language arts as well as in middle/high school literacy, especially in areas where student subgroup performance is weakest and/or historically underperforming. In addition, we are developing and promoting evidence based strategies for closing achievement gaps. We will expand the effective use of formative and summative assessments to create appropriate benchmarks for improvement. This data will be reported annually for all students and separately for all other ESSA accountability subgroups.

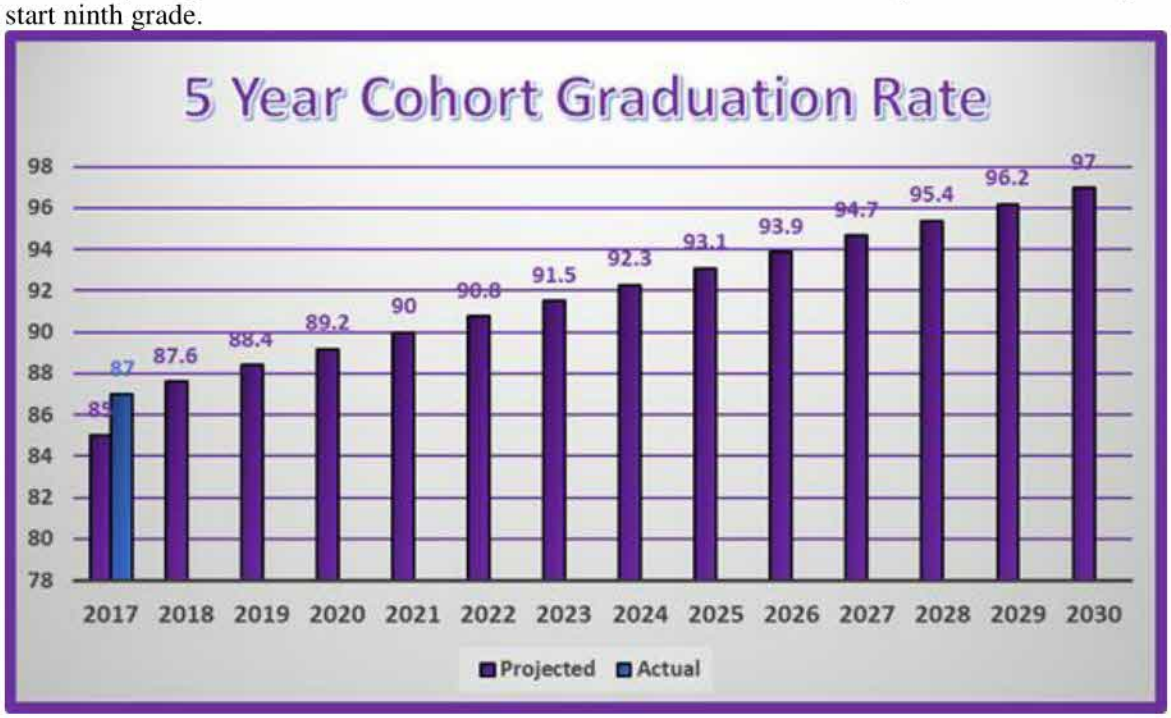
The Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE) is currently in the process of crafting an RFB that will ensure Alabama's statewide assessment system meets the requirements of ESSA § 1111(b)(2)(B) by requiring all students in Grades 3–8 and once in high school to complete annual assessments in mathematics and English language arts/reading. Science is required once per grade span (i.e., elementary, middle and high school). Alabama will continue to require all 11th grade students to take the ACT. The anticipated release date for the RFB is mid-April. All students will take the Scantron Assessment in Grades 3-8 and the ACT in Grade 11 for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years. In addition, Alabama administers the Alabama Alternate Assessment to students with severe cognitive disabilities in Grades 3-8 and once in high school based upon their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Alabama anticipates the new assessment will be administered in the 2019-2020 school year.

c. Graduation Rate. Describe the Graduation Rate indicator, including a description of (i) how the indicator is based on the long-term goals; (ii) how the indicator annually measures graduation rate for all students and separately for each subgroup of students; (iii) how the indicator is based on the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate; (iv) if the State, at its discretion, also includes one or more extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rates, how the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is combined with that rate or rates within the indicator; and (v) if applicable, how the State includes in its four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rates

Alabama realizes the importance of having prepared graduates. To support this belief, Alabama has rigorous, intellectually challenging, Alabama specific standards that support higher quality instruction of all students. As one of the measures for the success of this goal, we have indicated that we will increase the four year cohort graduation rate to 94% by 2030. The formula utilized to determine the four-year cohort graduation rate equates to the number of on-time graduates in a given year divided by the number of entering first-time ninth graders four years earlier, adjusting for transfers in and out. Students are monitored individually from the time students start ninth grade. Alabama is expecting to improve 1% annually through 2022. At that point, the expectation is annual improvement will move to .5% from the year 2023 through the year 2030. The chart below shows the actual four-year cohort projections for 2017 through 2030.



Alabama will include five-year cohort graduates in the new accountability system. The formula utilized to determine the five-year cohort graduation rate equates to the number of on-time graduates in a given year divided by the number of entering first-time ninth graders five years earlier, adjusting for transfers in and out. Students are monitored individually from the time they start ninth grade.



Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will be assessed using an alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(D) and awarded a state-defined alternate diploma under ESEA section 8101(23) and (25).

d. Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency (ELP) Indicator. Describe the Progress in Achieving ELP indicator, including the State's definition of ELP, as measured by the State ELP assessment.

Alabama utilizes a growth-to-target model. By design, the measures utilized in this model will be based on two years of student performance on WIDA ACCESS scores.

Student performance on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Assessment composite scale score will be included for students at schools with twelfth grades and those without a grade twelve and will contribute 5% to the total summative score. Alabama has defined "growth" or "progress" as an increase by equal intervals each year so all students meet the proficient cut score (4.8 or higher) within seven years after their initial year. Alabama will use the state English language proficiency assessment to evaluate progress toward English language proficiency.

To calculate the progress ELs make in learning English, a student's overall proficiency level of the two most current test scores are compared. Student growth expectations will increase each year so students meet the proficient cut score within seven years after their initial year. Students entering at higher levels of language proficiency will be given a shortened timeline corresponding to their initial language proficiency level. The ELP indicator score will be determined by the percentage of students meeting the adequate growth target. See the chart below.

Expected Time to English Language Proficiency

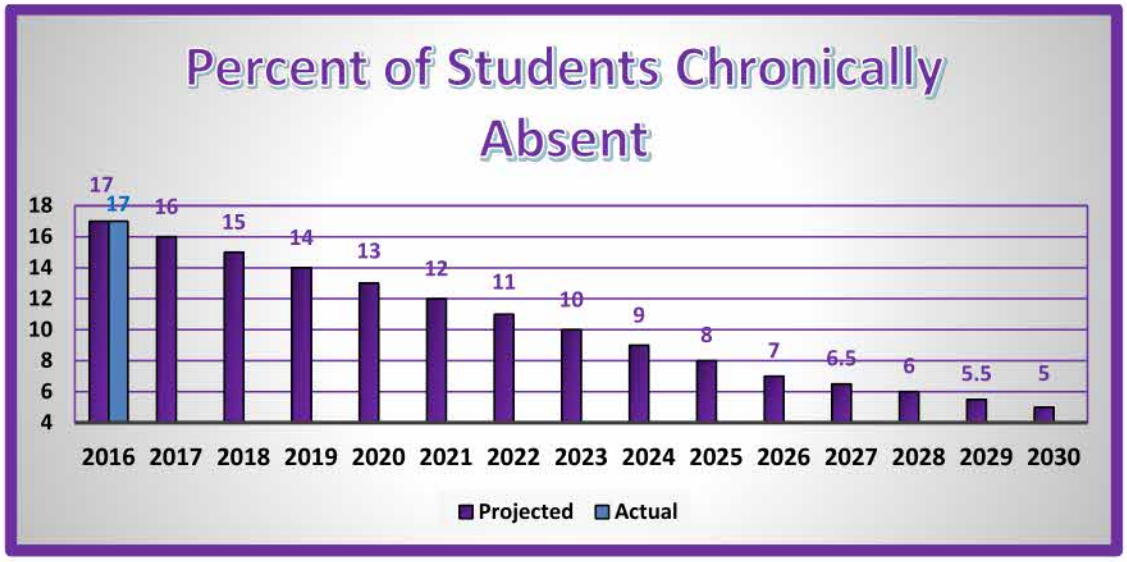
Initial Year	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6**	**Year 7**
Level 1	Level 1/2	Level 2	Level 2/3	Level 3	Level 4	Level 4/5
Level 2	Level 2/3	Level 3	Level 3/4	Level 4	Level 4/5	
Level 3	Level 3/4	Level 4	Level 4	Level 4/5		
Level 4	Level 4	Level 4/5	Level 4/5			

The state considers the long-term goal for each student based on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Assessment reliable because the method for calculating ELP growth is consistently applied using protocol independently applied and replicable across many states. Alabama will re-calculate the target percentages with the 2016-2017 baseline data once we have two years of data.

e. School Quality or Student Success Indicator(s). Describe each School Quality or Student Success Indicator, including, for each such indicator: (i) how it allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance; (ii) that it is valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide (for the grade span(s) to which it applies); and (iii) of how each such indicator annually measures performance for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. For any School Quality or Student Success indicator that does not apply to all grade spans, the description must include the grade spans to which it does apply.

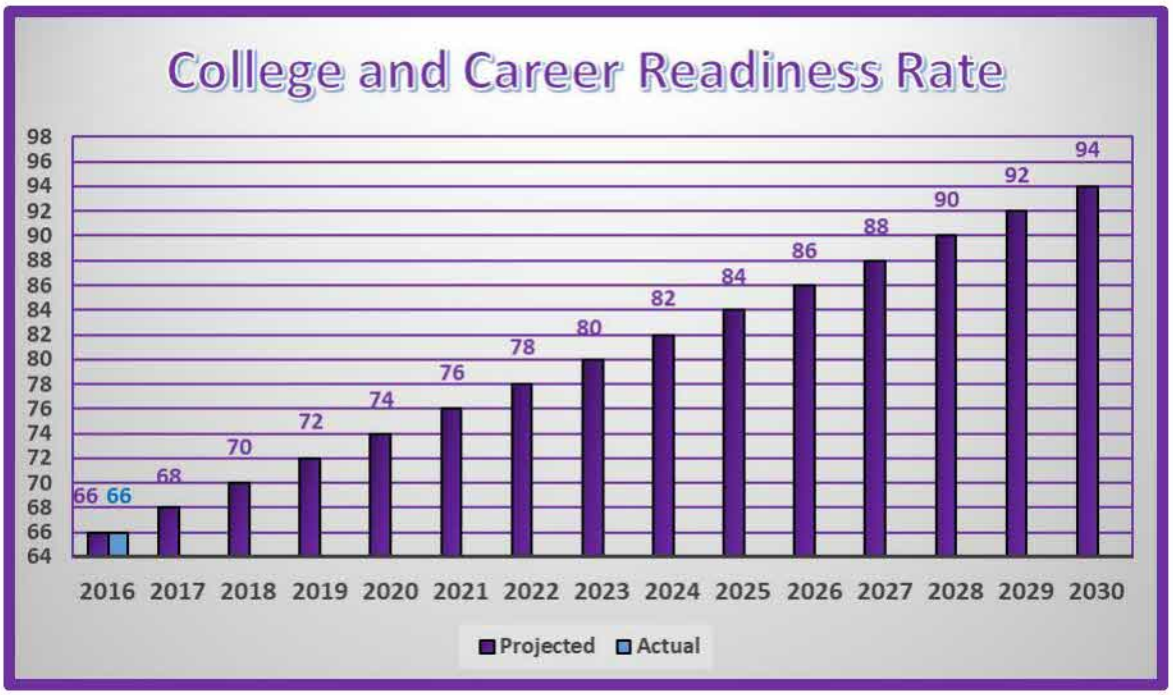
Through meetings across the state including the Alabama ESSA Accountability Workgroup, and other groups, stakeholders have shared a vested interest in ensuring that students in Alabama were successful not only in school but also in their careers and lives thereafter. Through much research, continuous feedback and data analysis, it was determined that student attendance has a major impact on overall success. Therefore, Alabama will include chronic absenteeism as a metric within its accountability systems for schools with a Grade 12 and for schools without a Grade 12. Alabama has defined chronic absenteeism as the percentage of students having 15 or more absences in a given school year. The goal is to decrease the overall chronic absenteeism rate to no greater than 5% by 2030 for all districts, schools and the state. This will be calculated by dividing the number of students absent for 15 or more days by the number of students actually enrolled, and multiplying by

100.



Alabama understands the impact school has on career and or college success. As a result, we have included our college and career ready indicator as another measureable indicator for high schools in this area. Students have multiple opportunities to be declared college and/or career ready. Students can be identified as college or career ready by the successful completion of one of six options. Our goal is that our students will benefit from challenging, world-class standards in all subjects. One of the supporting structures for this goal is that all twelfth grade students will earn at least one college or career readiness indicator prior to leaving school. As a measure of success, our goal is to increase the college and career readiness rate of all students in a cohort to 94% by 2030. The six indicators of college and career readiness currently utilized are achieving a benchmark score on the ACT, scoring a 3, 4, or 5 on an Advanced Placement exam/scoring a 4, 5, 6 or 7 on an International Baccalaureate exam, scoring silver level or above on ACT Work Keys, earning a transcripted college credit while still in high school, earning an Industry Credential, or being accepted for enlistment into any branch of the military. The college and Career Readiness indicator will be calculated based on the number of students enrolled in the actual cohort having earned at least one of the six indicators.

These indicators are periodically revisted to determine if additional indicators need to be included. A screen shot of the current Alabama College and Career Readiness Dashboard can be found in Appendix C. The top row of gauges, labelled “Enrollment”, show the college and career ready indicator percentages for an entire cohort.



v. Annual Meaningful Differentiation *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(C))*

a. Describe the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation of all public schools in the State, consistent with the requirements of section 1111(c)(4)(C) of the ESEA, including a description of (i) how the system is based on all indicators in the State's accountability system, (ii) for all students and for each subgroup of students. Note that each state must comply with the requirements in section 1111(c)(5) of the ESEA with respect to accountability for charter schools.

The ALSDE has recently organized and is finalizing the staffing plan of its Office of School Improvement and Turnaround (OSIT). A primary function of this office will be to create and review existing policies and practices for school improvement and intervention, in addition to developing supports for the LEAs requiring assistance. These supports will include evidence-based improvement strategies and models; addressing human capital capacity through professional learning and development; school and district audits with action planning to address priority needs; matching schools and districts with vetted external partners to address specific needs; and technical assistance by a cadre of OSIT staff that includes academic content experts, school improvement and strategy personnel, in addition to climate, culture, and mental health specialists.

Schools and districts will receive differentiated levels of support according to the classification assigned by the ALSDE utilizing a review of multiple sources of data to determine the specific classification of all schools within the state. The classification of the schools will be based on all accountability indicators measured within the ESSA Plan. The indicators measured will include:

1. Student Proficiency
2. Learning Gains (Growth)
3. English Language Proficiency
4. Attendance (Chronic Absenteeism)
5. Graduation Rate for schools with a Grade 12 only
6. College/Career Ready Rate for schools with a Grade 12 only

A review of all of the indicators above will determine the tier in which the school falls relative to support. Three tiers of support will be used to identify the type of service provided. The tiers are as follows:

1. Foundational Services: ALSDE staff will support all districts and schools with evidence-based online resources, to include a searchable library of district and school improvement research and a calendar of professional development opportunities. Foundational schools are granted considerable autonomy and flexibility, and have access to tools and resources as needed. An annual needs assessment must be conducted and the results must be used to implement and/or improve conditions in the school that are not effectively supporting the needs of all students.
2. Targeted Services: ALSDE staff will target student subgroups by providing services to individual districts and to groups of districts in a Leadership Team Learning Network. Schools receiving these services are defined as Targeted Support Schools. Targeted Support Schools are schools that exhibit significant proficiency gaps among traditionally low-performing student subpopulations. Targeted Support Schools receive ALSDE assistance and engage with the ALSDE staff in the needs assessment process, root cause analysis and in the identification and implementation of evidence-based interventions.
3. Comprehensive Services: ALSDE staff will target systematic change by providing services to schools and districts individually and in groups through a Learning Network and onsite coaching. Schools receiving these services are defined as Comprehensive Support Schools. Comprehensive Support Schools are those schools that are performing in the bottom six percent (6%) of schools within the state based on accountability data, have a graduation rate more than 10 percentage points below the state average graduation rate or have been a Targeted Support School for three or more years. Comprehensive Support Schools must implement evidence-based practices established within the ALSDE framework. They are assigned a liaison by the ALSDE to engage their leadership team in analysis of data, school practices and processes, and are closely monitored for implementation and impact. Schools will be identified for services beginning in fall of 2018.

b. Describe the weighting of each indicator in the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation, including how the Academic Achievement, Other Academic, Graduation Rate, and Progress in ELP indicators each receive substantial weight individually and, in the aggregate, much greater weight than the School Quality or Student Success indicator(s), in the aggregate.

Alabama has developed proposed weights for all indicators included within its ESSA State Plan. All indicators within the plan are calculated based on a 100 point scale. In working with stakeholders, Alabama has identified the weights listed below to be applied in determining the summative score for each district, school and the state.

Schools without a Grade 12:

1. Academic Achievement as measured by proficiency: 40%
2. Growth as measured by Learning Gains: 40%
3. Progress in ELP: 5%
4. School Quality/Student Success: Attendance (Chronic Absenteeism): 15%

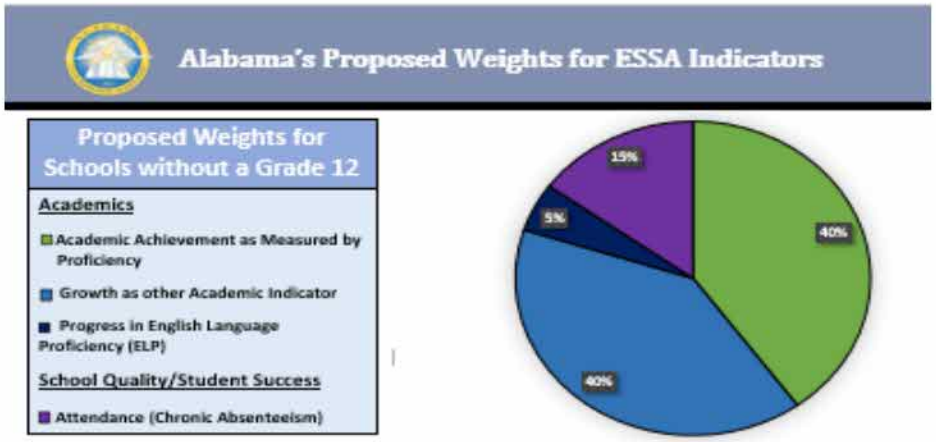
For schools without a Grade 12, academic indicator score percentages in the aggregate would total 85% of the summative score, which would be much greater than the School Quality/Student Success indicator percentage of 15.

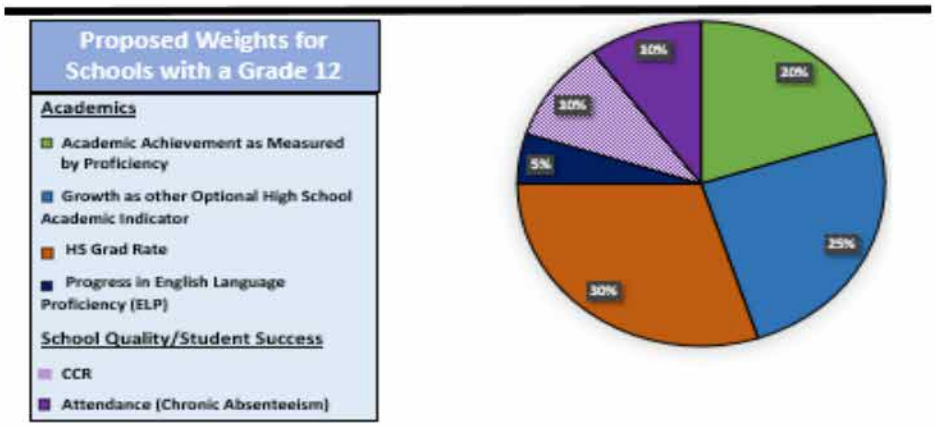
Schools with a Grade 12:

1. Academic Achievement as measured by proficiency: 20%
2. Growth as measured by Learning Gains: 25%
3. Graduation Rate: 30%
4. Progress in ELP: 5%
5. School Quality/Student Success: Attendance (Chronic Absenteeism): 10%
6. College and/or Career Ready: 10%

For schools with a Grade 12, academic indicator score percentages in the aggregate would total 80% which would be much greater than the School Quality/Student Success indicator score percentage of 20. Attendance and College and/or Career Readiness combine to form the School Quality/Student Success indicator.

The pie charts below represent the proposed weights for Alabama's ESSA indicators.





Weights will be adjusted within both the academic achievement and growth areas for the lack of minimum student data in certain areas. Schools that do not have a minimum number student count in the English Language Progress category will have the 5% added to growth, considering that the English Language Progress score is another growth measure for students academically. The other indicators within the overall accountability system would not be impacted.

c. If the State uses a different methodology or methodologies for annual meaningful differentiation than the one described in 4.v.a. above for schools for which an accountability determination cannot be made (*e.g.*, P-2 schools), describe the different methodology or methodologies, indicating the type(s) of schools to which it applies.

Not applicable.

vi. Identification of Schools *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D))*

a. Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe the State's methodology for identifying not less than the lowest-performing five percent of all schools receiving Title I, Part A funds in the State for comprehensive support and improvement, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.

Alabama has recently prioritized and elevated investments for supporting chronically underperforming schools by creating the Office of School Improvement and Turnaround (OSIT) in the Division of Teaching and Learning. The structure will allow for differentiated and tiered support and intervention for every school receiving Title I, Part A funds within the state based on multiple performance levels in the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year. Factors that will be considered in the identification of schools are as follows:

- Identification in the bottom 6% (no less than the bottom 5% as required by ESSA guidelines) of the schools.
- High Schools with a graduation rate more than 10 percentage points below the state average graduation rate.
- Schools with chronically low-performing subgroup(s): Any Title I school with at least one chronically-low subgroup of students that has not made sufficient improvement after implementation of a Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) plan over a maximum of three years.
- History of being identified among the bottom 6% for three years.

OSIT will provide guidance, professional learning, and technical assistance for all identified comprehensive support schools using evidence-based strategies, approaches, and interventions aligned to the following practices:

- Data-driven instruction;
- High quality teaching and leadership;
- Culture of high expectations;
- Frequent and intensive tutoring/targeting remediation;
- Extended school day and year.

Based on unique circumstances, the availability of state resources, and the capacity of state personnel, some comprehensive support schools and the districts in which they are located may be identified for additional supports/intervention. These supports may include state-designated personnel to oversee, coordinate, support and/or lead various areas of operations within a school or school district. Such actions would occur when an intervention plan with targets, goals, benchmarks, budgets, and timelines is created prior to the implementation of the intervention.

b. Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe the State's methodology for identifying all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one third or more of their students

for comprehensive support and improvement, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.

In the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, Alabama will identify all public high schools in the state with a graduation rate that is 10 percentage points or more below the state average graduation rate, or that has a graduation rate below 67% (whichever rate is higher) as comprehensive support and improvement schools. OSIT has identified evidence-based practices for improving high school graduation rates and is working to design and situate pilots throughout the state to inform Alabama's specific approach for improving high school graduation rates of comprehensive schools.

These evidence-based practices include but are not limited to the following:

- Make use of proven early-warning indicators such as Freshmen/9th Grade Academies. Freshmen who are on-track to graduate, earning no more than one F in a core course AND accumulating sufficient credits to advance to sophomore year, are four times more likely to graduate than students who are off-track.
- Focus on attendance data. Attendance is correlated to engagement, learning, academic success, and graduation. Each week of absence per semester in 9th grade is associated with a more than 20% point decline in the probability of graduating from high school.
- Create a culture in high schools where every adult embraces and shares a collective responsibility for the academic success of all students, not just their individual students.
- Raise the bar to "Bs" or better. Ninety percent (90%) of students who earn at least a grade of B and have a GPA of 3.0 in 9th grade go on to graduate from high school. This slips to 72% for 9th graders with a C average and to 50% for 9th graders with a D average.
- Foster supportive relationships to ease the transition from middle grades to high school.
- Assess and refine disciplinary practices. African-American students, students with low test scores, and students with a history of abuse and neglect receive out-of-school suspensions at higher rates than their peers, and out-of-school suspensions significantly decrease the likelihood that students will graduate high school.

c. Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe the methodology by which the State identifies public schools in the State receiving Title I, Part A funds that have received additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C) (based on identification as a school in which any subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State's methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)) and that have not satisfied the statewide exit criteria for such schools within a State- determined number of years, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.

Alabama will identify Title I schools with consistently underperforming subgroups of students that are performing at or below the performance of all students in the lowest performing schools, and have not improved over a three-year timeframe after implementing a targeted support and improvement plan.

Targeted support will include a comprehensive diagnostic audit/review of each identified school and the district. Targeted support will be focused on the highest leverage intervention points identified through the comprehensive audit/review (between two or three identified priority areas). An action or improvement plan will be drafted, implemented, supported and monitored for a period of no more than three years. Support and assistance from OSIT personnel and resources will be provided to the identified school and district based on the identified priorities from the audit/review.

d. Frequency of Identification. Provide, for each type of school identified for comprehensive support and improvement, the frequency with which the State will, thereafter, identify such schools. Note

that these schools must be identified at least once every three years.

Alabama will identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement every three years.

e. Targeted Support and Improvement. Describe the State's methodology for annually identifying any school with one or more "consistently underperforming" subgroups of students, based on all indicators in the statewide system of annual meaningful differentiation, including the definition used by the State to determine consistent underperformance. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(C)(iii))*

Any school with one or more consistently underperforming subgroup(s) will be identified annually for targeted support and improvement at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Alabama defines consistently underperforming as the same subgroup of students that are performing at or below the performance of all students in the lowest performing schools and have not improved over a three-year timeframe.

Targeted support will include a comprehensive diagnostic audit/review of each identified school and the district. Targeted support will be focused on the highest leverage intervention points identified through the comprehensive audit/review (between two or three identified priority areas). An action or improvement plan will be drafted, implemented, supported and monitored for a period of no more than three years. Support and assistance from OSIT personnel and resources will be provided to the identified school and district based on the identified priorities from the audit/review.

f. Additional Targeted Support. Describe the State's methodology, for identifying schools in which any subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State's methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D), including the year in which the State will first identify such schools and the frequency with which the State will, thereafter, identify such schools. *(ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C)-(D))*

At the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, any school with a subgroup that performs below the threshold for the "all students" group will be considered low performing, and will be identified once every three years for additional targeted support. Additional targeted support schools will be named again at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. These schools, both Title I and non-Title I, will be identified based on one or more subgroups of students performing at or below the performance of all students in the lowest performing schools. If the school does not improve after implementing a targeted support and improvement plan over a three-year period, it becomes a school that has a chronically low-performing subgroup and is then identified for comprehensive support and improvement.

OSIT will provide guidance, professional learning, and technical assistance for all identified targeted support schools using evidence-based strategies, approaches, and interventions aligned to the following practices:

- Data-driven instruction;
- High quality teaching and leadership;
- Culture of high expectations;
- Frequent and intensive tutoring/targeting remediation;
- Extended school day and year.

g. Additional Statewide Categories of Schools. If the State chooses, at its discretion, to include additional statewide categories of schools, describe those categories.

vii. Annual Measurement of Achievement *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(E)(iii))*: Describe how the State factors

the requirement for 95 percent student participation in statewide mathematics and reading/language arts assessments into the statewide accountability system.

Participation is based on the total number of students enrolled on the first day of the state testing window, not just full academic year students. In 2017-2018 in Grades 3-8 and high school, students will take the state assessment. The EL state assessment is calculated for participation in reading/language arts for those students who are in their first year of enrollment in a U.S. school and who will not participate in the regular state assessment. Participation rates are calculated for all subgroups.

Schools and districts not meeting the required 95% participation rate for statewide mathematics and reading/language arts assessments will be required to complete a plan after one year of failing to meet the requirements. Support and resources will be supplied to the districts and schools to assist personnel with meeting this requirement. Schools not meeting this requirement for two consecutive years will receive a reduction in their summative score of 2% on the report card.

viii. Continued Support for School and LEA Improvement *(ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(A))*

a. Exit Criteria for Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe the statewide exit criteria, established by the State, for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement, including the number of years (not to exceed four) over which schools are expected to meet such criteria.

   In order to exit identified status, schools must perform above the bottom 6% of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds and have sustained improvement for two consecutive years.

b. Exit Criteria for Schools Receiving Additional Targeted Support. Describe the statewide exit criteria, established by the State, for schools receiving additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C), including the number of years over which schools are expected to meet such criteria.

   A school identified for additional Targeted Support has the opportunity to exit status every three years when the identification methodology is used to identify a new cohort of schools. A school may exit status if it:
   - No longer meets the eligibiligy criteria for targeted support; and
   - Demonstrates improved student performance as compared to student performance at the time of identification for the student subgroup for which the school was identified as in need of targeted support and improvement for two consecutive years.

c. More Rigorous Interventions. Describe the more rigorous interventions required for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement that fail to meet the State's exit criteria within a State-determined number of years consistent with section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(I) of the ESEA.

   Schools identified for Priority Support under previous iterations of the law and identified under ESSA as Comprehensive Support Schools will automatically be elevated to Comprehensive Support and Improvement-Returning (CSI-R) status. Schools that do not exit CSI status within four years will enter CSI-R status. ALSDE will work collaboratively with the LEAs and CSI-R schools to identify external partners to conduct reviews and needs assessments at both the school and district levels.

   The qualitative and quantitative needs assessments will examine previous school improvement efforts/plans, programs, strategies, initiatives, instructional practices, assessments, staffing, systems

development, operational processes, and all factors that were intended to bring about change in the school. This will also include an assessment of the leadership capacity/competency, resources, and equity gaps at the school and district level. By using external partners to conduct the needs assessments, the LEAs/schools will get an unbiased, objective assessment of the schools and districts.

d. Resource Allocation Review. Describe how the State will periodically review resource allocation to support school improvement in each LEA in the State serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement.

The Office of School Improvement/Turnaround will review resource allocations by assessment of the following:

- Annual review of progress
- Opportunity gaps (tutoring, etc.)
- Parental involvement/engagement
- Learning support framework
- Feeder pattern trends
- Root cause analysis
- Financial capacity/priority
- Formative assessment process (Year 1 - District/school discretion. Year 2 growth = continue, no growth = ALSDE guides choice)
- Quality indicators (climate, culture, teacher turnover, etc.)
- Leadership capacity (school, central office, and board)
- Monitoring results – if applicable (impact)

e. Technical Assistance. Describe the technical assistance the State will provide to each LEA in the State serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement.

As part of its requirement under ESSA, the ALSDE will implement a process for approving, monitoring, and periodically reviewing LEA Comprehensive School Improvement plans. This will be offered through a variety of supports to schools and LEAs that will include but is not limited to on-site technical assistance, off-site training sessions, embedded professional learning, virtual learning experiences, guidance documents, and templates to support needs assessment, improvement planning, implementation, and monitoring.

The ALSDE will collaborate with LEAs and Regional Inservice Centers to develop a resource hub of evidenced-based strategies. In addition, the ALSDE will assist LEAs in exploring and identifying appropriate resources in national clearinghouses, such as:

- What Works Clearinghouse
- Results First
- Regional Comprehensive Centers and Regional Laboratories
- Best Evidence Encyclopedia

The ALSDE will also work with LEAs, the business community, and other state agencies to address common needs identified through LEA needs assessments, root cause analyses, and school improvement plan processes.

f. Additional Optional Action. If applicable, describe the action the State will take to initiate additional improvement in any LEA with a significant number or percentage of schools that are consistently identified by the State for comprehensive support and improvement and are not

meeting exit criteria established by the State or in any LEA with a significant number or percentage of schools implementing targeted support and improvement plans.

Not Applicable

5. Disproportionate Rates of Access to Educators (*ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B)):* Describe how low-income and minority children enrolled in schools assisted under Title I, Part A are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, and the measures the SEA will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the SEA with respect to such description.[4]

The ALSDE recognizes that there are disparities in the teaching force across the state, and has completed research to identify areas where gaps occur. A synopsis of that research is found in Table 5.

The definitions for out-of-field, inexperienced, and ineffective teachers are as follows:

Out-of-field Teacher: An out-of-field teacher is a teacher who (1) holds a valid Alabama certificate and is assigned during the school day to teach in an area(s) for which he/she is not properly certified, OR (2) does not hold any valid Alabama certificate and is assigned during the school day to teach in an area(s).

Analysis of statewide data indicates that the number of classes taught by out-of-field teachers fluctuates between less than one percent, where it now stands, to just over two percent in both Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools. Though no significant disparity exists between the number of classes taught by out-of-field teachers in Title 1 versus non-Title 1 schools, the ALSDE is committed to using federal report card data to monitor the rates in the future to ensure no disparity develops.

Inexperienced Teacher: An inexperienced teacher is a teacher who has fewer than two (2) years of teaching experience.

As shown in Table 5, the percentage of inexperienced teachers is higher in Title 1 schools than in non-Title 1 schools. The ALSDE is in the second year of the state wide implementation of the Alabama Teacher Mentoring (ATM) program for which $3,000,000 annually has been budgeted. The focus of the ATM is the provision of support for new teachers in all schools, especially those in hard to staff schools, to reduce turnover.

Table 5: Teacher Comparision by Type of School

Out-of-Field Teachers		Rate	Disparity
Low-Income Students	Title I Schools	.7%	0%
	Non-Title I Schools	.7%	
Minority Students	Title I Schools	.9%	-.6%
	Non-Title I Schools	1.5%	
Inexperienced Teachers		**Rate**	**Disparity**
Low-Income Students	Title I Schools	4.9%	1.4%
	Non-Title I Schools	3.5%	
Minority Students	Title I Schools	5.0%	1.9%
	Non-Title I Schools	3.1%	

[4] Consistent with ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B), this description should not be construed as requiring a State to develop or implement a teacher, principal or other school leader evaluation system.

Ineffective Teacher: An ineffective teacher is a teacher who is not able to demonstrate strong instructional practices, produce significant growth in student learning, or demonstrate professionalism and dedication to the field of teaching.

ALSDE does not currently collect or report information on teacher effectiveness at the state level. ALSDE is in the process of developing guidelines and collection methods for teacher effectiveness data. In addition to this state-level approach, every district receiving Title I funds will be asked to analyze school-level data to see if low-income students, English learners, and students of color are being taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective teachers, and, if so, create a plan for how they will eliminate those gaps.

ALSDE will begin to collect data during the 2018-2019 school year on the rate at which low-income and minority students are being taught by ineffective teachers. By September 15, 2019, ALSDE will submit an addendum to the ESSA plan that will describe how data was collected and provide an analysis of the extent to which low-income and minority students in Title I schools are taught by ineffective teachers as compared to students in non-Title I schools.

Goal: Ensure that Alabama's teachers have access to the best available training, research and information to improve their level of instruction.

Supporting Structures:

- Support professional learning in data-informed, high-priority areas that is research-based, extended in duration, and deeply connected to the day-to-day work of teaching and learning.
- Verify that 60% of individual teacher professional development is devoted to augmenting personal content knowledge.
- Continue to develop and fully implement the Alabama Teacher Mentoring Program with the goal of providing high-quality support to all teachers during their first two years in the profession.
- Support the creation of five and ten year professional learning plans to guide teachers statewide.
- Support professional learning for principals, superintendents and district leaders in data-informed, high-priority areas that is research-based, extended in duration, and deeply connected to the day-to-day work of teaching and learning. Deepen instructional leaders' understanding and skills in standards, curriculum, instructional practice, intervention, assessment, data analysis, high-impact feedback, building teacher capacity, and transformational processes.

Goal: Promote Equitable Staffing of Title I Schools and Systems.

Supporting Structures:

- Encourage partnerships and collaboration between Local Education Agencies and Institutions of Higher Education around teacher preparation in areas/subjects of need, "grow your own" initiatives and high-quality student internships in local classrooms.
- Create incentives to recruit academically successful teacher candidates to high-need areas and Title I schools.
- Provide training to instructional leaders on how to support new teachers.

Alabama is committed to recruiting, hiring and retaining effective teachers and leaders. In an effort to attract more prospective teachers into math and science fields, legislative funding for math and science education scholarships has been included in the state budget. The Math and Science Teacher Education

Scholarship Program funds are administered through the Alabama Commission on Higher Education. The state has undertaken a two-year effort, funded through a Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) grant, to develop standards driven and system specific approaches to evaluating teachers and leaders. This program will help the state identify resources necessary to support teacher development and success. In addition, the state legislature has also provided an annual three million dollar line item to support the provision of a trained and compensated mentor for every first year teacher in the state. Additionally, the Alabama Legislature has allocated $450,000 in scholarships to aid teachers who wish to become Nationally Board Certified. Each teacher who achieves the NCB certification receives a stipend of $5,000.

Evaluation and Public Reporting of Progress

LEA Consolidated Plan - Each LEA that receives Title I funding will provide a description of how low-income and minority children enrolled in schools assisted under Title I, Part A are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers. Out-of-field teachers are currently determined through data collections facilitated by the department's Teacher Certification section. The recently unveiled interactive Federal Data page provides a breakdown of core classes taught by non-HQT teachers. That data is provided for high poverty and low poverty classrooms. The Federal Data page will segue from HQT to out-of-field teachers as we move away from ESEA and into ESSA. Inexperienced teachers will be identified through the Alabama Teacher Mentoring (ATM) program which provides a trained mentor for all first-year teachers. Two years of ATM data will be cross-referenced with Local Education Agency Personnel System (LEAPS) financial data to ensure all first and second year teachers are accounted for. The department will determine percentage of inexperienced teachers in Title I versus non-Title I schools and include that on the Federal Data page. The principal objective measure found in the state's definition of ineffective teachers is an inability to "produce significant growth in student learning". The state will utilize student growth as the primary metric for determining teacher effectiveness and will report percentage of effective teachers in Title I versus non-Title I schools. All inexperienced, out-of-field, and ineffective teacher data will be reported annually within the interactive Federal Data page found on the ALSDE website.

Compliance Monitoring - All LEAs, including those with schools receiving Title I funds, receive formal Compliance Monitoring reviews on a five-year cycle, with some LEAs being monitored more frequently based on a risk-based rubric. As part of the monitoring review, LEAs must provide evidence in their LEA Consolidated Plan that low income and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by out-of-field, inexperienced or ineffective teachers. If the monitoring team finds evidence of inequities, the LEA will include in their corrective action plan steps to address the gaps, with specific goals and a timeline by which the inequities will be addressed.

Continuous Improvement Plan – All schools receiving Title I funds must complete the ACIP, Alabama's Continuous Improvement Plan in the AdvancED online platform every year. Part of both the Title I Schoolwide Diagnostic and the Title I Targeted Assistance Diagnostic include questions about instruction by qualified staff.

- Do all of the instructional paraprofessionals meet the state requirements? If no, what is the number that has not met state requirements and what is being done to address this?
- Do all of the teachers meet the state requirements? If no, what is the number that has not met state requirements and what is being done to address this?
- Describe how staffing decisions ensure that qualified, well-trained teachers provide instruction and how their assignments most effectively address identified academic needs.
  Schools have space in the diagnostic to answer the question and may upload additional supporting evidence.

Another component of the diagnostic addresses strategies to attract qualified teachers.

- What is the school's teacher turnover rate for this school year?
- What is the experience level of key teaching and learning personnel?
- If there is a high turnover rate, what initiatives has the school implemented to attempt to lower the turnover rate?

Data related to out-of-field, non-certified and ineffective teachers will be publically reported on the new state report card, which will be posted on the state website, www.alsde.edu, in the fall of 2017.

6. School Conditions (*ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(C)):* Describe how the SEA agency will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A to improve school conditions for student learning, including through reducing: (i) incidences of bullying and harassment; (ii) the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom; and (iii) the use of aversive behavioral interventions that compromise student health and safety.

Alabama plans to address school culture, student behavior and discipline infractions as outlined below.

Goal: Foster the component of effective schools and create cultures that support effective teachers, resulting in environments where excellent teaching and learning are provided for each student.

Strategies and Activities:

- Build a culture for school safety by promoting best practices in schools and LEAs.
- Provide updates and information on school emergency operations planning to LEA personnel.
- Provide information on Virtual Alabama School Safety System updates and revisions.
- Follow the national school emergency planning trends.
- Forecast future trends.
- Address LEAs' needs and concerns about emergency operations planning at the local level.

Goal: Design and implement alternatives to in-school and out-of-school suspensions.

Strategies and Activities:

- Create Restorative Justice Practices for school discipline – Restorative Justice is a powerful approach to unacceptable or at-risk behaviors that focuses on retooling consequences so that they are less negative and punitive. Rather, the consequences involve constructively "repairing" the "damage" done by the student in a way that shifts the focus from punishment to learning.
- Revisit, revise, and rewrite Code of Conduct processes to support behavior retraining and retooling of student to reduce in-school and out-of-school suspensions and expulsions.
- Project Creating Effective School Climates and Cultures (CESCC) - work with LEAs and Parent Training and Information Centers to provide professional development to general and special education teachers and staff who work with students with disabilities.
- Train LEAs on Positive Behavior Supports philosophy (PBIS)
    - Work with LEAs that have high numbers of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions of special education students.
    - Analyze the data determining the incidents, develop a plan, implement the PBIS philosophy to fidelity and review the data. Adjust strategies as needed.
    - Review the end-of-year data.
    - Support all schools and LEAs in the PBIS philosophy.

Goal: Identify and promote activities to address bullying and other negative behaviors. Provide a safe and secure school structure that facilitates learning.

Strategies and Activities:

- Bullying PLU/CEU - Collaborative effort of the ALSDE and Alabama Education Association (AEA): Closing Achievement Gaps through Community Conversations that Lead to Collective Action - The Community Conversation focuses on helping a broad cross-section of the community engage in a discussion about how all students can be free of bullying. It is about meeting the educational and social emotional needs of children-as well as their health needs-and engaging families and communities in addressing those needs as prerequisites to learning in school.

Goal: Improve attendance and reduce truancies.

Strategies and Activities:

- Participate in School Attendance Awareness Month; National effort conducted by Attendance Works.
    - Discover the latest research on chronic absences
    - Glean strategies and tools to address chronic absences.
    - Identify opportunities to implement what is learned.
    - Reduce the number of students ranking as chronically absent or truant.
    - Facilitate effective utilization and implementation of the Graduate Tracking System (GTS).
    - Assess LEA's practices and begin to create a set of tiered interventions to reduce chronic absenteeism.
- Attendance Matters in Alabama - Attendance Matters in Alabama is a call to action for community stakeholders to recognize the importance of school attendance in graduating on time and being prepared for life beyond high school. Even as few as two absences - excused or unexcused - reduces the student's opportunity to learn and experience success. Alabama supports "Every Student, Every Day" in an effort to provide all students with the greatest opportunity for learning.

7. School Transitions *(ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(D))*: Describe how the State will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A in meeting the needs of students at all levels of schooling (particularly students in the middle grades and high school), including how the State will work with such LEAs to provide effective transitions of students to middle grades and high school to decrease the risk of students dropping out.

Alabama plans to address school transitions in a variety of ways including implementing an Early Warning System, training LEAs on Innovative Pathways to Graduation Guide (IPGG) and RtI, expanding the REACH advisor/advisee model statewide, and the JAG program.

Goal: Expand the early warning system to identify students at-risk of dropping out beginning in the third grade; attain proficiency in reading by Grade 3.

Strategies and Activities: Provide training on the six-step implementation process for Graduation Tracking System (GTS) - *Early Warning System* for identifying students in real time at risk in three areas: attendance, behavior and course credit or grade attainment.
Purpose of the training is to:

- Provide awareness of tool for identifying students at risk early, particularly in elementary grades.
- Increase grade promotion rates leading to students graduating on time.

- Decrease the number of students with unacceptable behaviors with restorative justice practices.
- Increase attendance with appropriate interventions/services.

Goal: Provide support for students at risk for not graduating.

Strategies and Activities: Innovative Pathways to Graduation Guide (IPGG): A Bridge to Student Success

- Train LEAs, middle schools and high schools on the IPGG design.
- Provide guidance as LEAs create alternative or non-traditional pathways for students to be successful.
  Program components: Processes and procedures to assist LEAs as they customize plans for their local population.
  - LEAs will identify appropriate wraparound support services for students,
  - Use best practices for innovative pathways,
  - Offer students choices in their educational process.

Goal: Assist schools in the use of the Response to Instruction framework and Problem Solving Team process to identify and support students who are struggling academically and behaviorally.

Strategies and Activities: Implement the Response to Instruction behavioral components statewide, across all grades. Positive school climates feature:

- Safe environments free of violence, bullying, harassment, chronic absenteeism, truancy and substance use;
- Appropriate facilities and physical surroundings;
- Supportive academic settings;
- Clear and fair disciplinary policies;
- Respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community; and
- Available social, emotional, and behavioral supports and services.
- Pilot with 8-10 LEAs.

REACH Student Advisory Program

REACH is a Grades 5-12 Alabama Student Advisement Model and is research-based and standards-based. There are planning and implementation tools, including curriculum maps and standards-based lesson plans designed to enhance academic, career and personal-social development for Alabama middle and high school students.

The purpose of REACH is to advance student learning, success, and development in a proactive, deliberate, developmental manner by establishing a personal relationship with at least one consistent adult who facilitates weekly/monthly lessons and serves as an advocate for their students. REACH provides a vehicle for schools to 'link' to other school and community initiatives and develops the whole child through a system of individualized supports for each student.

The REACH curriculum is designed to bridge the gap between what is taught in the core curriculum and the skills necessary for success in school, postsecondary education and the work place by addressing six major skills areas:

- School Success Skills
- Academic Planning

- Career Exploration
- Post-Secondary Planning
- Interpersonal/Life Skills
- Work Ethic

REACH provides a systemic approach to student academic, career, and personal/social supports for middle and high school students. It is a research-based program that supports the notion that 'student success is everyone's responsibility.' It is a framework and curriculum for student advisement programs in Alabama. REACH is a fluid system that is easily adapted to each school's design, culture, and other school-wide programs. It not only provides a structure for delivery of specific academic, career, and personal/social content standards, but it enables each student to obtain essential 21st Century skill content regardless of transitioning from school to school in the State of Alabama. Yet, the structure allows for some adaptations to deliver specific content that may be of specific need in each particular school. REACH brings students, school staff, parents, the community, businesses, and other organizations together to enhance each student's educational experience by connecting rigor, relevance, and relationships. It brings forth systemic change required in Alabama's public schools to prepare our students for today's global workplace.

Goal: Provide support for students at risk of not graduating.

In 1996, Jobs for Alabama's Graduates (JAG) was established. JAG model programs are designed to identify students who are most at-risk and possess a significant number of barriers to stay in school, complete a high school diploma, secure an entry level quality job that leads to a career, and/or pursue a postsecondary education. JAG-Alabama Specialists, who work with 35-45 in-school students per program in grades 9 to 12, characterize a highly accountable program. JAG is unique in that it serves students often overlooked, providing individualized instruction, and giving each student the right tools needed for them to succeed and overcome barriers. In Alabama, if a student meets at least 5 of any of the JAG barriers, he/she is eligible to participate in the JAG program. Examples of barriers include: repeating a grade, past suspension or expulsion, lacks motivation to pursue education, has a disability, has a record of violent behavior, is homeless, is an economically disadvantaged student as defined by public assistance/free lunch, etc.
The National Jobs for America's Graduates model uses five performance goals to measure the success of every state affiliate. For 2015-2016, Alabama's chapter of JAG met all five goals.

Performance Goal	National Goal	Alabama
• Graduation rate of JAG participants	90%	99.7%
• Total Job Placement & Military Service	60%	62%
• Total Positive Outcomes	80%	94%
• Total Full-time Placements	80%	95%
• Total Full-time Jobs	60%	76%

In addition to obtaining the national goals, 59% of all seniors enrolled in further education courses. Thirty percent (30%) of these students had one or both parents who never finished high school.
Today, JAG (Alabama) operates 24 programs serving students in grades 9 to 12. With evidence of success of students enrolled in the program, there is greater opportunity for additional LEAs to use JAG as a resource to help decrease the risk of students dropping out.

B. Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children

1. Supporting Needs of Migratory Children *(ESEA section 1304(b)(1))*: Describe how, in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and projects assisted under Title I, Part C, the State and its local operating agencies will ensure that the unique educational needs of migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school, are identified and addressed through:
   i. The full range of services that are available for migratory children from appropriate local, State, and Federal educational programs;
   ii. Joint planning among local, State, and Federal educational programs serving migratory children, including language instruction educational programs under Title III, Part A;
   iii. The integration of services available under Title I, Part C with services provided by those other programs; and measurable program objectives and outcomes

B.1.i. ***The full range of services that are available for migratory children from appropriate local, State, and Federal educational programs.*** Not all enrolled migrant children will receive the same level of services from the Migrant Education Program (MEP). Migrant children, whether or not they receive direct or "visible" services, such as extended day or summer programs, will still receive some of the "invisible" services provided by LEA staff. Some of these services include advocacy in schools, referrals to other agencies, and parent training activities. Migrant funds are provided for preschool program site-based and home-based. Funding is provided for identification and evaluation of needs for Out-of-School Youth (OSY) children who have dropped out of school. Some of the services provided through LEAs, State, and Federal educational programs to ensure that migrant children have access to the full range of services available are listed below:

a. School Counseling and Guidance Services:

School counselors serve a vital role in maximizing student success. Through leadership, advocacy, and collaboration, school counselors promote equity and access to rigorous educational experiences for all students. School counselors support a safe learning environment and address the needs of all students through best practices that are part of the comprehensive school counseling program. School counseling programs are an integral component of the overall school instructional program—going beyond just the specifics of classroom instruction and school leadership by addressing the necessity of academic counseling, career counseling and safe and healthy school environments. School counselors' efforts help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society.

b. School Social Workers**:**

School social workers serve as the vital link between home, school and community. They help address non-academic issues in the lives of students and their families to ensure academic success in the classroom.

c. Gifted Education:

There are no barriers for migrant children to participate in opportunities for gifted students.

d. Special Education:

There are no barriers for migrant children to participate in resources for students with disabilities.

e. Credit Recovery Programs:

The state department has developed minimum guidelines to follow for the LEAs that choose to offer Credit Recovery. This provides the opportunity for a student to "recover" credit for a course that he or she was previously unsuccessful in earning academic credit for graduation. Credit Recovery in general, is based on deficiencies rather than a repeat of the entire course, thus helping students stay in school and graduate. Credit Recovery courses may be presented in classrooms or in on-line courses.

f. 21st Century Community Learning Centers:

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program provides before school, after school, or summer school learning opportunities for eligible students.

g. Homeless Children and Youth Education Program:

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth face in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

h. English Learners:

Title III is a federally funded program which provides eligible Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with subgrants to support supplemental services for English learners (ELs). Both the state and those systems utilizing Title III hold students accountable for progress and attainment in English language proficiency. Alabama is a WIDA state and incorporates WIDA standards into its college and career curriculum, emphasizing social and academic language enabling ELs to use English to communicate and demonstrate academic, social, and cultural proficiency.

i. Access Virtual Learning:

The Access Virtual Learning program provides additional offerings for all Alabama high school students. The courses are Internet-based.

j. Child Nutrition Programs:

All migrant students are eligible for free lunches based upon their migrant status.

k. Other Programs:

Title I, Title II, Health Services, Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) and Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI).

B.1.ii. Joint Planning:

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) is the product of joint planning among local, state, and federal programs. Stakeholders from the LEAs, the State Department of Education, Title III, and the

Homeless Children and Youth Program were involved in the development of the CNA. The CNA results are aligned with other state initiatives and resources to plan services to meet the unique educational needs of the migrant students. The electronic grant application process (E-Gap) plans from each LEA are submitted to the Alabama State Department of Education each year for review. The E-Gap plans indicate how federal funds are utilized to meet the specific needs in each area.

The State of Alabama Migrant Evaluation is based upon these five areas of concern:

- Parental Involvement: The percentage of migrant parents with children who participate in school-sponsored events will increase.
- State Assessment Scores: The scores for migrant students will be compared to all students each year in reading and math. The goal is for the migrant students to meet or exceed state standards.
- Dropout/Graduation Rates: The migrant graduation rates will be compared to the state goal of 90%. The dropout rates for migrant students will decrease each year.
- Preschool Readiness: The number of migrant preschool children who attend a high-quality preschool program will increase each year.
- Identification and Recruitment of Out of School Youth: The number of OSY students identified and recruited will increase.

The Alabama State Migrant Program is evaluated annually. The goals of the plan were developed using the results of the State of Alabama's Comprehensive Needs Assessment which is conducted by independent sources every three years. The services provided are evaluated by measurable performance objectives.

Migrant educators, LEA staff, State MEP staff, Title III staff, Homeless Program staff, and other community stakeholders were tasked with the identification of the special unique needs of the state's migrant population. As a result, a Comprehensive Needs Assessment was developed. An action plan was devised to implement and evaluate evidence-based solutions that would form the state's annual evaluation and service delivery plan.

B.1. iii. The integration of services available under Title I, Part C

The goal of the migrant program is to ensure that migratory children are provided with appropriate educational services (including supportive services) that address their special needs in a coordinated and efficient manner and to ensure that migratory children receive full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet. These goals are met through a variety of funding sources such as Title I, Part A, Title I, Part C, the Homeless Children and Youth Program, and Title III. The migrant program itself provides assistance with enrollment, school engagement for students and parents, English language acquisition, interpreting, access and referrals to health services and community services, and educational support.

Supplemental services such as assistance with enrollment, school engagement for students and parents, English language acquisition, interpreting, access and referrals to health services and community services, and education support are provided through migrant funding during the school year and during the summer as feasible for preschool students, Out-of-School Youth (OSY), and priority for services students. There are also some educational summer programs offered in the State where there is a

collaborative effort between Title III, Part A, and Title I, Part C.

B.1.iv. Measurable program objectives and outcomes.

a. The gap between migrant students and their non-migrant peers will decrease on the state assessment in Grades 3-8 in reading and math.

   Strategies: Identify existing supplemental programs and resources, use evidence-based instructional strategies for reading and math; match academic supplemental services to students' needs, increase academic support through after school programs, tutoring, academic summer schools, credit accrual and/or in school tutoring; provide summer school programming that focuses on academic interventions to meet migrant students' needs; improve communication with migrant parents regarding supplemental academic programs available; build MEP staff awareness of possible programs to increase access for migrant students; and provide supplemental instruction in English language acquisition for migrant students identified as LEP.

b. The percent of migrant parents who participate in school functions and/or migrant program activities will increase.

   Strategies: MEP staff will use evidence-based preschool instructional strategies; provide transition field trips; encourage parent participation in all school activities; target the migrant students with the greatest needs; facilitate better communication between home and school to help migrant parents understand school expectations, setting goals with their children, and supporting academics in the home; improve communication skills to reach low-literacy, language-minority parents; and increase parent education regarding high school graduation, GED, and postsecondary opportunities.

c. The percentage of students who graduate from high school each year with a regular diploma disaggregated by migrant status will increase and the dropout rate will decrease.

   Strategies: Increase academic support through after-school programs, tutoring, academic summer schools, credit accrual, and/or in school tutoring; offer supplemental credit accrual and credit recovery options leading to graduation; provide supplemental tutorials to increase math and reading proficiency; provide tutorials to increase proficiency in English/language arts; provide educational opportunities and/or career path development; provide referrals to social services; provide opportunities for participation in college/career readiness activities; provide supplemental advising and career counseling strategies to encourage graduation and discourage dropping out; ensure that at-risk migrant students participate in any available dropout prevention activities; ensure that at-risk migrant students are aware of counseling services at the school level; and assist the migrant students and families on transcript reviews.

d. The number of migrant preschool children attending a high quality preschool program will increase.

Strategies: Provide an organized center-based preschool program; use a research-based preschool program curriculum; provide activities to involve parents; provide educational materials for home use; increase awareness of available migrant preschool programs; provide opportunities to understand the school experience through scheduled classroom visits, Kindergarten information events, and access to preschool literature; coordinate with other early childhood service providers to provide opportunities for parent training on early literacy and school readiness; and facilitate the transition from summer programs to Kindergarten.

e. The number of migrant Out-of-School Youth (OSY) identified and recruited will increase.

Strategies: Provide OSY recruitment strategies to LEA migrant staff; collaborate with GED services and adult basic education; and identify OSY and provide services to re-engage them in school or work toward a career.

2. Promote Coordination of Services (*ESEA section 1304(b)(3)*): Describe how the State will use Title I, Part C funds received under this part to promote interstate and intrastate coordination of services for migratory children, including how the State will provide for educational continuity through the timely transfer of pertinent school records, including information on health, when children move from one school to another, whether or not such move occurs during the regular school year.

The central function of the Migrant Education Program (MEP) is to reduce the effects of educational disruption by removing barriers to educational achievement. The MEP has been a leader in coordinating resources and providing integrated services to migrant children and their families. MEP projects have also developed a wide array of strategies that enable schools to serve the same migrant students and to communicate and coordinate with one another. In Alabama, inter/intrastate collaboration focuses on the following activities: providing year round identification and recruitment, participating in the OSY Consortium Incentive Grant (CIG), coordinating secondary educational coursework (e.g., Access Virtual Learning and Credit Recovery Programs) and participating in Migrant Student Information Exchange (MSIX) to more effectively track the movement of migrant students and to transfer educational and health data to participating states.

The timely transfer of records is ensured by two methods:

1. The registrar at each school forwards school records to the receiving school. The transfer of records includes grades, health records, attendance records, a list of the schools attended and the date ranges.

2. The State of Alabama utilizes MIS2000 where information is entered which consists of immunization health records, chronic and acute health conditions, credit accruals, and the names of the schools attended while in Alabama. The information from MIS2000 is uploaded to the MSIX program. Receiving schools with MEP programs can view the information that is sent by the sending schools. The MSIX database would verify if there is an immunization record on file and the names of the school attended and whether the student attended during the regular school year of during the summer intercession.

3. Use of Funds *(ESEA section 1304(b)(4))*: Describe the State's priorities for the use of Title I, Part C funds, and how such priorities relate to the State's assessment of needs for services in the State.

The state of Alabama periodically conducts a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) with the assistance of ESCORT. The latest major findings of this needs assessment are as follows:

1. Migrant students have lower scores on state assessments than their non-migrant peers.
2. In general, migrant parents may lack some skills or capacities, which could limit their ability to assist with academic, supplemental, and enrichment programs that students need from preschool through Grade 12, and these parents do not participate in school activities as frequently as non-migrant parents.
3. Migrant students drop out of school at a greater rate than non-migrant students.
4. Migrant preschool children more frequently lack school readiness skills and are not as prepared for entrance to Kindergarten as their non-migrant peers.
5. Migrant Out-of-School youth (OSY) are often not identified and recruited and therefore are not provided information about services and programs available to them.

The findings from the comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) have become a part of the Migrant Service Delivery Plan. Performance goals have been based upon the CNA and these goals will be evaluated annually for effectiveness. The CNA results are utilized to determine the state's priorities for the use of Title I, Part C funds.

Alabama requires that LEAs assist in meeting the needs of migrant children and youth that are served locally, in accordance with the goals of the state CNA. The CNA provides the LEA with the information to develop a plan for delivering appropriate services based on students' identified needs.

C. Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk

1. Transitions between Correctional Facilities and Local Programs *(ESEA section 1414(a)(1)(B))*: Provide a plan for assisting in the transition of children and youth between correctional facilities and locally operated programs.

   Research suggests one of the most important keys to rehabilitating adjudicated youths is transition. However, transition should not begin at a student's exit from the adjudicated system. The transition should begin at the student's entrance into the system to ensure a continuum of education to better provide more choices to adjudicated youths upon exiting the adjudicated system. Because of the varying needs and characteristics of students in the adjudicated system, no agency can implement a successful transition piece in isolation. State agencies, LEAs, parents, families, and community organizations can all potentially help students make a successful transition. While each student's transition should be individualized, it is essential to have a process in place to ensure transition activities occur. The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) facilitated a design team comprised of practitioners from Local Education Agencies, Adjudicated Youth Facilities, and members of the ALSDE. A guidebook was created to assist in the transition into adjudicated facilities and back into regular education and job situations, as well as develop procedures for transition. All LEAs will be required to have written procedures, or a transition guidebook, for students transitioning back into local programs. The guidebook may be found on the ALSDE website here: http://www.alsde.edu/sec/fp/Title%20Programs/updated%20al%20transition%20guide2.docx

2. Program Objectives and Outcomes *(ESEA section 1414(a)(2)(A))*: Describe the program objectives and outcomes established by the State that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the Title I, Part D program in improving the academic, career, and technical skills of children in the program.

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Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and State Agencies (SAs) in Alabama serve neglected and/or delinquent youths in institutions operated or contracted by these agencies. The ALSDE provides resources to LEAs and SAs to carry out the purposes of Title I, Part D based upon the submission of a required plan and application. Applications are submitted using Alabama's Electronic Grant Application Process as part of the oversight and monitoring process. The ALSDE will use the following data sources to assess the effectiveness of the Title I Part D program in improving the academic, career, and technical skills of children.

- CSPR Data
- TABE Data
- State Assessments
- Annual Counts
- Monitoring Outcomes

Alabama's program objectives and outcomes for TitleI, Part D

Objective	Outcome	Timeframe
Ensure ongoing, collaborative discussion with state agencies and LEAs to determine their needs	Provide appropriate technical assistance, resources, and professional development	Quarterly
Ensure state agencies and LEAs set performance goals	Measurement to monitor progress of all students in meeting challenging state academic standards and/or career and technical skills of children in the program	Annually each summer
Ensure LEAs understand the requirements for transferring records and recognize student credit earned while in facilities	Transition Guidebook	Review and Update Annually each summer
Ensuring state agencies and LEAs increase the number of students who enroll in district of residence after exit	Increase the percentage of school-age students making a successful transition to continue education to earn a regular high school diploma	Baseline 2016-2017 Assess not less than once every three years (ESSA, Section 1431)
Ensure state agencies increase the number of students with high school diplomas who transition to postsecondary education, job training or employment within 90 days of exit	Increase the percentage of students with a high school diploma, or equivalent making, a successful transition to postsecondary education, job training or employment	Baseline 20152016 Assess not less than once every three years (ESSA, Section 1431)

D. Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

1. Use of Funds *(ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(A) and (D))*: Describe how the State educational agency will use Title II, Part A funds received under Title II, Part A for State-level activities described in section 2101(c), including how the activities are expected to improve student achievement.

Alabama is committed to strengthening the professional growth and development of teachers and other school leaders. The state goal is to ensure that teachers, principals, and other school leaders have access to the best available training, research and information to improve their level of instruction that will also meet the expectation of increased student academic improvement. This mission can be accomplished by improving access to excellent educators without decreasing our focus on the need for high-quality educators for all LEAs, schools, and classrooms. Our comprehensive approach will strengthen and maintain teacher, principal, and other school leader effectiveness across the state with an emphasis on schools and classrooms with the greatest needs.

The state will set aside 1% of the Title II, Part A allocation for administrative costs and 4% for state-level activities with the remaining funds allocated to the LEAs. The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) will use Title II, Part A state-level activities funds to support the continuous improvement of world class educators. Activites directed for usage with Title II funds will support building capacity and sustainability to improve student achievement by providing resources that focus on delivering high-quality professional learning to educators across the state.

Funds will be used to provide online professional learning opportunities, online resource support, face-to-face, job-embedded and sustained professional learning, preservice training, educator preparation program and professional learning evaluations. A professional learning group of state department personnel and educational stakeholders will be formed to help determine specific needs relative to these areas. This approach will strengthen and maintain teacher, principal, and other school leader effectiveness and help provide equitable access to educators across the state. As the effort progresses, the initial focus will be augmented to include the development of a professional learning framework to guide development of further high quality professional learning. Finally, the process will continue by developing a universal evaluation tool to determine the impact of professional learning offered across Alabama.

2. Use of Funds to Improve Equitable Access to Teachers in Title I, Part A Schools *(ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(E))*: If an SEA plans to use Title II, Part A funds to improve equitable access to effective teachers, consistent with ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B), describe how such funds will be used for this purpose.

   Alabama does not intend to use Title II, Part A state-level funds to improve equitable access to effective teachers; however Alabama promotes equitable access to effective teachers, principals and leaders through the leveraging of other Federal, State, and local funding. In addition, Alabama supports schools and districts through ACCESS Distance Learning, a virtual platform, as a means of providing effective teachers to high-poverty and high-minority schools.

3. System of Certification and Licensing *(ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(B))*: Describe the State's system of certification and licensing of teachers, principals, or other school leaders.

   The Educator Certification Section of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) is responsible for certification of teachers, administrators, and instructional support personnel. All individuals must be fingerprinted for a criminal history background check through the Alabama State Bureau of Investigation (ASBI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) pursuant to Act 2002-457. Below is a brief overview of the certification approaches offered. Detailed information regarding specific certification requirements, as well as areas of certification offered, may be found at www.alsde.edu/edcert (click SBOE Administrative Code).

   Alternative approaches: The ALSDE provides certification opportunities for individuals who did not enter the field of education through a traditional route. Individuals who hold a degree in a non-education field

may be employed while completing requirements for professional certification. Additionally, individuals who hold advanced degrees or professional credentials in support areas may also seek professional certification. Alternative approaches are offered in most teaching fields and areas of instructional support.

Career and Technical Education approaches: The ALSDE provides certification opportunities for individuals with experience and training in business and industry.

Traditional approaches: Alabama colleges and universities work in conjunction with the ALSDE to provide high-quality educator preparation programs at the bachelors, masters, and education specialist's levels. Programs are offered in most teaching fields and areas of instructional support.

Other approaches: The ALSDE provides opportunities for individuals who desire to enter the field of education in Alabama through other routes.

4. Improving Skills of Educators *(ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(J))*: Describe how the SEA will improve the skills of teachers, principals, or other school leaders in order to enable them to identify students with specific learning needs, particularly children with disabilities, English learners, students who are gifted and talented, and students with low literacy levels, and provide instruction based on the needs of such students.

   Title II, Part A state-level funding will support the needs of educators statewide by funding a variety of a professional learning opportunities designed to assist teachers, principals, and other school leaders with resources to identify students' specific learning needs. These opportunities will offer professional learning that is designed to address the needs of students with disabilities, students at-risk of failing and not meeting state academic standards, English Language students, gifted and talented students, students transitioning from neglected and delinquent facilities, homeless students, and foster care students. Currently this is being accomplished through various means to include both seminars and virtual opportunities. Alabama's eLearning uses a web-based model to provide educators with effective professional learning that leads to gains in content knowledge, improvements in their practices and increases in achievement of their students. In addition, Alabama Learning Exchange (ALEX) web portal delivers and sustains support for teaching, leading and learning through a repository of lesson plans, podcasts, web resources and learning assets aligned to Alabama's College and Career Ready Standards. This portal also houses ALEX Resource Development Summits, Girls Engaged in Math and Science (GEM-U), ALEX Certification for Excellence Program, Podcast Camps, Project –Based Learning seminars and training sessions, and Alabama History digital Content eTextbook Resource Project. These resources in addition to the face-to-face professional learning opportunities assist in addressing special population students.

5. Data and Consultation *(ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(K))*: Describe how the State will use data and ongoing consultation as described in ESEA section 2101(d)(3) to continually update and improve the activities supported under Title II, Part A.

   The state and LEAs will continue to review data and ongoing consultation regarding professional qualifications of teachers, including the number and percentages of inexperienced teachers, those teaching with emergency or provisional credentials, and teachers who are not teaching in the subject or field for which the teacher is certified or licensed. The state and LEAs will also analyze equity gaps to determine priorities to fund strategies to address identified needs.

6. Teacher Preparation *(ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(M))*: Describe the actions the State may take to improve preparation programs and strengthen support for teachers, principals, or other school leaders based on the needs of the State, as identified by the SEA.

Background Information

- Since 1997, Alabama rules for the approval of educator preparation programs have required Alabama colleges and universities to guarantee the success of new teachers who are assigned to teach the subject(s) or at the grade level for which they were prepared. The guarantee stipulates help to be provided for up to two years at no cost to the recent graduate or the employer. Very few school or school system administrators have called on educator preparation institutions to provide assistance to properly certified, but struggling new educators. A concerted effort will be made to encourage school and school system administrators to take advantage of the assistance that educator preparation institutions are willing to provide. More open communication about the problems faced by new educators will have an impact on students taught by those new teachers, as well as on preparation programs. Colleges and universities have a vested interest in improving the performance of their graduates.

- In 2013, the Alabama State Board of Education (ALSBE) adopted a more rigorous set of rules for the approval of educator preparation programs. The new rules, effective for individuals admitted to a program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, include higher grade point average (GPA) requirements for admission to and completion of educator preparation programs at the bachelor's, master's, and education specialist degree levels. Requirements for bachelor's degree GPAs were raised from 2.50 to 2.75 for individual admission and completion, with a 3.0 cohort requirement for admission. Requirements for the master's degree completion GPA were raised from 3.0 to 3.25. Requirements for the education specialist degree completion GPA were raised from 3.35 to 3.50.

- During the 2016-2017 academic year, the Alabama State Superintendent of Education appointed Strategic Planning committees for mathematics, reading, and science. Committee recommendations were submitted to the Superintendent on May 15, 2017. The committee recommendations include multiple components focused on improving educator preparation and requirements for certificate renewal.

- Alabama has taken steps to ensure approved programs produce effective educators able to improve P-12 student learning. ALSDE requires each program to provide documentation of how: curriculum adequately addresses all relevant standards; key assessments are designed to ensure prospective teachers attain essential content and pedagogical proficiencies and also provide quality data to inform program improvement; field experiences are well-planned, sequential, and meaningful.

- With regard to the assessment of prospective educators' knowledge and skills, the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program, (AECAP) for admission to bachelor's degree level programs, Alabama adopted a new and more rigorous test of basic skills effective for tests taken after July 2017. On several occasions, Alabama has adopted new and more rigorous content knowledge tests required for certification. In the near future, the ALSBE will be asked to adopt the multi-state scores for content knowledge tests provided by Educational Testing Service (ETS) for all certification areas for which the current Alabama passing score is less than the multi-state score. In addition, effective fall 2018, applicants for initial certification will be required to document a passing score on edTPA, a nationally scored performance assessment measure.

Additional Actions to be Taken

Alabama's program review process has moved from an input model, looking at syllabi to ensure standards

and general plans for assessment of knowledge and abilities, to a more complex model focusing on curriculum, field experiences, and specific key assessments and data analysis. The process has been purposefully designed to:

- Respond to requests from members of the Alabama State Board of Education (ALSBE) for more detailed information about program quality as they make decisions about program approval.
- Provide more approval options to the ALSBE based on review team recommendations (initial or continuing approval for up to seven years; conditional approval for up to three years; probationary approval for one year; and denial of approval).
- Ensure Alabama educator preparation providers (EPPs) have the opportunity to prepare successfully for the higher expectations in the Educator Preparation Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code* adopted by ALSBE in August 2015 and the standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).
- Provide both greater accountability and flexibility for programs.
- Provide more data-based information about program quality to CAEP and state vising teams.
- Allow the educator preparation staff in the ALSDE to provide ongoing oversight and support rather than the prior process of waiting seven years until the next comprehensive review.
- Encourage Alabama EPPs to seek and attain national recognition by the appropriate specialty professional association (SPA), such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM).
- Two new options will be made available for the preparation of Pre-K teachers.
- For each Praxis II content test used in Alabama as a prerequisite for certification, the ALSBE will be asked to raise the minimum passing score to at least the multi-state score.
- The ALSBE will be asked to adopt an updated Educator Preparation Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*. Revisions will include editing to match terminology in the most recent Educator Certification Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code,* standards from specialized professional associations (such as the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics) adopted since 2015, accepted recommendations for the Strategic Planning committee for mathematics, reading, and science, etc.
- Effective September 1, 2018, applicants for initial certification based on completion of an ALSBE-approved program will be required to document a passing score on edTPA, a performance assessment instrument to be scored by national rather than state scorers. The same requirement will be applied to individuals completing alternative certification approaches that lead to the receipt of renewable Professional Educator Certificate.
- Alabama will produce a more comprehensive statewide educator preparation report card and expect each institution to publicly provide state and institution-specific report card information.

E. Title III, Part A, Subpart 1: English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement

1. Entrance and Exit Procedures *(ESEA section 3113(b)(2)):* Describe how the SEA will establish and implement, with timely and meaningful consultation with LEAs representing the geographic diversity of the State, standardized, statewide entrance and exit procedures, including an assurance that all students who may be English learners are assessed for such status within 30 days of enrollment in a school in the State.

Standardized Entrance Procedures
Alabama has clearly defined entrance and exit procedures for English learners.

Initial assessment of English language proficiency is conducted using W-APT, WIDA/MODEL, and WIDA Online Screener to determine the level of English proficiency and to facilitate appropriate instructional and program placement decisions. Language-minority students identified through the HLS during registration before the beginning of the school year must be assessed for English-language proficiency within thirty (30) days of enrollment. Language-minority students who register after the beginning of the school year must be assessed within ten (10) days of enrollment.

Alabama is a member of the WIDA consortium and has adopted the WIDA Screener Online Assessment to help determine eligibility for placement, for students in Grades 1-12, in to the LEA's Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP). The WIDA Screener assesses English language proficiency in all four domains of language development–listening, speaking, reading, and writing–as well as comprehension to ensure students' language needs are properly identified and addressed through the LEA's educational program. Alabama has adopted the *WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (*W-APT™*) and WIDA/MODEL* as the statewide entrance assessments for kindergarten. The LEAs may access both these resources through their Federal Program Coordinators, EL Coordinators, EL Teachers, and WIDA website.

The WIDA Screener yields an overall composite score based on the language domains tested. The following guidelines must be adhered to in determining eligibility for placement in the English language instruction educational program:

- Any student in Grades 1-12 scoring an overall composite score below 5.0 on the WIDA Screener Online must be classified as an English learner and will require placement in an English language instruction educational program.
- Any student scoring an overall composite score of 4.0 or above on the Screener may be identified as limited-English proficient and may require placement in an English language instruction educational program. Further assessment of the student's English language proficiency is needed to determine placement and should be supported by additional evidence, such as previous schooling in English or recommendations from previous teachers.
- Concerning kindergarten placement; a) a student scoring an overall composite score below 24 on W-APT Kindergarten must be classified as an English learner; b) a student scoring an overall composite score below 40 on WIDA/MODEL Kindergarten must be classified as an English learner. A W-APT™ score of 25 and above or a WIDA/MODEL score of 40 and above is considered proficient. The student may not need EL services, but academic progress may be monitored in case rescreening is needed in first grade to determine reading and writing proficiency.

Alabama uses a standardized single-criterion exit procedure for English Learners. All ELs in Grades K-12 participate in the annual ELP assessment (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0) that is aligned with Alabama's ELP standards. Students who reach an overall composite of 4.8 in the reading, writing, listening, and speaking domains on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 annual assessment are exited from services and are reclassified as former ELs.
Parents receive an annual individualized report at the beginning of the school year informing them of their child's progress and/or attainment of the State's ELP standards in a language they can understand.

WIDA recently conducted a standards setting study for the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment to meet the language demands of academic content standards and assessments. After through research, consultation with the EL workgroup, and discussions with WIDA, we have determined that our current English proficiency cut score standard is strong, and will keep this as the standard of proficiency.

EL students who make an overall proficiency level of 4.8 on ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0 will exit the EL

program and continue to be immersed in the language in a regular classroom setting with support if necessary. If a student does not make an overall proficiency score of 4.8, they will continue receiving core English language instruction and may keep receiving supplemental language acquisition services from the school system.

Alabama is in compliance with requirements in the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004* (IDEA) and ESSA in that it has developed and implemented alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in state and districtwide assessments, even with accommodations. Alabama uses the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs secure large–scale English language proficiency (ELP) assessment. It is administered to students in Grades 1–12 identified as ELs with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to meaningful participate in ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. This paper–based assessment is given annually to monitor student's progress in acquiring academic English.

Alabama is working with WIDA and other WIDA consortium states in a process for determining criteria on what proficiency means for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Part of the ongoing work is how to determine a student's ELP when the student's disability prevents assessment in one or more domains of the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.

2. SEA Support for English Learner Progress *(ESEA section 3113(b)(6))*: Describe how the SEA will assist eligible entities in meeting:
    i. The State-designed long-term goals established under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii), including measurements of interim progress towards meeting such goals, based on the State's English language proficiency assessments under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(G); and
    ii. The challenging State academic standards.

SEA Support for English Learner Progress

Due to the transitory nature of some of our ELs, Alabama continues to provide various levels of support by collaborating with educators, parents, experts, and other stakeholders to identify best practices and to provide LEAs assistance in meeting interim and long-term goals and in fully implementing the challenging state academic standards. The proposed six-year time frame, with 2022-2023 as the target year, allows time for state investments and system changes in EL services to demonstrate results.

School Assistance Meetings for Understanding English Learners (SAMUELs)

LEAs will continue to be provided with professional development associated with best practices for English learners in the form of SAMUELs conducted by State ESL Coaches. SAMUEL professional development trainings emphasize effective instructional practices for teaching ELs that go beyond "good teaching." The training expands what educators know about regular classroom practices by specifically addressing the language demands of students who are developing skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in a new language. Professional development will be centered on the WIDA English Language Development Standards, as well as evidence-based classroom practices that support English learners in accessing content in all settings. SAMUELs are developed and conducted by State ESL Coaches who are master practitioners borrowed from LEAs around the state. Thousands of administrators, EL teachers, content teachers, EL paraprofessionals, and central office personnel take advantage of SAMUEL trainings.

WIDA Professional Development

Alabama is an active member of the WIDA consortium and continually uses their materials, resources and professional learning opportunities to support educators who serve English learners. Alabama will continue to host webinars and workshops that focus on standards-based instructional practices, assessments, and data analysis.

Various delivery platforms are utilized to maximize learning opportunities for all LEA staff. Face-to-face trainings, webinars, and district-specific technical assistance will continue to be offed on an ongoing basis to foster a culture of high expectations for all English learners in Alabama schools.

Alabama English Learner Guidebook
Alabama has issued practical guidance for providing services to students who are English Learners through the Alabama English Learner Guidebook. This document provides requirements and guidance for policies, procedures, and practices for identifying, assessing, and serving ELs.

Annual Professional Development
Alabama Federal Programs and Special Education Services Sections provide professional development and training for over two thousand educators to engage with local and national experts to explore innovative and effective instructional strategies to help ELs and all students in English and content standards.

3. Monitoring and Technical Assistance *(ESEA section 3113(b)(8))*: Describe:
   i. How the SEA will monitor the progress of each eligible entity receiving a Title III, Part A subgrant in helping English learners achieve English proficiency; and
   ii. The steps the SEA will take to further assist eligible entities if the strategies funded under Title III, Part A are not effective, such as providing technical assistance and modifying such strategies.

Monitoring
Monitoring of federal programs is conducted to ensure English learners and immigrant students in selected programs in K-12 school systems comply with state and federal regulations to ensure students:

1. Attain English proficiency.
2. Develop high levels of academic attainment in core academic subjects.
3. Meet the same challenging state academic standards as all children are expected to meet.

Alabama monitors on an ongoing basis through annual desk audits, and a cycle based on risk assessment or a four-year monitoring period.

LEAs conduct an annual evaluation of the language instruction education program to determine the effectiveness of programs, practices, services and procedures. Systems may use formative and summative assessments for making education decisions about programs and practices for English learners and immigrant students

Technical Assistance
Alabama provides ongoing technical assistance to all LEAs, but especially to those with ELs that are not making progress in achieving English proficiency. It is the state's intent to answer questions, offer guidance, and exchange ideas and information to promote program improvement to assist LEAs to meet federal requirements. The Federal Programs Title III/EL workgroup along with the State ESL Coaches conducts the EL Regional Meetings and EL Mini-Regional Meetings to provide educational personnel updated information concerning effective instructional practices addressing ELs and their families. During these meetings, assistance is provided to help LEAs in: identifying and implementing effective language instruction educational programs and curricula for teaching ELs; helping ELs meet the same challenging state academic standards that all children are expected to meet; and strengthening and increasing parent, family, and community engagement in programs that serve English learners.

F. Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

1. Use of Funds *(ESEA section 4103(c)(2)(A)):* Describe how the SEA will use funds received under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 for State-level activities.

The Alabama State Department of Education's (ALSDE) Students Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) program will support its LEAs as we collaborate and work to: 1) provide all students with access to

a well-rounded education, 2) improve school conditions for student learning, and 3) improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students. LEAs have broad flexibility to use the SSAE program funds for a variety of activities to improve student outcomes and address the opportunity gaps identified through local needs assessment.

The ALSDE will use Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 state-level funds to support activities to address behaviors identified through the ALSDE's data collection sources such as Attendance Reports, School Safety Reports, Student Health Reports and Students Incident Reports (discipline). Some examples of state-level activities, not an exhaustive list, follow:

- Promoting community and parent involvement in schools.
- Providing school-based mental health services and counseling.
- Promoting supportive school climates to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline and promoting supportive school discipline.
- Establishing or improving dropout prevention.
- Identifying and utilizing strategies to address chronic absenteeism.
- Supporting re-entry programs and transition services for justice-involved youth.
- Implementing programs that support a healthy, active lifestyle (nutritional and physical education).
- Implementing systems and practices to prevent bullying and harassment.
- Developing relationship building skills to help improve safety through the recognition and prevention of coercion, violence, or abuse.
- Establishing community partnerships.

2. Awarding Subgrants (ESEA section 4103(c) (2)(B)): Describe how the SEA will ensure that awards made to Title II Part A, subpart 1 are in amounts that are consistent with ESEA section 4105(a)(2).

   The ALSDE will make SSAE subgrants to LEAs by formula based on our LEAs related shares of funds under Title I, Part A for the preceding fiscal year. The ALSDE will ensure all LEAs have at minimum $10,000 to be consistent with ESEA section 4105(a)(2).

G. Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

1. Use of Funds *(ESEA section 4203(a)(2))*: Describe how the SEA will use funds received under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, including funds reserved for State-level activities.

   The SEA reserves 5% for administration and state-level activities. Two percent (2%) of the grant award the SEA receives will be used for administration while 3% will be used for state-level activities. Administration funds will be used for salaries and benefits, travel, rent, utilities, professional services, materials and supplies, and indirect cost to the SEA. State-level activity funds will be used for the Auburn University Truman-Pierce Institute contract. The state-level activity funds will also be used for salaries and benefits for four Technical Advisors who provide statewide technical assistance to grantees.

2. Awarding Subgrants *(ESEA section 4203(a)(4)):* Describe the procedures and criteria the SEA will use for reviewing applications and awarding 21st Century Community Learning Centers funds to eligible entities on a competitive basis, which shall include procedures and criteria that take into consideration the likelihood that a proposed community learning center will help participating students meet the challenging State academic standards and any local academic standards

Application Review and Selection Process

Phase One – Review of Application Components
Each application received will be reviewed by the ALSDE to determine if all the required components are enclosed and complete. In addition, each application will be checked for submission compliance. Partial and/or incomplete submissions for **each** required component of the RFA **will not** proceed to Phase Two.
Phase Two – Federal Compliance Review
The ALSDE will determine and ensure each application has met all the 21st CCLC program requirements as stipulated by state, local, and federal laws. Based on the ALSDE's assessment of each applicant's risk of non-compliance pertaining to federal and state statutes, the application may not progress to the next phase.
Phase Three – Reader Review and Scoring
Each application will be evaluated and scored by a panel of independent readers. The ALSDE requires all readers submit a Vita/Résumé to ascertain their accomplishments and eligibility. Each reader is then thoroughly screened and must attend a grant reader training prior to the process. Readers also sign the ALSDE Conflict of Interest Policy. The readers will use the 21st CCLC Application Scoring Rubric as their evaluation instrument. Applications are then scored based on the quality of the proposal and the capacity of the applicant to implement the program. Competitive priority points will only be added to applications that are in compliance with federal statute and exceed the standard base expectation. (Please refer to the Priorities portion of the RFA and the RFA Scoring Rubric).
Phase Four – ALSDE Post – Reader Review Assessment
Upon completion of the Reader Review process, the ALSDE will review all reader scores and comments to address any outstanding issues or concerns. Revisions such as a reduction of funding or denial of a particular non-allowable expense may result.
Phase Five – Notification of Awards
Based on available funding and the overall application score, the selection of awarded grants will then be determined by a rank-order process. Applicants that have been selected for funding will receive a Grant Award Notification (GAN) and a list of 21st CCLC grant awards will be posted on the ALSDE Web site at http://www.alsde.edu in the eGAP Document Library.

Principles of Effectiveness

Each eligible applicant receiving an award must use funding to carry out and implement a broad array of activities that advance student achievement. Therefore, all 21st CCLC program activities must be based on the following *Principles of Effectiveness* as identified in the USDOE guidelines, (ESSA, Title IV, Part B, Section 4205 [b]):

- *Principle 1* – Applicants must conduct a needs assessment based on a thorough analysis of objective data pertaining to the population intended to be served – both in the school and community – regarding the need for out-of-school programming and activities. If awarded funding, grantees must develop systems to ensure the ongoing assessment of programmatic school and community needs.
- *Principle 2* – Applicants must develop goals and measurable objectives that directly relate to identified needs; impact regular school and student success; improve regular school day attendance and behavior; and implement academic enrichment to enhance student educational achievement.
- *Principle 3* – Applicants must demonstrate the use of evidence-based research (please refer to Appendix B) which provides evidence that the program, strategies, or activities will help students meet the state and local academic achievement standards and accomplish the projected goals and objectives of the project.
- *Principle 4* – If awarded funding, grantees must ensure the periodic evaluation of the program's achievement toward its stated goals and objectives. The results of each assessment must then be used to refine, improve and strengthen the project.

*** Evidence of the utilization of the Principles of Effectiveness must be made available to federal, state, or local representatives upon request. (This standard is also applicable to local community public requests.)*

H. Title V, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income School Program

1. Outcomes and Objectives *(ESEA section 5223(b)(1))*: Provide information on program objectives and outcomes for activities under Title V, Part B, Subpart 2, including how the SEA will use funds to help all students meet the challenging State academic standards.

   The Rural and Low-Income (RLIS) Program is a supplemental grant program that addresses the unique needs of rural school districts that frequently lack the personnel and resources needed to compete effectively for federal competitive grants and/or receive formula grant allocations in amounts too small to be effective in meeting their intended purposes.

   The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) expects LEAs to meet RLIS standards by utilizing the flexible funds provided by the program to:
   - Increase academic achievement
   - Expand academic growth
   - Improve graduation rate
   - Support English Language proficiency
   - Provide professional development opportunities
   - Support school quality/climate factors

   Alabama is awarded Title V, Part B funds through a formula grant based on the number of students in average daily attendance served by the LEAs. The ALSDE allocates funding to eligible LEAs via a formula grant. The funding is intended to provide flexibility in using funds under authorized Titles to meet the specific needs of the LEAs.

   Eligible LEAs must complete an annual Comprehensive Needs Assessment to determine program objectives. RLIS funds will be used to target the specific objectives from the needs assessment. The use of funds must coincide with an LEA's Consolidated Plan, and be closely aligned with the purposes and allowable activities in one or all of the following:

   - Title I Part, A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by LEAs;
   - Title II Part, A: Improving Teacher Quality;
   - Title III: Language Instruction for EL and Immigrant Students;
   - Title IV, Part A: Student Support of Academic Enrichment Grants;
   - Parent Involvement Activities.

   LEAs receiving funding for Title V complete the Electronic Grant Application Process (eGAP). The eGAP application includes how the Title V funds will be budgeted and used within the district. The application is submitted to ALSDE for approval.

   To determine if State and LEA program objectives and outcomes are met, LEAs must annually complete evaluations in eGAP indicating how their Title V funds were spent the previous year. The expenditures must align with the strategies and action steps within the district's approved eGAP Improvement Plan.

   The evaluations must list the strategies/action steps from the LEA's eGAP Improvement Plan, the specific performance measures for determining the effectiveness of the strategies/action steps, and the impact (if any) the strategies and action steps had on helping students meet the challenging State academic standards.

ALSDE will monitor how LEAs utilize Title V funding via the Electronic Grant Application Process and onsite Compliance Monitoring visits to ensure that funding is being spent according to Federal regulations. The ALSDE has dedicated staff members assigned to oversee the districts receiving RLIS funds, provide technical assistance, and complete compliance monitoring.

Program Objectives and Outcomes for RLIS:

Objective	Outcome	Timeframe
Ensure LEAs who receive RLIS funds are monitored for alignment between grant application and use of funds for authorized activities and progress toward goals	Review and approve grant application (budget and improvement plan) after initial submission and following all application revisions Complete onsite monitoring based on ALSDE Compliance Monitoring schedule	Annually in the fall
Ensure LEAs set performance goals	Review and approve the LEA's grant application (budget and improvement plan) after initial submission and following all application revisions. Require LEAs to submit yearly evaluations measuring program effectiveness based on performance goals	Annually in the fall
Ensure RLIS LEAS report their use of funds	Accurately populate the Consolidated State Performance Report	Annually in the winter
Engage RLIS LEAs in ongoing collaborative discussion to determine needs	Provide appropriate technical assistance, professional development, and other resources	Annually in the summer and fall and ongoing as needed

2. Technical Assistance *(ESEA section 5223(b)(3))*: Describe how the SEA will provide technical assistance to eligible LEAs to help such agencies implement the activities described in ESEA section 5222.

Each year, ALSDE staff provides technical assistance to districts receiving RLIS funding. Technical assistance is available via site visits, telephone calls, email, face-to-face meetings, annual conferences,

webinars, etc. Technical assistance is designed to provide ongoing support as needed to an LEA in meeting the federal program requirements. LEAs may be provided official Technical Assistance annually either by official request from the LEA or through procedures defined in Alabama Code §16-6B-3.

I. Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B

1. Student Identification *(722(g)(1)(B) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Describe the procedures the SEA will use to identify homeless children and youth in the State and to assess their needs.

   Each local education agency (LEA) in Alabama has designated a homeless education coordinator or liaison to act as the contact person for the identification of homeless children and youth and for related programs and services. The LEA liaison for homeless children and youth facilitates the process of identifying eligible students and assessing special needs. Currently, the liaison works with designated LEA level school-based personnel, and representatives from other services agencies to identify and assess the needs of homeless children and youths. Factors used to identify homeless children including the following:

   - Inappropriate clothing
   - Frequent tardiness or absenteeism
   - Lack of books or other school supplies
   - Frequents and/or inconsistently reported changes in address.
   - Symptoms of malnutrition
   - Poor hygiene and grooming
   - Behavioral changes that otherwise are unexplained
   - Changes in school performances that otherwise are unexplained
   - Aggressive behavior toward adults or other children
   - Withdrawal from peer interaction
   - Signs of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse
   - Chronic fatigue and inability to concentrate
   - Chronic health problems that unattended
   - Low-self esteem
   - Difficulty establishing relationship and trust in peers and/or adults
   - Inability to participate in school or peer activities due to providing care for parents or siblings.
   - Living in a motel or other temporary residence
   - Consistently unprepared for schoolwork.

   The ALSDE collaborates with the Alabama Department of Human Resources, the Alabama Department of Public Health, Housing and Urban Development, Alabama Food Assistance Programs, Alabama Postsecondary Department, Domestic Violence Agencies, Department of Early Childhood Education, local housing authorities, YMCAs, and local shelters for battered women. Representatives from these groups identify needs, develop strategies to address the needs, provide educational and support services to students experiencing homelessness and provide professional development and training to individuals who work with homeless children and youth.

   During the 2016-17 school year, a state-level advisory committee was established to assist with developing an action plan for state-level activities. Starting in 2017, and each year thereafter, the state coordinator will facilitate the work of the advisory committee. A summary report on the current state of Alabama's homeless education programs, along with the results a LEA homeless needs assessment, will direct the committee's annual work. Results from the committee work for the action plan will be shared with Federal

Programs Coordinators at the Federal Programs Annual Fall Conference and/or The Alabama Association of Federal Education Programs Administrators (AAFEPA). Homeless Liaisons and Coordinators will have access to the action plan through the ALSDE website.

2. Dispute Resolution *(722(g)(1)(C) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Describe procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth.

The process was adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education in May 1999; however, the procedure will be revised during the 2017-18 school year. Alabama's process to resolve disputes that may arise over school selection or enrollment in school by a homeless student at the LEA and ALSDE level is as follows:

- When a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the child/youth must be immediately enrolled in the school in which the parent or unaccompanied homeless youth is seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute (five days). Enrollment must continue in the school until the dispute and appeals are resolved at all levels (local, state, national) as necessary. The student must be provided with all services to which McKinney-Vento eligible students are entitled (e.g. transportation, Title I services, free meals).
- The parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth must be provided with a written explanation of the LEA's decision on the dispute, including the right to appeal further.
- The parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth must be referred to the homeless liaison for assistance with the appeal process. He or she will carry out the LEA's dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute.
- Training of local liaisons to enforce the dispute resolution process will continue to be offered by the state coordinator. The local liaison is responsible for educating others in their district, carrying out the dispute resolution process, and advocating for unaccompanied youths. Local liaisons should maintain a record of all complaints.
- LEAs must include in their local procedures a timeframe that allows the dispute resolution process to be carried out as expeditiously as possible.
- The state coordinator will receive a copy of all disputes from LEAs and maintain a "complaint log" or LEA file for possible intervention.
- Appeals made to the state require that designated administrative personnel from the LEA involved in the dispute notify the State Homeless Coordinator immediately to determine an interim resolution to avoid delay in enrolling the student in school.
- The State Superintendent of Education, or an appointed designee, must address the issue within ten (10) days of the receipt of the written request.
- ALSDE will provide written notice of its position and inform parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth.
- To comply fully with statutory requirements *(722) (g)(1)(C)* of the McKinney-Vento Act, ALSDE will presume that keeping a child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's best interest unless this is against the wishes of the parent. The LEA liaison for homeless children and youth and/or the ALSDE Homeless Coordinator may assist in the resolution of the dispute.
- The ruling of the State Superintendent of Education is final.

The proposed revisions will be submitted to the Alabama State Board of Education for approval. If approved, notification of the revisions will be made to each LEA by written communication from the State Superintendent of Education to LEA superintendents, federal programs coordinators, homeless education coordinators and liaisons for homeless children and youth. A copy of the approved state plan will be placed on the ALSDE website under the Federal Programs section.

3. Support for School Personnel *(722(g)(1)(D) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Describe programs for school personnel (including the LEA liaisons for homeless children and youth, principals and other school leaders, attendance officers, teachers, enrollment personnel, and specialized instructional support personnel) to heighten the awareness of such school personnel of the specific needs of homeless children and youth, including runaway and homeless children and youth.

The Alabama State Department of Education, with assistance and guidance from the state's Homeless Education Advisory Committee conducts annual training sessions in March, April and July for LEA liaisons for homeless children and youth and other designated persons, from all school districts and charter schools in Alabama. Each LEA is required to send designated staff to one of these training sessions. The March and April City and County Homeless Liaison training is conducted jointly by ALSDE, state agencies, and advocacy groups that provide support and assistance to homeless children and families. The purpose of the training is:

- To provide awareness training and disseminate information related to the prevalence of homelessness, circumstances that may result in homelessness, and how to access support system for meeting the needs of homeless children and their families;
- To provide training on state-level expectations and procedures for identifying homeless children and youth, enrolling these individuals in public schools and providing educational and support services that allow these students to succeed academically, emotionally, physically, and socially;
- To share examples of "best practices" within the state and the southeastern region of the United States that result in effective programs and services for homeless children and youth; and
- To provide a training module that can be used to train other LEA personnel, school administrators, and student support personnel in each school.

A second level of training is provided during the summer and fall at state-level conferences. Additionally, on-going training is provided or brokered as needed by ALSDE. Updated guidance and other information is disseminated through e-mail, webinars, and other forms of communication on a daily basis. District training and technical assistance for homeless education can be requested or is determined from a needs assessment for compliance. Training and technical assistance topics that will continue to be addressed include:

- Determining appropriate placement of runaways in alternative programs that will meet their needs;
- Providing tutoring and counseling services for youth who show signs of being potential runaways or for those who are runaways;
- Coordinating between and among support services providers, juvenile authorities, and runaways to (1) develop plans for runaways to complete their education and to develop skills that will make them employable, and (2) make sure that their needs for school supplies, clothing, toiletries, and other basic needs are met;
- Using the Response to Intervention (RTI) process to devise alternatives for potential runaways and actual runaways:
- Teaching conflict resolution skills to runaways and other children and youth;
- Maintaining confidentiality and privacy issues to support personnel who work with homeless children and youth;
- Handling domestic violence and;
- Informing parents and school personnel regarding the rights and resources available to the parents of homeless children.

The ALSDE monitors the Homeless Education program. The Federal Programs staff of ALSDE conducts systematic technical assistance and monitoring of federally funded programs in each of the state's 139 LEAs on a three-year cycle or based on a risk assessment. This process ensures that ALSDE staff have

substantial opportunities to provide technical assistance and oversight of all programs annually. Also, the ALSDE will continue to collaborate with other agencies and entities that provide programs services and/or advocacy for at-risk children to ensure that homelessness is addressed specifically and consistently among those groups.

4. Access to Services *(722(g)(1)(F) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Describe procedures that ensure that:
   i. Homeless children have access to public preschool programs, administered by the SEA or LEA, as provided to other children in the State;
   ii. Homeless youth and youth separated from public schools are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services, including by identifying and removing barriers that prevent youth described in this clause from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school, in accordance with State, local, and school policies; and
   iii. Homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs, if such programs are available at the State and local levels.

i. The ALSDE requires that all students, including homeless children, have equal access to public education programs and support services. Local liaisons are required to develop partnerships with Head Start and Early Head Start Programs; public or private preschool programs which may be school or community based; social service agencies; public or private child care programs; family child care homes, home-based early childhood programs; and early childhood health and development providers. In addition, the local liaison is required to work with school personnel as they are enrolling a homeless child or youth in school to identify any preschool aged family members. ALSDE collaborates with the state's early intervention and special education programs to meet the IDEA, Parts B and C known as Child Find to provide information and training. City and county homeless liaisons are trained on importance of preschool services for homeless children and how waiting lists often create barriers for homeless families who wish to enroll their children. Local liaisons receive training through (WIC, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other public benefits programs for ensuring preschool-age children are identified and prioritized for educational services.

Once preschool aged students are identified at the district level, the local liaisons are required to help enroll preschool-aged homeless children in preschool if they are not already enrolled. Additionally, they help connect families to providers of social services, providers of emergency, transitional, and permanent housing and community organizational groups to ensure homeless students have access to services besides education to address their basic needs such as housing and health.

ALSDE also partners with the Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE), which oversees the state-funded First Class Pre-K Program, through the creation of the Pre-K Collaboration Task Force. Monthly meetings of the Task Force bring all agency and non-profit partners together that serve preschool children – Title I, Head Start, Special Education, Migrant, Homeless, and Child Subsidy - to address barriers to collaboration and to coordinate efforts in the delivery of a high quality program to all children and to remove barriers for homeless children.

Outreach efforts for isolated, homeless and/or hard-to-reach families include providing information resources and contact information to pediatricians, local health departments, churches, and local

government offices. Technology and social media will increasingly play an important role in assisting Alabama First Class Pre-K personnel in delivering contact information and outreach to Alabama's hard-to-reach families.

English learners, migrant and homeless children are ensured equal access to and full participation in First Class Pre-K. First Class Pre-K provides a safe and nurturing environment which in turn promotes the physical, social-emotional, cognitive, and creative development of all young children. Every child program is valued as a unique individual. Teachers will recognize and support each child's need to grow and develop at his/her own pace.

ii. To ensure school stability, LEAs must make school placement determinations on the basis of the "best interest" of the homeless child or youth based on student-centered factors. LEAs are required to have clear procedures in place to ensure that homeless students receive appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school. LEAs are expected to review a student's prior school to calculate, award and receive partial credits, as well as make necessary adjustments to a student's schedule to permit students to complete courses started elsewhere and particulate in credit recovery opportunities. Local liaisons are required to collaborate with school guidance counselors to ensure students can be awarded credits for all courses satisfactorily completed at a prior school even if the school was in a different district or state. Local Liaisons must consult with school counselors to contact a student's prior school about coursework at that school, informally or formally evaluating student's current mastery of courses partly completed in a prior school, awarding partial credits and ensuring school district offer credit recovery courses. Alabama does not currently have a specific, uniform procedure in place to ensure that all McKinney-Vento students, including those who have been out of school, can receive appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school.

ALSDE recognizes the ability to accrue credits is critical to keeping students in school and advancing toward graduation, higher education, and eventual financial stability and independence. Currently, LEAs are meeting this requirement through various means. The Alabama Connecting Classroom, Educators and Students Statewide (ACCESS) virtual school, ACCESS credit recovery and the Graduation Tracking System are the most common means by which students, including homeless students, may earn or recover class credits. Additionally, ALSDE Guidance and Counseling section, in collaboration with the state's Homeless Coordinator, will begin working in 2018 with school boards and superintendents to help districts develop locally driven policies and procedures. These policies will identify homeless youths separated from public schools and support children and youth experiencing homelessness to ensure that barriers are removed that may prevent the homeless children from receiving appropriate credit for full and partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school.

ALSDE is working with local liaisons to develop more formal processes for students to receive the credit they have earned, either partial or full credit. ALSDE is reviewing successful plans from other states and local school districts to make sure homeless students receive credits for all successful coursework they have completed. On-going homeless training provided for liaisons will include best practices and strategies to ensure highly mobile students can have the same access as non-homeless students to district programs for full or partial credit accrual and recovery. ALSDE will also provide inclusive training to charter school personnel to ensure charter schools can meet the access to service provision as described under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The ALSDE Homeless Coordinator and the ALSDE Guidance and Counseling section will continue to encourage homeless students to apply to their district for graduation when they have met credit requirements. Additionally, they will continue to collaboration to evaluate districts' practices and state laws regarding partial credit and credit recovery and will continue making recommendations to identify and remove barriers that may prevent homeless children from receiving appropriate full or partial credit.

iii. LEAs are required to have procedures to ensure that homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet schools, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs. Local homeless liaisons are trained to anticipate and accommodate the needs of McKinney-Vento-eligible students to enter school programs and activities despite missing application and enrollment deadlines due to a period of homelessness. The local homeless liaisons are trained to employ strategies and build relationships across their districts to ensure full school participation for students experiencing homelessness. LEAs are encouraged to give homeless children and youth priority if there is a wait list for magnet schools, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning and charter schools. Local homeless liaisons receive two mandatory yearly training on the legal rights of and support to help ensure that students experiencing homelessness can participate fully in extracurricular school activities. LEAs are provided with strategies that build awareness about homelessness across districts. LEAs are encouraged to develop local policies that expedite full participation in extracurricular activities for homeless students. LEAs are encouraged to form cooperative relationships with the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) as well as waving fees, using funds and developing strategies for homeless students comparable to those used to allow other low-income students to participate in sports; strategies to obtain document such as birth certificates; accessing health insurance and examinations and developing national partners in homeless education for assistance with meeting the needs of homeless children and youth.

5. Strategies to Address Other Problems *(722(g)(1)(H) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Provide strategies to address other problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youth, including problems resulting from enrollment delays that are caused by—
   i. requirements of immunization and other required health records;
   ii. residency requirements;
   iii. lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documentation;
   iv. guardianship issues; or
   v. uniform or dress code requirements.

In 2001, ALSDE was asked to craft a series of statements and procedures to be used in a model policy and procedure manual for local boards of education. Training provided to local boards of education was revised to reflect the increased emphasis on eliminating barriers to school enrollment based on residential status and English-speaking status.

The Alabama State Board of Education adopted a policy and has implemented the provision found in the McKinney-Vento Act, which states homeless children must be allowed to enroll in school and be provided the same opportunities to succeed in school as all other children. ALSDE has implemented a comprehensive compliance monitoring system which includes conducting document reviews and interviews. The monitoring process include a formal letter of notification, protocols for interviews, observations, a written report of whether requirements were met during the desk audit, or an on-site review of the LEAs Homeless Education Program. If it is determined during a monitoring review that an LEA's policy for student enrollment is not fully aligned with an inclusive policy, or that the procedure may serve as a barrier to homeless and/or other groups of students, the LEA is cited for non-compliance and is

required to submit a corrective action plan to describe an immediate and satisfactory remedy. Additionally, through the comprehensive compliance monitoring, ALSDE can ensure that all LEAs, including McKinney-Vento sub-grantees, are conducting activities to inform LEA personnel (specifically, attendance officers, secretaries, at risk coordinators, counselors, and principals) of requirements and best practices related to the enrollment and identification of homeless children and youths.

All LEAs have an ongoing obligation to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youths. Problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youths may include transportation issues and enrollment delays that are caused by immunization requirements, residency requirements, lack of birth certificates, school records or other documentation or guardianship issues, and uniform or dress code requirements. These issues have been addressed by ALSDE through training provided to the local homeless liaisons and on-site comprehensive compliance monitoring. The required training for local liaisons has resulted in LEAs reviewing and regularly updating their policies to eliminate barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youth in order to ensure immediate access to educational programs and support services. This includes consideration and written procedures to address barriers associated with required fees, supplies and equipment that may prevent any student with limited financial means from accessing, basic instruction, supplies, rigorous courses, and enrichment activities. The need for services and/or student support to address the problems found in (*722 (g) (1) (H) of the McKinney-Vento Act* is determined on a case-by-case basis and through a local student's needs assessment and/or questionnaire developed at the local level.

ALSDE conducts training sessions throughout the state to inform educators, school district employees, parents, homeless advocates, service providers, social workers, and other interested parties of various strategies in addressing the problems in educating homeless children and youths. These training sessions include a discussion of prior school records, immunizations and screening, residency, transportation, guardianship requirements and uniform or dress code requirements. In addition, national and state level training materials are disseminated monthly to ensure LEAs are abreast of changes, new requirements and mandated state requirements for Homeless Education to ensure the Homeless Education Program across Alabama complies with the McKinney- Vento Act and is consistent to protect those students who may travel across districts. Training is not limited to face-to-face. Local coordinators are provided with monthly WebEx training information through the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) and The National Association for the education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY). Upon completion, liaisons are provided with certificates of completion which are often used as additional documentation for professional training during compliance monitoring.

LEAs are required to provide written assurance that they have policies that remove all barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth. They must demonstrate that students are enrolled in school and have full and equal opportunity to participate and succeed. ALSDE fosters collaboration among local education agency (LEAs) through the mandatory spring training for local homeless liaisons and the summer and fall conferences for Federal Programs staff. Technical assistance visits are provided to LEAs that have programs to address the unique needs of struggling students, including those served through the McKinney-Vento program. This allows the LEAs the opportunity to discuss enrollment and retention policies under different programs and how those policies may need to be revised to ensure the immediate enrollment and participation of homeless children and youth. The ALSDE provides guidance, training, and public display information to other local and state programs about the available federal and state resources in school systems. ALSDE ensures that all LEAs, including sub-grantees, provide qualifying programs for homeless children and youth by providing monitoring on a cycle. The ALSDE also provides all LEAs, including McKinney-Vento sub-grantees, assistance with addressing access for homeless students to before-school, after-school, extended day, and/or summer programs. Local Liaisons are trained to collaborate with the 21st CCLC coordinator at the state level to ensure each homeless child or youth to be assisted is provided services comparable to services offered to other students in school,

including educational services for which the child or youth meet the eligibility criteria, including, but not limited to programs in career and technical education, programs for gifted and talented students before-and after-school programs, and online learning programs. LEAs conduct in-take interviews with each family to ensure that the educational needs of each student are being addressed.

Many LEAs in Alabama provide in-class tutoring during the school day as well as provide services to at-risk students who are at risk for dropping out of school. LEAs are required to follow up on academic activities of homeless students and allow for an increase in the participation in programs that strengthen academic success. Title I set aside provides funding which increases the availability of these additional academic programs.
ALSDE continues to seek input from homeless parents, students, advocates, shelter directors, and other service providers to identify new and/or continuing issues concerning enrollment delays, and actively works with LEAs to develop reasonable solution to enrollment-related problems. School uniforms for homeless children and youths are provided by several sources such as Title I, Part A, McKinney-Vento state general funds, civic and church groups, and other local donations. Efforts to facilitate enrollment when immunization may cause delays are being addressed through a collaboration with the Alabama Department of Health State Agency and will continue to be a training topic at the mandatory trainings for local liaisons.

Sub-grantees are required to submit information regarding the review and revision of local policies in their annual program evaluations report as well as their signed assurances.

6. Policies to Remove Barriers *(722(g)(1)(I) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Demonstrate that the SEA and LEAs in the State have developed, and shall review and revise, policies to remove barriers to the identification of homeless children and youth, and the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth in schools in the state, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences.

   ALSDE will continue to provide professional development opportunities for LEA personnel, including the local liaisons, to assist them in identifying and meeting the needs of homeless children and youths.

   The State Homeless Coordination will work with the State's Homeless Advisory Committee to review LEA's existing policies and practices for enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth and make recommendation to LEAs for strengthen existing policies to ensure LEAs carry out the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act. ALSDE will provide samples of acceptable policies and procedures LEAs can use as a guide when developing and revising their district enrollment policy to ensure there are no barriers to the enrollment of homeless child and youth.

   Ongoing training with ALSDE staff, state homeless liaisons and the State Advisory Committee began in the summer of 2017 and continue thereafter to train district Homeless Liaisons on preventing truancy and excessive absences for homeless children and youth.

   Ongoing training for LEA homeless liaisons related to outstanding fees and fines as a school barrier for homeless children and youth will begin in the summer of 2017 and will continue thereafter. ALSDE and LEAs personnel will work together to review and revise policies which can prevent students from participating fully in school activities. The ALSDE homeless coordinator, state's various homeless advisors and LEAs will collaborate to create uniform policies and procedures for eliminating fee and fines as a barrier to enrollment or retention.

   LEA methods to eliminate fees and fines barriers are as follows:

- The LEA will waive the fees and absorb the costs.
- The LEA will explore what is in place for other students who can't afford the fees such as funds available through the PTA, booster club, local civic groups, faith community, or other agencies.
- The LEA will use McKinney-Vento funds; can these funds be used to assist homeless students to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Title I, Part A set aside can be used for services not ordinarily provide to other Title I students.
- The State Coordinator will conduct appropriate training for any newly appointed local homeless liaison who are employed/designated after the school year has started.
- Comprehensive Compliance Monitoring is the mechanism the state will continue to use to ensure LEAs are complying with the McKinney-Vento Act and that districts have board approved policies and practices that eliminate barriers to enrollment and retention due to fees and fines and absences.

ALSDE will ensure compliance with the "Local Education Agency" described in section (722*)9g)(I)(I) of the McKinney-Vento Act* through the following:

- ALSDE will put forth and facilitate the approval of the revised Homeless State Plan by the State Board of Education.
- ALSDE will continue professional development and training on Homeless eligibility under *The McKinney-Vento Education Assistance Act.*
- State Homeless Coordinator will work with the State Advisory Committee to review LEAs' existing policies and practices for the enrollment and retention of Homeless children and youth.
- On-going training with ALSDE staff, state Homeless Coordinator and State Advisory Committee will begin in the summer of 2017 to training district Homeless liaisons on preventing truancy and excessive absences for homeless children and youth.
- On-going training for LEA Homeless Coordinators related to outstanding fees and fines as a school barrier for homeless children and youth will be included in training beginning in the summer 2017.
- On-going training for LEA Homeless Coordinators related to outstanding fees and fines as a school barrier for homeless children and youth will be included in training beginning in the summer 2017.
- The State Coordinator will conduct appropriate training for any newly appointed LEA Homeless Liaisons who are employed/designated after the school year has started.
- On-going professional development about barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees, fines or absences will be a topic at all state level training for Homeless Liasions and other school personnel.

7. Assistance from Counselors *(722(g)(1)(K))*: A description of how youths described in section 725(2) will receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths, and prepare and improve the readiness of such youths for college.

   The *Alabama Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama Public Schools* currently serves as the framework for the development of equitable, effective district and local school counseling and guidance programs. Alabama utilizes *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* to provide essential program elements which help students achieve success in school.

   The State Homeless Coordinator will collaborate with ALSDE Counseling and Guidance staff to provide on-going, joint professional development and training for LEA homeless liaisons and professional school counselors. ALSDE will ensure that professional school counselors and other LEA staff provide guidance to homeless youth which help prepare and improve the readiness of such youth for college. The local school system homeless liaison, along with the school counselor and other college access staff, are required to

ensure that all homeless high school students receive information and individualized counseling regarding college readiness, college selection, the application process, financial aid and the availability of on-campus support. The ALSDE will ensure compliance with *(722(g) (1) (K)* through its comprehensive compliance monitoring for Federal Programs and Counseling and Guidance.

ALSDE Counseling and Guidance staff will encourage professional school counselors, career coaches, and other counseling staff to:

- Focus on homeless and unaccompanied youth during Alabama's Cash for College/FAFSA Completion Campaign, as well as participate in the annual Alabama College Application Week.
- Encourage the local districts to begin early career exploration activities, including participating in Alabama's CollegeCounts Smart Art contest for all students in Grade 4. The CollegeCounts Smart Art Contest focuses on career exploration and post-secondary planning.
- Administer interest inventories which help students explore careers that are compatible with their interests.
- Assist students in the creation of personal education plans of study by utilizing the Alabama Career Planning System. Personal education plans of study are designed by students to explore their interests, career opportunities, and support students in planning for post-secondary success. Personal education plans of study become integral components of students' career portfolios, which is positive particularly for students who are highly mobile and/or homeless.
- Lead and facilitate the REACH student advisory program, establishing personal relationships with at least one consistent adult advocate in the school.
- Analyze career assessment results in meetings with students (and parents, when possible) to discover potential career pathways.
- Coordinate, plan and facilitate career development events, industry tours, and job shadowing/apprenticeship opportunities, eliminating any barriers preventing participation by homeless or unaccompanied youth.
- Assist students with admissions to career and technical education programs and post-secondary programs of study.
- Partner with student support programs, such as TRIO, at various colleges to ensure smooth transitions from high school to college and into the workforce.

ALSDE will continue to train and support school counselors, career coaches, and other counseling staff to ensure that the unique needs of homeless students are addressed through all program activities. This includes guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Education regarding the ability of homeless students to complete and submit the FAFSA.

Appendix A: Executive Order Number 16

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 16

WHEREAS, on December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a bipartisan federal bill reauthorizing the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), was signed into law;

WHEREAS, the ESSA replaces the previous version of the law, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and takes decisions out of the hands of the federal government, shifting power and control over education back to the states;

WHEREAS, offering greater stability and flexibility, the ESSA allows states to determine best practices for the implementation of academic standards, testing, accountability, school improvement, and teacher quality;

WHEREAS, giving states control of academic standards, prohibiting the Secretary of Education and any other federal agent from incentivizing states into adopting specific standards, this flexibility will allow governors to tailor state plans to best fit the needs of local communities;

WHEREAS, this gubernatorial implementation enables governors to bring together education stakeholders and agencies and create opportunities to align the education pipeline, from early childhood with K-12 and into postsecondary education and the workforce;

WHEREAS, under the ESSA, section 1005, amending 20 U.S.C. § 6311, states are charged with developing individual state plans;

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Department of Education is the entity tasked with developing the state plan for Alabama; and

WHEREAS, sections 1005 and 8032 also require the state educational agency to develop the individual state plan in consultation with the Governor, members of the state legislature and the state board of education, as well as local educational agencies, representatives of Indian tribes in the state, educational stakeholders, parents, and others.

NOW, THEREFORE, based upon these considerations and for other good and valid reasons thereto, I, Robert Bentley, Governor of the State of Alabama, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Alabama, do hereby establish the Alabama Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Implementation Committee (the Committee).

BE IT ORDERED, that the Committee shall be comprised of the following members, or their designees:

- Two vice chairs, appointed by the Superintendent, Alabama State Department of Education
- Two appointments by each Alabama State Board of Education member, excluding the Governor
- The Secretary, Department of Early Childhood Education
- The Education Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor
- Director, Governor's Office of Minority Affairs
- Three representatives in workforce development programs or related entities, appointed by the Governor
- A representative of the Alabama Public Charter School Commission, appointed by the Governor
- One member from the Alabama Senate, appointed by the Senate President Pro Tem
- One member from the Alabama House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives
- Additional members as needed, appointed by the Governor

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Governor shall appoint the Committee chair, who shall serve at the Governor's pleasure.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that this Committee shall meet at the call of the chair and shall develop the state plan as outlined in Title 1, Part A, Section 1005 of the reauthorized ESSA (ESSA State Plan), in collaboration with the Alabama State Department of Education. By December 1, 2016, the Committee shall submit the ESSA State Plan to the Governor, the Alabama State Board of Education and the Alabama State Department of Education.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that this Executive Order shall become effective immediately upon its execution and shall remain in effect until amended or modified by the Governor.

DONE AND ORDERED this the 14 day of March, 2016.

Robert Bentley
Robert Bentley
Governor

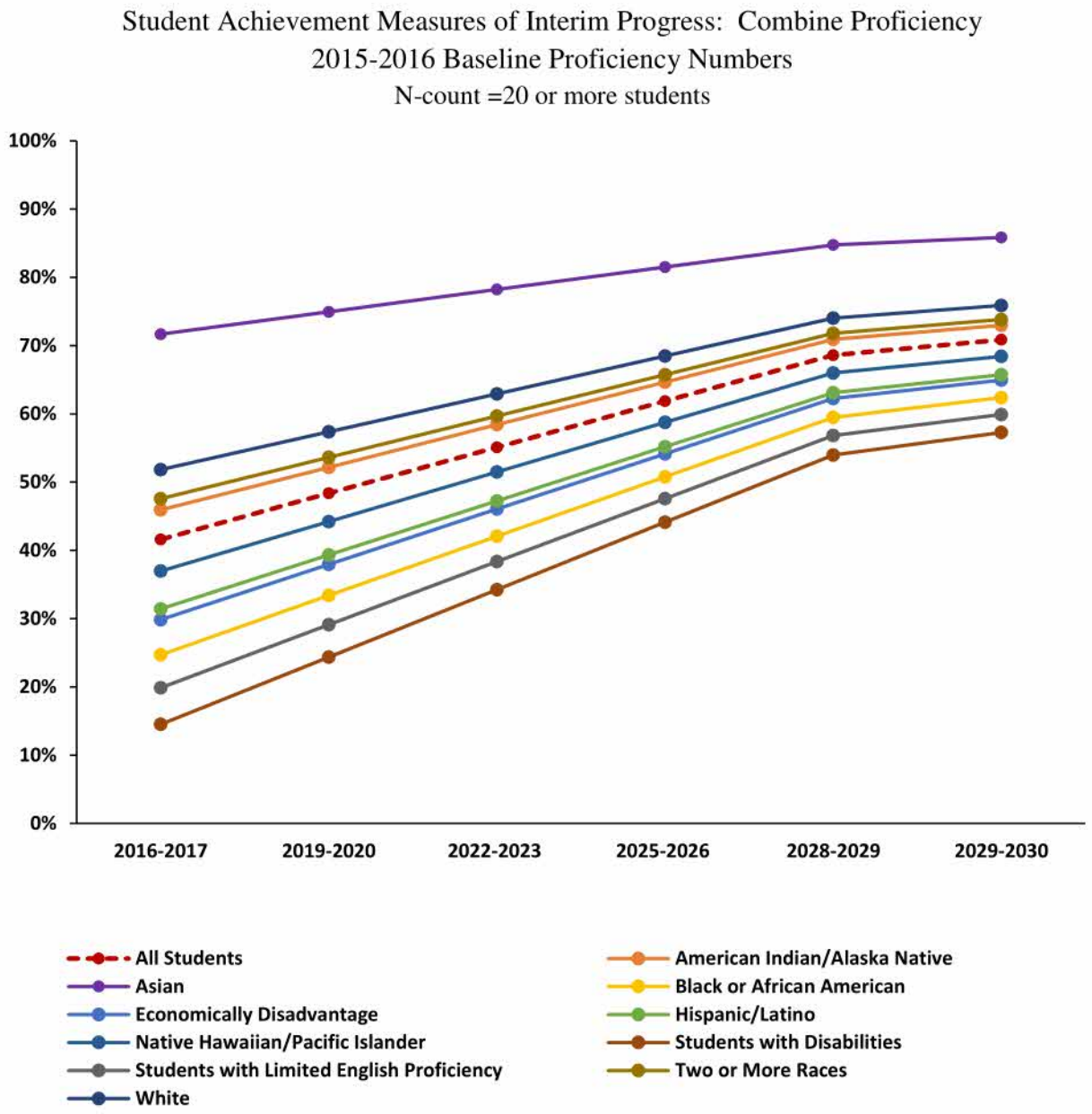
ATTEST:

John H. Merrill
John H. Merrill
Secretary of State

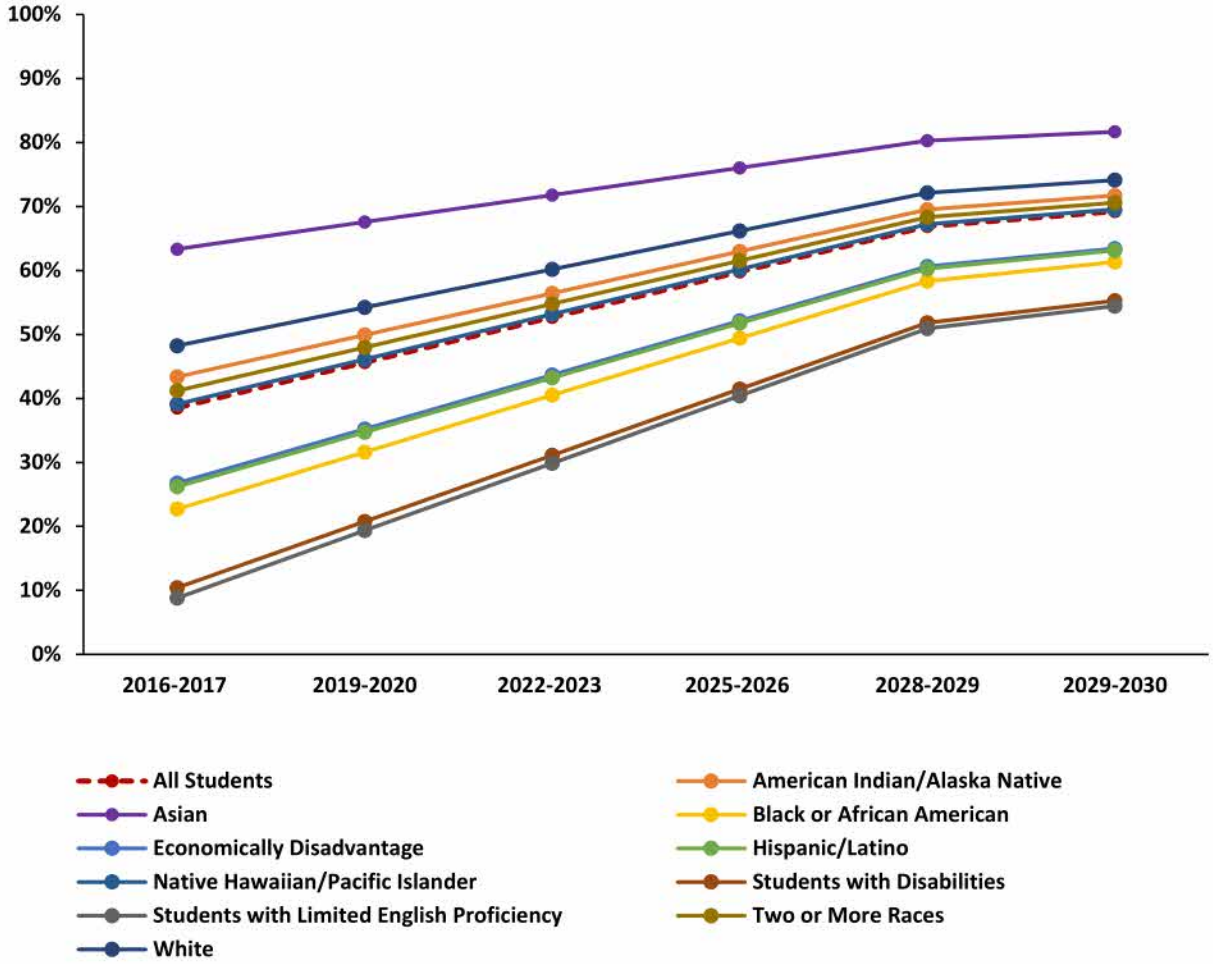
Appendix B: Measurements of Interim Progress

Instructions: Each SEA must include the measurements of interim progress toward meeting the long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rates, and English language proficiency, set forth in the State's response to Title I, Part A question 4.iii, for all students and separately for each subgroup of students, including those listed in response to question 4.i.a. of this document. For academic achievement and graduation rates, the State's measurements of interim progress must take into account the improvement necessary on such measures to make significant progress in closing statewide proficiency and graduation rate gaps.

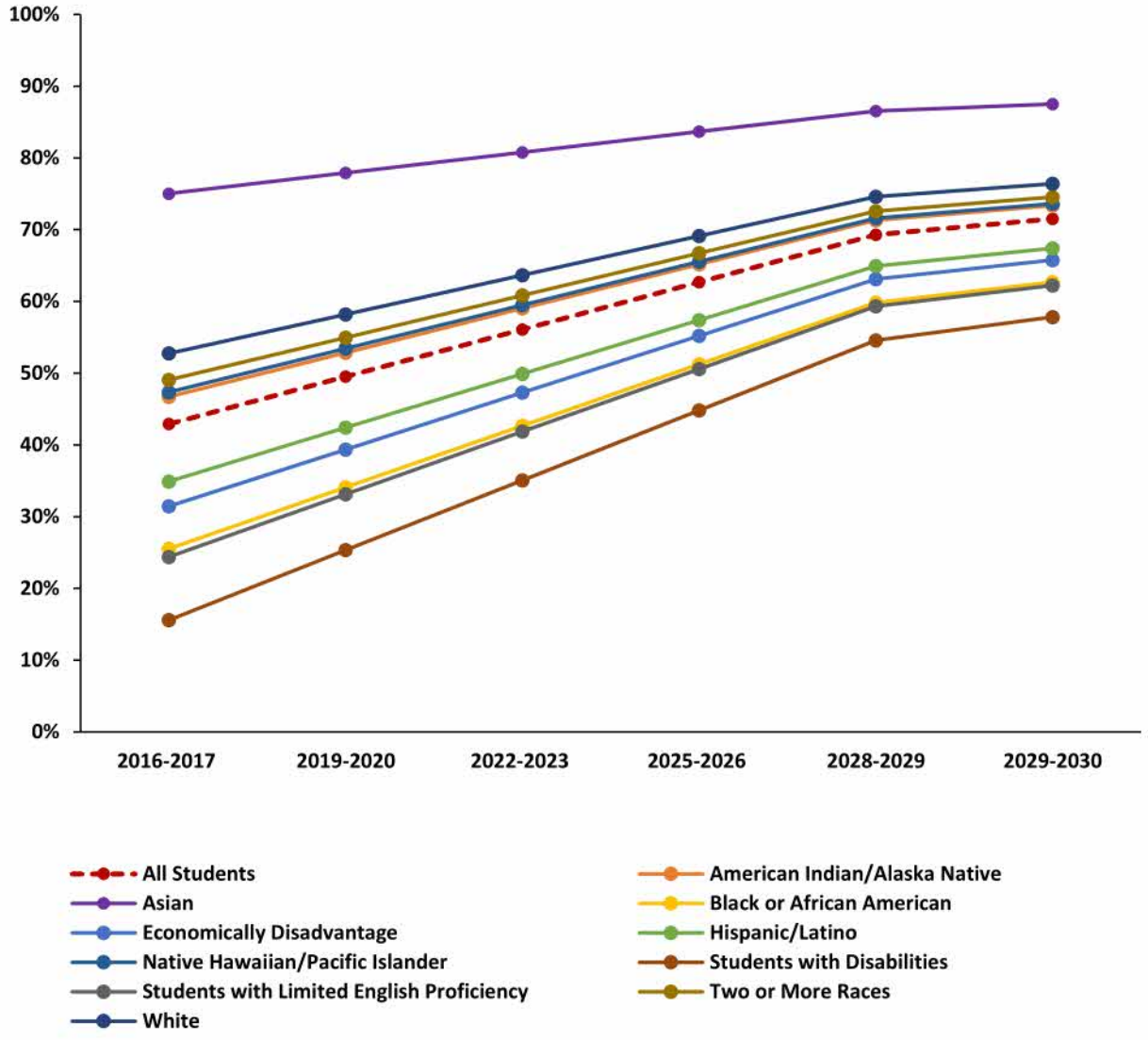
1. Academic Achievement



Student Achievement Measures of Interim Progress: Reading Proficiency
2015-2016 Baseline Proficiency Numbers
N-count =20 or more students



Student Achievement Measures of Interim Progress: Math Proficiency
2015-2016 Baseline Proficiency Numbers
N-count =20 or more students



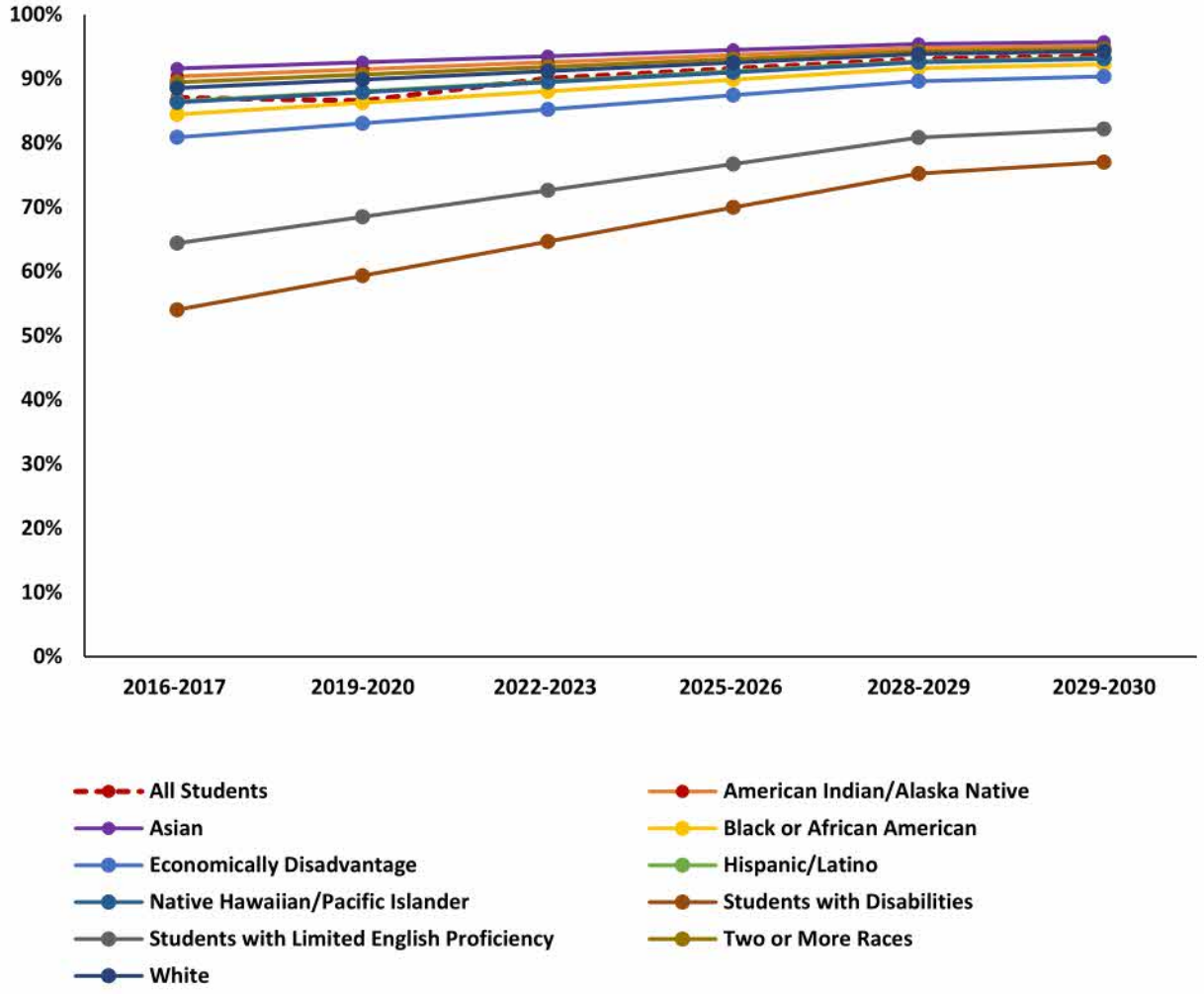
2. Graduation Rates

Graduation Rate Measures of Interim Progress
2015-2016 Baseline Rate
n-count = 20 or more

4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate										
System Code	System Name	School Code	School Name	Subgroup	2016-2017 Baseline for Graduation Rate	2019-2020 Target	2022-2023 Target	2025-2026 Target	2028-2029 Target	2029-2030 Goal
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	All Students	87.12	88.62	90.12	91.62	93.12	93.62
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	American Indian/Alaska Native	90.38	91.49	92.60	93.71	94.82	95.19
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Asian	91.62	92.58	93.54	94.50	95.46	95.78
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Black or African American	84.51	86.31	88.11	89.91	91.71	92.31
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Economically Disadvantaged	80.92	83.11	85.30	87.49	89.68	90.41
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Hispanic/Latino	86.52	88.08	89.64	91.20	92.76	93.28
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	86.36	87.92	89.48	91.04	92.60	93.12
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Students with Disabilities	54.05	59.36	64.67	69.98	75.29	77.06
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Students with Limited English Proficiency	64.41	68.52	72.63	76.74	80.85	82.22
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Two or More Races	89.48	90.68	91.88	93.08	94.28	94.68
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	White	88.61	89.93	91.25	92.57	93.89	94.33

5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate										
System Code	System Name	School Code	School Name	Subgroup Name	2016-2017 Baseline for Graduation Rate	2019-2020 Target	2022-2023 Target	2025-2026 Target	2028-2029 Target	2029-2030 Goal
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	All Students	86.86	89.89	92.92	95.95	98.98	99.99
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	American Indian/Alaska Native	85.29	88.68	92.07	95.46	98.85	99.98
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Asian	93.65	95.12	96.59	98.06	99.53	100.00
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Black or African American	84.37	87.97	91.57	95.17	98.77	99.97
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Economically Disadvantaged	81.52	85.78	90.04	94.30	98.56	99.98
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Hispanic/Latino	87.62	90.47	93.32	96.17	99.02	99.97
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	90.91	93.01	95.11	97.21	99.31	100.00
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Students with Disabilities	46.71	59.01	71.31	83.61	95.91	100.00
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Students with Limited English Proficiency	69.08	76.22	83.36	90.50	97.64	100.00
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	Two or More Races	86.05	89.26	92.47	95.68	98.89	99.96
0	State of Alabama	0	State Of Alabama	White	88.18	90.91	93.64	96.37	99.10	100.00

Graduation Rate Measures of Interim Progress
2015-2016 Baseline Proficiency Numbers
N-count =20 or more students



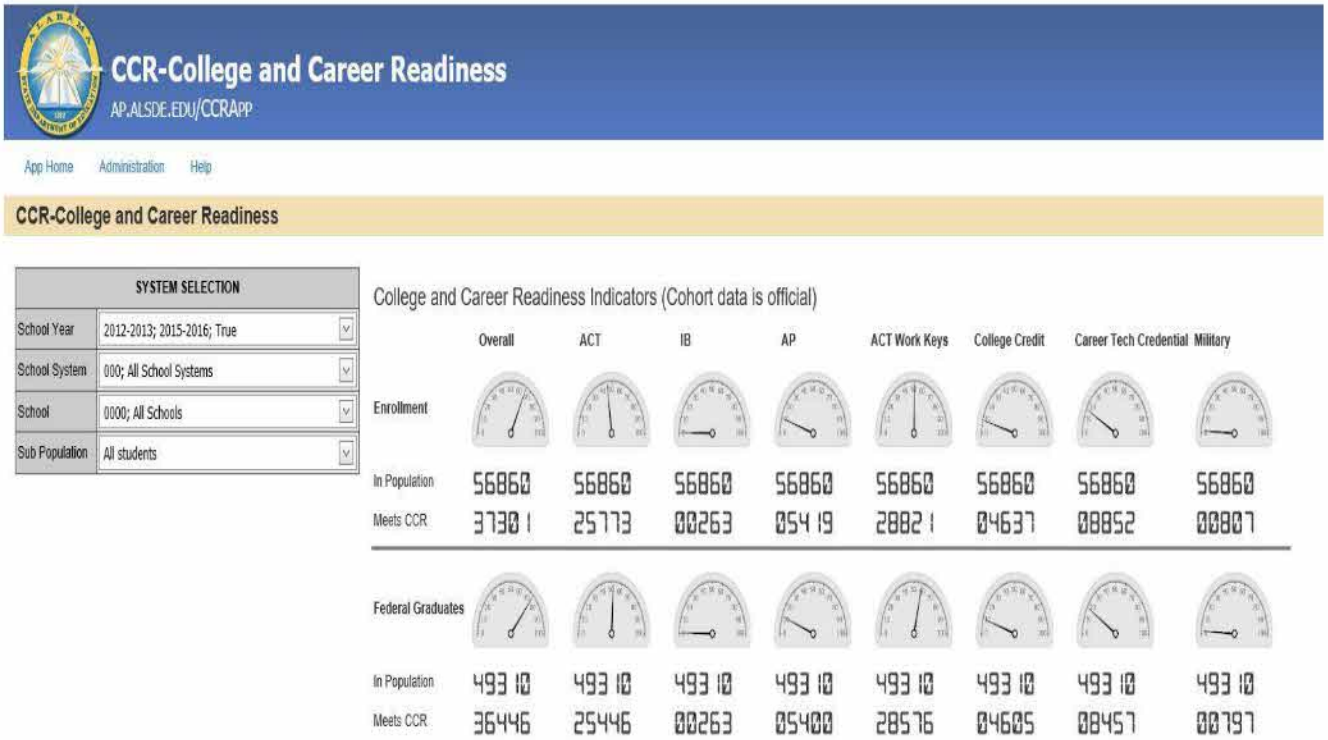
3. Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency

Progress Targets Based on 2017 Baseline

*Alabama will re-calculate the target percentages with the 2016-2017 baseline data once we have two years of data.

Progress Targets Based on Previous Year's Data	
Year	**Targets**
2017	**40%**
2018	**47.5%**
2019	**55%**
2020	**62.5%**
2021	**70%**
2022	**77.5%**
2023	**85%**

Appendix C: : College and Career Readiness Dashboard



Appendix D: LEA Allowable Uses of Federal Funds

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

LEA Allowable Uses of Funds

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Title I, Part A of Uses of Funds in a Schoolwide Program (Based on the Needs Assessment)
• High-quality preschool or full-day kindergarten and services to facilitate the transition from early learning to elementary education programs. • Recruitment and retention of effective teachers, particularly in high-need subjects. • Instructional coaches to provide high-quality, school-based professional development. • Increased learning time. • Evidence-based strategies to accelerate the acquisition of content knowledge for English learners. • Counseling, school-based mental health programs, mentoring services, and other strategies to improve students' nonacademic skills, • Activities designed to increase access and prepare students for success in high-quality advanced coursework to earn postsecondary credit while in high school (e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment programs). • Career and technical education programs to prepare students for postsecondary education and the workforce. Examples of Uses of Funds in a Schoolwide Program (Based on the Needs Assessment) • Programs and activities to promote the health and well-being of all students. • School climate interventions (e.g., anti-bullying strategies, positive behavior interventions and supports). • Equipment, materials, and training needed to compile and analyze student achievement data to monitor progress, alert the school to struggling students, and drive decision making. • Response-to-intervention strategies intended to allow for early identification of students with learning or behavioral needs and to provide a tiered response based on those needs. • Activities that have been shown to be effective at increasing family and community engagement in the school, including family literacy programs. • Devices and software for students to access digital learning materials and collaborate with peers, and related training for educators (including accessible devices and software needed by students with disabilities). • Two-generation approaches that consider the needs of both vulnerable children and parents, together, in the design and delivery of services and programs to support improved economic, educational, health, safety, and other outcomes that address the issues of intergenerational poverty.

Title I, Part A – Allowable Uses of Funds

Under ESSA, SEAs have the discretion to waive the forty percent poverty threshold if the SEA believes it will best serve student needs. ESSA, Section 1114(a)(1)(B). ESSA, Section 1114(b).

Title II, Part A LEA Allowable Uses of Funds

LEAs must prioritize Title II, Part A funds to schools that:

- Are implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities and targeted support and improvement activities, and
- Have the highest percentage of children counted under section 1124(c)[4] (these are primarily low-income children)[5]

A. Evaluation and Support Systems

LEAs may use Title II funds to develop or improve evaluation and support systems for teachers, principals, or other school leaders that are (1) based in part on student achievement, (2) include multiple measures of performance, and (3) provide clear, timely, and useful feedback.[6]

B. Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Effective Teachers; Implementing Supports for Principals and Other School Leaders

LEAs may use Title II funds to develop and implement initiatives to recruit, hire, and retain effective teachers to improve the equitable distribution of teachers, particularly in low-income schools with high percentages of ineffective teachers and high percentages of students who do not meet state standards.[7] LEAs may also use Title II funds to implement supports for principals and other schools leaders.

C. Recruiting from Other Fields

LEAs may use Title II funds to recruit qualified individuals from other fields to become teachers, principals, or other school leaders. Qualified individuals from other fields include mid-career professionals from other occupations, former military personnel, and recent graduates of institutions of higher education with records of academic distinction who demonstrate the potential to become effective teachers, principals or other school leaders. [8]

D. Class Size Reduction

LEAs may use Title II funds to reduce class size to a level that is evidence-based, to the extent the SEA (in consultation with LEAs) determines such evidence is reasonably available.[9] According to ED guidance, LEAs may consider reducing class size as one strategy to attract and retain effective educators in high-need schools.[10]

E. Personalized Professional Development

LEAs may use Title II funds to provide high-quality, personalized professional development[11] for teachers,

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[4] ESSA, Section 2102(b)(2)(C).

[5] ESSA, Section 1124(c) is located in Title I of ESSA, and describes the children that should be counted.

[6] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(A).

[7] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(B).

[8] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(C).

[9] ESSA, Section 2013(b)(3)(D).

[10] *ED 2016 Title II, Part A Guidance*, p. 24.

[11] ED's guidance describes ESSA's definition of "professional development" in the following way:

> Section 8101(42) defines "professional development," specifically noting that the professional development activities are sustained (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused.

ED 2016 Title II, Part A Guidance, p. 11. For the full definition of professional development, please see ESSA, Section 8101(42).

instructional leadership teams, principals, or other school leaders.[12] The professional development must be evidence-based, to the extent the SEA (in consultation with LEAs) determines such evidence is reasonably available. The professional development must also focus on improving teaching and student learning and achievement, including supporting efforts to train teachers, principals, or other school leaders to:

- Effectively integrate technology into curricula and instruction (including education about the harms of copyright piracy),
- Use data to improve student achievement and understand how to ensure individual student privacy is protected,
- Effectively engage parents, families, and community partners, and coordinate services between school and community,
- Help all students develop the skills essential for learning readiness and academic success,
- Develop policy with school, LEA, community, or state leaders, and
- Participate in opportunities for experiential learning through observation.[13]

F. Increasing Teacher Effectiveness for Students with Disabilities and English Learners

LEAs may use Title II to develop programs and activities that increase teachers' ability to effectively teach children with disabilities and English learners, which may include the use of multi-tiered systems of support and positive behavioral intervention and supports.[14]

G. Supporting Early Education

LEAs may use Title II funds to provide programs and activities to increase the knowledge base of teachers, principals, or other school leaders on instruction in the early grades and on strategies to measure whether young children are progressing.[15]

H. Supporting Effective Use of Assessments

LEAs may use Title II funds to provide training, technical assistance, and capacity-building to assist teachers, principals, or other school leaders with selecting and implementing formative assessments, designing classroom-based assessments, and using data from such assessments to improve instruction and student academic achievement, which may include providing additional time for teachers to review student data and respond, as appropriate.[16]

I. Supporting Awareness and Treatment of Trauma and Mental Illness, and School Conditions for Student Learning

LEAs may use Title II funds to carry out in-service training for school personnel in:

- The techniques and supports needed to help educators understand when and how to refer students affected by trauma, and children with, or at risk of, mental illness,

J. Supporting Gifted and Talented Students

LEAs may use Title II funds to provide training to support the identification of students who are gifted and talented, including high-ability students who have not been formally identified for gifted education services, and implementing instructional practices that support the education of such students, such as:

- Early entrance to kindergarten,

[12] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(E).
[13] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(E)(i)-(vi).
[14] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(F).
[15] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(G)(i).
[16] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(H).

- Enrichment, acceleration, and curriculum compacting activities (techniques relating to differentiated instruction), and
- Dual or concurrent enrollment programs in secondary school and postsecondary education.[17]

K. School Library Programs

LEAs may use Title II funds to support the instructional services provided by effective school library programs.[18]

L. Preventing and Recognizing Child Sexual Abuse

LEAs may use Title II funds to provide training for all school personnel, including teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals, regarding how to prevent and recognize child sexual abuse.[19]

M. Supporting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

LEAs may use Title II funds to develop and provide professional development and other comprehensive systems of support for teachers, principals, or other school leaders to promote high-quality instruction and instructional leadership in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects, including computer science.[20]

N. Feedback Mechanisms to Improve School Working Conditions

LEAs may use Title II funds to develop feedback mechanisms to improve school working conditions. This can include periodically and publicly reporting feedback on educator support and working conditions.[21]

O. Supporting Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

LEAs may spend Title II funds to provide high-quality professional development for teachers, principals, or other school leaders on effective strategies to integrate rigorous academic content, career and technical education, and work-based learning (if appropriate), which may include providing common planning time, to help prepare students for postsecondary education and the workforce.[22]

P. Other Activities

LEAs may also spend Title II funds on other activities that meet Title II purposes (see "Purpose of the Title II Program" above) and are evidence-based to the extent the SEA (in consultation with LEAs) determines that such evidence is reasonably available.[23]

Spending Title III, Part A Funds to Support English Learners

LEAs must use Title III funds for effective approaches and methodologies for teaching ELs and immigrant

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[17] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(J).
[18] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(K).
[19] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(L).
[20] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(M).
[21] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(N).
[22] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(O).
[23] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(P).
ED 2016 *Non-regulatory Guidance for Title, II Part A* ESSA, Section 2102(b)(2)(D).ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(A). [23] ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(B). ESSA, Section 2103(b)(3)(B)(i).

children and youth for the following:

1. Developing and implementing new language instruction educational programs and academic content instructional programs for English learners (ELs) and immigrant children and youth, including early childhood education programs, elementary school programs, and secondary school programs.

2. Carrying out highly focused, innovative, locally designed activities to expand or enhance existing language instruction educational programs and academic content instructional programs for ELs and immigrant children and youth.

3. Implementing schoolwide programs for restructuring, reforming, and upgrading all relevant programs, activities, and operations relating to language instruction educational programs and academic content instruction for ELs and immigrant children and youth.

4. Implementing LEA-wide programs for restructuring, reforming, and upgrading all relevant programs, activities, and operations relating to language instruction educational programs and academic content instruction for ELs and immigrant children and youth.

ESSA, Section 3115(a). For federal non-regulatory guidance on the Title III program, please see U.S. Department of Education, *English Learners and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA),* as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (September 2016) available at http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiiiguidenglishlearners92016.pdf. This guidance will be referred to as *ED 2016 Title III, Part A Guidance*.

Definition of English Learner and Immigrant Children and Youth under ESSA (ESSA, Section 8101(20). Also, *ED 2016 Title III, Part A Guidance,* p. 43.)

Under ESSA, an "English learner," when used with respect to an individual, means an individual —

(A) who is aged 3 through 21;
(B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;

(C) (i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
(ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and
(II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or
(iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
(D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual —

(i) the ability to meet the challenging State academic standards;

(ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or

(iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Under ESSA, the term "immigrant children and youth" means individuals who— (A) are aged 3 through 21; B) were not born in any State; and (C) have not been attending one or more schools in any one or more States for more than 3 full academic years.

Under the first presumption of supplanting, an LEA may not use Title III funds to meet the requirements of federal, state, or local law. Under federal law, specifically Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), LEAs have legal obligations to ensure that ELs can

meaningfully and equally participate in educational programs and services.[24] ED guidance explains that to meet these civil rights obligations to EL students **LEAs must**:

- Identify and assess all potential EL students in a timely, valid, and reliable manner,
- Provide EL students with a language assistance program that is educationally sound and proven successful, consistent with *Castañeda v. Pickard* and the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Lau v. Nichols*,
- Provide sufficiently well prepared and trained staff and support the language assistance programs for EL students,
- Ensure that EL students have equal opportunities to meaningfully participate in all curricular and extracurricular activities,
- Avoid unnecessary segregation of EL students,
- Ensure that EL students who have or are suspected of having a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, located, and evaluated in a timely manner and that the language needs of students who need special education and disability related services because of their disability are considered in evaluations and delivery of services,
- Meet the needs of EL students who opt out of language assistance programs,
- Monitor and evaluate EL students in language assistance programs to ensure their progress with respect to acquiring English proficiency and grade level content knowledge, exit EL students from language assistance programs when they are proficient in English, and monitor exited students to ensure they were not prematurely exited and that any academic deficits incurred in the language assistance program have been remedied,
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a school district's language assistance program(s) to ensure that EL students in each program acquire English proficiency and that each program is reasonably calculated to allow EL students to attain parity of participation in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time, and
- Ensure meaningful communication with limited English proficient (LEP) parents.[25]

Because Title III funds may not be used to meet legal obligations, including civil rights obligations, Title III may not be used to meet the obligations in the above list.

How Title III Funds May be used: Required	Additional Allowable Supplemental
1. Providing **effective language instruction educational programs (LIEPs)** the meet the needs of ELs and demonstrate success in increasing English language proficiency and student academic achievement.	

[24] *ED 2016 Title III, Part A Guidance*, Question A-2 and A-3.

[25] *ED 2016 Title III, Part A Guidance*, Question A-3. Additional information about the civil rights obligations to EL students is available in a joint U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice Dear Colleague Letter (2015), available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf.

2. Providing **effective professional development** to classroom teachers (including teachers in classroom settings that are not the settings of LIEPs), principals and other school leaders, administrators, and other school or community-based organizational personnel, that is: o Designed to improve the instruction and assessment of ELs, o Designed to enhance the ability to understand and implement curricula, assessment practices and measures, and instructional strategies for ELs, o Effective in increasing children's English language proficiency or substantially increasing the subject matter knowledge, teaching knowledge, and teaching skills of such teachers, and o Of sufficient intensity and duration (which shall not include activities such as 1-day or short-term workshops and conferences) to have a positive and lasting impact on the teachers' performance in the classroom.	
3. Providing and implementing other effective activities and strategies that enhance or supplement language instruction educational programs for ELs, which must include **parent, family, and community engagement activities**, and may include strategies that serve to coordinate and align related programs.	
	• Upgrading program objectives and effective instructional strategies,[26] • Improving the instructional program for ELs by identifying, acquiring, and upgrading curricula, instructional materials, educational software, and assessment procedures,[27] • Providing to ELs tutorials and academic or career and technical education, and intensified instruction, which may include

[26] ESSA, Section 3115(d)(1).
[27] ESSA, Section 3115(d)(2).

	materials in a language that the student can understand, interpreters, and translators,[28] • Developing and implementing effective preschool,[29] elementary school, or secondary school language instruction educational programs that are coordinated with other relevant programs and services,[30] • Improving the English language proficiency and academic achievement of ELs,[31] • Providing community participation programs, family literacy services, and parent and family outreach and training activities to ELs and their families to improve the English language skills of ELs, and to assist parents and families in helping their children to improve their academic achievement and becoming active participants in the education of their children,[32] • Improving the instruction of ELs, which may include ELs with a disability, by providing for: the acquisition or development of educational technology or instructional materials; access to, and participation in, electronic networks for materials, training, and communication; and incorporation of these resources into curricula and programs,[33] • Offering early college high school or dual or concurrent enrollment programs or courses designed to help ELs achieve success in postsecondary education,[34] and

[28] ESSA, Section 3115(d)(3).
[29] For more information on Title III and Early Learning, please see *ED 2016 Title III, Part A Guidance*, Section F.
[30] ESSA, Section 3115(d)(4).
[31] ESSA, Section 3115(d)(5).
[32] ESSA, Section 3115(d)(6).
[33] ESSA, Section 3115(d)(7).
[34] ESSA, Section 3115(d)(8).

	• Carrying out other activities that are consistent with the purposes of Title III subgrants

Title V-B, Rural and Low Income Allowable Expenditures

The purpose of the Rural Education Achievement Program: The Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) is designed to assist rural school districts in using Federal resources more effectively to improve the quality of instruction and student academic achievement. It consists of two separate programs – the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program and the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) program. • The RLIS program authorizes formula grant awards to State educational agencies (SEAs), which in turn make subgrants to eligible LEAs either competitively or by formula. LEAs may use RLIS funds to support a broad array of local activities to support student achievement.	
Allowable Expenditures	
Teacher Recruitment and retention	
Teacher professional development	
Educational technology to support integration into the classroom	
Parental involvement activities	
Activities authorized under other titles:	
Activities authorized under Title I	
Activities authorized under Title II	
Activities authorized under Title III	
Activities authorized under Title IV, Part A (Student Support of Academic Enrichment Grants)	
Activities to support safe schools	
Administrative costs	
• The SRSA program provides eligible local educational agencies (LEAs) with greater flexibility in using the formula grant funds that they receive under certain State-administered Federal programs. (*See* "REAP-Flex" discussion in Parts II-A and II-B in the guidance.) It also authorizes formula grant awards directly to these LEAs to support a wide range of local activities that support student achievement.	SRSA Can Support activities authorized under Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV – Part A and Title IV, Part B (21st Century Community Learning Centers)

Appendix E: Communications from Stakeholder Groups

August 18, 2017

Honorable Kay Ivey
Governor and President of the State Board of Education
Montgomery, Alabama

Honorable Members of the Board
Stephanie Bell, Vice President (District 3)
Cynthia McCarty, Ph.D., Pro Tempore (District 6)
Jackie Zeigler (District 1)
Betty Peters (District 2)
Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D. (District 4)
Ella B. Bell (District 5)
Jeff Newman (District 7)
Mary Scott Hunter, J.D. (District 8)

Dear Governor Ivey and Members of the Board,

As concerned and engaged members of the K-12 education community, each of us has read and reviewed the state's proposed revised Consolidated State Plan to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA Plan). As you well know, our organizations represent a wide variety of educators, the business community, and interested citizens. Furthermore, while we may not always see things the same way, we all share a common mission of improving education across our state for each and every child. And, we believe that Alabamians can work together to ensure that every student gets the type of high-quality education needed for success.

ESSA provides us with the opportunity to move closer to this important goal. Our plan can help ensure that we have a high quality, data-informed, student-focused system of education that is accessible to all children and youth, no matter their address, background, or resources.

Having individually reviewed the ESSA Plan, each of our organizations will be submitting concerns and recommendations independently. This letter details our collective concern that the current plan simply is not ready for submittal to the US Department of Education, and that it requires a great deal more input from all stakeholders.

All of us were engaged early on in the process led by Early Childhood Secretary Jeana Ross, and we appreciate her openness to our input and expertise. We also appreciate the willingness of staff in the State Department of Education to listen to our concerns, suggestions, and ideas for best practice. However, upon receiving a draft, we were deeply disappointed to discover that the plan does not seem to reflect the work of the various task forces and stakeholder input.

ESSA shifts key decisions to the state and this plan is the basis for our relationship with the Federal government and the foundation of accountability reporting for the next decade. Alabama's plan needs to clearly articulate our high aspirations for children and youth; our dedication to undergird and support our local schools; our passion for teaching and learning, including pre-service and in-service teacher education; and our commitment to open, honest, fair, and transparent accountability to our communities.

We are asking you to recognize the need for stringent reconsideration of the plan before adopting it as your own and submitting it to the US Department of Education. In writing to you, we pledge our willingness to work hand-in-hand with the department to ensure that the best possible plan be developed.

With great appreciation for your leadership and dedication to children and youth, we are,

Sincerely yours,

(b)(6)

A+ Education Partnership

(b)(6)

Alabama Association of School Boards

(b)(6)

Alabama Education Association

(b)(6)

Business Education Alliance

(b)(6)

Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools

School Superintendents of Alabama

KAY IVEY
GOVERNOR

STATE CAPITOL
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

STATE OF ALABAMA

September 13, 2017

Dear Members of the Alabama State Board of Education:

Thank you for submitting the Alabama State Department of Education's *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) state plan to me for gubernatorial signature as required by federal law. As a former educator, I believe that ESSA is an opportunity to cast aside federal mandates, embrace local flexibility, and listen to school districts, teachers, principals, and families to determine the future of Alabama's education system.

The ESSA state plan is supposed to be a critical first step in setting the tone for innovation in this new age of flexibility for Alabama. The second is to provide a clear, coherent vision for educators on the ground to ensure a high-quality education for students. Unfortunately, I believe the state plan provided does not yet accomplish those two critical goals.

The proposed state plan is built on a strong foundation of restoring educational authority back to Alabama, but improvements are necessary.

Incoherent Accountability Indicators
ESSA ushers in a new era for state- and locally-designed accountability systems that are more holistic than the test-heavy federal system of the past, but the current Alabama state plan does not embrace this new opportunity.

Instead, the proposed state plan outlines a series of disparate measures and indicators with conflicting definitions for how to measure schools. In the current state plan, the entirety of measures that encompass "the Alabama Accountability System" and how they interact is not clear.

For local school districts to be empowered, Alabama's state plan must have an aligned series of coherent indicators linked to a broad vision to ensure academic achievement continues to improve. The proposed Alabama state plan also is not clear on how student growth will be measured, especially in relation to the use of formative and summative assessments.

Alignment and linkages in Alabama's accountability system must be included, not only to meet the requirements in ESSA, but also to ensure superintendents, principals, and educators on the ground are able to work toward a clear, common expectation for student success.

Failure to Move Past Federalized Differentiation
No Child Left Behind forced states to use a one-size-fits-all regime to differentiate schools and used the blunt instrument of federalized models for school improvement. I believe creating a system of

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differentiation that reflects the needs of Alabama's students is the most significant opportunity afforded to our state under this law.

Yet, the proposed Alabama state plan does not provide a clear picture for how our annual meaningful differentiation links to our accountability system. The proposed state plan also does not include sufficient details on tiers of differentiated support, including the percentages of schools that could fall into each tier.

Schools must know how the state's differentiation system operates in order to ensure effective implementation of our state's vision and ESSA. Submitting a state plan without these details would shortchange Alabama's students and education community.

School Improvement in Need of Refinement
ESSA grants states the ability to reserve 7 percent of federal Title I funding to provide school improvement strategies designed to support the needs of Alabama schools and students. In Alabama, $17.5 million is annually available to our state when we fully utilize this set-aside.

Alabama's proposed state plan provides few details on how our state education agency would turn around our low-performing schools and transform other schools from average to superb. Our state education community deserves to know how low-performing schools will be identified, how "consistently underperforming" is defined in our state, how differentiation links to the school improvement process, and how the state will ensure that schools have improved enough to exit low-performing status.

Currently, the state plan does not provide enough information on any of these items, and it must before we submit it to the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Connection Between Education and the Workforce Must Be Stronger
ESSA's move away from punitive, narrow federal accountability creates an opportunity for Alabama to leverage the K-12 system to build a pipeline of talent and keep our economy strong. The current draft of the state plan identifies a College and Career Readiness dashboard of indicators as part of Alabama's School Quality Indicator.

However, the dashboard is missing critical information for district and classroom implementation, as well as details necessary for the U.S. Secretary of Education to evaluate our state plan for approval. The dashboard lacks necessary definitions, benchmarks for college and career readiness, and clarity around the number of options available to each district.

The future success of Alabama's students is too important to not resolve these issues before submission of the state plan.

Need for Recognition of Teachers and Principals
Teachers and principals sacrifice daily to ensure that Alabama's students are equipped to be successful in work and life. ESSA provides states with tools and opportunities to build up our educators. Unfortunately, the proposed Alabama state plan does not provide a clear vision for utilizing the approximately $32 million our state receives annually to train and develop teachers and principals.

Specifically, no information is provided on how Alabama would leverage federal resources to support effective instruction and educator-focused professional development. The state plan also fails to include

evidence-based strategies for educator professional development included in the Alabama state education agency's strategic plan, how the number of National Board Certified teachers will be increased, and how the state will utilize teacher evaluation to ensure high quality teachers throughout our state.

Teachers and principals are the single most significant factor in the success of our education system. We must have a clear vision for how we will take care of them before our state plan is submitted.

Conclusion

After reviewing this state plan, I believe it is incomplete, and we cannot, in good conscience, submit it to the U.S. Secretary of Education. We have more work to do on the issues I have identified in this letter, and many other shortcomings not specifically addressed here.

Therefore, I contacted U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to secure an extension to submit Alabama's state plan after September 18th, the day all state plans are due to the federal government. Because of the impact and devastation left by Hurricane Irma, Secretary DeVos has granted Alabama a 30-day extension, with a new deadline of October 13, 2017.

Alabamians deserve better than the proposed state plan we now have before us. With more time from the U.S. Secretary of Education, we can take a closer look at the hundreds of comments from Alabama's education community filed during the public comment process, meaningfully engage with stakeholders, and use that input to improve our state plan, and submit a state plan that we can all be proud of for approval.

While my original request for 60 days was not granted, the 30-day extension does allow us to join together and develop a stronger plan that Alabama will be proud of. If the revised plan does not address these issues highlighted in this letter, I will reach out to the Secretary once again and request additional time beyond the 30 day-extension. I ask the Alabama State Board of Education to support those efforts if additional time is needed.

I am not alone in believing our state needs more time. Many comments, from teachers to the business community, indicate the critical need of improving the current draft of Alabama's state plan.

We have an important opportunity in front of us in the coming days and weeks. The future of Alabama's students is in our hands.

I look forward to partnering with you to meet this challenge.

Sincerely,

Kay Ivey

Kay Ivey
Governor

September 28, 2017

Honorable Kay Ivey
Governor and President of the State Board of Education
Montgomery, Alabama

Honorable Members of the Board
Stephanie Bell, Vice President (District 3)
Cynthia McCarty, Ph.D., Pro Tempore (District 6)
Jackie Zeigler (District 1)
Betty Peters (District 2)
Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D. (District 4)
Ella B. Bell (District 5)
Jeff Newman (District 7)
Mary Scott Hunter, J.D. (District 8)

Dear Governor Ivey and Members of the Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to have meaningful and productive conversations between education organizations and the State Department of Education with a shared vision to improve the state ESSA plan. Dr. Joe Morton, at the direction of Dr. Ed Richardson, convened the groups below on two separate occasions and all voices were heard. During these meetings, which were collaborative in nature and constructive in direction, we addressed a list of concerns that we felt were missing from the plan and, if used, would improve the state's proposal. The revised plan addresses these concerns.

We support the submission of the latest revision of the ESSA plan to the USDE. We fully understand that there may be amendments and modifications based on their feedback. We welcome the opportunity to participate in that process and look forward to future collaborations as we work together to improve public education in our state.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

A+ Education Partnership

(b)(6)

Business Education Alliance

(b)(6)

Alabama Association of School Boards

(b)(6)

Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools

(b)(6)

Alabama Education Association

School Superintendents of Alabama

Appendix F: Assessment Advisory Committee Members

Assessment Stakeholder Committee Members

Mrs. Vickie Holloway, Montgomery County System Test Coordinator
Mr. Jimmy Shaw, Florence City Superintendent
Mrs. Maria Johnson, Principal, Dothan City
Ms. Theresa McCormick, Auburn University (in place of Betty Lou Whitford)
Mrs. Marcia Smiley, Assistant Superintendent, Perry County
Ms. Khristie Goodwin, Special Education Coordinator, Oxford City
Ms. Jeana Winter, Executive Director, AL Parent Education Center
Ms. Caroline Novak, President, A+
Dr. Trey Holladay, Superintendent, Athens City
Ms. Ashley Chasteen, Instructional Coach, Jefferson County
Dr. Vic Wilson, Executive Director, CLAS
Dr. Beth Quick, Dean of College of Education, UAH
Ms. Nancy Anderson, Associate Director, AL Disabilities Advocacy Program
Ms. Mallory Lamb, Elementary Teacher, Oneonta City
Ms. Jacqueline Brooks, Macon County
Ms. Tisha Allred, Parent, Walker County
Ms. Crystal Richardson, SDE
Ms. Sandy Ledwell, AMSTI, SDE
Mrs. Kellie Yeager, System Test Coordinator, Jefferson County
Mrs. Heather Johnson, Parent, Tallassee City
Dr. Pamela Fossett, Manager of Education Policy and Professional Practice, AEA
Mr. Thomas Raines, Vice President of Policy, A+
Dr, Tonya Perry, UAB School of Education
Mrs. Carrie Garris, Parent/Speech Pathologist, Clarke County
Mr. Jeff Hyche, Principal, Hartselle High School
Dr. Eric Mackey, Executive Director, School Superintendents of Alabama
Dr. Shannon Stanley, Superintendent, Boaz City
Ms. Sally Smith, Executive Director, AL Association of School Boards
Ms. Lissa Tucker, AL Association of School Boards
Dr. Jim McLean, Executive Director, University of Alabama
Mr. Josh Laney, SDE
Ms. Michelle Lee, ALSDE – Title III/EL
Ms. Lisa Heard, SPED Coordinator, Tallapoosa County
Ms. Becky Birdsong, Geneva County Superintendent
Mr. Kyle Kallhoff, Superintendent, Demopolis City Schools

Appendix G: Notice to all Applicants

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 03/31/2017)

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Departmentof Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

(4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education,
400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005