PUERTO RICO
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CONSOLIDATED STATE PLAN

THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965, AS AMENDED BY THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

#todoporlosniños

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**.

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 A.

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

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.

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.

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

Cover Page

Contact Information and Signatures	
SEA Contact: Julia B. Keleher, Secretary Puerto Rico Department of Education	**Telephone:** (787)759-2000
Mailing Address: Ave. Tnte. César González,esq. Calle Juan Calaf, Urb. Industrial Tres Monjitas, Hato Rey, P.R. 00917	**Email Address:** keleherj@de.pr.gov
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: Julia B. Keleher, Secretary	**Telephone:** (787)759-2000
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative	Date: 9/18/17
Governor: (Printed Name) Honorable Ricardo Rosselló	Date SEA provided plan to the Governor under ESEA section 8540: August 19, 2017
Signature of Governor	Date:

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.

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Meaningful Consultation

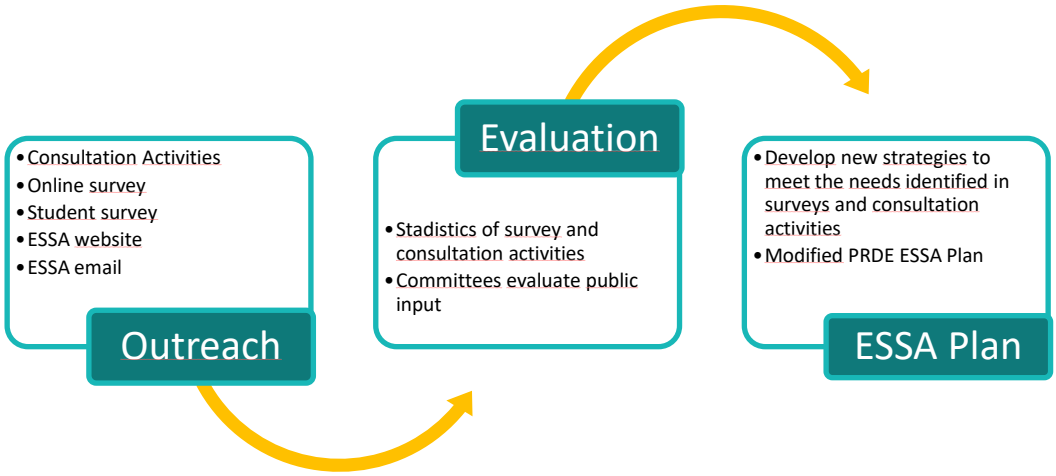
A SEA may, but is not required to, include supplemental information of its efforts to consult with and engage stakeholders when developing its consolidated State plan. The PRDE considers education stakeholders to be a vital component in drafting and implementing its state plan. This section presents an overview of how PRDE has provided information to and engaged with the public during all phases of the development of its ESSA plan, to ensure that stakeholders had sufficient information about ESSA.

Below is a general listing of the groups considered in PRDE's ESSA Meaningful Consultation activities:

- The Governor or appropriate officials from the Governor's office;
- Members of the State legislature;
- Members of PRDE's regions and districts;
- Teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, and organizations representing such individuals;
- Parents and families;
- Community-based organizations;
- Civil rights organizations, including those representing students with disabilities, and English learners;
- Institutions of higher education (IHEs);
- Employers;
- Private school students or representatives
- Early childhood educators and leaders;
- The general public

The diagram below presents PRDE's overall approach to Stakeholder Engagement.

Diagram 1: Stakeholder Engagement



ESSA Committees

A total of three committees were formed as part of the ESSA plan development. These were:

- the Technical Advisory Committee
- the PRDE ESSA Committee and
- the Stakeholder Committee

These groups were an integral part in providing feedback and guidance in the development of all phases of the plan. The ESSA Stakeholder Committee includes individual representatives consistent with subsection 299.13 (b) and 299.15 (a). Committee members were responsible for developing new strategies aligned to ESSA, gathering and analyzing feedback collected from stakeholders and interested parties across the island, and developing the ESSA State Plan. Some work group sessions were held on a weekly basis and others more than weekly. These work groups were critical and necessary for the development of the ESSA plan.

The PRDE ESSA Committee, which is comprised of the following Departments:

- Academic Affairs
- Planning, Assessment, Statistics
- Teacher Preparation
- Federal Affairs

PRDE also engaged its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC consists of experts in psychometrics and/or the assessment of students with disabilities. For the first group of recommendations for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan, the PRDE convened its TAC, to ensure we had wide range of technical perspectives in the development of our accountability model. The TAC assisted the PRDE with analyzing its state assessment and accountability data and research-based best practices and provided recommendations or options based on the analysis.

Stakeholder Feedback Processes

The Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) recognizes that an ongoing and meaningful stakeholder engagement is essential to the effective development and successful implementation of Puerto Rico's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan on behalf of Puerto Rican students. Toward that end, PRDE provided multiple avenues and opportunities for interested individuals and organizations to review the decision points, options, recommendations, and drafts and provide feedback throughout the design and development of our ESSA plan. In addition, PRDE believes the stakeholder consultation and plan development process should be as meaningful and transparent as possible. Efforts to create transparency included frequent and widely disseminated

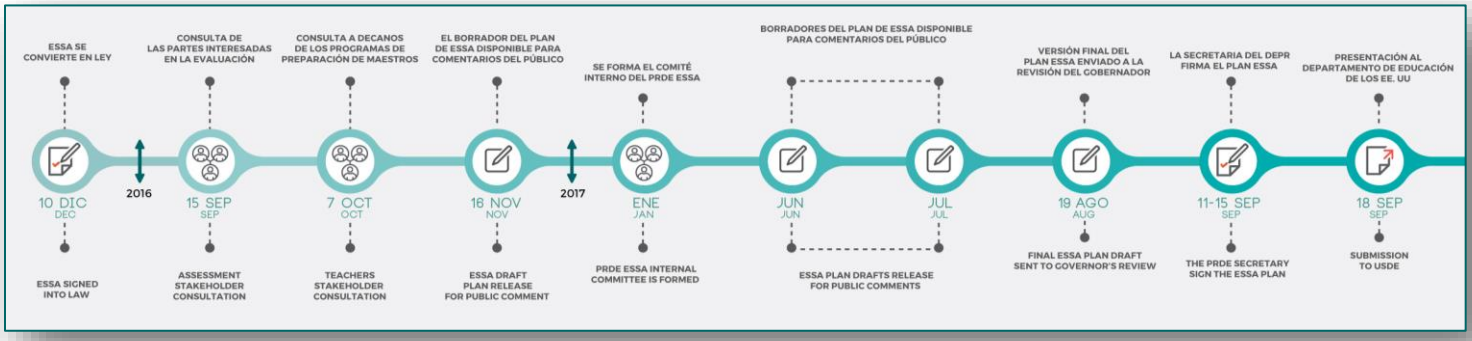
updates on the process, timelines, and opportunities to engage at different stages and levels of plan development.

Teachers, principals, schools leaders, specialized instructional personnel, parents and families, community based organizations, civil rights organizations (including those representing students with disabilities, second language learners, institutions of higher education, employers, representatives of private schools, early childhood educators, and the public were invited to participate in the survey over e-mail or phone. The survey results were collected, analyzed, and considered by the PRDE ESSA Committee for the plan's development.

PRDE administered surveys to gather input from the general public, interested parties and school community members as to whether they were in agreement with the strategies PRDE proposed improve the public education system. The PRDE invited the general public to participate in this consultation by publishing a second set of announcements in two leading newspapers in the state.

The following timetable presents the events that lead to the ESSA Plan development.

Diagram 2: PRDE's timeline for the development of the ESSA Plan



Outreach Activities:

September 2016 - Assessment stakeholders Consultation:

Assessment stakeholders include teachers, principals, schools leaders, specialized instructional personnel, parents and families. This stakeholder group identified three priorities that were considered in Puerto Rico Consolidated State Plan. These priorities are: student attendance rates, elements of school climate, including: violent incident records, parent involvement, and teacher preparation, and teacher attendance rates. In addition, this group expressed an interest in including: evidence of commitment from the school directors, appointment of qualified personnel and teacher quality indictors (i.e. teacher transcripts). Participating parents raised concern regarding the responsibility of parents being present in school communities. Suggested indicators included:

orientation events, informational events and creating spaces for a more active participation in the processes and activities of the school.

October 2016- Deans of Teacher Preparation Programs Consultation:

Deans of Teacher Preparation Programs include teachers, principals, and schools leaders. This group, expressed interest in using the number of academic offerings to address the particular needs of gifted and special education students, opportunities for more personalized learning, extended teaching time and time for teachers to develop learning communities for their ongoing professional development.

This group also emphasized the importance of providing a safe environment for learning development, and the need for effective teachers and administrators in the classroom. They indicated that having effective teachers as the greatest guarantee of success for the student. This coincides with research related to the fact that the success of the student despite being multifactorial depends to a large extent on the quality of their teachers.

October 2016- Schools Director Consultation:

Principals of schools requiring comprehensive interventions made recommendations in regard to increase state budgets, and to help schools to change classification, while maintaining their equipment, finding additional budget for extended school hours and summer. They stated that PRDE should implement and increase extended teaching time in order to improve testing results. Also, improve communication channels with the communities, increase district support for schools, perform staff recruitment with the participation of the school director, and increase the use of technology.

Public Notice Part I: November 16, 2016

The PRDE published a public notice, through one of Puerto Rico's main newspapers, stating that the agency had presented the Consolidated Plan draft in its website. This was the PRDE's first public announcement for stakeholders to provide feedback on the development on the ESSA Plan.

Consultation with the Governor: February – August 2017

In January 2017, the Puerto Rico government had a change in administration and Julia B. Keleher began as Secretary of the PRDE. The Secretary and Governor met weekly to discuss the development of PRDE's ESSA plan as well as various other strategies related to the transformation of public education in Puerto Rico.

Public Notice Part II: March 10, 2016

On March 10, 2017, an additional public announcement was published by the PRDE's new administration. PRDE also created an ESSA webpage on the PRDE website (http://www.de.pr.gobierno) and an email address (essa@de.pr.gov). These mechanisms were

established by the agency to collect questions and feedback from the public. The ESSA website provided the public a view of its timeline for stakeholder engagement activities, guidance and relevant resources, the most recent news over the plan's development and implementation, ESSA plan drafts, contact information for questions or comments related to the ESSA plan's development, its participating committees' development (members, roles, agenda, meeting materials), and various survey questions.

TAC Meetings: March 2017 and June 2017

On March 2-3 and June 12-13, 2017, the PRDE met with the TAC and discussed the sections of long-term goals, accountability and Excellence Educators. TAC meetings are part of an ongoing effort to gather feedback from its TAC to update the PRDE's statewide accountability framework. Part of the process is to align the ESSA indicators and other performance indicators to ensure a high-quality system of accountability for our schools.

Public Notice Part III and IV: May 2017

On May 19, 2017, a second draft of the ESSA plan was posted on the PRDE's ESSA website for additional public comment. The PRDE received via the ESSA email: essapr@de.pr.gov comments from various groups of interest. These here shared and discussed with the PRDE Internal ESSA Committee and considered in the ESSA Plan development.

A final draft of the state plan was posted on the ESSA website for public comment on September 12, 2017.

Outreach and Collaboration/Work session Events: June - July 2017

The first week of June 2017, PRDE organized an outreach event for individuals representing the Governor's office, members of the legislature, private school students, and early childhood educators and leaders. To complete its outreach process, the PRDE requested participation from various committees to contribute to the ESSA plan's development considering their experience in the academics, assessment, and planning areas of PRDE.

Engagement with Elected Officials: March - August 2017

The PRDE held work group sessions with the PRDE ESSA committee, which represented the areas of Academic Affairs, Planning, Assessment, Statistics, Teacher Preparation and Federal Affairs. During these work group sessions, which were held on a weekly basis, the Committee members worked on the developing of new strategies aligned to ESSA, gathered and analyzed feedback collected from stakeholders and interested parties across the island, and developed the ESSA State Plan.

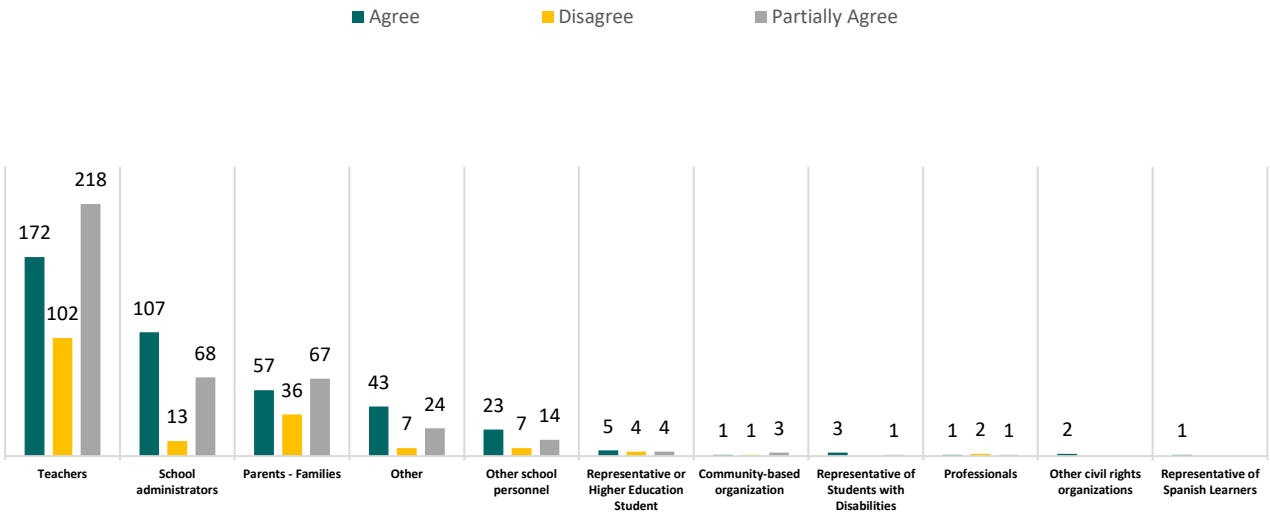
Summary of Stakeholder Feedback from Survey Administration

The PRDE posted a survey in the ESSA website, where the general public was presented the establishment of Long Term Goals and the gap reduction percentage that the agency will achieve every year for that period. From that survey, a total of 987 individuals representing various interested groups participated, most of them school directors, teachers and parents. As an added value of these interested groups, the PRDE identified that they mostly agreed with their long-term goals, which seek to reduce the achievement gap by 3% each year for the next five years.

Survey results:

- 83% agree or partially agree that PRDE's long-term goals should be set for five years.
- 17% disagree that PRDE's long term goals should be set for five years.

Graph 1: Do you consider that the establishment of long term goals to 5 years, with a revision in the 3rd year is reasonable for the students?



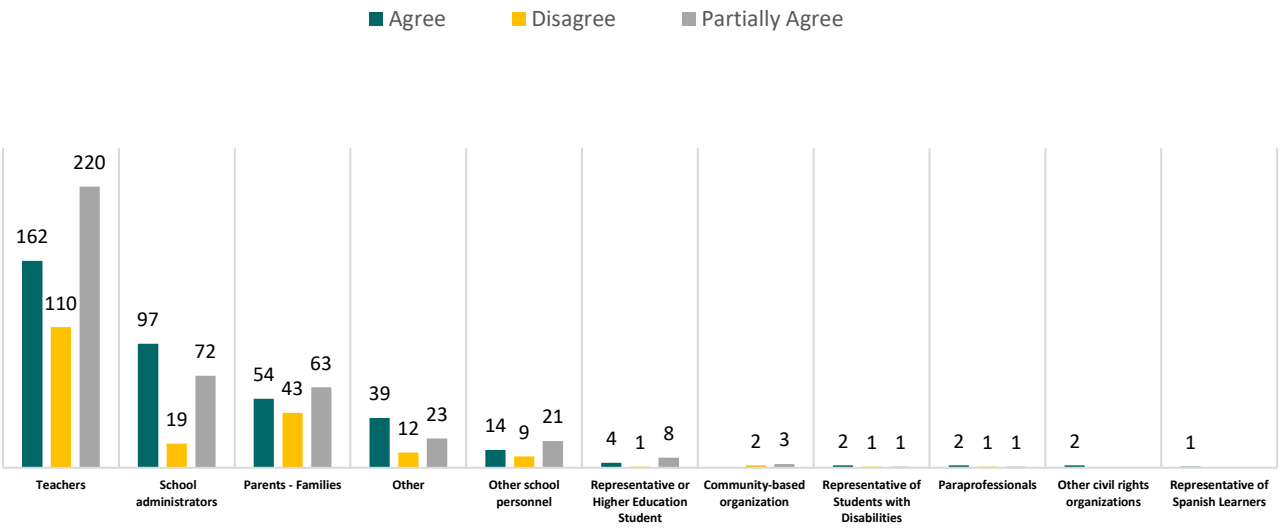
Based on the results on the results of the survey, PRDE will maintain the establishment of the long-term goals to 5 years with a review in the 3rd year.

Another question included in the public survey was to gather feedback as to whether the PRDE's long-term goals were ambitious. PRDE's has set its academic progress goals to reflect a 3% gap reduction each year for all students and each subgroup. The PRDE's five-year long-term goals are ambitious because, the historical data demonstrate a yearly average natural achievement gap reduction tendency of 1% for all students and for each subgroup of students. In light of these facts, a 3% yearly gap reduction is ambitious.

Survey results (all students):

- 80% agree or partially agree that the achievement gap reduction was considered ambitious for all students.
- 20% disagree that the achievement gap reduction was considered ambitious for all students

Graph 2: Do you consider that the percentage is adequate and meets the ambitious and reachable goals? for all students?



Based on the results on the results of the survey, PRDE will increase the establishment of the long term goals and the achievement gap reduction to 5% since it is considered ambitious for all students. This is because the reviewers did not all agree that the 3% was ambitious enough for all students.

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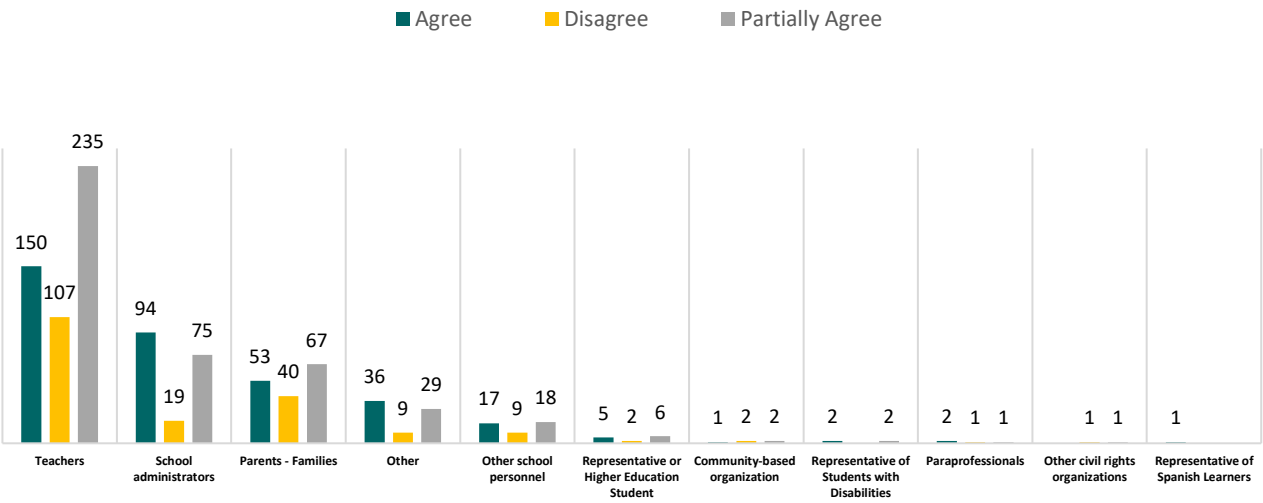
Survey results (each student subgroup):

- 81% agree or partially agree that the achievement gap reduction was considered ambitious for all students.
- 19% disagree that the achievement gap reduction was considered ambitious for all students.

Graph 3: Do you consider that the percentage is adequate and meets the ambitious and reachable goals? each subgroup



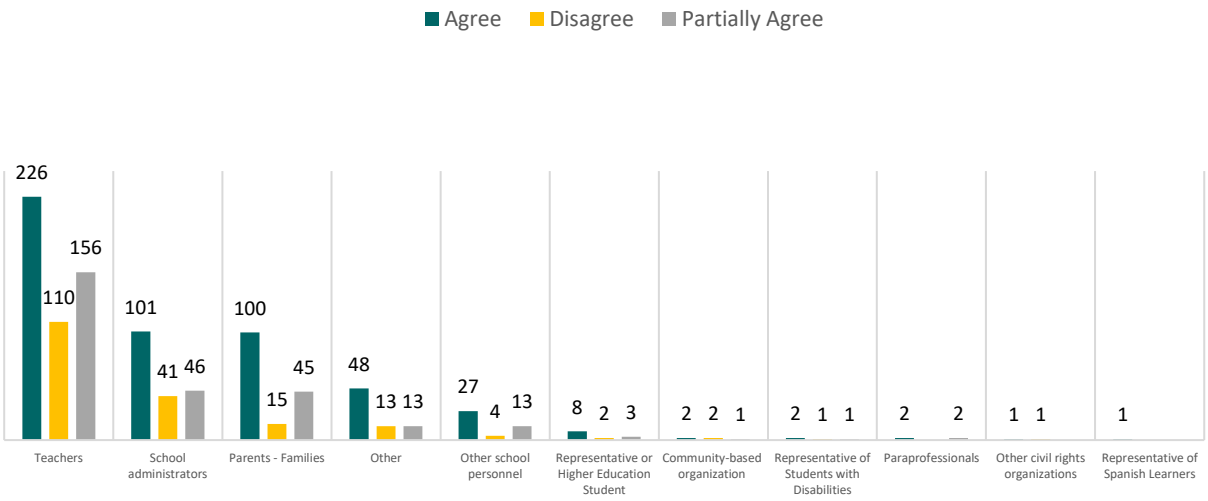
Based on the results on the results of the survey, PRDE will increase the establishment of the long term goals and the achievement gap reduction to 5% since it is considered ambitious for each subgroup. This is because the reviewers did not all agree that the 3% was ambitious enough for each subgroup.

In a third question, the PRDE presented to the public that it seeks to raise the graduation rate by 2% each year for the next 5 years. If the PRDE reaches or surpasses the interim goals established for the third year, the goal will raise to 3% for the fourth year and to 4% for the fifth year. On the other hand, if the PRDE does not reach the interim goals established for the third year, then it will remain at 2% for the fourth and fifth year. These rules will be applied to all students and to each of the subgroups independently of each other.

Survey results:

- 80% agree or partially agree that PRDE's long-term goals should be set for 5 years.
- 19% disagree that PRDE's long term goals should be set for 5 years.

Graph 4: PRDE has demonstrated each year that it meets an increase of 2% of its graduation rate. Based on this, do you consider that PRDE should increase this percentage?



Based on the results on the results of the survey, the PRDE will maintain the increase of 2% in its graduation rate.

In a fourth question, the PRDE presented to the public that it seeks to raise the SLP by 3% each year for the next five years. However, if the PRDE reaches or surpasses the interim goals established for the third year, they would increase to 4% for the fourth year and to 5% for the fifth year. On the other hand, if the PRDE does not reach the interim goal established for the third year, the goal would decrease to 2% for the fourth and fifth year.

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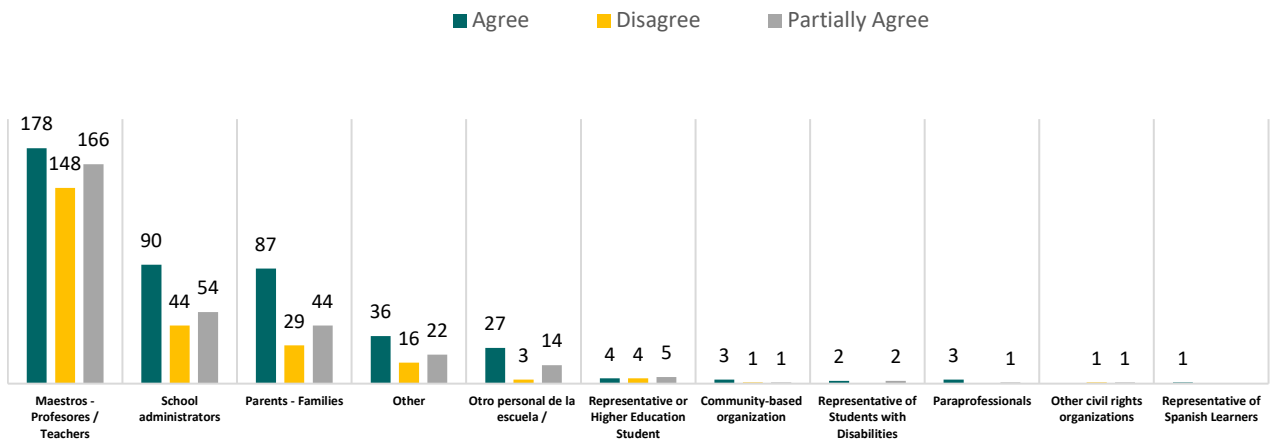
Survey results:

- 75% agree or partially agree that the achievement gap reduction was considered ambitious for all students.
- 25% disagree that the achievement gap reduction was considered ambitious for all students.

Graph 5: Do you consider that PRDE should increase the 3% gap reduction for SLP students?



Based on the results on the results of the survey, the PRDE will maintain the increase of 3% in its gap reduction for SLP students.

The PRDE worked diligently to ensure it complied with subsection 200.21 (b) (1) - (3). To accomplish this, PRDE performed consultation activities, media releases, social media, official ESSA website, and accessing members of its ESSA Stakeholder Committee to keep the public informed on the work of the consolidated state plan.

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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.)[2]

PRDE has elevated academic expectations for students by adopting new, more rigorous standards. In the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the PRDE developed the Puerto Rico Core Standards (PRCS) with the support of Puerto Rico's higher education institutions, education industry and stakeholder groups composed of the school communities that support the prek-12 model.

Certification

Universities in their alignment analysis concluded, affirmed and certified the implementation of PRCS. They confirmed that implementation of these standards across the curriculum, would reduce the number of students who would have to take remedial courses in college in their first year. A long-term outcome of the implementation of the PRCS is, that by 2022 all students will be ready for college and/or prepared for a career. PRDE engages in annual monitoring of PRCS implementation to track progress towards long-term goals.

Teachers from the education system in Puerto Rico evaluated the alignment of our curriculum and standards and confirmed that they provide students with the knowledge and skills that our high school graduates need to succeed during their first year of college. PRDE also contracted an independent company to conduct a study of external curricular alignment This study confirmed the alignment between PRDE's academic standards (PRCS) and what is evaluated (i.e. the content) of our state assessment (META-PR). Sireci Psychometric Services performed this study in the summer/fall of 2016. The final report was submitted in October 2016.

PRDE's success in accomplishing vertical and horizontal alignment of our standards makes it possible for teachers to include interdisciplinary activities that enhance 21st century student learning that prepares them to be competitive in a globalized world. The curricula's vertical and horizontal alignment make it possible for teachers to include cross-curricular activities that enhance our student's learning. Studies and papers related to the implementation of PRCS project that those students who began the PRCS program in kindergarten will be prepared for college upon graduation. The first program results are to come in 2021. Puerto Rico is committed to ensuring that when a student graduates high school they are prepared for college and a career in the 21st century and are world competitive citizens.

[2] 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.

Implementation

Implementation of the PRCS ensures that instructional materials are not limited to textbooks and promotes the use of research-based instructional practices within each grade level and content area. PRDE developed curriculum materials for grades K-12 for Spanish, Math, Science and English as a second language in order to operationalize the implementation of the PRCS. These curriculum maps support standards-based instruction and ensure horizontal and vertical articulation of the standards. Curricular alignment documents and sequence calendars have also been developed. These resources offer teachers additional tools and guides to support the implementation of the curriculum and content standards evaluated on the state assessment. Various universities participated in the development of these resources and have also provided professional development to support their use by PRDE teachers. These efforts are consistent with PRDE's commitment to ensure our curriculum ensures students are college ready and do not need remedial courses.

PRDE provides ongoing support for standards implementation. We provide regular and ongoing professional development to train teachers around the use of the curricular tools they need implement the standards in their classrooms. The PRDE has a catalog of topics for professional development aligned to new academic content in order to meet the professional training needs of teachers. School principals and facilitators are trained annually to integrate additional evidence-based academic strategies to improve teachers' ability to implement the new curriculum. These trainings are provided during the summer, covering topics, which include the following:

- How to plan lessons using curriculum maps
- How to successfully differentiate education
- How to make a better use of curriculum maps and the scope and sequence document

Throughout the school year, the PRDE offers workshops to teachers and school principals at all operational levels to support the ongoing implementation of standards and curriculum in all its parts. These trainings focus on the effective use of curricular materials and maps, data based decision-making and the integration of evidence-based strategies.

Assessments: META-PR

Annually, Puerto Rico administers its high quality and aligned assessment to measure the proficiency and academic growth of students in the content areas of Spanish, math and English as a second language in third through eighth and eleventh grade. The curricular area of science is also measured in fourth, eighth and eleventh grade. The results of PRDE's evaluation system are used to guarantee the accountability and provide support and feedback to schools on student achievement in relation to the curriculum.

Through the development of standards and assessment the PRDE ensures that all students have access to high-quality education. PRDE continues to require demonstration of competency in reading, writing, math and science for all students. With continued high expectations and appropriate supports and interventions for struggling students, we expect to see our students rise to the challenge and observe the corresponding change in achievement results. Annual review of META-PR results should demonstrate students' level of mastery, proficiency levels and academic growth. We are working to develop new tools and resources that will enable us to incorporate formative indicators of progress towards standards master in the current year.

Puerto Rico believes that everyone one if its students can succeed. A student's ethnic background, socio-economic status, primary home language, prior academic experience, or home community within the state is not an excuse to lower expectations for our students, our schools, or our educators that serve them. Our leadership is committed to making sure it does not slide backwards in the years ahead.

The technical development of the tests is based on the standards and expectations have been documented in PRDE's Peer Review submission (July 2017). This evidence demonstrates that PRDE's student evaluation system ensures coverage of the depth and breadth of academic content standards and employs multiple approaches within the specific combinations of grade and content to meet this goal.

The psychometric evidence also establishes that PRDE's standards and expectations have been translated into blueprints that guided test development. These blueprints also identify the indicators within each standard and show of the levels of emphasis included in the assessment and the corresponding weight it has on the overall assessment of student academic achievement. The blueprints establish the distribution of the content to be evaluated in one of the grades granting weights based on the priorities established by the teachers for the contents teaching and learning. The blueprints also establish the distribution of skills and expectations considered as the most relevant to be evaluated as necessary knowledge among students for each of the grades and content that measures the test. For the first time ever, the blueprints were disseminated to teachers in March of 2017. Teachers have been provided with ongoing professional development to ensure they understand the blueprints and can use them when planning lessons.

Test Development Process

In 2015 PRDE modified its state assessment system. The Puerto Rican Tests for Academic Achievement (PPAA, per its acronym in Spanish) became the Measurement and Evaluation for Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico test (META-PR, per its acronym in Spanish). META-PR improved PRDE's capacity to gather evidence on the functioning of the entire education system of Puerto Rico as the new assessment was aligned with the PRCS.

The results of the 2016 META-PR administration reflect the application of new standard setting procedures. Overall, students demonstrated an increase in proficiency across all subjects. The average number of students who demonstrated growth in their execution, regardless of their level of proficiency, was Spanish 60%, Mathematics 52%, and English 58%, the baseline year for assessing progress is 2017. The TAC has advised PRDE that these results should be used as a new baseline for assessing changes in academic achievement over time. PRDE understands that maintaining a valid and reliable assessment system is a requirement for receiving federal funds. However, we see tremendous value in using the results from our assessment system to identify focus areas and strategies for improving academic achievement of disadvantaged students and low performing schools. We use assessment results to identify professional development needs for teachers, plan summer programs, and identify the need for new instructional practices. In addition, PRDE's current assessment system, enables us to:

- Identify the levels of proficiency of the students.
- Give direction to the teaching and learning process and contribute to the decision making on the training and professional development of teachers.
- Provide the opportunity to evaluate the integration of projects and innovations in the classroom that promote academic improvement.
- Implement effective and relevant pedagogical decisions.
- Validate the application of concepts learned in the classroom.
- Improve academic performance by generating ideas and interventions that contribute to the future learning of students.
- Develop effective school improvement strategies and track the effects of their implementation
- Develop self-assessment processes to determine progress and make decisions about student's learning, achievement, and academic growth.

META-PR Alterna

The PRDE is committed to ensuring all students have the opportunity excel in school, regardless of their special needs. PRDE's evaluation system includes an alternate assessment for students identified as having significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in the regular assessment, even with the provision of accommodations. META-PR Alterna was developed with USDE approval under the portfolio strategy.

PRDE developed specific guidelines for Special Education teams to review and apply when determining student participation in the alternate assessment, including the student needs with explicit instruction, extensive supports, and substantial modifications to the curriculum.

Participants in META-PR Alterna comprise approximately less than 1% of the total population of the system.

META-PR Alterna evaluates students under the portfolio strategy in third through eighth and eleventh grade in specific content standards in Spanish, math, and English as a second language. It also evaluates science students for fourth, eighth and eleventh grade students. With the development of the alternate test, we ensure that we provide a differentiated assessment process for our students with disabilities. The portfolio strategy promotes a quality assessment that allows teachers to work on the learning needs of each student. It also allows the monitoring of the achievement and scope of the Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs), adapt the content of the curriculum and evaluate the quality of their own teaching.

PRDE Alternate Performance Indicators reflect equally rigorous definitions of what students with significant cognitive disabilities need to know and be able to demonstrate to be considered proficient in the academic domains for each content and grade level assessed. The content of the alternate test is organized by input targets with multiple sub-parts for data collection. This allows fragmenting grade expectations into smaller, measurable goals and skills to avoid disjointed instruction or a limited level.

Student performances in these tests are compared to alternate performance standards. Alternate performance standards are used for those students who whose participation in the META-PR is not appropriate, even with accommodations. Alternate test scores are used for accountability purposes, student scores are combined with the scores of regular students who obtained proficiency levels. Performance and participation are reported to the United States Department of Education.

Alternate indicators are consistent with the regular test content requirements. To demonstrate this, a document was developed that can determine the alignment of the expectations and skills required for these students through instruction and the portfolio and the PRCS, 2014. To support the training process in META-PR Alterna and provide teachers a tool to incorporate best practices in alignment of standards, education and assessment, teachers have access to instructional modules for all META-PR Alterna entries aligned to the 2014 standards for all indicators required. Each year, training is given on alternate assessment to different groups of special education teachers: new staff administering the test and experienced teachers administering the test. Annually, the best practices of schools that have had the best results from META-PR and META-PR Alterna are identified and shared with the public through the PRDE website, http://www.de.gobierno.pr/41-institucion/2692-resultados-meta-pr.

The technical development of META-PR Alterna is based on the development and specifications of the minimum skills required by grade and area of content to be evaluated. Academic achievement levels were also developed for these students and their outcomes were shared with schools to determine student achievement and academic growth as well as decision makers on curriculum implementation and use of best practices Instructional.

Use of Data from Assessment System

PRDE uses META-PR to measure student achievement. META-PR provides data in its achievement-level reports by content, grade and benchmark standards among subgroups that facilitate instructional decision making at the school or public policy level. Puerto Rico has continuous support from our TAC; which has provided PRDE with support for the past several years, as seen here. Our TAC has confirmed that PRDE's assessment systems for both regular education and special education, as well as our use of data to make decisions about PRDE's academic programs, are compliant with USDE requirements. Puerto Rico will continue to use META-PR and META-PR Alterna in its transition to ESSA and we will continue to work with our TAC to ensure ongoing compliance with federal requirements.

PRDE's comprehensive statewide testing program shows where students are, where they should be, and where they will be PRDE will continue to provide individual student reports are provided to schools to help measure student progress in the identified skills related to content standards. This helps teachers know where to intervene with their students at the beginning of each school year. In addition, scores serve as evidence to identify and evaluate the interventions offered to the student and to determine the achievement of measurable annual goals and objectives for all students and subgroups.

In the current academic year, the PRDE is revising its methods for reporting student achievement results to ensure these results are more easily accessible by parents, teachers and students. We are also moving to the use of new platforms that will facilitate the information to our stakeholders. However, we will ensure that there is continuity and comparability in score reporting across all years. In addition, we will ensure that calculations of academic growth that compares student results across two consecutive years: current and previous are valid.

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**
   X No

Puerto Rico does not administer end-of-course mathematics assessments to high school students. Therefore, Puerto Rico does not seek to use the exception for students in eighth grade to take such assessments as allowable under section 1111(b)(2)(C) of the ESEA. This is something that PRDE is considering as it continues to transform its academic program and offerings.

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**
X 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.

The language of instruction in PRDE is Spanish. Therefore, instead of English Language Proficiency (ELP), students are identified as Spanish Learners (SL). English speaking students are identified as SL.

PRDE defines "a language other than Spanish that is present to a significant extent in the participating student participation" as a language that is present in greater than 30% or more percent of the population. For 2016-2017, the initial students' enrollment was 365,181. The SL population is 1,490 as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR) that represent 0.41% of the total population. The following table shows that the main language spoken by PRDE SL students' is English.

Table 1: Main Languages spoken by SL based on Home Language Survey Data

Main Languages spoken by SL students	Number of SL students (2016-2017)	% of SL student
English	1,411	95%
Haitian (Creole)	20	1%
Chinese	15	1%
Arabic	5	0%
Others	39	3%
Total	**1,490**	**100%**

No additional languages are present "to a significant extent" or that constitute a large enough percentage of the island wide student population, according to the definition above. Nevertheless, PRDE will continue monitor population growth and demographic shifts each year and adjusts its assessment development plan accordingly.

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

There are no existing assessments, in languages other than Spanish, for there are no languages that constitute a large enough percentage of the island wide student population to require additional translated versions of any Puerto Rico assessment. K-3 students participating in the recently implemented Bilingual Initiative take an English proficiency test (pre and post) designed by the English Program Facilitators with the support of the META-PR contractor. However, due to the demand for services by the Bilingual Initiative the English Program is committed to develop a valid and reliable English proficiency measurement for all grades impacted. Over the next two years, working in a progressive manner, PRDE will seek to develop English versions of the Science and Math test for third grade.

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

There are no other existing languages, other than Spanish, that constitute a large enough percentage of the island wide student population to require additional translated versions of any Puerto Rico assessment.

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);
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; and
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.

SL students do not represent a significant extended population based on the state definition. Participants in SL assessments represent less than 1,500 students; or less than 1% of our total population. In addition, the number of students included in this overall population continue to decrease as students leave the island every year.

PRDE provides instruction to the SL population using a full immersion model in which all core subjects are taught in Spanish language. Accommodations and differentiated instruction is provided for both instructional or assessment purposes. Analysis of assessment results among SL students demonstrate comparable academic performance as compared to Spanish dominant students. This tendency is observed in both math and Spanish (Note: the assessment is

administered in Spanish). The following table shows assessment results data based on percentage of proficient.

Table 2: Assessments Results: %Proficiency

	META-PR Assessment 2015-16				META-PR Assessment 2016-17			
Content Area	**All student**		**SL**		**All student**		**SL**	
	%Proficiency	***#Students***	***%Proficiency***	***#Students***	***%Proficiency***	***#Students***	***%Proficiency***	***#Students***
Math	33.45%	202,217	35.22%	886	33.00%	192,258	29.00%	636
Spanish	50.65%	201,791	40.32%	883	49.00%	191,965	31.00%	636
Science	52.84%	85,002	42.94%	326	49.00%	80,519	28.00%	238

Source: PRDE Report Card PRDE Report Card

See report card here.

The Spanish Acquisition and Immigrant Program Accommodations Manual was created to provide best practices and procedures to provide equitable opportunities for all students in an integrated way. The Manual includes examples for how to provide accommodations during the administration of the standardized test (META-PR and Alternate META-PR) as well as during the daily instruction and/or other evaluations that take place throughout the academic year.

The accommodations, differentiated instruction and other strategies to be implemented for Spanish Learners are well documented in each SL student's Individualized Plan Accommodations are developed separately for each student taking into consideration their unique needs, characteristics and recommendations of the parents, legal guardians, teachers, facilitators, school director and any other important member of the Language Revision Committee (COREL, per its acronym in Spanish). Each student receives differentiated instruction based on the assessment results, where teachers and other personnel need to see the area were the student is not meeting the proficiency level (speaking, listening, comprehension and/or writing) to emphasize and work with activities inside and outside the classroom. The differentiated instruction includes activities were the integration of fine arts, ludic method and technology is utilized.

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).

Table 3: Major racial and ethnic group in PRDE as reported for accountability purposes

Subgroups
Puerto Rican students
Hispanic students (other than Puerto Rican)
White non-Hispanic students
Other origin

These four student groups were chosen because they are the four racial/ethnic groups that are prevalent in Puerto Rico. Analysis shows that there are achievement gaps among these subgroups across multiple indicators in Puerto Rico. These racial and ethnic subgroups are consistent with the requirements for federal reporting according to the most recent federal guidance published in the *Federal Register* (72 Fed. Reg. 59267). It should be noted that Puerto Rico has used these same subgroups for the last 10 years; they are compliant with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Elementary and Secondary (ESEA) requirements.

PRDE reports "Other Origin" as a student subgroup, which consists of any student representing Multi-racial students. The combined student group allows inclusion of the performance of these students in the accountability system in cases where no individual student group meets the minimum n-size threshold.

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.

The PRDE uses all the statutorily required subgroups in its Island wide accountability system. No additional student subgroup is currently used by PRDE.

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
X No

d. If applicable, choose one 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.

Recently arrived Spanish Learners are those students whose initial entry date in a public school is less than one year (i.e., 12 months) prior to test administration. A recently arrived SL is tested in all subject areas starting with the first year. However, the test scores for that recently arrived SL are not included in the achievement accountability calculations (Indicator 1) for the first year.

However, PRDE excludes the results of SL students when reporting the Spanish/ Language Arts proficiency results for META-PR and Alternate META-PR. The achievement accountability system removes scores from these participants' for that first year. Scores are excluded because recently arrived SLs have not had enough time to learn Spanish and be able to understand the language in which the assessment items are presented. Consequently, the results reported for these students may be more of a reflection of lack of proficiency in Spanish instead of lack of mastery of grade level content standards. PRDE recognizes that use of these results could produce decisions that are based more on linguistic limitations rather than academic skills.

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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 PRDE has determined that the minimum number of students will be:

- N=5 for accountability classifications based on all students
- N=10 for reporting purposes
- N=10 for subgroup driven accountability classifications

This minimum N-size applies to all students and each subgroup of students.

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

Puerto Rico analyzed population data to develop our accountability model. We believe that availability of data for all students provides statistical richness and eliminates sampling errors. It also assures that every student is represented in the model and that results are reliable and valid. It is important to note that various schools have a small number of students from various subgroups. As a result, the accountability determination for each school may include results from student groups that form a fairly small percentage of the overall student population. In order to hold schools accountable for the performance of smaller student groups, PRDE attempted to develop accountability system with a minimum n-size that is small enough so that as many students from these groups are included as possible.

Consequently, PRDE determined that its most pressing considerations regarding minimum n-size are: 1) the reliability of the indicators and 2) the rate of inclusion of historically underserved student groups in the accountability system. PRDE recognizes that all indicators in an accountability system are subject to variability from year to year. Higher n-sizes increase the reliability and consistency of these indicators, and helps remove variability that may be outside a district's control, such as variation in student cohorts or the fact that assessment scores have an inherent standard error of measure.

Puerto Rico elected to have a minimum n size of 5, for accountability purposes. This implies a single student can generate a meaningful differentiation in the performance of a 5-person group. Although the PRDE recognizes that 1 student affecting a score significantly is not ideal, that concern is outweighed by the fact that Puerto Rico's model allows for the inclusion, evaluation and attention of small subgroups of students who need additional support in our Educational System.

Puerto Rico's socioeconomic condition makes it imperative that we pay particular attention to subgroups in public policy decisions. PRDE, after consulting with the Institute of Statistics, has determined its minimum number of students is sufficient to yield statistically reliable information for each purpose for which disaggregated data is used and ensures that all student subgroups are included for purposed of making PRDE's accountability determinations.

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.

The minimum number was selected by PRDE after performing various statistical analyses and modeling. PRDE then consulted with stakeholders and considered the recommendations of our TAC. The following table includes at what percentage of students, in total and for each subgroup statewide, would be included in the accountability system based on N-size determinations.

Table 4: Number of student included in the accountability system by subgroup at different minimum n size

	Enrollment Total Students	N<30		N<20		N<15		N<10		N<5	
Subgroup		#Students	%	#Students	%	#Students	%	#Students	%	#Students	%
All Students	364,970	364,923	100%	364,970	100%	364,970	100%	364,970	100%	364,970	100%
Puerto Rican	364,675	364,628	100%	364,675	100%	364,675	100%	364,675	100%	364,675	100%
Hispanic NOT Puerto Rican	6,578	604	9%	1,132	17%	1,839	28%	2,968	45%	4,782	73%
White NOT Hispanic	456	-	0%	-	0%	16	4%	16	4%	55	12%
Other Origin	383	-	0%	-	0%	17	4%	43	11%	62	16%
Economically Disadvantaged	294,210	294,151	100%	294,178	100%	294,195	100%	294,210	100%	294,210	100%
Disabilities	118,329	116,171	98%	117,840	100%	118,159	100%	118,289	100%	118,316	100%
Spanish Learners	1,025	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	38	4%	128	12%

As the table shows a low n size is required to obtain participation in several subgroups. Puerto Rico set n=5 as the minimum subgroup size, for accountability purpose, to ensure the most inclusive representation of subgroups. The data demonstrate that for certain groups, such as White Not Hispanic, Other Origin and Spanish Learners would not have any representation at a minimum n of 20. However, this improves when the minimum n is at 5. This is because these three student subgroups each comprise less than 1% of Puerto Rico's student population.

It is important to also note that the population characteristics of Puerto Rico differ from those in most states.

d. Describe how the State ensures that the minimum number is sufficient to not reveal any personally identifiable information.[3]

There were two considerations in the determination of reporting results to ensure that no personally identifiable information is revealed. PRDE is committed to protecting the confidentiality of the individual students. When a subgroup is relatively small, the possibility that individual members could be identified with a particular set of scores by virtue of demographic characteristics is substantially increased. Therefore, because small subgroups in any school could lead to the identification of individual students, n should be large enough to protect confidentiality. The second consideration was the fact that educators, the public and media will likely use any reported information to make comparisons.

Again, relatively small n's carries a relatively large sampling error, which makes any comparison unreliable for practical purposes, and misinform the untrained user, which are, in general, the population for which the reports are intended. Puerto Rico determined to use a minimum group size of 10 for reporting results which is sufficient to not reveal any personally identifiable information. PRDE's n - size will be no larger than necessary to ensure the protection of privacy for individuals and to allow for statistically reliable results of the aggregate performance of the students who make up a subgroup.

To be as inclusive as possible all students are utilized in the general school classification process. The PRDE will not use subgroups smaller than 10 when classifying schools for targeted support as this might have identified the performance of a particular student. As mentioned before, some schools have very small subgroups.

[3] 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.

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.

N/A

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

Puerto Rico, like the rest of the country, has persistent achievement gaps that spread across the entirety of the public school population. PRDE believes that an excellent education can enable every child – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or disability status – to master challenging academic curriculum and achieve at the highest levels. The general consensus among Puerto Ricans is that, every child regardless of background or zip-code, is capable of achieving at the highest levels when exposed to great instruction and school leadership. Puerto Rico and the PRDE have a moral obligation to hold all students to the highest of standards, and to expect that all students will rise to the academic challenges put before them. Students increase their proficiency on the annual state assessment if they demonstrate a reduction on their achievement gap on those assessments toward higher levels of achievement from one year to the next. PRDE is working together with the Governor's office to address the student achievement issues that have historically plagued Puerto Rico. The school improvement outcomes established by the PRDE are aligned with the Governor's Plan for Puerto Rico.

As described in the Stakeholder Engagement section of this document, PRDE was able to obtain feedback through its meaningful consultation process. The feedback collected addressed a wide range of topics including academic outcomes. Stakeholders indicated that PRDE's long-term goals should measure its students' goals based on clear and specific Academic Metrics. PRDE used this feedback, along with research and analysis conducted internally, to develop a timeline for long-term goals at five years for each core academic courses (Mathematics, English and Spanish).

Baseline data and the long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rates, and Spanish Language Proficiency have been set for all students and subgroups. In order to support all students in meeting their fullest potential, PRDE has set academic goals and targets for all subgroups as required by federal law. Our goal is that the lowest performing subgroup, regardless of the amount of students, has the largest improvement in academic proficiency, while the having simultaneous gains in academic proficiency amongst all groups of students on near-parallel tracks.

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

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.

PRDE has a history of slow change in terms of academic achievement and has several challenges in achieving high proficiency rates. This phenomenon has been identified based on a longitudinal tracking of PRDE's performance. However, it is important to note that, Puerto Rico's academic achievement outcomes have also been poor as compared to other states.

For the 2016-2017 school year, less than a half of the students were proficient in all academic subjects (Mathematics, English and Spanish). The highest proficiency rate in the last 6 years was achieved in the 2015-2016 school year, at 50.7% in Spanish. Neither the PRDE nor the Governor of Puerto Rico are willing to accept such low levels of student proficiency.

Table 5: Historic Proficiency Rate from 2010-11 to 2016-17

	PPAA				META-PR	
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Mathematics	29.6	29.3	30.0	29.6	33.5	33.0
English	42.3	43.0	41.4	41.9	45.1	42.0
Spanish	46.9	48.1	45.7	43.5	50.7	49.0

In order to support all students in meeting their fullest potential, Puerto Rico has set academic goals and targets for all subgroups as required by federal law. Our goal in Puerto Rico is for the current lowest performing subgroup, to have an academic proficiency rate of 70% by 2022. We likewise have set similar targets for simultaneous gains in academic proficiency amongst all subgroups of students

Currently, the rate of student growth in academic proficiency varies between each subgroup. In order to ensure that all of Puerto Rico's children are above a 70% academic proficiency by 2022 (with island-wide averages of 80% in Spanish, 73% in mathematics and 77% in English) PRDE has undertaken a comprehensive restructuring. The goal of this restructuring is intended to improve

academic outcomes and better align resources. PRDE expects that an improvement in proficiency will provide encouragement to all schools to continue to progress.

Table 6: Long-Term Goals for each Subgroup by Subject

Subgroup	Spanish Long Term Goal	Mathematics Long Term Goal	English Long Term Goal
	(2021-2022)	(2021-2022)	(2021-2022)
All Students	80	73	77
Puerto Rican	80	73	77
Hispanic Not Puerto Rican	77	70	77
White Not Hispanic	78	75	88
Other Origin	80	75	85
Economically Disadvantaged	78	73	76
Disabilities	73	72	72
Spanish Learners	72	72	86

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i. Baseline Data

The baseline for long term goals for all students and for each subgroup was set using actual data from the 2017 PRDE's Report Card. Baseline was defined as the current island wide proficiency rate for each subgroup, for the 2016-2017. The following table outlines the new baseline for each student subgroup, by subject.

Table 7: Baseline for each Subgroup by Subject

Subgroup	Spanish Baseline	Mathematics Baseline	English Baseline
	(2016-2017)	(2016-2017)	(2016-2017)
All Students	49	33	42
Puerto Rican	49	32	43
Hispanic Not Puerto Rican	43	26	42
White Not Hispanic	44	37	69
Other Origin	50	37	63
Economically Disadvantaged	46	32	40
Disabilities	33	29	31
Spanish Learners	31	29	64

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ii. Long term goals and timeline

PRDE is seeking to reduce the achievement gap in the next five years, for all students and for each subgroup of students. Puerto Rico's goal is that the current lowest performing subgroup must have an academic proficiency rate of 70% by 2022. This represents a 12% yearly reduction in the achievement gap, or a gap reduction of 60% in five years. PRDE's long-term goals show that the state has a commitment to close the achievement gap.

Table 8: Baseline and Long-Term Goals for each Subgroup by Subject

Subgroup	Spanish Baseline	Spanish Goal	Math Baseline	Math Goal	English Baseline	English Goal
	(2016-2017)	(2021-2022)	(2016-2017)	(2021-2022)	(2016-2017)	(2021-2022)
All Students	49	80	33	73	42	77
Puerto Rican	49	80	32	73	43	77
Hispanic Not Puerto Rican	43	77	26	70	42	77
White Not Hispanic	44	78	37	75	69	75
Other Origin	50	80	37	75	63	85
Economically Disadvantaged	46	78	32	73	40	76
Disabilities	33	73	29	72	31	72
Spanish Learners	31	72	29	72	64	86

Procedure for Calculating Long Term Goals for Academic Achievement

Long Term Goals for Academic Achievement (LTGA) will be 100% minus the calculated GAP for each year for every subgroup. The calculated GAP will be the current GAP reduced by 12% each year. Current GAP will be determined as the difference between 100% and the Proficiency Rate Baseline for each subgroup (i.e. Spanish Proficiency for all Students in 2017 is 49%, GAP = 100%-49% = 51%). The calculated GAP will be 12% less in year 1, 24% less in year 2 and so on, in order to reach a gap reduction of 60% in five years.

Long Term Goals for Academic Achievement (LTGA) is calculated as follow:

$$LTGA_t = 100 - GAP\ (1 - .12t)$$

Where,

t = long term goals years (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

and

$$GAP = 100 - Proficiency\ Rate\ Baseline$$

iii. Ambitious Long-Term Goals

PRDE's historical data demonstrates a barely average achievement gap reduction of 1% every year, for all students and for each subgroup. For this reason, Puerto Rico recognizes that the new goals, which reflect an average of 12% yearly gap reduction, are extremely ambitious and feasible.

It is true that has been a challenge to improve proficiency rate over the years, but PRDE is committed to disseminate information about its new approach to addressing schools' and students learning needs. There will be ongoing support and the development of new curricular material to ensure the needs of diverse learners are met. Additionally, PRDE will continue to provide continued and sustained professional development to improve the competencies of educators throughout its system. Puerto Rico is moving forward to dramatically improve education so all our children can succeed.

In order to address the longstanding academic achievement needs of students in Puerto Rico, the PRDE has undertaken a comprehensive restructuring, which goal is intended to improve academic outcomes and better align resources.

The PRDE also consulted research that indicates that when districts close schools they are able to achieve improved outcomes for students by concentrating limited financial and staff resources on fewer schools. Additionally, this research suggests that this strategy is particularly effective in districts that face declining student enrollment. Student enrollment in PR has been declining in recent years, approximately 20,000 students per year.

The PRDE initiated a comprehensive data collection effort to understand the specific situations in each of our school communities. We did this because research indicates that when closing schools, it is important to consider that it is always difficult for parents and students of these schools. In addition, the PRDE is cross-referencing school closure data and data related to academic achievement. Our intention is to address schools that have been chronically underperforming for years. Our goal is to move students to more productive learning environment and/or combine schools that are "Excellent" so that more students can benefit from effective instructional practices.

In order for the PRDE to make these decisions with the effect of improving academic outcomes the PRDE needs better data and information to make informed decisions. The PRDE is adhering to best practices in Data Driven Decision Making (DDDM) and applying methods form Total Quality Management, Organizational Learning, and Continuous Improvement. Additionally, the types of data that are collected, analyses that are performed, and decisions the PRDE is making vary across levels of our educational system, including the classroom, school, district, and island. Without the availability of high-quality data and appropriate technical assistance, data may lead to invalid conclusions.[4]

[4] http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2006/RAND_OP170.pdf

Stakeholder expectations for PRDE's long term goals

As mentioned in the opening section of this document, the PRDE recognizes that an ongoing and meaningful stakeholder engagement is essential to the effective development and successful implementation of Puerto Rico's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan on behalf of Puerto Rican students.

On March 24, 2017, PRDE administered a survey providing the opportunity to express opinion and concerns regarding the establishment of long-term goals and if the achievement gap reduction was considered ambitious for all students. Based on the results of the survey, 81% of interested groups agreed that PRDE's long-term goals, of a yearly reduction of 3% in the achievement gap, is ambitious. This goal would only allow 50% of students to achieve proficiency levels in Spanish and English and less than a half in math.

For this reason, PRDE is committed to establishing highly ambitious long-term goals and striving to improve education so all our children can succeed. *(Survey results are presented in Stakeholder Consultation section.)*

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

The measurements of interim goals toward meeting the academic year 2021-2022 final goals were set, based on a yearly reduction of a 12% in the achievement gap. At the end of the first year of ESSA implementation PRDE will examine the results of its scores for each subgroup island-wide.

Where schools fail to meet the identified annual target, PRDE will examine the performance of these schools to better understand the reasons for the observed performance. The PRDE will look for changes in attendance rates, scaled scores, and performance on individual content areas as measured by other academic indicators.

If schools, teachers and/or students do not meet the intended goals, then the PRDE will identify causal factors and will address the underlying issues. This root cause analysis will help ensure schools can get back on target for meeting their long-term goals.

One specific example of how the PRDE will accomplish this is through the implementation of it our School Improvement Plan (DEE, per its acronym in Spanish). School Improvement Teams, led by school directors, must create an annual plan to guide the professional development and school improvement activities for their school. The collaborative development process requires that school level teams use the data to make the decisions on professional development content or instructional practices that are needed.

With the DEE, schools are to plan activities and improvement projects based on their needs. Previously, PRDE did not have the results of state assessments in time to use them in planning the following year's professional development. This year, for the first time, PRDE is using results of

the most recent state assessments to attend student needs. This has given PRDE a clearer idea of which content areas need improvement. The schools' DEE are reviewed and approved by district leadership teams.

Also, the PRDE's "Escuelas Faro" Model helps the faculty teams to develop plans with a holistic perspective aided by the community. "Escuelas Faro" are schools that are transforming into entrepreneurial communities and schools. These schools are systematically establishing all the essential components to help students develop the skills necessary to be competitive citizens worldwide, with an emphasis on entrepreneurship. Puerto Rico is beginning to establish one school by municipality that serves as an example in its geographic area of how schools can be transformed with the help of their neighbors, businesses and organizations in their community.

In the year 2017-2018 Puerto Rico has already established 12 Faro Schools in 12 municipalities in the east and west regions. These schools have begun to form the multisector teams at the municipal level that are helping them in the process of transformation. The Faro Schools serve as a workshop for the development of new programs and methodologies that Puerto Rico is working to enhance public education on the island. These schools have become centers for training teachers.

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In the following tables (9 through 11), the first column represents the baseline and the following columns represents the interim yearly academic achievement goals till 2021-2022. One table is presented for each of the core content areas tested in PR's assessment system: Spanish, Mathematics, and English.

Table 9: Baseline and Interim Goals for Academic Achievement (Proficient) in Spanish, Puerto Rico 2016-2017 to 2021-2022

	Baseline	Interim Goals				Goal
Group	**(2016-2017)**	**(2017-2018)**	**(2018-2019)**	**(2019-2020)**	**(2020-2021)**	**(2021-2022)**
All Students	**49**	55	61	67	73	**80**
Puerto Rican	**49**	55	61	67	73	**80**
Hispanic NOT Puerto Rican	**43**	50	57	64	70	**77**
White NOT Hispanic	**44**	51	57	64	71	**78**
Other Origin	**50**	56	62	68	74	**80**
Economically Disadvantaged	**46**	52	59	65	72	**78**
Disabilities	**33**	41	49	57	65	**73**
Spanish Learners	**31**	39	48	56	64	**72**

Notes:
- Proficiency = Proficient + Advance in META-PR Results
- Goals were calculated using a 12% yearly reduction in the achievement gap.

Graph 6: Goals for Academic Achievement (Proficient) in Spanish: All Students

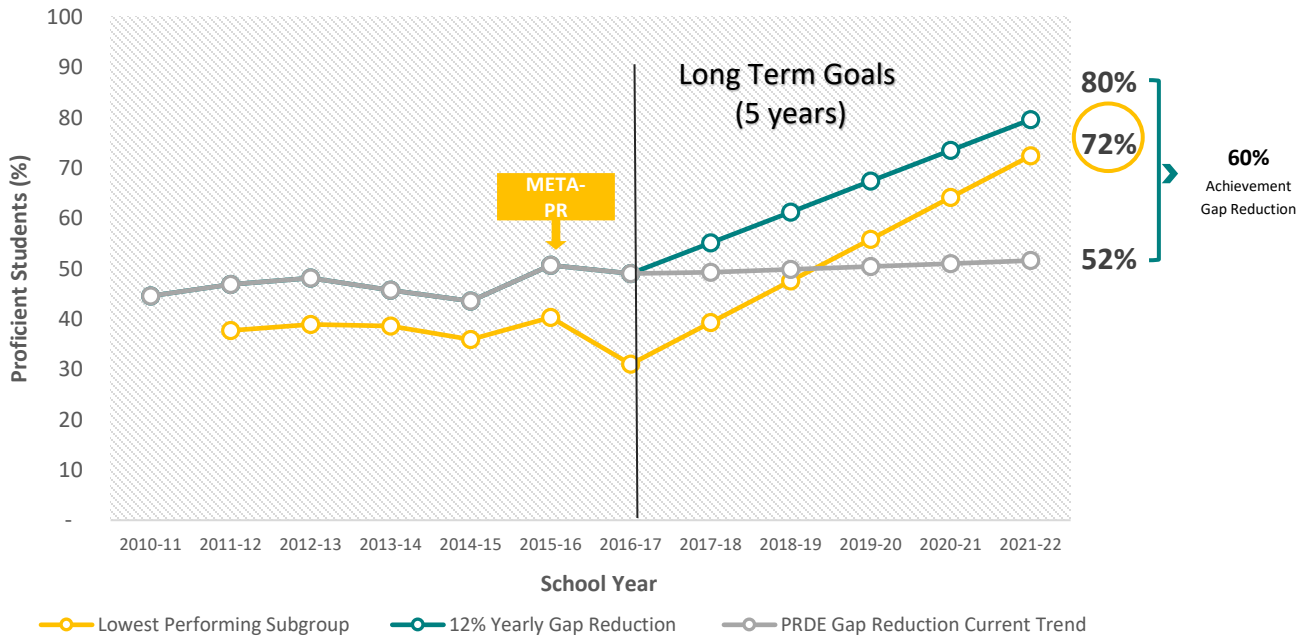


Table 10: Baseline and Interim Goals for Academic Achievement (Proficient) in Mathematics, Puerto Rico 2016-2017 to 2021-2022

	Baseline	Interim Goals				Goal
Group	**(2016-2017)**	**(2017-2018)**	**(2018-2019)**	**(2019-2020)**	**(2020-2021)**	**(2021-2022)**
All Students	**33**	41	49	57	65	**73**
Puerto Rican	**32**	40	48	56	65	**73**
Hispanic NOT Puerto Rican	**26**	35	44	53	62	**70**
White NOT Hispanic	**37**	45	52	60	67	**75**
Other Origin	**37**	45	52	60	67	**75**
Economically Disadvantaged	**32**	40	48	56	65	**73**
Disabilities	**29**	38	46	55	63	**72**
Spanish Learners	**29**	38	46	55	63	**72**

Notes:

- Proficiency = Proficient + Advance in META-PR Results
- Goals were calculated using a 12% yearly reduction in the achievement gap.

Graph 7: Goals for Academic Achievement (Proficient) in Mathematics: All Students

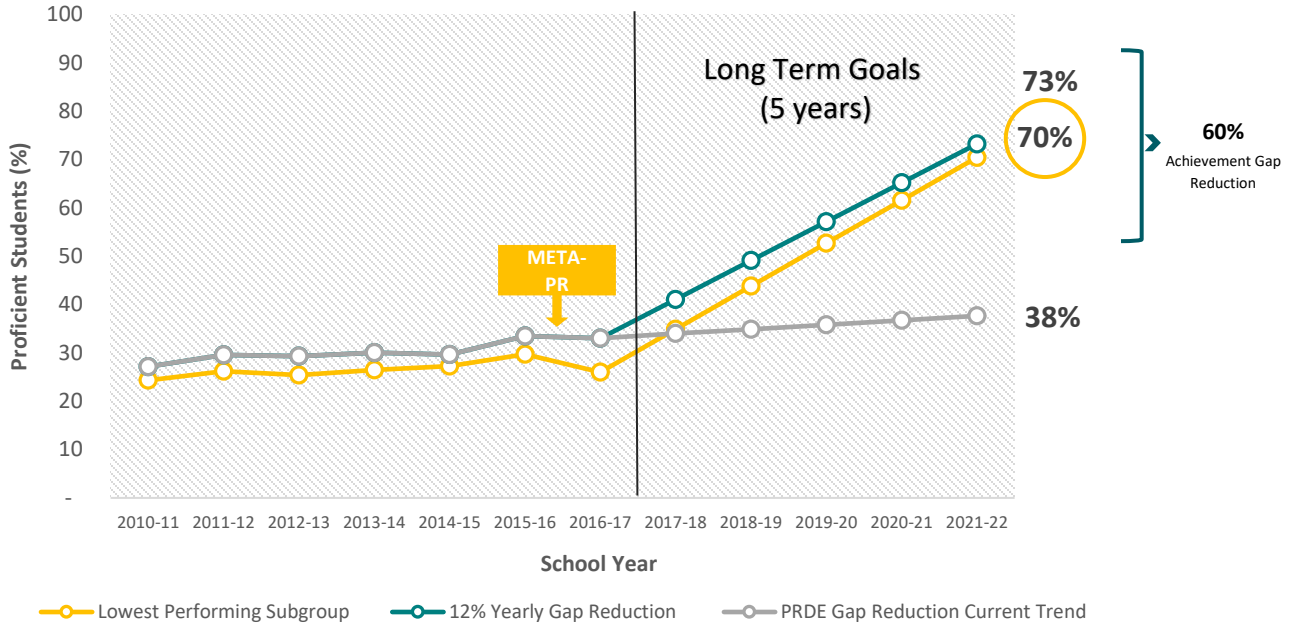


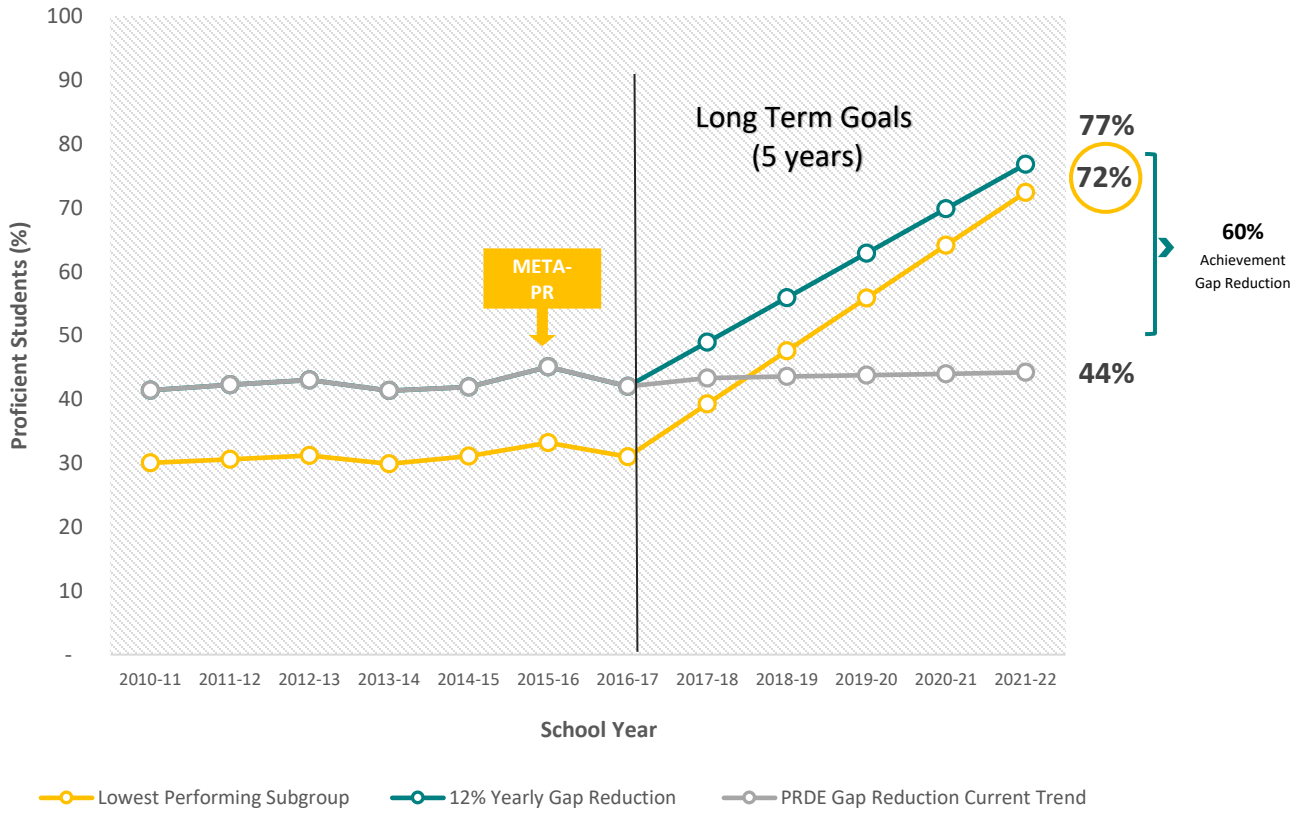
Table 11: Baseline and Interim Goals for Academic Achievement (Proficient) in English, Puerto Rico 2016-2017 to 2021-2022

	Baseline	Interim Goals				Goal
Group	**(2016-2017)**	**(2017-2018)**	**(2018-2019)**	**(2019-2020)**	**(2020-2021)**	**(2021-2022)**
All Students	**42**	49	56	63	70	**77**
Puerto Rican	**43**	50	57	64	70	**77**
Hispanic NOT Puerto Rican	**42**	49	56	63	70	**77**
White NOT Hispanic	**69**	73	76	80	84	**88**
Other Origin	**63**	67	72	76	81	**85**
Economically Disadvantaged	**40**	47	54	62	69	**76**
Disabilities	**31**	39	48	56	64	**72**
Spanish Learners	**64**	68	73	77	81	**86**

Notes:

- Proficiency = Proficient + Advance in META-PR Results
- Goals were calculated using a 12% yearly reduction in the achievement gap.

Graph 8: Goals for Academic Achievement (Proficient) in English: All Students



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.

The PRDE embraces the opportunity ESSA brings to achieve its long term goals by the year 2022, ensuring that its PreK-12 community is aligned to PRDE's students achievement goals, and by preparing its students to achieve at the highest levels in their academic and professional careers. PRDE has set interim targets for all students and for each sub-group that allow for meaningful growth and improvement in reducing achievement gaps.

Over the last 7 months, PRDE has conducted a system-wide assessment of its operations and performance. As a result of this analysis, we have identified the improvements necessary to meet the identified proficiency targets. PRDE has identified that the root causes of historical failure to make consistent process in closing achievement gaps in the past are the result of:

- Inconsistent focus on key standards and performance outcomes
- Absence of a coherent system of academic improvement interventions
- Ineffective administrative and professional support procedures that specifically target effective instructional practices
- Lack of system-wide articulation of the administrative roles/positions in support of instructional practices, supervision and outcomes

Through the implementation of our professional evaluation systems, PRDE will be able to gather implementation data that will demonstrate the degree to which changes in practice are resulting in changes in these leading indicators.

Results on current island wide assessments has shown that achievement gaps also exists in Puerto Rico's historically underserved and underrepresented student population with regard to result. When compared to island wide averages Student with Disabilities (Special Education) makes up to 45% of the population, and Spanish Learners students make up less than 1% of our student population.

In order to realize the improvement necessary for students' subgroups who are behind in reaching those goals, including those undeserved and underrepresented groups of students, PRDE has designed the following system wide school improvement strategies:

Academic Achievement of students and attending the whole child

Gaming for learning project (motivational didactic strategy)

Through the implementation of this project, PRDE aims to benefit from the use of gamification in learning environments, without losing sight of meaningful and permanent learning, school retention of students. PRDE has considered essential to use games in contexts relevant to the goals and objectives of academic achievement of students. Gaming for Learning is based on

using technology to improve math learning for PRDE's fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. The primary objective is that students achieve a minimum increase of 10% in their academic achievement in mathematics using innovative strategies. By embracing and integrating technology in the classroom, PRDE sets our students for the digital future. Students prefer technology because they believe that it makes learning more interesting and fun. Therefore subjects that students deem challenging or boring can become more interesting with virtual lessons and games.

Implementation data from this initiative will be used to ensure that PRDE is making progress in reaching its long-term academic achievement goals. PRDE will develop periodic assessments for the student to complete before and after participating in the activities, as a way to measure the effectiveness of this initiative.

Online Learning

The PRDE will offer an innovative academic program, based on Information Technologies, Internet and the techniques and methodologies of Online Learning/Distance Education. These strategies offer Online courses with special attention to students at risk of School Dropout to encourage School Retention and to all students including Vieques and Culebra. Effective implementation should result in a, decrease Dropout rates for all students in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Star Links curriculum

The Links Curriculum (Linking Assessment and Instruction for Independence) is an evidence-based, comprehensive, web-based curriculum to teach upper elementary, secondary and postsecondary students with autism and other developmental disabilities to be independent across school, community and vocational routines. One of the strengths of this project is the specialized training offered to the teachers of the system, along with a coaching program that allows them to implement the new strategies and knowledge acquired in their classroom.

Through the STAR Program and Curriculum Links (STAR / Links) PRDE optimizes the education of our students with autism other developmental disabilities. Approximately 4.59% of our student population has been diagnosed with autism. PRDE's autism population is 882 students between de ages 3-5, and 4,584 students between the ages of 6-21 years, while Student with Disabilities (Special Education) makes up to 45% of the population.

The Links Curriculum includes detailed lesson plans, visual sequence strips, data systems and assessment. Links is designed to promote student independence in natural environments. The Links online system utilizes a curriculum-based assessment to individualize routines for every student. The Links school and community lesson plans provide the user with the tools necessary to teach both individual skills and independence in daily routines.

The systematic structure of the program begins with an evaluation process based on development and continues with the implementation of lessons appropriate to the student's abilities and needs. This curriculum incorporates functional learning that improves the quality of life of these students.

PRDE's implementation of this intervention has enabled students to demonstrate an increase their mathematics and writing abilities.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

PRDE seeks to manage inappropriate behaviors that affect school climate, to foster an environment conducive to learning and to increase student achievement. To improve school climate, PRDE will implement a Professional Development Program for school district teachers (supervisors), teachers and principals Elementary schools in order for them to properly implement the PBIS system in elementary schools of the system. PBIS is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. This program will allow participants to learn how to implement a Positive School Behavior Support System to achieve a Positive and Creative School Climate. Likewise, through this professional development program, PRDE will engage the collaborative involvement of parents, students, the community adjacent to the campus, and all school staff to creatively address behavioral problems and violence faced by schools.

During the 2017-2018 school year, PRDE expects that 70% of eligible project participants will be able to increase their knowledge about the PBIS and how to implement it in their school. Progress in knowledge will be evidenced by annual pre and post tests administered to participants.

Team teaching

The PRDE completed a needs analysis, taking into account several elements related to factors affecting student performance. Due to the reorganization undergone in the agency and the re-authorization requirements of the ESEA of 1965, as amended by ESSA, there are schools that have resulted in increased enrollment (2017-2018) for closure and consolidation of schools. As a result, the 2017-2018 school year is a transition year where receiving schools will have more students, with the same quantity of teachers.

It is known that teachers have administrative and evaluative factors that are part of their daily responsibility. Therefore, it is the interest of the PRDE to provide additional resources to support teachers in the regular classroom, maximizing the teaching-learning process of students, through the team-teaching or co-teaching strategies.

For the 2017-2018 school year, PRDE seeks to increase in 15% the academic achievement in core subjects of a 100% of the disadvantaged students of the 672 participating eligible schools. This will be accomplished through the strategy of supporting co-teaching or team teaching, focused on language acquisition and strengthening literacy to reinforce areas of low student achievement and close academic gaps between subgroups. During the 2017-2018 school year, the PRDE will recruit 948 transitional teachers in accordance with the procedures established by the Agency, qualifications and the following requirements:

The teacher must be in the eligibility register and meet any of the following categories:

- Elemental K-3
- Elementary 4-6
- Elementary English
- Secondary Spanish
- Social Studies and Secondary History (for integration with a basic subject)
- Secondary English
- Secondary Mathematics
- Secondary biology
- General sciences
- Earth sciences
- Environmental sciences
- Physics
- Chemistry

Creation of More Effective, Less Bureaucratic Administrative Structures

The PRDE is also considering how to redesign other aspects of our system to improve academic achievement. School improvement research indicates that one of the core managerial decisions made at the level of the school district level is how to organize students into schools. While the vast majority of American public school students in Grades 9 through 12 attend a traditional high school, the system in Puerto Rico has been traditionally characterized by a wide variety of configurations. We recognize that there is likely no single configuration that is optimal for every school district; we believe we can improve student outcomes by changing the hodgepodge that currently exists.

To accomplish this, PRDE is conducting a careful analysis of how grade configuration impacts student achievement. In particular, we are collecting data that will help us determine if how schools in each district should address problems in middle schools and high schools[5]. Our approach to school improvement in this arena also involves collecting and managing data related to school levels in Puerto Rico in order to make a comprehensive and accurate assessment of our unique needs.

[5] http://www.albanyschools.org/district/Grade.Configuration/2015-16/Research.docs/GradeConfigurationResearch(RobertHendricks).pdf

School Improvement Team (SIT)

Developing and implementing a School Improvement Plan is a federal requirement for the allocation of federal funds. In the past, schools have experienced difficulties in identifying the school needs, determine its priorities and where the resources are needed. The development of the School Improvement Plan (DEE, per its acronym in Spanish), requires schools to assure that the strategies that will be employed will satisfy those particular needs.

Consistent with this purpose, the PRDE has created the group School Improvement Team (SIT) composed of 4 Masters Leaders with leadership skills, knowledge and mastery of technology, so they provide the necessary support to the School Director in the drafting of the DEE.

The SIT will assist the School Director in the periodic review and updating of the DEE so that it is available to all PRDE officials and School Community. These periodic reporting metrics have not been collected previously. To the extent that an effective and direct DEE is drafted to meet the needs of the student and school personnel; that effective and accurate will be the results in the student academic achievement results.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Programs

Consistently PRDE's students have done poorly in math. As a result we will focus school improvement strategies on Math beginning in grade 4 and continuing through grade 8. PRDE will focus on STEM Programs to improve performance in science and math.

Project in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), PRDE will offer continuous professional development activities of high quality and development of diverse academic strategies aimed at increasing academic achievement of students from the perspective of a research methodology. This project will provide science and mathematics teachers, faculty facilitators, and students, the opportunity for academic development and training in scientific research activities and increase the amount of Effective Teachers in classroom.

The first phase of implementation involves the training of 21 teachers and facilitators of science and mathematics at the intermediate and higher levels of the seven (7) educational regions, impacting a total of 3,500 students. In addition, 14 faculty facilitators in the subjects of Science and Mathematics will participate of this project. The PRDE seeks to design 28 STEM-PBL laboratory rooms with the necessary equipment and material.

With the implementation of this initiative, PRDE seeks to increase in 8% the academic achievement of the students in METAS-PR 2018. At the end of the academic year 2017- 2018, a total of two professional development academies will be held and one CiMa STEM PBL Convention in Puerto Rico where 420 Science and Mathematics teachers will participate (210 Sciences and 210 Mathematics) of the 210 schools belonging to the 7 Educational Regions,

including the 14 Science and Math Teaching Facilitators. This will increase opportunities to apply learning in the classroom, increased engagement rom teachers and a more effective instruction.

Character Counts

Research confirms that students do better in school when they are emotionally and physically healthy. They miss fewer classes, are less likely to engage in risky or antisocial behavior, concentrate more, and achieve higher test scores. The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (Eaton et al., 2010), reports that one of five students experiences symptoms of a mental health illness, and as many as 80 percent may go untreated (Breslau, 2010). Children and adolescents with mental disorders are at much greater risk for dropping out of school and suffering long term impairments (Breslau, 2010). Also, in Puerto Rico 14-16% of children report being bullied at school (Suarez & Gonzalez 2015).

In order to address these issues, the PRDE developed a project to create positive school environments. This initiative aims to increase the school retention rate, academic achievement, skills development and attitudes in students in an integrated way by attending to the whole child Josephson (1987), created the innovative and effective Character Counts for the formation of values and civism in schools based on the model T. E. A. M. (Teach, Enforce, Advocate and Model). The program has been effective in the change of behaviors and attitudes of the students. The results have been tested by statistics and by social change. In addition, the project seeks to improve the school climate and reduce by 25% the indicators of incidents reported.

Project implementation has (9) phases, to be completed during the 2017-2018 school year. It will begin with outreach activities at all levels. During the implementation we expect to impact all students in the PRDE. Among the activities that will support the anti-bullying campaign, the PRDE will provide training and guidance to the school personnel. Also, orientations to parents and students on effective discipline practices that promote orderly and healthy school climates. An innovative communication service tool to address the bullying problem, will also be introduced in schools.

The bullying reporting tool will allow counselors to meet students where they are –with text and online messaging – to help solve issues. By reducing the stigma of communicating with trusted adults, the service will allows students to open-up and break the ‘code of silence’. Schools consistently report helping students who have never previously reached out for assistance.

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.

PRDE's graduation rate is calculated based on the number of students who earned a regular high school diploma divided by the total number of students in the three-year-cohort. PRDE's graduation rate accounts for students who are considered dropouts and transfers out. The applicable students for "transfer out", to be subtracted in the denominator are: students who left to enroll a public school in the same district, students who left to enroll a public school in another district, students who left to enroll in a private school, that awards a recognized diploma, in the same district, students who left to enroll in a private school, that awards a recognized diploma, in other district, students who emigrate to the US or to another country and deceased student.

Historical data shows different trends among the subgroups' graduation rates. The island-wide graduation rate for all students has increased by 10% in the last five years; it was 75% in 2016-2017 as compared to 65% in 2012-2013.

Table 12: Historic Graduation Rate from 2012-13 to 2016-17

Group	(2012-2013)	(2013-2014)	(2014-2015)	(2015-2016)	(2016-2017)
All Students	65	68	72	75	75
Puerto Rican	64	68	72	75	75
Hispanic Not Puerto Rican	92	81	64	69	70
White Not Hispanic	88	90	50	56	72
Other Origin	93	78	42	66	65
Economically Disadvantaged	61	66	69	69	69
Disabilities	55	57	61	73	80
Spanish Learners	53	43	59	87	77

i. Baseline Data

Similar to academic goals, ESSA requires states to set long-term graduation rate goals that are the same for all high schools. As a first step in determining new long-term goals, PRDE reviewed Puerto Rico's current baseline data and progress over the last several years. The baseline for long term goals for all students and for each subgroup was set using actual data from the 2017 PRDE's Report Card. Baseline was defined as the actual statewide Adjusted Graduation Rate (AGR) for each subgroup, for the 2016-2017. Table 13 outlines the new baseline for each student subgroup, by subject.

Table 13: Graduation Rate Baseline for each subgroup

	Baseline
Subgroup	**(2016-2017)**
All Students	75
Puerto Rican	75
Hispanic Not Puerto Rican	70
White Not Hispanic	72
Other Origin	65
Economically Disadvantaged	69
Disabilities	80
Spanish Learners	77

ii. Long term goals and timeline

PRDE long-term goal is that by 2022, 9 out of 10 students graduate from high school on time. In order to reach PRDE's long-term goal, graduation rate must increase 3% points yearly. PRDE's long term goals seek to raise the graduation rate by 15% points in five years, reflecting continuous and substantial improvement from the prior year towards meeting or exceeding the graduation rate goal. This time frame will be the same length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students.

Table 14: Graduation Rate Long-term goals for each subgroup

	Baseline	Goal
Group	**(2016-2017)**	**(2021-2022)**
All Students	75	90
Puerto Rican	75	90
Hispanic Not Puerto Rican	70	85
White Not Hispanic	72	87
Other Origin	65	80
Economically Disadvantaged	69	84
Disabilities	80	95
Spanish Learners	77	92

Long Term Goals for Adjusted Graduation Rate (LTAGR) is calculated by increasing the Graduation Rate Baseline by 3 percent points every year, in order to raise the graduation rate by 15% points in five years for every subgroup. (i.e. Graduation Rate Baseline for all students in 2017 is 75%, for year 1 will be 78% (75% + 3%), for year 2 will be 81% (75% + 6%) and so on).

Long Term Goals for Adjusted Graduation Rate (LTAGR) is calculated as follow:

$$LTAGR_t = Graduation\ Rate\ Baseline + 3\%(t)$$

Where,

t = long term goals years (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

iii. Ambitious Long Term Goals

As indicated above, historical data shows that graduation rate for all students has increased by 10% in five years, 75% in 2016-20017 compare with 65% in 2012-2013.

As Puerto Rico continues its implementation of more rigorous academic content standards, and enhances supports for struggling students and schools, and transitions to new expectations for high school counseling and graduation, the state's current graduation rate of 75% should continue to increase.

PRDE is setting the ambitious three-year graduation rate goal of a statewide average of 90%. Puerto Rico will work toward its goal of a statewide average of 90 percent, continuously supporting the state's high schools and annually reporting and celebrating progress toward that goal. Puerto Rico commits not only to improving graduation rates statewide, but also to ensuring Puerto Rico closes the achievement gap for historically disadvantaged subgroups.

Stakeholder Consultation

As mentioned in the beginning of this document, the PRDE recognizes that an ongoing and meaningful stakeholder engagement is essential to the effective development and successful implementation of Puerto Rico's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan on behalf of Puerto Rican students. On March 24, 2017, the PRDE administered a survey providing the opportunity to express opinion and concerns regarding the establishment of long term goals that seek to raise the graduation rate based on a 2% points increase each for the next 5 years. Based on the results of the survey, 80% of interested groups agreed to raise the graduation rate based on a 2% points increase each for the next five years. This will lead to an increment in graduation rate of 10% point in five years, from 75% to 85%. PRDE increased the percentage to 3 in order to reach an average of 90% graduate students. Results of survey are presented in the Stakeholder Consultation section.

Project C.A.S.A.:

In order to realize the improvement necessary for students to reach these graduation rate goals PRDE implemented the project C.A.S.A.

Per PRDE's most recent School Dropout report (issued in September 2016), students from middle and high school grades show a higher tendency of dropping out before reaching the 11th grade. Out of 12,741 of the students that left the public system during 2015-16, 695 or .05% of the students left due to disciplinary or personal issues; 207 or .01% went to a juvenile or correctional institution; 7,371 or 57.8% moved to the United States; while the remaining of the students, 4,467 or 35% left because of their interest in an alternate or private education.

The Program CASA will support the goal of increasing the graduation rate to 90%, directly impacting both academic and personal students, taking into account their needs. A collaboration with the Department of Education will be established to have updated statistical data in the student information system (SIE, per its acronym in Spanish). It will continue offering varied classes with individualized support. Continuing bio-psychosocial support will also be provided with the following staff: psychologist, professional counselor, and social worker who will serve the student for skills development, such as communication, decision making, reasoning, emotional management, assertiveness, self-esteem development, Resistance to group pressure, relationships among others. In addition, reasonable accommodations will continue to be provided for students

who belong to the Special Education Program, allowing the student to participate and perform in a less restrictive environment.

Program CASA will carry out activities that allow students to enrich their academic development as well as to develop leadership skills in safe environments that promote a good quality of life. Socio-educational workshops- They aim to provide their recipients with the information and training of social and emotional skills necessary to prevent risk situations. It will continue with the experiences aimed at developing positive strategies and attitudes capable of being applied to daily life in its various areas (study, friends, family, work, staff and environment). It will establish community alliances and will follow up and support so that when the student finishes his fourth year he can enroll in the university or institute to complete a race.

Every year more students show their interest of a different setting, a different pace or a different time to learn. Effective alternative education, gives these students another path to high school graduation.

For the fiscal year 2016-2017, the project C.A.S.A provided academic services to 1,850 students, reaching school retention of 1,770 students. In addition, a total of 770 of the students were studying the 12th grade, and reached a 100% graduation rate.

Implementation data from the following initiative will be used to insure that PRDE is making progress in reaching its long-term academic achievement goals.

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.

This section is not applicable, because PRDE doesn't have an extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

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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 A.

The goals for PRDE's long term goals seek to raise the AGR based on a 3 percent points increase each year. PRDE will measure the interim progress, toward meeting the Long-Term Goals for AGR, comparing each year AGR results with its correspondent year interim goal. The interim progress for each for each subgroup will be identified if it was able to have progress and meet the specified and/or exceed the specified goals or not achieve progress.

The PRDE created a plot program titled "*Sistema de Detección Temprana de Desertores Escolares para la Escuela Superior Pública en Puerto Rico: Utilizando los Datos para Brindarle Apoyo al Estudiante*" (Early Detection System for School Dropouts for Public High School in Puerto Rico: Using Data to Provide Student Support), with the goal of identifying kids at risk of dropping out.

The program measured the characteristics or variables that were most important when predicting the probability of dropouts, which were results of standardized tests in science, English proficiency, Spanish qualifications and unexcused absences. The program suggests that as soon as a student earns a D or F grade in the subjects of English or Spanish, or accumulates a total of 5 or more unexcused absences, the student must be classified as a high risk of dropout. These students should be offered individual or intensive interventions.

The recommended interventions include: personalized meetings, home visits, mentoring students, or other teacher assignments. As soon as a student earns a C grade in English or Spanish subjects, or accumulates 2 to 4 unexcused absences, the student must be classified as a moderate risk of dropout. These students should be offered general or universal level interventions. The recommended interventions include: sending written or electronic communications to parents or guardians, group workshops, after-school group tutorials, and guidance on effective study techniques, among others. [6] Table 15, represents the baseline and the interim yearly AGR goals up to 2020-2021 academic year.

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[6] Disdier, O.M. (2017). Early Detection System for School Dropouts for Public High School in Puerto Rico: Using Data to Provide Student Support. Institute of Statistics of Puerto Rico. In process of publication.

Table 15: Baseline and Interim Goals for Adjusted Graduation Rate (AGR), Puerto Rico 2016-2017 to 2021-2022

	Baseline	Interim Goals				Goal
Group	**(2016-2017)**	**(2017-2018)**	**(2018-2019)**	**(2019-2020)**	**(2020-2021)**	**(2021-2022)**
All Students	**75**	78	81	84	87	**90**
Puerto Rican	**75**	78	81	84	87	**90**
Hispanic NOT Puerto Rican	**70**	73	76	79	82	**85**
White NOT Hispanic	**72**	75	78	81	84	**87**
Other Origin	**65**	68	71	74	77	**80**
Economically Disadvantaged	**69**	72	75	78	81	**84**
Disabilities	**80**	83	86	89	92	**95**
Spanish Learners	**77**	80	83	86	89	**92**

Notes:
The Adjusted Graduation Rate goals were calculated using a 3 percent points yearly increase

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.

PRDE has set interim targets for all students and for each sub-group that allow for meaningful growth and improvement in to raising the graduation rate based on a 3% points increase each year.

Baseline data showed consistently underachieving subgroups by content areas. Bringing special attention to these underperforming groups contribute to take necessary actions steps and best practices implementation in order to improve their overall performance. Interim progress measurements toward the long-term goals are fundamental tools for determining PRDE's progress to reach their goals.

AGR long-term goals are the common point of reference that allows PRDE to measure the progress for continuous improvement goals. PRDE's long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for the three-year adjusted cohort graduation rate take into account the improvement necessary for subgroups of students who are behind in reaching those goals. Specifically, we have identified the

following achievement trends in those students who do not graduate: they have higher absences, have history of having failed and repeated a course.

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, 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.

In Puerto Rico, Spanish is the language of instruction, as well as the predominant language used in commerce and social interaction. Spanish Learners (SL) students is the group of students in Puerto Rico that is not fluent or is limited in the Spanish language in reading, writing, speaking and listening and parallels the English language learner (ELL) group in mainland states. As of August 2017, there are 1,490 identified SL students receiving language instruction services in Puerto Rico. These students are served utilizing state funds, other federal funds and funds from Title III, Part A program. It is PRDE's expectation that the SL population achieves the same academic goals and standards as regular students while becoming proficient in the Spanish language.

Spanish Learners Proficiency Assessment

LAS Links is a research-based, Spanish language proficiency assessment that measures the speaking, listening, reading, writing, and comprehension skills of K–12 students who are non-native speakers. It helps teachers identify the language difficulties a student may have in Spanish and track and monitor progress in attaining Spanish language proficiency. Stakeholders can use comprehensive language proficiency data to target instruction to meet each student's needs during the academic year to help speed progress toward Spanish language proficiency.

LAS Links assessment determines when students are ready to exit Spanish Language Acquisition Program. In order for a student to be exited from Spanish learner status, he or she must attain levels 4 or 5 in overall score. Students who obtained 4 or 5 points in the overall scale are considered as achieving proficiency in the test. This indicator was based on the proficiency of the Annual Measurement Achievement Objectives (AMAO) established for the Spanish Learner Program. Historical data on Puerto Rico's Spanish language proficiency assessment illustrates that students could require from 10 months to three years to meet the exiting criteria. The number of years to meet the exiting criteria has historically varied by grade level, were younger students required less time to learn a second language. Historical results are shown below.

Table 16: Historic Spanish Learners Proficiency Rate from 2014-15 to 2016-17

SL Proficiency Rate			
	(2014-2015)	(2015-2016)	(2016-2017)
SL Proficiency Rate (Students who Obtained 4 or 5 Points in the Overall Scale Score)	24%	26%	23%
Total Number of Students Tested	1,586	1,185	822

i. Baseline Data

The baseline for long-term goals for PRDE's Spanish learners was set using data from the 2017 PRDE's Report Card. Baseline for 2016-2017 was 23%, based on the current Spanish Learner Proficiency rate and 61% of students making progress based on the new model explained in the interim goal section.

Table 17: Baseline for Spanish Learners Proficiency and Progress

	Baseline
	(2016-2017)
Spanish Language Learners Proficiency	23%
Spanish Language Learners Progress	61%

ii. Long term goals and timeline

PRDE long-term goal is that by 2022, 5 out of 10 (53%) SL students reach proficiency levels in order to exit the program and will become a former student. This represent a growth of 30% point of proficient students in five years, 6% point yearly increase. A determination of Spanish Language Proficient indicates that a student has demonstrated Spanish language skills or Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency to successfully access content area expectations. Thus, the criteria set by PRDE of a maximum of five years to attain Spanish Language Proficiency is reasonable.

Table 18: Baseline and Long Term Goal for Spanish Learners Proficiency and Progress

	Baseline	Long Term Goal
	(2016-2017)	(2021-2022)
Spanish Language Learners Proficiency	23%	53%
Spanish Language Learners Progress	61%	91%

iii. Ambitious Long Term Goals

PRDE currently calculates the percentage of students making progress in achieving Spanish language proficiency by taking into consideration the student who score 10 points or more on the scale score compared to the previous year. Historical data demonstrate that in the most recent year 60% of students achieve progress while just 24%, in average, of Spanish learners reach proficiency levels. This means a student can achieve progress for many years and yet not become proficient.

Therefore, PRDE has developed a new model for measuring Spanish language proficiency growth that reflects the trajectory of language development for Puerto Rico students based on historical trend data, and as a result has set ambitious targets for future performance expectations. In this new model, Puerto Rico establishes that the maximum number of years that students have to attain proficiency is five years. This allows the PRDE to reach its 5 yearlong tern goal of raising the proficient student level to 53%, this represent a 6% points annual increase. A 6% annual growth rate is ambitious compared to our historical growth of 1%.

The following is a summary of the previous state's annual targets compared to performance (AMAO I growth and AMAO II attainment percentages):

Table 19: Previous State's Annual Targets: AMAO1 – AMAO2

Year	AMAO1 Target- (Making Progress Toward SL	Actual	Met/ Not Met	AMAO2 Target - (SL Proficiency Level)	Actual	Met/ Not Met
2014-15	25%	60%	Met	13%	24%	Met
2015-16	26%	72%	Met	14%	26%	Met
2016-17	27%	60%	Met	15%	23%	Met

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.

Spanish Learner Proficiency Level

The PRDE's long term goals seek to raise the SL Proficiency based on an average of 6% points increase each year. The following equation shows the calculation of the interim proficiency level goal for every year. It illustrates that 6% is added to the baseline every year until reaching the goal of an increment of 30% proficient students in 5 years.

Interim Goals for Spanish Language Proficiency (ITGS) were calculated as follow:

$$ITGS_t = SL\ Proficiency\ Rate\ Baseline + 6\%(t)$$

Where,

t = long term goals years (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

The measurements of interim goals toward meeting the SLP 2021-2022 final goals were set, based on a 6% point increase each year. In the following table, the first column represents the baseline and the following columns represents the interim yearly SLP goals till 2021-2022.

Table 20: Baseline and Interim Goals for Spanish Language Proficiency (SLP), Puerto Rico 2016-2017 to 2021-2022

	Baseline	Interim Goals				Goal
Group	(2016-2017)	(2017-2018)	(2018-2019)	(2019-2020)	(2020-2021)	(2021-2022)
Spanish Language Learners	**23.0**	29.0	35.0	41.0	47.0	**53.0**

Students making progress in achieving Spanish language proficiency

The PRDE has determined that for a student to be exited from Spanish learner status must attain levels 4 or 5 in the overall score of the LAS Links Spanish version assessment. Starting with the 2016-2017 assessment cycle, the PRDE will define increases in the percentage of all current SLs making progress in Spanish language proficiency (SLP) as SLs that meet the SLP cut scale score (SS) within the established timeframe consistent with a student's baseline of proficiency level (see Student-Level Interim Growth Targets Table below). Thus, the state will consider a student's proficiency level on the first annual assessment to determine the number of years that a student has, to reach proficiency, then set targets for interim progress based on entering grade-level scale score accordingly. Under this model, students achieving a proficiency of 4 or higher on their initial assessment have met their growth target and will be considered as a student making progress.

The maximum number of years where is expected to SL students to attain proficiency is five years. The attainment target for each student is the scale score corresponding to be proficient at the grade level. Mostly, the number of years a student has, to reach the attainment target, varies from three to five years depending on the proficiency level in the baseline year. Each student's interim growth

targets are calculated annually by subtracting their previous year scale score from scale score target and dividing the difference by the remaining number of years required to reach the goal.

The table below illustrates the model. This method allows for a variable growth trajectory depending on each student's progress over time while still requiring that the attainment target be reached within the required number of years. The annual reset allows the individual student's interim scale score targets to reflect the amount of growth that the student has made in a year. This yearly reset recognizes the nonlinear growth that students at varying proficiency levels make within a year's time.

Table 21: Baseline and Interim goals for increases in the percentage of SL students making progress in achieving Spanish language proficiency

Baseline Proficiency Level	Baseline 2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Above Proficient 5	PROGRESS					
Proficient 4	PROGRESS					
Intermediate 3	SS_Year1	(Target Score - SS_Year1)/3	(Target Score - SS_Year2)/2	PROGRESS		
Early Intermediate 2	SS_Year1	(Target Score - SS_Year1)/4	(Target Score - SS_Year2)/3	(Target Score - SS_Year3)/2	PROGRESS	
Beginning 1	SS_Year1	(Target Score - SS_Year1)/5	(Target Score - SS_Year2)/4	(Target Score - SS_Year3)/3	(Target Score - SS_Year4)/2	PROGRESS

The PRDE's long term goals seek to raise the percentage of students making progress by an average of 6% points increase each year. The following equation shows the calculation of the interim progress goal for every year. Where 6% is added to the baseline every year until reaching the goal of an increment of 30% students achieving progress in 5 years.

Interim progress toward the long-term goal (IPG) were calculated as follow:

$$IPGS_t = \%Students\ making\ progress\ Baseline + 6\%(t)$$

Where,

t = long term goals years (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Table 22: Baseline and Interim Progress toward the Long-Term Goal, Puerto Rico 2016-2017 to 2021-2022

	Baseline	Interim Goals				Goal
Group	**(2016-2017)**	**(2017-2018)**	**(2018-2019)**	**(2019-2020)**	**(2020-2021)**	**(2021-2022)**
%Spanish Language Learners making progress	**61.0**	67.0	73.0	79.0	85.0	**91.0**

At the end of the first year of ESSA implementation PRDE will examine the results. Where schools fail to meet the identified annual target, PRDE will examine the performance of these schools to better understand the reasons for the observed results. Establishing yearly interim targets allows the PRDE to have a ready tool for identifying schools that are on track to meet their timeline, in order to reclassify their students as fluent Spanish proficient, and those schools who may need additional supports or targeted intervention to meet those goals.

Where schools fail to meet the identified annual target, PRDE will examine the performance of these schools to better understand the reasons for the observed results. Establishing yearly interim targets allows the PRDE to have a ready tool for identifying schools who are on track to meet their timeline, in order to reclassify their students as proficient in the Spanish language, and those schools who may need additional supports or targeted intervention to meet those goals.

The additional supports and targeted intervention will vary based on student's results, monitoring outcomes, technical assistance provided and any other factor that could affect SL's progress and academic achievement.

For the students' support and interventions, the Program will employ different strategies to achieve measurements of interim progress and the ambitious long-term goals; such as tutoring, team teaching and virtual teaching. The tutoring services will be provided through Spanish Language Acquisition Centers which will integrate fine arts, among other subjects, as a technique. This strategy will help to lower the student's affective filter and to help them to be more eager to acquire the Spanish language. Spanish Clubs will be established at each school integrating SL program participants. This will aim students to interact with one another and learn vocabulary from each other while they find a common ground between them.

The Program will also provide additional teachers or tutors to those students that are presenting a difficulties acquiring the language, and therefore are having problems with their academic achievement. The teachers or tutors will mentor the homeroom teacher and will also team-teach with him/her. The same teacher or tutor will also do one on one teaching when needed. To integrate technology, the Program selected software specifically designed to work with learning a second language and at the same time address low academic performance.

Furthermore, PRDE its ensuring that teachers and other school personnel that provides services for SLs are well prepared by providing sustained professional development activities in areas directly related to learning a second language. Moreover, this information will be discussed later in the Title III section.

PRDE is committed to ensuring every Spanish Learner is able to meet academic standards with their peers, and perform with high achieving students. The PRDE has the responsibility to ensure that schools are not motivated to prematurely exit students, which could lead to negative future academic consequences if those students are not provided appropriate supports through reclassification. Subsequently, the SL population achieves the same academic goals and standards as regular students.

PRDE will assess the number of students existed in the program each year. The average number of students that exit the program is around 300. We will hold annual review meetings with teachers to discuss data on exited students. This will help us identify effective practices.

Table 23: Baseline and Interim of number of exited students 2016-2017 to 2021-2022

	Baseline	Interim Goals				Goal
Group	(2016-2017)	(2017-2018)	(2018-2019)	(2019-2020)	(2020-2021)	(2021-2022)
#SL exited students*	**300**	370	440	510	580	**650**

*the number of students is subject to the students enrolled in the program

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.

Accordingly, the SL Program will use different strategies to achieve measurements of interim progress and the long-term goals based on the State's Spanish language proficiency assessment under ESEA; such as tutoring, team teaching and virtual teaching. The tutoring section integrates fine arts, using drama, among others, as a technique. These strategies will help to lower the student's affective filter and to help them to be more eager to acquire the Spanish language. Also, a Spanish Club, will be established at each school integrating SL program participants. It will help students to interact with one another and learn vocabulary from each other while they find a common ground between them.

In the Spanish Club, the teacher will be responsible to provide activities to increase student's vocabulary. The Program will also provide additional teachers or tutors to those students that are

presenting a difficulty on acquiring the language, and therefore are having problems with their academic achievement.

The teachers or tutor will mentor the homeroom teacher and will also team-teach with him/her. The same teacher or tutor will also do one on one teaching when needed.

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Table 24: Strategies and program interventions towards meeting established long-term goals integrating WIDA standards

Goal	Program Interventions	Evaluation	6-months Achievement Goals	2-year Achievement Goals
Increase Language Complexity to a level 6 (WIDA Standards) by the end of SY 2019-2020.	To improve Spanish reading and writing skills, SLs will be participate in: **-Tutoring 3 to 5 times per week for 2 hours** using Theatrical Scripts as teaching tool. -Teacher-student virtual tutoring. -Team-teaching with two teachers (home room teacher and other) one teacher is bilingual.	Reading Pre and post test Writing Pre and post-test. Analytical rubrics Classroom work Grades Portfolio	Student will **advance 2 levels** from the baseline as established on the WIDA Standards in Speaking and Writing after 6 months of enrollment in the program. Student will communicate in Spanish while **decreasing the code switching to 40%** in the main language 6 months of enrollment in the program.	Student will **achieve level 6** based on WIDA Standards: Speaking and Writing Performance after 2 years in the Program. Student will communicate in Spanish while **decreasing code switching by 80%** in the main language after 2 years in the Program.
Increase Language use and forms to a level 6 (WIDA Standards) by the end of SY 2019-2020.	Students will receive **tutoring** for analyzing language structure and grammar (verb tenses, sentence construction, among others) **3 to 5 times per week for 2 hours** within language use will lead to increase in Language Use and Form.	Grammar pre and post-test. Analytical rubrics Attendance rosters Portfolio Classroom performance Grades	Student will **advance 2 levels** based on the WIDA Standards: Speaking and Writing after 6 months of enrollment in the program. Student will be proficient in a **minimum of 50% of grammar rules** (verb tenses, sentence construction, among others) after 6 months of enrollment in the program.	Student will **achieve level 6** based on WIDA Standards Speaking and Writing Performance after two years in the Program. Student will be proficient in a **minimum of 70% of grammar rules** (verb tenses, sentence construction, among others) after 2 years in the Program.
Increase Spanish Vocabulary to a level 6 (WIDA Standards) by the end of SY 2019-2020.	Students will participate in **Spanish Club a minimum of 1 time a week** to practice vocabulary with their Spanish speaking peers. **Teach a minimum of 20 vocabulary words** aligned with the topic and daily use of words for communication in the real world.	Vocabulary pre and post test Vocabulary Checklists Classroom Observation notes Academic Portfolio Attendance rosters Lesson Plans	Student will **advance 2 levels** based on WIDA's Speaking and Writing Performance after 6 months of enrollment in the program. Students will use a **minimum of 40% of the words** correctly after 6 months of enrollment in the program.	Student will **achieve level 6** based on WIDA Standards Speaking and Writing Performance after two years in the Program. Students will use **a minimum of 80 % of the words** correctly after 2 years in the Program.

The Spanish Acquisition Program has established activities to ensure that students achieve growth in the Spanish language and succeed in the classroom according to the same academic state standards established for all students and all subgroups. Thus, the achievement of goals towards meeting the WIDA SLD standards should reflect students' accomplishments towards meeting proficiency in the Spanish Language Proficiency Assessment.

To ensure the needs of the SL students in the academic content area are met for achieving state standards, the Title III program will provide sustained professional development for all SL teachers. Topics are selected based on student grades and META-PR or Alternate META-PR results for this subgroup. Additionally, the SLA program will provide academic resources, equipment, software and instructional materials designed to support academic content areas. Academic support will be data-driven and designed to develop and grow the knowledge and skills necessary for students to succeed. In order to encourage the coordination of services with other programs, if necessary, as established by ESSA requirement of promoting a well-rounded education, the student's integral needs have been and will continue to be analyzed. The goal is to assist SLs to meet the program's exiting criteria and the challenging State academic standards as all students are expected to meet.

Furthermore, as mentioned before, the services to provide student support must be described in the individualized plan. After the parent is notified that the student is enroll in a language instruction educational program, the student begins to receive Title III supplemental services too. All services the student receives are unique and are designed to meet the language needs of the student as well as contribute to academic achievement.

The program services provided to the student include after-hours tutoring, classroom support, academic resources, supplemental instructional materials, integration of technology, accommodations on standardized exams and classroom evaluations, extracurricular activities such as cultural events and field trips, family literacy nights, and other community sponsored events related to second language acquisition and academic achievement in needed areas. To help parents and guardians with supporting their children at home, the school will conduct a needs assessment for them to indicate workshops and resources that they feel will help them support their child's academics at home. The school director will ensure that family support activities are designed to meet the needs of the students and parents and will provide services in this area at the school. The SLA will supplement these services with Title III, Part A funds, based on the needs assessment results.

Teacher Support

The School Director conducts a needs assessment of the teachers and other school personnel that serve students identified as SL to identify their topics of interest for future workshops. This assessment is conducted to determine priorities, differentiated teaching strategies integrating WIDA standards, instructional planning, strategies to improve language transition, and other

relevant topics to improve academic support. The SLA program will focus on teachers who have SL students enrolled in their classroom for professional development opportunities related to second language acquisition. The professional development innovative plan includes sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data driven and classroom focused training related to the assessed needs among teachers and student academic progress data aligned with the three main goals established by the PRDE.

In addition, as part of the professional development opportunities, the Title III program will provide coaching such as team teaching, lesson planning and assessment, and peer observations for SL teachers to ensure they have the necessary knowledge and teaching methods to apply in the classrooms and to provide direct services to students that are unique according to their individual needs.

Among the professional development activities, Title III program includes and will continue including the following topics:

- Scientific Base Teaching Strategies for Spanish as Second Language Students.
- Spanish as Second Language Standards-WIDA
- The advantages of integrating Ludic Activities and Students Learning Styles to help ELL and SLL students to learn an L2.
- Teaching Strategies
- Reading Comprehension Through Urban Art and Music
- Folk Tales: Understanding Reading and Writing
- Strategies for Reading Comprehension
- Drama: A Different Tool for Teaching and Evaluating a concept
- Using *Achieve3000* and *Middlebury Interactive Language* as tools for learning a language
- *Reader's Theater* for Language Acquisition
- Content Academic topics based on needs assessments and students' achievement progress data

District facilitators from all subject matter areas, offer and will continue offering support to school personnel through the "Job Embedded" professional development modality as stated before. The program it's in the process of contracting personnel for each Educational Region to enhance language instruction educational programs within the schools.

As other support activity to ensure that Spanish Learners meet the challenging State academic standards, beginning on August 2017, the PRDE will offer tutoring in Spanish for SLs and

immigrant students as a focus activity. These tutoring activities will be offered after school. Co-curricular activities will be integrated with the inclusion of fine arts as well, with theater strategies and integrating technology, to teach Spanish language arts skills.

An alliance will be established with the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture to provide workshops. Through alliances with the community, higher education institutions, and other programs; family literacy and other parent engagement activities will be designed to promote academic support in the home. This will aim to take care of other students needs that impact progress achievement of long term goals related to Spanish Language proficiency attainment.

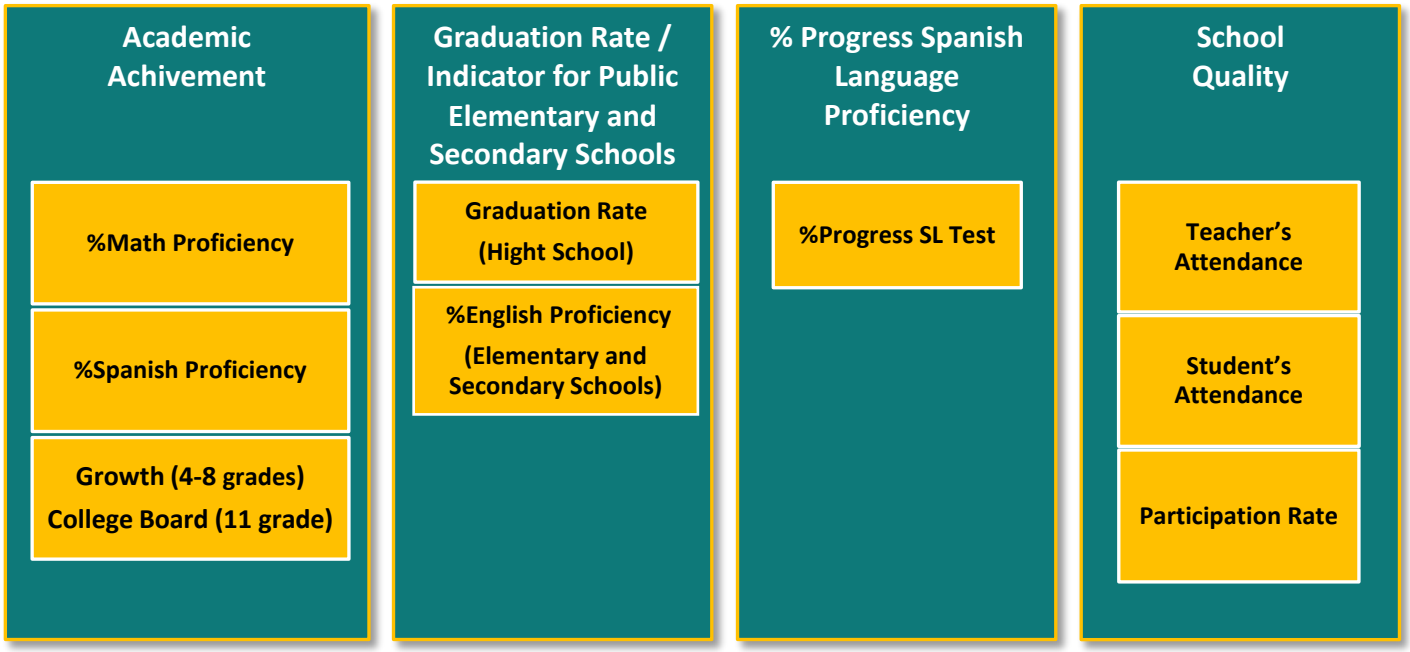
iv. Indicators *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(B))*

The framework for the Puerto Rico accountability system recognize that school performance should be assessed within four overarching categories:

- Student Academic Achievement
- Graduation Rate
- Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency
- Other Indicators of School Quality

Each indicator is described briefly below:

Diagram 3: Indicators for the Accountability Model



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.

For the Academic Achievement Indicator, PRDE has determined two components: Proficiency Rate and Achievement Growth, also referred to as growth. For schools that do not have growth data, an alternative indicator will be used. Examples of schools that do not have growth data are high schools and some elementary schools, because students are not offered testing. These are the schools that don't have the grades, in which the exams are administered. Since 3rd grade is the first grade of the elementary testing grade span and testing occurs only once in High School, growth is not calculated for 3rd or 11th grades. Therefore, this measure is just included to evaluate elementary schools. For high schools that do not have growth data, PRDE will uses College Board results instead of Growth.

Data used to Create Academic Achievement Indicators

The Academic Achievement indicator in Puerto Rico's accountability system is based on META-PR assessment. The META-PR is aligned to the Puerto Rico Core Standards (PRCS) and is designed to measure student achievement in Spanish, English as a Second Language (ESL), Mathematics in 3rd through 8th grade and 11th grade, and Science in 4th, 8th and 11th grade. The META-PR is administered annually in these grades and content areas.

Results from META-PR provide data on proficiency on the annual reading/language arts and mathematics assessments. Summary level proficiency rates are provided for each grade and subject area tested. Summary level data for subgroups of students are also produced. An overall school level proficiency rate is also provided for each subject area.

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Table 25: General Description of Performance Level

Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Prebasic
4	3	2	1
Students at this level show an **optimal** academic performance in the subject assessed in META-PR (Medición y Evaluación para la Transformación Académica de Puerto Rico) and demonstrate a **profound** level of understanding and conceptual reasoning, as well as the development of skills that are, in both cases, complex and abstract.	Students at this level show **competent** academic performance in the subject that is assessed in META-PR (Medición y Evaluación para la Transformación Académica de Puerto Rico) and demonstrate a **significant** level of conceptual understanding and reasoning, as well as skill development**.**	Students at this level show **limited** academic performance in the subject that is assessed in META-PR (Medición y Evaluación para la Transformación Académica de Puerto Rico) and demonstrate **partial m**astery of conceptual understanding and skills.	Students at this level show **the minimum** academic performance that is assessed in META-PR (Medición y Evaluación para la Transformación Académica de Puerto) **and little or no mastery** of conceptual understanding and skills.

Subgroup Reporting

The PRDE has disaggregated testing results in the subgroups of students in compliance with subsection (c)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds. Subsection states that the term ‘‘subgroup of students’’ means: (A) economically disadvantaged students; (B) students from major racial and ethnic groups; (C) children with disabilities; and (D) English learners.

Annually, testing results are disaggregated for all the accountability subgroups and for All Students. Proficiency is also calculated at school, district and island wide levels. Overall proficiency is assessed, scored and reported for the following subgroups:

- All Students
- Puerto Rican
- Hispanic NOT Puerto Rican
- White NOT Hispanic
- Other Origin
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Disabilities
- Spanish Learners

Table 26: Spanish and Math Proficiency Rates by Subgroups

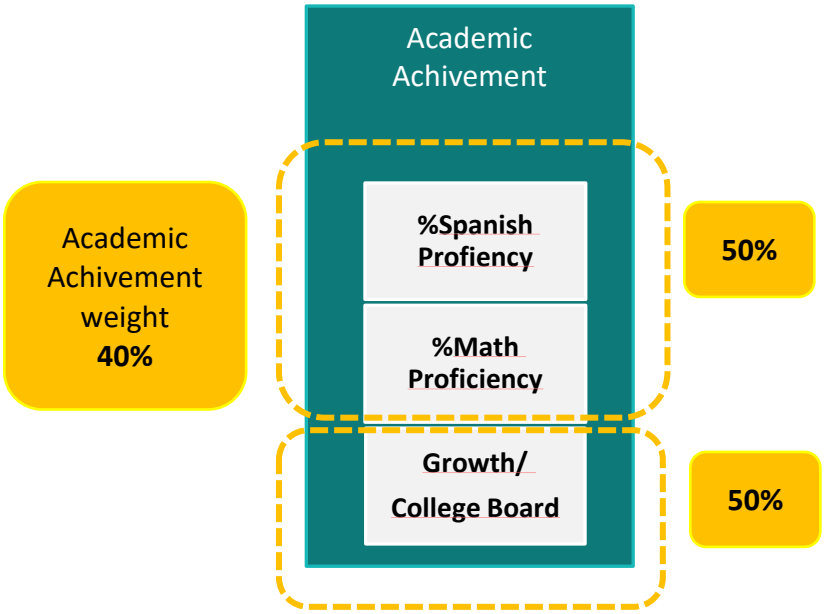
	Spanish Proficiency Rate		Math Proficiency Rate	
Subgroups	**(2015-2016)**	**(2016-2017)**	**(2015-2016)**	**(2016-2017)**
All Students	50.7	49.0	33.5	33.0
Puerto Rican	50.7	49.0	33.5	32.7
Hispanic Not Puerto Rican	45.3	43.0	27.1	25.9
White Not Hispanic	27.3	44.4	22.7	36.8
Other Origin	46.5	49.5	32.2	37.0
Economically Disadvantaged	48.2	46.3	32.9	31.7
Disabilities	35.2	33.2	29.7	28.2
Spanish Learners	40.3	30.8	35.2	29.5

Proficiency Rate Indicator

As for this component of the academic achievement indicator, PRDE will use Math and Spanish proficiencies. For each grade level, and within each subject area, assessment results will be combined. This will be done for students in grades 3rd through 8th and 11th grades.

This component is calculated as the average proficiency rate in Spanish and Math and weight 50% of the Academic Achievement indicator.

Diagram 4: Academic Achievement Indicator



Proficiency Rate as a component of the academic achievement indicator is calculated as the average percentage of proficiency students in Spanish and Math.

$$Proficiency\ Rate\ = \frac{\#Proficient\ students\ in\ Spanish\ test + \#Proficient\ students\ in\ \ Math\ \ test}{\#Participating\ students\ in\ Spanish\ test + \#Participating\ students\ in\ Math\ test}$$

The proficiency rate component of the academic achievement indicator is aligned with on the long-term goals as defined for Spanish (RLA) and Math seeking progress from the baseline and for the next five years. Progress will be based on meeting the average of proficiencies in Math and Spanish as the core content areas looking forward to a yearly achievement gap reduction of 10%.

Growth

PRDE has established a growth model that tracks students' academic achievement longitudinally. PRDE growth model evaluates changes student achievement in Spanish language arts and mathematics in 4th through 8th grade using score from the current META-PR assessment systems. This growth model, which is a Transition Matrix model, does not apply to high school students (11th grade) because these students do not have scores from previous year.

PRDE has identified the following benefits of its growth model: it 1) uses database of matched students over time, 2) does not require a common (vertical) scale across grades, 3) does not require confidence intervals, 4) handles nonlinear growth and 5) and be used with alternate assessments that do not have scale scores. This model is simple to communicate with stakeholders and is currently used by several states.

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PRDE's current Transition Matrix model appears in Figure 1. As can be seen in Figure 1, the extreme low and high achievement levels (pre-basic and advanced) are split into two ordinal levels and the middle categories (basic and proficient) are split into three levels, so that growth within these achievement levels can be counted in addition to growth across levels. The points allocated to the transitions assign points to students who increase one or more level across year if they are below mid-basic, with the number of points increasing as the number of levels improved increases. The maximum number of points is 6, which is associated with "high advanced". Student who are mid-basic or above are assigned 2 points if they maintain their status across years, and more than 2 points if they increase one or more levels, as indicated in Diagram 5.

Diagram 5: Transition Matrix - Value Point Structure

Year One	Year Two									
	Low Pre-Basic (1.1)	High Pre-Basic (1.2)	Low Basic (2.1)	Mid Basic (2.2)	High Basic (2.3)	Low Proficient (3.1)	Mid Proficient (3.2)	High Proficient (3.3)	Low Advanced (4.1)	High Advanced (4.2)
Low Pre- Basic (1.1)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	6	6	6
High Pre- Basic (1.2)	0	0	2	3	4	5	6	6	6	6
Low Basic (2.1)	0	0	0	3	4	5	6	6	6	6
Mid Basic (2.2)	0	0	0	2	3	4	5	6	6	6
High Basic (2.3)	0	0	0	0	2	3	4	5	6	6
Low Proficient (3.1)	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	4	5	6
Mid Proficient (3.2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	5	6
High Proficient (3.3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	6
Low Advanced (4.1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6
High Advanced (4.2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6

Significantly Regressed
Regressed
Slightly Regressed
Maintained
Slightly Improved
Improved
Significantly Improved

The range of points that students can achieve is from 0 to 6. In order to calculate the score for the school, student's' points were averaged. School's minimum score is 0 and maximum score is 6 as same as for each student. Growth as a component of the academic achievement is calculated as a percentage, dividing the school averaged score by 6 (maximum score).

Growth as a component of the academic achievement indicator is calculated dividing the average school score by 6 (maximum score)

$$Growth\ per\ school = \frac{School\ Averaged\ Score}{6}$$

Where,

$$School\ Averaged\ Score = \frac{Total\ student's\ points}{Total\ number\ of\ students}$$

College Board's Results as Alternate Indicators

To date, there has been no validation study that establishes the alignment between META-PR and the College Board assessments. However, since 1964, the Puerto Rico Department of Education has used College Board's PEAU tests to support students' transition from high school to higher education institutions in Puerto Rico. "Las Pruebas de Evaluación y Admisión Universitaria" (PEAU), are more than a criterion for admission to accredited university institutions in Puerto Rico. The PEAU, like SAT, is a test that assesses reasoning ability (verbal, math) of high school students applying to college in Puerto Rico. The PEAU has been specially designed for Spanish-speaking populations and has been validated in multiple Spanish speaking countries. The PEAU is required by ALL universities in Puerto Rico, and is used by prestigious public and private universities in 11 Latin American countries.

Both the PEAU and SAT share theoretical principles, format, and methodology, and the 200-800 scale. Cumulative validity evidence throughout its history has continuously shown PEAU scores as uniform, reliable and vital measures for admission processes and placement into first or second year college coursework, with multiple predictive studies across institutions in PR presenting its ability to predict college performance –specifically, first year college GPA (FYGPA)– over and above high school GPA (HSGPA). Moreover, the examination of the relationships between the PEAU results with grades in the matching coursework domains in higher education have shown a strong positive relationship, suggesting that the PEAU is sensitive to instruction in Spanish, Mathematics and English. Given its rigorous test development process –which requires that all test forms are built using a to a common set of content and statistical specifications, allowing the creation of comparable tests– and the use of statistical score equating procedures that ensure that scores and subscores reported to students have the same meaning, in terms of achievement, regardless of which form a student takes, continuous use of College Board's PEAU provides a proven and standardized mean for assessing readiness for and success in postsecondary education.

For the most recent redesign of the PEAU, which will be launched in October 2017, the College Board carefully examined what the best available evidence indicated were the essential prerequisites in reading, writing, language, and mathematics for readiness for and success in postsecondary education. This evidence, along with extensive feedback from K–12 and higher education experts, was critical to shaping the design of the assessment, hereto referred as the revised PAA. It is expected that this new assessment will provide even more information about the degree of college readiness of students, and thus critical for evidenced-based educational interventions and high-stakes decision that can be undertaken the PRDE.

Calculation of the College Board Results as a component of the academic achievement indicator

The maximum points that students can achieve in the College Board tests is 4,000. In order to calculate a score for the school, student's' points were averaged. School's maximum score is 4,000

as same as for each student. College Board Results as a component of the academic achievement is calculated as a percentage, dividing the school averaged score by 4,000 (maximum score).

College Board Results as a component of the academic achievement indicator is calculated dividing average school score per student by 4000 (maximum score)

$$College\ Board\ Results\ per\ school = \frac{School\ Averaged\ Score}{4000}$$

Where,

$$School\ Averaged\ Score = \frac{Total\ student's\ points}{Total\ number\ of\ students}$$

Both, **Proficiency Rate** and **Growth (or College Board)** components are assigned a 50% weight of the Academic Achievement indicator. If a school does not have Growth or College Board data, the proficiency component will weight 100% of the Academic Achievement indicator and Growth or College Board component will not include.

The **Academic Achievement** weight distribution is 40% of the overall composite score.

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.

PRDE will use the proficiency scores from the English as a Second Language portion of the META-PR assessment as its Other Academic Indicator for public elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools. This indicator will be calculated it in the same way for all elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools and will be applied to all the schools in the PRDE system. This indicator will replace the Graduation Rate indicator that is used for high schools.

PRDE will ensure consistency in the application of this Other Academic Indicator across all grade spans. The inclusion of this indicator allows the use of testing results on an annual basis that could be used with all students and also disaggregated for each subgroup. Progress will be based on

meeting the percentage of proficiencies in English content areas, by attaining an achievement gap reduction of 10% each year.

For all subgroups, the proficiency percentage will be calculated and compared with the expected outcome for each subgroup for each year as a uniform procedure across these schools.

There are numerous reasons why PRDE believes performance on the English as a Second Language assessment is an appropriate indicator. Historically, PRDE has found that teaching English to their students has been a challenge. Currently, the vast majority of Puerto Ricans recognize that the modern world requires the knowledge of several languages to face the economic and social challenges of a competitive and globalized market. PRDE believes it is important that all of our students become proficient in English in order to ensure their success in school and post school years.

The PRDE conducted a field study on the development of bilingual skills in 2012 (English and Spanish). This study demonstrated that the vast majority of the parents in Puerto Rico recognize the need to strengthen the teaching of English. The questionnaire administered in May 2017 to parents of kindergarten, first and second grade students indicated that 92% of them want their children to learn English, and that is necessary to strengthen the teaching of English in schools. The questionnaire also revealed that 80% of teachers and principals expressed their interest in improving their communication skills in English and dispositions to implement a bilingual program in their schools.

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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 students with the most significant cognitive disabilities 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).

PRDE's graduation rates indicator is calculated based on the number of students who earned a regular high school diploma divided by the total number of students in the three-year-cohort, accounting for students who are considered dropouts and transfers. PRDE uses its graduation rate to measures the percentage of students from the beginning of high school who graduate with a high school diploma in four years.

Historical data shows different trends among the subgroups. The island-wide graduation rate for all students has increased by 10% in five years, 75% in 2016-20017 compare with 65% in 2012-2013. This is reflects of the graduation rate growth in the following subgroups. Puerto Ricans, Economic Disadvantaged, Disabilities and Spanish Learners. While Hispanic NOT Puerto Rican, White NOT Hispanic, and Other Origin have shown a significant decrease in the last five years. Table 27 shows historic graduation rate for each subgroup.

Table 27: Historic Graduation Rate from 2012-13 to 2016-17

Group	(2012-2013)	(2013-2014)	(2014-2015)	(2015-2016)	(2016-2017)
All Students	65	68	72	75	75
Puerto Rican	64	68	72	75	75
Hispanic Not Puerto Rican	92	81	64	69	70
White Not Hispanic	88	90	50	56	72
Other Origin	93	78	42	66	65
Economically Disadvantaged	61	66	69	69	69
Disabilities	55	57	61	73	80
Spanish Learners	53	43	59	87	77

PRDE's long term goals is to raise the graduation rate based on a 3%-point increase each for the next 5 years. The baseline for long term goals for all students and for each subgroup was set using actual data from the 2016 PRDE's Report Card. School-level and subgroup results will be compared against state-level long-term goals on an annual basis to determine progress. PRDE long-term goals were determined for the three-year adjusted cohort graduation rate that represents statewide expectations to increase the number of students graduating from high school.

There are numerous reasons why PRDE believes graduation rates are an appropriate indicator. The graduation rates indicate the degree to which schools are successful in moving students through the secondary education system and achieving the end goal of college and career readiness. All schools are required to report student graduation information in a consistent manner ensuring reliability and comparability of results across the state. Holding all students to the same rigorous expectations for post-secondary and workforce readiness is intended to ensure the reported graduation rates provide comparable inferences about school success and quality statewide. The inclusion of this indicator allows the use of testing results on annually bases that could be disaggregated for all the accountability subgroups and for all students.

PRDE is working on a **new graduation cohort based on a <u>four-year</u>** term beginning 2016-2017. The new cohort will allow the PRDE to more precisely calculate data. This is because those students with higher grade-point averages tend to graduate early while other students take longer than four years to graduate.

The new system will take into account those students who leave the public-school system but do not necessarily drop out. These are students who move away from Puerto Rico.

PRDE does not consider the students with the most significant cognitive disabilities for alternate HS diploma.

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.

In Puerto Rico, Spanish is the language of instruction, as well as the predominant language used in commerce and social interaction. Therefore, instead of ELP, students are identified as Spanish Learners (SL). This subgroup includes all students that are not fluent or are limited in the Spanish language in reading, writing, listening, speaking and comprehension. As of August, of 2017, there are 1,490 identified SL students receiving services in Puerto Rico for language instruction. These students are served with state funds, other federal funds and with Title III, Part A program funds.

Progress in Achieving Spanish Language Proficiency (SLP) Indicator

Progress in Achieving Spanish Language Proficiency (SLP) Indicator is based on LAS Links assessment. LAS Links is a research-based, Spanish language proficiency assessment that measures the speaking, listening, reading, writing, and comprehension skills of K–12 students. It helps teachers identify language difficulties a student may have in Spanish and track and monitor progress in attaining Spanish language proficiency. Stakeholders can use comprehensive language proficiency data to target instruction to meet each student's needs during the academic year to help speed progress toward Spanish language proficiency.

LAS Links assessment determines when students are ready to exit Spanish Learner Program. In order for a student to be exited from Spanish learner status must attainment levels 4 or 5 in an overall score. Students who obtained 4 or 5 points in the overall scale are considered as achieving proficiency in the test. For 2016-2017, SL Proficiency Rate was 23%. Starting with the 2016-2017 assessment cycle, the PRDE will define increases in the percentage of all current SLs making progress in Spanish language proficiency (SLP) as SLs that meet the SLP cut scale score (SS) within the established timeframe consistent with a student's baseline of proficiency level (see Student-Level Interim Growth Targets Table below). Thus, the state will consider a student's proficiency level on the first annual assessment to determine the number of years that a student has to reach proficiency, then set targets for interim progress based on entering grade-level scale score accordingly. Under this model, students achieving a proficiency of 4 or higher on their initial assessment have met their growth target and will be considered as a student making progress.

Mostly, the maximum number of years that students have to attain proficiency is five years. The attainment target for each student is the scale score corresponding to be proficient at the grade level. The number of years a student is expected to reach the attainment target varies from three to five years depending on the proficiency level in the baseline year. Each student's interim growth targets are calculated annually by subtracting their previous year scale score from scale score target and dividing the difference by the remaining number of years required to reach the goal.

The table below illustrates the model. This method allows for a variable growth trajectory depending on each student's progress over time while still requiring that the attainment target be reached within the required number of years. The annual reset allows the individual student's interim scale score targets to reflect the amount of growth that the student has made in a year. This yearly reset recognizes the nonlinear growth that students at varying proficiency levels make within a year's time.

Table 28: Baseline and Interim goals for increases in the percentage of SL students making progress in achieving Spanish language proficiency

Baseline Proficiency Level	Baseline 2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Above Proficient 5	PROGRESS					
Proficient 4	PROGRESS					
Intermediate 3	SS_Year1	(Target Score - SS_Year1)/3	(Target Score - SS_Year2)/2	PROGRESS		
Early Intermediate 2	SS_Year1	(Target Score - SS_Year1)/4	(Target Score - SS_Year2)/3	(Target Score - SS_Year3)/2	PROGRESS	
Beginning 1	SS_Year1	(Target Score - SS_Year1)/5	(Target Score - SS_Year2)/4	(Target Score - SS_Year3)/3	(Target Score - SS_Year4)/2	PROGRESS

Progress is defined as:

1- Students who achieve interim target in the determined year.
2- Students achieving a proficiency of 4 or higher on their initial assessment

Progress in Achieving Spanish Language Proficiency (SLP) Indicator is calculated by dividing the number of student who achieve progress (defined above) by the number of students with paired tests plus the number of students achieving a proficiency of 4 or higher on their initial assessment.

Progress in Achieving Spanish Language Proficiency (SLP) Indicator is calculated as follow:

$$Progress\ in\ Achieving\ SLP\ indicator = \frac{\#\ of\ students\ who\ achieve\ the\ interim\ goals_t + \#PS_{year1}}{\#\ student\ with\ paired\ tests + \#PS_{year1}}$$

Where,

t = interim goals years (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
$\#PS_{year1}$ = number of students achieving a proficiency of 4 or higher on their initial assessment

SLP Indicator will be used only for schools that have Spanish learners' students enrolled. If any schools do not have SL students, then the indicator will not be use in the calculations of the composite score. The SLP Indicator will weight 20% of the composite score.

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.

School Quality or Student Success Indicator is a composite score based on teacher attendance rate, student attendance rate and participation rate. All three components will weigh the same. If the data is unavailable for one of the components of the school quality indicator, the average of the available variables will be calculated to generate this indicator. This indicator is part of the final composite score of all indicators for the accountability and school identification process. School Quality or Student Success Indicator will weight 20% of the total composite score.

The inclusion of this indicator allows the use of testing results on annually basis that could be disaggregated for all the accountability subgroups and for All Students. It is comparable and applicable island wide.

According to the data submitted electronically by school principals through the PRDE digital platform SIE there were 2863 discipline related incidents in schools reported in the 2016-2017 school year. Of those, 26% of the incidents were related to some type of violent action or behavior, and in 41% of the cases, the aggressor had some type of disability or a specific learning problem. It's important to note that on 25% of all discipline related incidents the disciplinary response was a suspension from school grounds. In analyzing this data, PRDE determined that 1) not all discipline incidents were reported and 2) discipline data was not available for all schools. Consequently we are not able to include this information in our ESSA model. During the current school year we are working to improve the collection and reporting of school discipline information.

Puerto Rico is in dire need of implementing initiatives that improve school climate and their environment, as well as the relationships between the various components of the school community, so that it is safe and optimal space for learning. A needs assessment completed by the Auxiliary Secretary of Integrated Student Services, as well as information compiled by the Office of the Security Commissioner, evidenced that school resources want to acquire knowledge and develop the skills needed to support the development of a healthy school climate, which is

conducive to improved academic performance of their students. It is well known that positive school environments foster the social, emotional and academic wellbeing of all students. Research has shown that having a positive school climate is directly linked with student academic success, pro-social behaviors, increased graduation and attendance rates, reduced dropout rates, and higher rates of teacher satisfaction. (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments. 2011).

In order for the PRDE to make these decisions with the effect of improving academic outcomes the PRDE recognized the need for better data and information to make informed decisions. The PRDE is adhering to best practices in DDDM and has also considered models for DDDM recognize that the process must be understood within a larger context. Additionally, PRDE is working to expand the types of data that are collected, analyses that are performed, and decisions made. PRDE is planning the implementation several new technology driven initiatives that will improve school climate (Restorative Discipline, Character Counts, and Bullying Prevention and Awareness). These are discussed in greater detail below. These initiatives will be implemented system-wide and the data collected from them will be used to inform assessments about school climate and school quality is making vary across levels of our educational system, including the classroom, school, district, and island. During the 2017-2018 school year, these data will be collected and assessed to determine if PRDE can incorporate them into the School Quality indicator. Additionally we will pilot the use of teacher and student surveys. Once this is available, we will determine if it can be used in our School Quality indicator. If it can be, PRDE will submit the necessary requests for amendments to USDE.

To provide for meaningful differentiation PRDE has established a composite School Quality Indicator with the following selected criteria:

Student Attendance Rate

For the 2017-2018 academic year, the minimum number of days that school must be in session is 181 days. The student attendance rate is based out of the number of days the student is absent from the days school is in session. Student attendance is defined as the number of school days in session in which a student is enrolled/registered during the annual reporting period from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. If a student misses 3 or more classes in 1 day, PRDE considers student absent for the school day.

School quality or student success will be reflected in the percentage of a school's student attendance in K-12 grade levels. A student who is not present for any reason, excused, unexcused or for disciplinary action is absent unless permitted by statute or regulation. Attendance rates for the purpose of school quality or student success under ESSA will be calculated based on the percentage of all students who were present (taking into account that student who did not miss 3 or more classes of the school day) and will factor in student subgroups.

PRDE believes student attendance provides important information about a school's culture and climate. In addition, for students with low attendance are more likely to drop out of school. When reporting data for school accountability, PRDE needs to ensure that the individual student attendance is as valid and reliable as possible. Historically, Puerto Rico has had challenges with attendance rates of both teachers and students. During 2015-2016, PRDE received a total of 833 referrals for students with low attendance rates. Given this, the PRDE has decided to give high significance to attendance when assessing schools, for students with low attendance are more likely to drop out of school.

For such reason, the PRDE will require all schools to appoint personnel to take the role of registrars. The registrars will be responsible for monitoring data entry in the SIE, determine protocols to validate the data in SIE, and generate compliance reports on data entry to the SIE. SIE local administrators will perform random and periodic school supervision visits to the school director, focused on data entry to the SIE. The PRDE will have campaigns to disseminate the need for the data entered in SIE to ensure the accuracy of the attendance data.

Currently the student is present unless indicated otherwise in the SIE. The PRDE is analyzing the option to change the default so that it is null (neither absent nor present). This allows the educator to identify who is not passing the student's attendance to the SIE and monitor the admission of absences in the system. The PRDE will determine the corrective protocol, including consequences, for those who do not comply with the data validation rules in the SIE.

Teacher Attendance Rates

Personal leave includes voluntary absences for reasons other than sick leave. Teacher attendance rate will be calculated based on the number of days teachers are absent from the 181 school days.

Teacher attendance is defined as the average percentage of days that teachers are present and teaching students in an assigned class. Teachers should not be considered present for days taken for sick leave and/or personal leave. Teacher attendance includes data as collected by the PRDE on a daily basis by the correspondent available platforms.

PRDE believes teacher attendance is directly related to student outcomes: the more teachers are absent, the more their students' achievement suffers. A number of studies have found there to be a disproportionately high rate of teacher absenteeism in schools serving low income and minority students, providing yet another obstacle to closing the achievement gap[7][8][9].

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7 Clotfelter et al. (2007).
8 Bruno, J. E. (2002). The geographical distribution of teacher absenteeism in large urban school district settings: Implications for school reform efforts aimed at promoting equity and excellence in education. Los Angeles, CA: University of California.
9 Miller (2012).

Investing in a system that keeps effective teachers in the classroom should be a priority for school leaders and policymakers. A key part of that effort is creating a school climate in which consistent teacher attendance is the norm.

Assessment participation rate

Pursuant to Section 1111(c)(4)(E) of ESSA, all states are required annually to measure the achievement of at least 95 percent of all students in each student subgroup. When measuring, calculating, and reporting proficiency rates, states are required to include either a denominator equal to 95 percent of all students (and of each student subgroup) or the number of students participating in the assessments.

Full participation in the assessment program is an important means to ensure that the public education system is delivering on the promise of high academic expectations and college and career readiness for each and every student. The validity of conclusions one can derive from assessment results is partially dependent on the percentage of students who participated in the assessment. For this reason, PRDE considered the META-PR assessment participation an important element of the accountability system. The participation rate is included as a component of the School Quality or Student Success Indicator because low participation can be influenced by lack of communication, assessment misinformation, level of understanding about the purpose of the test, adult attitudes/perceptions about standardized testing in general, concerns about too much testing/loss of instructional time, student test anxiety and other school environment factors.

Participation rate is based on the META-PR assessment. The PRDE receives the META-PR data file from the testing vendor and calculates the participation rate as the number of students who participated in the META-PR assessment divided by the number of students enrolled in the assessed grades. The subjects that are considered in the calculation are Spanish, Math and English.

Participation Rate is calculated as follow:

$$Participation\ rate = \frac{\#\ students\ who\ participated\ in\ METAPR\ assessment}{\#\ of\ students\ enrolled\ in\ the\ assessed\ grades}$$

Future School Quality Indicators

As indicated above, PRDE is working to expand the types of data that are collected, analyses that are performed, and decisions made. PRDE is planning the implementation several new technology driven initiatives that will improve school climate (Restorative Discipline, Character Counts, and Bullying Prevention and Awareness.

These initiatives will be implemented system-wide and the data collected from them will be used to inform assessments about school climate and school quality is making vary across levels of our educational system, including the classroom, school, district, and island. During the 2017-2018 school year, these data will be collected and assessed to determine if PRDE can incorporate them into the School Quality indicator. Additionally we will pilot the use of teacher and student surveys. Once this is available, we will determine if it can be used in our School Quality indicator. If it can be, PRDE will submit the necessary requests for amendments to USDE.

PRDE is committed to collected additional data on school quality that will enable us to ensure all students have positive learning environments. We define positive learning environments as those that are that are safe, supportive, and engaging. We have conducted research and found that there is vast evidence, including studies completed locally and nationally, that highlight best practices and research on the field of Social Emotional Learning.

PRDE considered using the results of the Youth and Risk Behavior questionnaire. Unfortunately this survey is, administered every two years by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Results from the survey evidence the violence problem present in our schools, as well as the absence of a positive and safe school climate for all. Results include:

(1) 10% of students indicated being a victim of bullying at one point;

(2) 8% indicated being a victim of cyberbullying;

(3) 3% indicated having carried a weapon to school;

(4) 7% have threatened, or hurt, another student with a weapon;

(5) 17% have been involved in a fight; and

(6) 6% have been the victim of some type of violent behavior in the context of a relationship.

These aspects of school climate have a negative effect on attendance. 12% of our students indicated having been absent during the last year because of not feeling safe at school or on the way to school.

Results from other studies confirm these findings. Puerto Rico Administration of Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services found that 10.7% of the students that participated on the sample had committed robbery in the year prior while 3% had carry a weapon and 2.5% had been arrested/. Parenting Resources found that with a representative sample of 10,229 students from third grade

(elementary school) to senior year (high school).11% of girls and 14% of boys reported being victims of harassment at least two or three times a month.

PRDE also believes that negative aspects of school climate and exposure to hostile environments correlate with low academic achievement, behavioral difficulties, psychiatric disorders like post-traumatic stress disorder, and an increase in the use of controlled substances.

Programmatic Interventions that will Improve Data Collection

As the rates of suspensions and expulsions, or exclusionary discipline, has increased over the past few decades, a growing body of research has found that exclusionary discipline does not deter poor behavior, negatively affects school climate, takes up instructional time, and is associated with poor student academic achievement and outcomes, including drop out and juvenile justice involvement. Researchers and practitioners have been working to determine which alternatives show promise in preventing and addressing problem behavior in school. Two of the most commonly studied and implemented alternatives with growing data supporting progress are restorative practices and social and emotional learning (SEL).

Restorative justice practices aim to hold students accountable and to change their behavior. Research shows that the use of restorative justice techniques can decrease misbehavior and suspension rates. Furthermore, restorative justice practices can be used in many different situations and can be tweaked to fit the students involved or the behavior targeted. It focuses on the damage, rather than the offender, in an effort to make a change in the students' worldview in order for him to emphasize with the victim and recognize the repercussion of his actions.

The PRDE will begin implementing restorative and SEL practices in a small scale as to determine its effectiveness and perform any changes needed. This implementation will vary based on specific school needs. At the same time, the Students Code of Conduct will be revise in order to decrease exclusionary discipline practices (out of school suspensions and expulsions) and to give the regional LEAs a legal frame, focus on restorative and SEL practices, from where they can establish their own, according to the particular needs of their region.

Character Counts

The PRDE developed a project to create positive school .This initiative aims to increase the school retention rate, academic achievement, skills development and attitudes in students in an integrated way by attending to the whole child Josephson (1987), created the innovative and effective Character Counts for the formation of values and civism in schools based on the model T.E.A.M. (Teach, Enforce, Advocate and Model). The program has been effective in the change of behaviors and attitudes of the students. The results have been tested by statistics and by social change. In addition, the project seeks to improve the school climate and reduce by 25% the indicators of incidents reported.

Project implementation has (9) phases, to be completed during the 2017-2018 school year. It will begin with outreach activities at all levels. During the implementation we expect to impact all students in the PRDE. During the same period of time, we will offer anonymous resources for students to report bullying, as well as spaces for conflict mediation. Combining all of these efforts, as well as providing professional development for teachers and workshops for parents, we will provide knowledge and skills to manage social emotional issues to all of our school communities.

Bullying Prevention and Awareness

For the fiscal year 2017-2018, the PRDE will introduce an anti-bullying campaign. The PRDE will provide training and guidance to the school personnel and orientations to parents and students on effective discipline practices that promote orderly and healthy school climates. An innovative communication service tool to address the bullying problem, will also be introduced in schools.

This tool will allow counselors to meet students where they are –with text and online messaging – to help solve issues. By reducing the stigma of communicating with trusted adults, the service will allow students to open-up and break the 'code of silence'. Schools consistently report helping students who have never previously reached out for assistance.

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 1111(c)(5) of the ESEA with respect to accountability for charter schools.

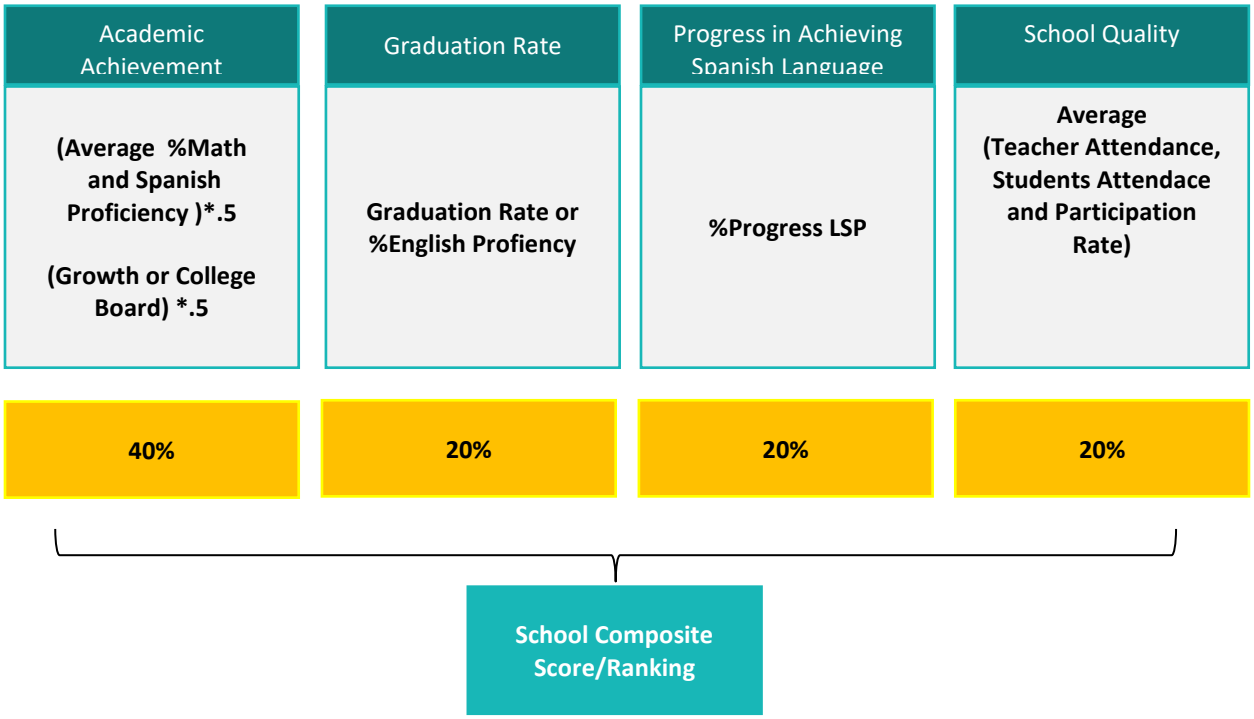
The PRDE has been implementing a differentiated accountability model based on the requirements of section 1111(c)(4)(C) of the ESEA. PRDE's new accountability system provides increased transparency by allowing PRDE to set and track progress toward ambitious new long-term goals PRDE's new accountability system, as defined in its ESSA plan will facilitate the, identify comprehensive and targeted schools and customizing support to non-categorized Title I schools. ***PRDE's accountability system under ESSA is based on four elements: coherence, comprehensiveness, freedom from bias, and fairness.*** Each element of the system should logically relate to better school performance and the accumulation of elements should adequately focus on interest.

The PRDE's process to establish annual meaningful differentiation will be based on all the indicators in the State's accountability system for all students and for each of subgroup of students and will apply to all schools. PRDE believes that the application of this model will make it possible to identify those schools that will not make the interim targets and would be in need of additional

support. The academic indicators are academic achievement, academic progress and progress toward Spanish language proficiency. The non-academic indicators include graduation rate and school quality. In the school classification system, greater weight of 60% will be afforded to the academic indicators, while the non-academic indicators will carry a lesser weight of 40%. We believe this provides a well-rounded assessment of all the dimensions that have historically impacted achievement in PR.

Weighted indicator scores will then be combined to create a composite score for each school. The composite score will be used to identify the school as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). Schools that do not fall in one of these two categories will be identified as "Other" (i.e., Transition).

Diagram 6: Composited Score



The composite score is based on the following indicators:

- **Academic Achievement- 40%**
  - Proficiency Rate: This component is calculated as the average proficiency rate in Spanish and Math.
  - Growth:
    - For high schools, that do not have growth data, College Board results will be used.

- Both, proficiency rate and growth components will weight 50% of the Academic Achievement indicator.
  - If a school does not have Growth or College Board data, this component of the academic achievement indicator will not include. Therefore, the proficiency component will weight 100% of the Academic Achievement indicator.

- **Graduation Rate or Percent English Proficiency - 20%**
  - Graduation Rate data is calculated for high schools and English Proficiency rate for elementary schools.
- **Progress in Achieving Spanish Language Proficiency- 20%**
  - This indicator is only included for those schools that have Spanish learners' students.
- **School Quality- 20%**
  - This indicator is composed of teacher attendance rate, student attendance rate and participation rate. All three components will weigh the same, 33.33% each one.
  - If the data is unavailable for one of the components of the school quality indicator, the average of the available variables will be calculated to generate this indicator.

Meaningful Differentiation

School will be ranked according to their composite score. Schools with lower performance will be classified either as CSI or TSI. Schools identified as CSI will receive the highest level of support, and TSI schools will receive support targeted to assisting specific populations to foster continuous improvement.

PRDE believes our new model will encourage schools to work toward closing achievement gaps clarifying the reasons for the low academic achievement. The differentiated accountability system has created expectation for what educators need to do to improve the performance of the lowest-achieving groups of students. It also creates new opportunities for educators to learn form best practices that have been effective at producing higher achievement among certain groups of students.

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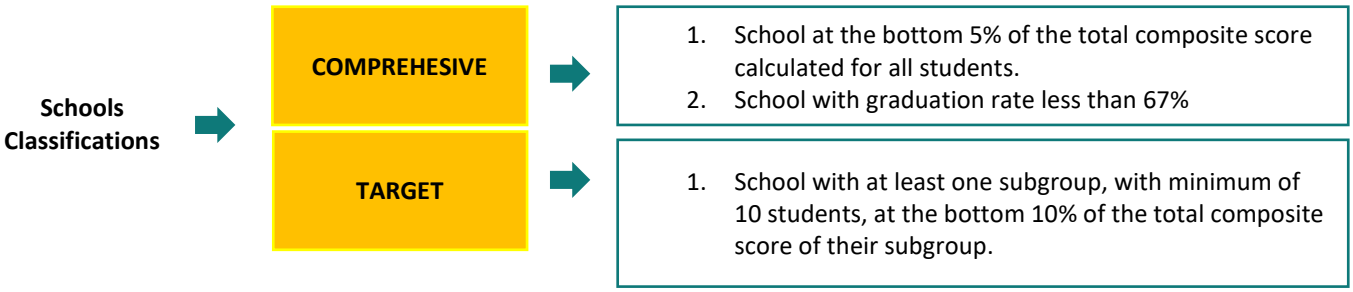
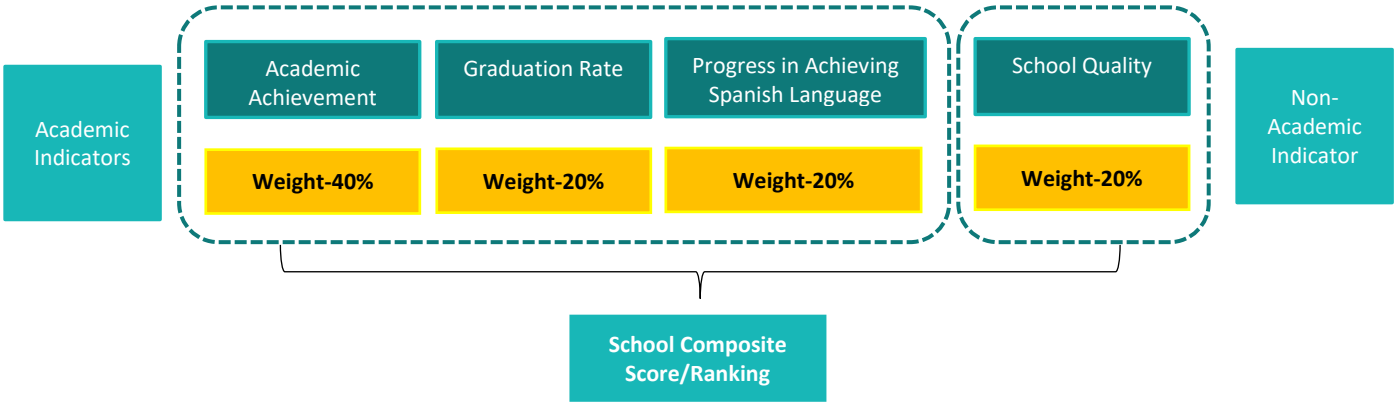
Diagram 7: Schools Classifications



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.

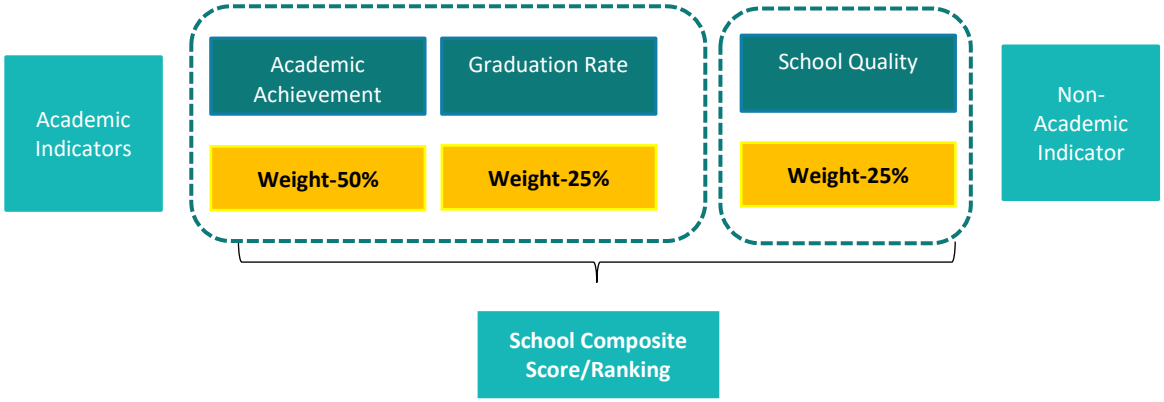
The PRDE has determined that for those schools that have Spanish learners' students the weight for all indicators is as presented in the diagram below.

Diagram 8: Weight for all indicators (Schools with SL students)



For those schools that do not have Spanish learner students, an abbreviated model in substituted that removes the points allotted to this category. Weights have been adjusted as follows:

Diagram 9: Weight for all indicators (Schools without SL students)



c. If the States 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.

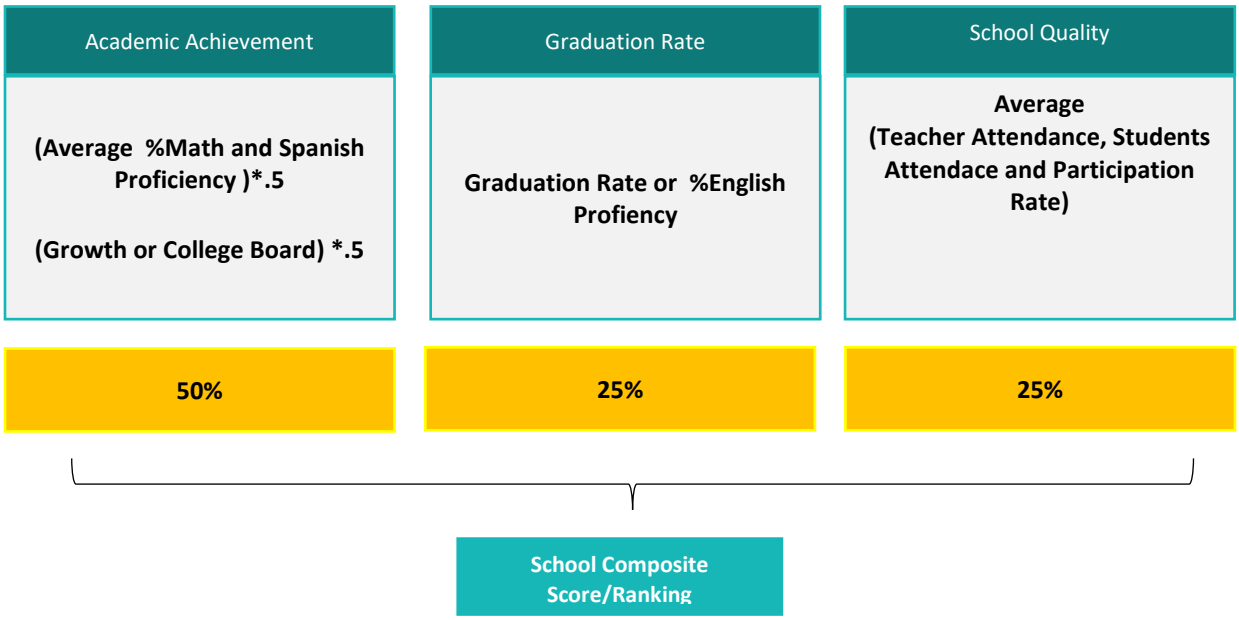
The PRDE uses a different methodology for those schools that not have Spanish learners' students. The PRDE's process to establish annual meaningful differentiation for all students and for each student subgroup is to calculate the accountability system without the LSP criteria. The new weights are as follows:

- **Academic Achievement- 50%**
  - Proficiency Rate
    - This component is calculated as the average of proficiency in Spanish and Math.
  - Growth
    - For high schools, that do not have growth data, College Board results will be used.
  - Both, proficiency rate and growth components will weight 50% of the Academic Achievement indicator.
    - If a school does not have growth or College Board data, this component of the academic achievement indicator will not include. Therefore, the proficiency component will weight 100% of the Academic Achievement indicator

- **Graduation Rate - 25%**
  - Graduation Rate data is calculated for high schools and English Proficiency rate for elementary schools.
- **School Quality 25%**
  - This indicator is composed of teacher attendance rate, student attendance rate and participation rate. All three components will weigh the same, 33.33% each.
  - If the data is unavailable for one of the components of the school quality indicator, the average of the available variables will be calculated to generate this indicator.

The calculations for the composited score, for the abbreviated model, is explained in the diagram below:

Diagram 10: Composited Score (Schools without SL students)



Schools will be ranked according their composite score. Schools with lower performance will be classified either as CSI or TSI. Schools identified as CSI will receive the highest level of support, and TSI schools will receive support targeted to helping specific populations to foster continuous improvement.

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.

The PRDE will identify schools for either CSI or TSI by the end of June 2018 using 2017-2018 school year data and will remain in this classification status for a minimum of three years. Identification will be based on a streamlined set of rules and criteria that focus intervention at the District level in addition to the school level. The methodology that the PRDE used to identify 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 is as follows:

- schools with bottom 5% of the composite score based on all the indicators and for all the students will be classified as *Comprehensive Support* and Improvement Schools. The PRDE will first identifying these schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) in the 2017-2018 school year.
- schools that previously identified for TSI support due to chronically low performing student subgroups, that has not demonstrated sufficient improvement after three years in that status.
- schools determined to fall within the lowest 5% in the state accountability system for three consecutive years or with an adjusted cohort graduation rate of less than 67% in the most recent year was requiring comprehensive support.

This definition includes but is not limited to Title I schools. Schools will be added to the list on an annual basis.

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PRDE plans to identify schools for support and improvement as follows:

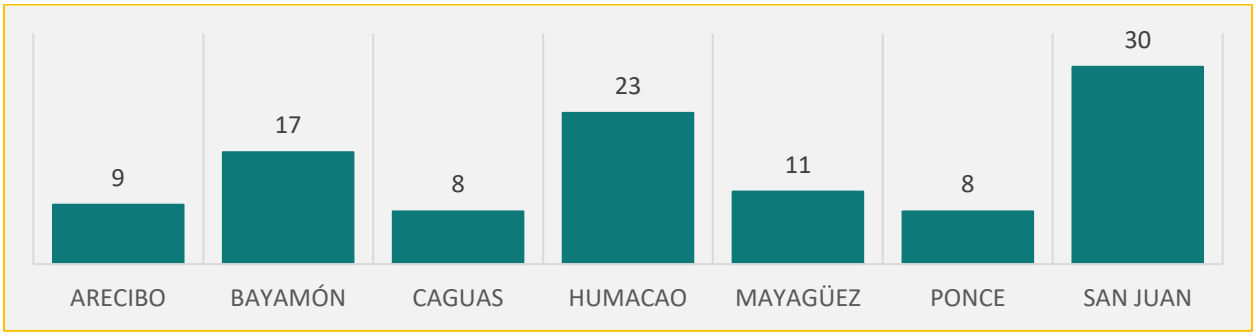
Table 29: Schools for Support and Improvement

Determination	Description	
Comprehensive support and improvement *(every three years)*	There are three ways to be identified as a school in need comprehensive support and improvement: • Each Title I school with an overall performance, based on all applicable indicators and in accordance with the weighting system described in Section 4.1.D(ii), that is at or the bottom five percent of Title I schools (i.e., the cut score); • Each high school with a four-year graduation rate at or below 67 percent; and • Each Title I school identified as in need of targeted support and improvement for three or more consecutive years (chronically low performing).	
Targeted support and improvement *(every three years)*	Each school with at least one subgroup, whose overall performance, based on all applicable indicators and in accordance with the weighting system described in section 4.1.D(ii), is at or below the tenth percentile of Title I schools.	
Consistently underperforming subgroup *(annually)*	**Non-High Schools**	**High Schools**
	Each school that has at least one student subgroup that: • falls at the bottom 10% of the state average for all students on all of the following indicators: - Academic achievement; - English Proficiency test - Progress toward Spanish language proficiency (if applicable); and - Composite Indicator for School Quality.	Each school that has at least one student subgroup that: • falls at the bottom 10% of the state average for all students on all of the following indicators: - Academic achievement; - Graduation rate; - Progress toward Spanish language proficiency (if applicable); and - Composite Indicator for School Quality

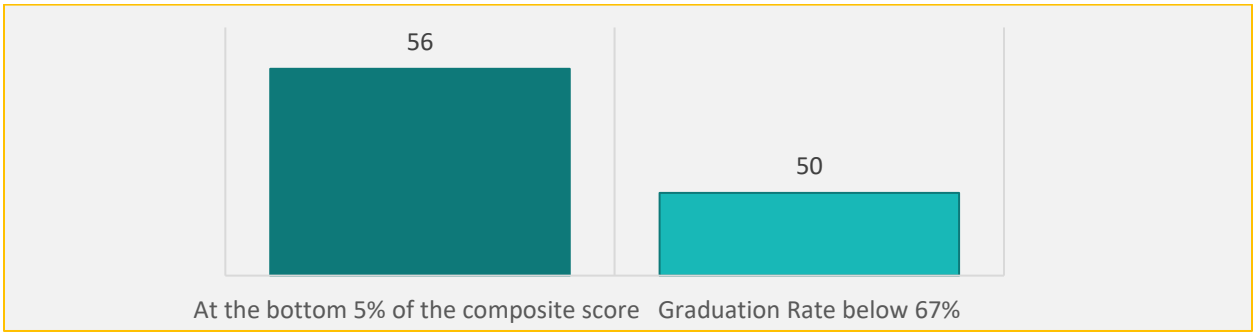
The PRDE did a preliminary analysis of the accountability model to evaluate how many schools would need comprehensive support. Under this methodology 95 schools were identified as comprehensive, where 56 were at the bottom 5% of the composite score based on all the indicators and 50 with a three-year graduation rate at or below 67 percent. The Regional LEAs with a larger

number of schools classified as comprehensive were San Juan, with 30 schools. Based on the results of this modeling effort, PRDE believes the results of our accountability system will not only identify schools correctly but also produce cohorts of schools in each Regional LEA that can be appropriately supported given the new administrative structures we are implementing.

Graph 9: Comprehensive Schools by Region



Graph 10: Reasons for a School to be classified as Comprehensive



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.

All public high schools (Title I or non-Title I) with of graduation rate of less than 67% will automatically be identified for CSI beginning in the 2018-2019 school year. These schools will be identified using the 2017-2018 four-year cohort graduation rate data.

Per ESSA Section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(II), TSI-1 schools that do not meet exit targets within three years will be identified for CSI beginning November 2021. The PRDE will identify CSI schools by the end of November 2018 using 2017-2018 school year data. Schools will then conduct needs assessment and planning prior to implementation by the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year.

Title I programs will assist schools with conducting a needs assessment, analyzing the data, and developing school improvement plans.

PRDE's school identification is determined by our "system of meaningful differentiation." This is based on the PRDE's accountability system, including indicators of academic achievement, graduation rate, progress towards LP proficiency and school quality. Using our model, PRDE is able to identify (calculate) which are the comprehensive support and improvement schools and targeted support and intervention schools.

Comprehensive support schools will be identified at least once every three years beginning in the 2017–18 school year. This category will include the lowest-performing 5 percent of Title I, Part A schools and all public high schools that fail to graduate 67 percent or more of their students. PRDE will notify Regional LEA's of any schools identified as part of the comprehensive category. Once Regional LEAs have been notified, these must work with multi sector teams to develop and implement a comprehensive support and improvement plan. The plan must be approved by the school, the Regional LEA, and the SEA. Once approved, the SEA will monitor and review implementation of the plan. While this practice may seem logical and common, it should be noted that this level of scaled support and oversight has not previously existed in Puerto Rico. We believe created a clear line of accountability and clarifying the responsibility of every actor in the system will result in immediate changes in the fidelity of implementation of these plans.

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.

The identification of CSI schools will be determined based on the results of an indexed score based on performance in each of the indicators included in PRDE's new accountability model. The PRDE will use these index scores to identify the lowest-performing schools in the island. Using this methodology, the state will identify CSI schools every three years. The PRDE decided to identify the lowest 5% of schools in rank order based on the results of the data modeling practices we applied.

Comprehensive Support schools may remain in this classification status for a minimum of three years. The PRDE believes that this three-year span is necessary to ensure that interventions take place and become part of the school culture.

The exit criteria would consider whether the school would still be eligible for comprehensive support, based on the criteria used **initially** to identify these schools for comprehensive support, when the next cohort of schools is identified for comprehensive support. These are:

- High schools with graduation rate of MORE than 67% for two consecutive years.
- No longer being identified as part of the lowest 5% of schools for two consecutive years.
- No longer identified as "chronically low performing", receiving targeted support and improvement for two consecutive years.
- School demonstrates an effective sustainability plan of the progress that it has made. This plan must explain how the school will maintain a strong rate of growth and change while addressing how the school intends to ensure sustainability with reduced services, supports and/or funding.

Schools that have not satisfied the exit criteria may be required to implement any one or more of the following interventions: replacing school staff, restarting the school as a Partnership school (i.e. schools with an alliance with nonprofit organizations, IHEs, etc.) or closing the school and enrolling students in higher-performing schools.

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.

The PRDE will review all schools **annually**. Schools that have been previously classified as comprehensive support schools can be re-identified if they fail to continue their improvements after meeting the exit criteria. In addition, each school will have a Report Card that tracks progress on interim indicators as discussed above.

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))*

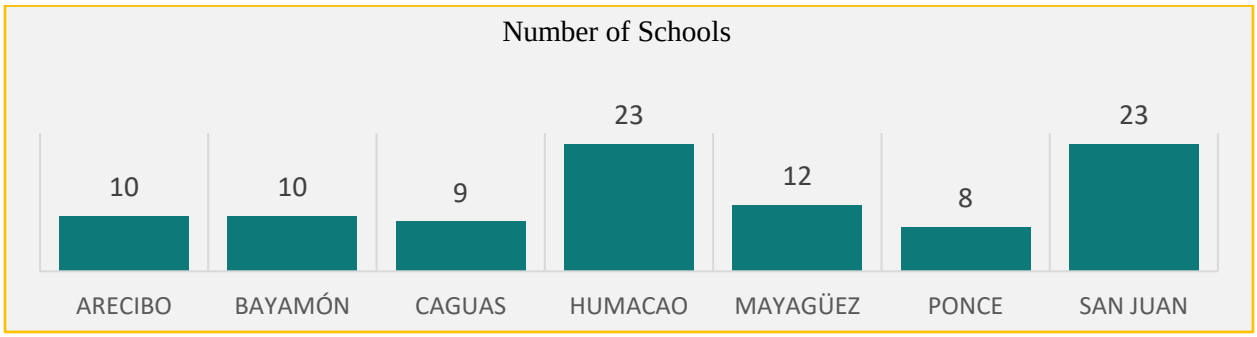
The methodology that the PRDE used to identify schools receiving Title I, Part A funds that have received additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C) is as follows:

Once the Comprehensive Schools are identified, the remaining schools are evaluated based on the performance of subgroups. Schools are to be identified as in need of "targeted support and improvement" if they:

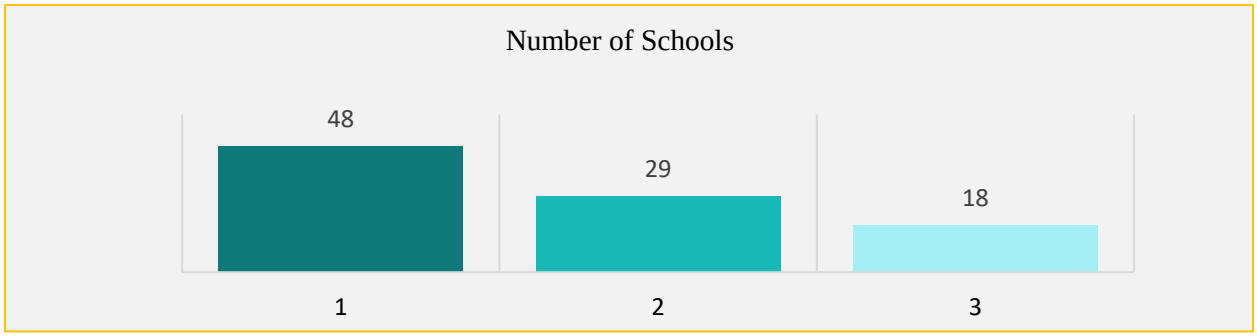
- Have one or more subgroups of students underperforming. If a school with at least one subgroup, with a minimum 10 students, is at the bottom 10%, of the composite scores based on all the indicators, of their subgroup is classified as TSI.

The PRDE did a preliminary analysis of the accountability model to evaluate what subgroups and how many schools would need targeted support. Under this methodology 95 schools were identified as targeted, where some schools have up to a maximum of three subgroups that would need support. The Regional LEAs with a larger number of schools classified as targeted were San Juan and Humacao, with 23 schools each. The subgroups identified as consistently underperforming were students with disabilities, students economically disadvantaged and Puerto Ricans. Based on the results of this modeling effort, PRDE believes the results of our accountability system will not only identify schools correctly but also produce cohorts of schools in each Regional LEA that can be appropriately supported given the new administrative structures we are implementing.

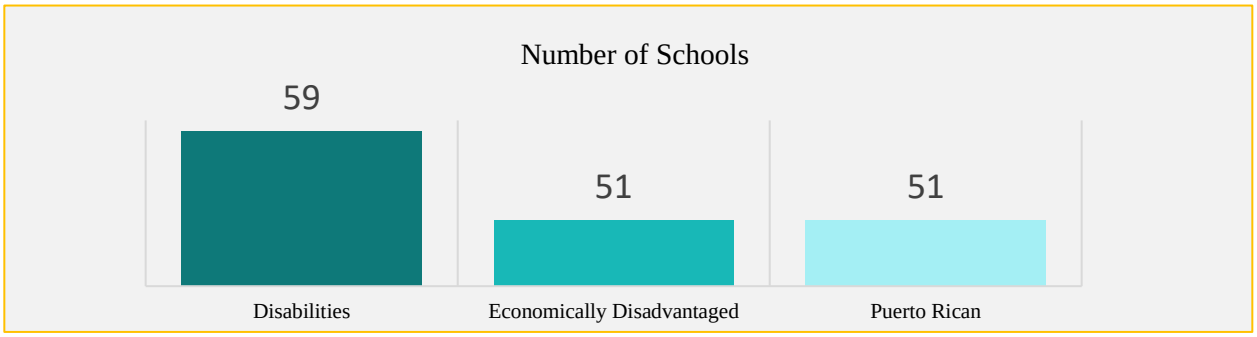
Graph 11: Targeted Schools by Region



Graph 12: Number of Targeted Subgroups by Schools



Graph 13: Subgroups Classified as Targeted



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))*

Once the Comprehensive Schools are identified, the remaining schools are evaluated based on the performance of subgroups. Schools are to be identified as in need of "targeted support and improvement" if they:

- Have one or more subgroups of students underperforming. If a school with at least one subgroup, with a minimum 10 students, is at the bottom 10%, of the composite scores based on all the indicators, of their subgroup is classified as TSI.

For those schools in the elementary and middle level, composite scores is based on the following indicators:

- Academic achievement
- English Proficiency test *(different when compared to high schools)*
- Progress toward Spanish language proficiency (if applicable), and
- Composite Indicator for School Quality

While for high schools, the composite scores is based on the following indicators:

- Academic achievement
- Graduation rate *(different when compared to elementary and middle schools)*
- Progress toward Spanish language proficiency (if applicable), and
- Composite Indicator for School Quality

The PRDE will identify TSI schools by the end of June 2018 using 2017-2018 school year data and will remain in this classification status for a minimum of three years, period in which PRDE will identify again such schools. Identification of TSI-1 schools is based on an index across all indicators for each student subgroup. This subgroup summative index score will then be compared to the performance of all students. The PRDE will then rank the performance of each subgroup in this set of schools. The 10% of accountability schools with the lowest-performing subgroups will be identified as TSI-1 schools.

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

Puerto Rico has no additional statewide 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.

Pursuant to Section 1111(c)(4)(E) of ESSA, all states are required annually to measure the achievement of at least 95 percent of all students in each student subgroup. When measuring, calculating, and reporting proficiency rates, states are required to include either a denominator equal to 95 percent of all students (and of each student subgroup) or the number of students participating in the assessments.

PRDE maintains its student enrollment in a statewide student information system. It also calculates and report state assessment participation rates for all schools and districts and disaggregated groups. In accordance with ESSA and in order to maintain a valid system of school accountability, all students who are enrolled in grades three through eight and eleven are required to participate in testing.

School report cards will include clear and explicit reporting of student participation on the state assessments, and will clearly indicate on the school report card instances when the participation falls below 95 percent for all students or any subgroup.

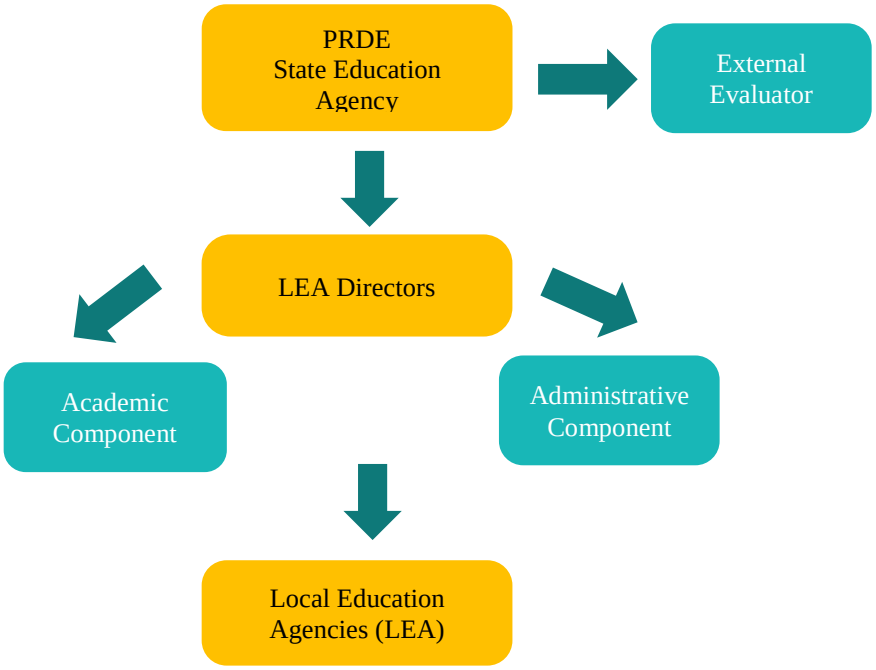
Participation rate is factored in the calculation of the statewide accountability system, because PRDE has established it as a component of the School Quality Indicator. The data used to obtain this component is the number of students participating in the META-PR. Considering that participation rate is a component of the School Quality Indicator, obtaining a low percent participation will affect the final composite score to identify CSI and TSI schools.

If the school fails to meet the participation rate for two consecutive years the PRDE will require each school to submit a plan that includes strategies for meeting participation requirements.

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

PRDE is in the process of creating Regional LEA structures. In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, the PRDE will begin transitioning to a management model with a greater degree of administrative and academic control of the school region under the overall direction of the LEA Director. This plan will be implemented in its totality in the 2018-2019 fiscal year and will allow the PRDE to provide continued support for schools and achieve LEA improvement.

Diagram 11: Transformation Model for Academic Excellence



With the new model, new lines of authority, responsibility and supervision of the administrative and academic components will be restructured through the LEA directors, administrative and academic components will serve the entire LEA region, rather than being strictly assigned to a district, and aspects of uniformity, efficiency in the use of resources and the interaction of areas will be improved. Administrative, technical and academic services will also be decentralized and expanded. This redesign is part of the PRDE's efforts to improve our schools and be able to address the longstanding academic achievement needs of students in Puerto Rico.

Currently, the PRDE is a unitary system serving as both the state educational agency (SEA) and a local education agency (LEA). The PRDE oversees one island-wide education system. From the SEA perspective, PRDE's Central Level develops policies and guidelines, provides materials and technical assistance, engages in oversight and monitoring and provides leadership to all schools and Districts. From the LEA perspective, PRDE provides direct services to schools and ensures the implementation of SEA level policies. Although PRDE uses the term "Districts," these entities are not yet LEAs and do not have autonomous decision-making authority, nor do they have fiscal independence.

Regional LEA structures will be able to provide more direct oversight and support to CSI and TSI schools that fail to meet their improvement targets More rigorous interventions could include modify the newly created local governing structures through the use of a Regional LEA. This activity is part of the PRDE's responsibilities as a LEA. The PRDE also consulted research that indicates that when districts close schools they are able to achieve improved outcomes for students by concentrating limited financial and staff resources on fewer schools. Thus, PRDE will examine and modify how resources are currently allocated to ensure schools with the greatest need receive the most support. An example of this could include assigning district level staff to specific CSI schools.

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.

Comprehensive and targeted support schools will exit if they no longer meet the reason for their identification in the three consecutive years after identification. All CSI schools will be annually evaluated through the school accountability framework.

PRDE will require CSI schools to develop and track the implementation of academic improvement initiatives through their school improvement plan (DEE). PRDE district level staff will engage in monitoring and evaluation of the school's implementation of its school improvement plan.

The Data included in the School Report Card, which is based on their META-PR scores having to do with academic achievement, the whole child, and teachers allows schools to **measure interim progress**, issue progress reports, and establish priorities based on those needs in order to produce activities to close the gap. Progress reports allows schools to ensure that their activities are closing the gap. Changes to the activities are made throughout the year to assure progressive results.

At the end of the first year of ESSA implementation PRDE will examine the results of its scores for each subgroup island-wide. Where schools fail to meet the identified **annual** interim target, PRDE will examine the performance of these schools to better understand the reasons for the

observed performance. The PRDE will look for changes in attendance rates, scaled scores, and performance on individual content areas at the **end of each year** and compared these with the interim goals established by the PRDE.

The exit criteria would consider whether the school would still be eligible for comprehensive support, based on the criteria used **initially** to identify these schools for comprehensive support, when the next cohort of schools is identified for comprehensive support. These are:

- High schools with graduation rate of MORE than 67% for two consecutive years.
- No longer being identified as part of the lowest 5% of schools for two consecutive years.
- No longer identified as "chronically low performing", receiving targeted support and improvement for two consecutive years.
- School demonstrates an effective sustainability plan of the progress that it has made. This plan must explain how the school will maintain a strong rate of growth and change while addressing how the school intends to ensure sustainability with reduced services, supports and/or funding.

Different from previous years, the PRDE now requires that the schools demonstrate a sustainable plan for their continued improvement. If the school cannot show sustainable development, as continue using SIT teams, provide ongoing PD in same areas or continue obligation of funds in similar manner, then the PRDE will continue to provide them with support (i.e. academic, student services, SIT) in order for them to achieve their targets, until they are no longer considered comprehensive support and improvement schools. The PRDE will establish an objective standard in the improvement plans, consistent for all schools, in order to monitor and measure the school's development.

These exit criteria were chosen based on the following:

- They provide enough time for intervention to take hold and become part of the school culture.
- They indicate that the school is performing at a level on par with rigorous expectations.
- They meet any other applicable federal guidelines for other grant programs.

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.

PRDE will use the same process for evaluation the potential exit from TSI classification that it uses with CSI schools. PRDE seeks to ensure uniformity and transparency in the design of its

differentiated accountability systems. It also seeks to streamline the process of performance monitoring and make optimal use of the existing human resources and procedures.

The following indicators of progress, which are consistent with the indicator included on the PRDE's accountability system, will be monitored annually for all comprehensive schools and used to make course corrections to comprehensive school's improvement plan (DEE):

- High schools with graduation rate of MORE than 67% for two consecutive years.
- None of the school's subgroup, with a minimum 10 students, is at the bottom 10%, of the composite scores based on all the indicators for two consecutive years.
- No longer identified as "chronically low performing", receiving targeted support and improvement for two consecutive years.
- School demonstrates an effective sustainability plan of the progress that it has made. This plan must explain how the school will maintain a strong rate of growth and change while addressing how the school intends to ensure sustainability with reduced services, supports and/or funding.

These annual monitoring indicators will help inform the school, LEA's Regions and Central Level about the progress of each TSI school and provide objective measures for use in modifying the school level plans.

Schools will remain in TSI status for a minimum of three years. At the end of these three years, a school may exit TSI status if, in the current academic year, all subgroups have met a composite score higher than the bottom ten percent.

These exit criteria were chosen based on the following:

- They provide enough time for intervention to take hold and become part of the school culture.
- They indicate that the school is performing at a level on par with rigorous expectations.
- They meet any other applicable federal guidelines for other grant programs.

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.

Comprehensive Restructuring

The PRDE has initiated a comprehensive data collection effort to understand the specific situations in each of our school communities. In order to address schools that have been chronically

underperforming for years and shown a longstanding academic achievement need, PRDE has set as a goal to move students to more productive learning environment and/or combine schools that are "Excellent" so that more students can benefit from effective instructional practices. [10] The goal of this restructuring is intended to improve academic outcomes and better align resources.

Close/consolidate ineffective schools. A large portion of our effort will include school closures similar to what is considered as part of a school improvement strategy for SIG schools. The PRDE's school improvement effort includes efforts to close low-performing schools and consolidate schools by sending students to other, higher-performing schools, schools with the capacity to achieve positive outcomes, and schools that have sufficient enrollment to support cost-effective implementation of new academic programs. The PRDE developed this strategy based on research that has shown positive results closing schools and moving students to other schools and/or reopening the school with new staff. [11]

Additionally, research suggests that this strategy is particularly effective in districts that face declining student enrollment. Student enrollment in Puerto Rico has been declining in recent years, approximately 20,000 students per year.

Engage External Evaluators

PRDE will identify an external partner to conduct qualitative needs assessments at both the school and district levels. The PRDE will work with IHEs and other external partners to develop local, effective, and cost-efficient external evaluators and evaluation systems and will work collaboratively with the LEA/school to examine the findings of the needs assessment and provide support in the development of an appropriate and actionable improvement plan. Evaluations will consider the qualitative needs assessments will examine previous school improvement efforts/plans, programs, strategies, initiatives, instructional practices, assessments, staffing, systems development, and all factors that were intended to bring about change in that school. This will also include an assessment of the leadership capacity/competency at the school and district level.

Partnership Schools

Partnerships schools are unique public schools that are allowed the freedom to be more innovative while being held accountable for advancing student achievement, and can operate with liberty from some of the regulations that are imposed upon district schools. Partnership schools are accountable for academic results and for upholding the promises these made. They must demonstrate performance in the areas of academic achievement, financial management, and organizational stability. If a partnership school does not meet performance goals, it may be closed by the state.

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[10] http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/federal-funding-school-turnaround-field-guide.aspx

[11] https://www.brookings.edu/research/continued-support-for-improving-the-lowest-performing-schools/

The core of the partnership school model is the belief that public schools should be held accountable for student learning. In exchange for this accountability, school leaders should be given freedom to do whatever it takes to help students achieve and should share what works with the broader public school system so that all students benefit.

Partnership schools foster a partnership between parents, teachers, and students. They create an environment in which parents can be more involved, teachers are allowed to innovate, and students are provided the structure they need to learn. Some specific examples of how partnership schools are working to improve student achievement include:

- **Adjusting curriculum to meet student needs.** Partnership school teachers, for example, have a say in the curriculum they teach and can change materials to meet students' needs.
- **Creating a unique school culture.** Partnership schools build upon the core academic subjects by creating a school culture or adopting a theme. For example, partnership schools may focus on Science Technology Engineering or Math (STEM) education, performing arts, college preparation, career readiness, language immersion, or special education.
- **Developing next-generation learning models.** Partnership schools are rethinking the meaning of the word "classroom." Some partnership schools may combine online classroom time with classroom time in a physical school building.

New DEE Plans - Schools not meeting the Exit Criteria

For those schools that cannot exit, the School Improvement Team (SIT) composed of 4 Masters Leaders with leadership skills, knowledge and mastery of technology, will provide the necessary support to the School Director in the drafting a new DEE. The new revised School Improvement Plan will be develop based on the comprehensive analysis that addresses the following:

1. the reasons the school did not meet the exit criteria including whether the school implemented the interventions with fidelity and intensity
2. identified resources of previous inequalities and identify new ones that are consistent with the original plan
3. additional evidence-based interventions in the school that are identified by an external needs assessment and that are more rigorous and based on strong or moderate levels of evidence.

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.

Puerto Rico will withhold 7% of state Title I funding to distribute to Regional LEAs through a formula basis to serve schools implementing comprehensive support and improvements activities or targeted support and improvement activities according to the ESSA Section 1003(b)(1)(A). Annually, the PRDE will determine the formula based on the amount available under ESSA Section 1003, ESSA Section 1111(d), and updated rules and non-regulatory guidance from ED.

Funding will depend upon the number of schools the PRDE designates for Comprehensive Support Schools, Targeted Support Schools and the number of children from low-income families who attend to those schools. Regional LEAs will demonstrate the alignment of resources to support schools improvements strategies.

Annual Comprehensive Review

PRDE will implement a process of continuous improvement through which the different areas of the programs will be measured by their performance, service satisfaction and effectiveness. Annual cycles of strategic resource allocation examination will be performed and what decision-making process was used in the allocation of funds. Based upon available data (e.g., budget and spending information), the Regional LEAs will analyze the support provided to Comprehensive and Targeted schools and the effectiveness of those supports. Academic and non-academic expenditures will be discussed to identify areas where the school can leverage funds to address priorities established in their DEE and the alignment of existing resources to support improvement efforts.

With the DEE, schools are to plan activities and improvement projects based on their needs. In prior years, PRDE did not have the results of state assessments **in time** to use them in planning the following year's professional development. This year, for the first time, PRDE is using results of the most recent state assessments to attend student needs. This has given PRDE a clearer idea of which content areas need improvement. In the development of the DEE, schools are require to assure that the strategies that will be employed will satisfy their particular needs.

If gaps exist in resources and supports, adjustments will be made to meet those needs. The PRDE developed an internal procedure together with the USDE in order to access funds. This procedure establishes that the PRDE will make a quarterly review of the allocations of funds made to the different initiatives, such as work plans, funds to schools, request for proposal (RFP), or other assignments, in order to evaluate the implementation of the plan for which they were allocated funds and also the level of expenditure generated at the time. This in order to determine if in fact

it is implemented properly and if there are excess funds to collect. Regular tracking of expenditures can be used as an indicator of program implementation.

The PRDE will develop a new performance management process will enable schools to ensure that state and federal resources are properly used in compliance with statutory and statutory program and fiscal requirements. More importantly, it will focus on the need for continuous improvement, service and support, as well as compliance.

Regional LEAs serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement and the Targeted Support and Improvement schools will receive support and technical support from the School Improvement teams (SIT), in order to attend inequities in resources, as they write their school improvement plans. Support may include:

- Reallocation of financial and other resources to address the identified needs,
- looking at best practices and allocations in other districts,
- consider centralization of RFPs to obtain economies of scale, and
- Better alignment of federal funds/programs

Analyzing a school's year-end progress report will also allow PRDE to support, respond to, and improve its schools. It enables the PRDE to see whether the school is meeting progress and growth of students against PRDE's long-term goals. PRDE needs to ensure that interventions are appropriate and effective.

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.

Risk Management

The PRDE has designed a consolidated risk assessment procedure to determine the schools and districts that require the most attention and is based on past and current performance of meeting the Title I program requirements. This process will be implemented in lower performing schools over a three-year monitoring cycle. The state office will use the risk assessment to identify and monitor the progress of each school receiving Title I funds, especially those who have been challenging in the past based on the risk assessment, schools that have repeatedly struggled, have large enrollment due to consolidation of schools, and have new directors. A state designed uniform monitoring process has been established outlining the procedures and guidelines utilized to monitor the progress of the schools with lowest achievement %. Monitoring is performed by the PRDE Monitoring Unit of the Auxiliary Secretariat of Federal Affairs. Monitoring includes both desk monitoring and on-site visits by division staff.

Technical Assistance

Currently, the PRDE offers a variety of support to schools and Districts that includes on-site technical assistance; off-site networking sessions; guidance documents and templates to support needs assessment, improvement planning, and monitoring. Examples of these include:

Digital PR: Is a platform where a diversity of resources and tolls are made available to schools teachers. By accessing https://dedigital.dde.pr/, teachers may reach to additional information over Planning, Team Teaching, PBL, STEM, among others initiatives implemented by the PRDE. Teacher also have access to guidelines over the process and evaluation forms that PRDE uses to measure teacher performance.

The platform includes a section where teacher may access to various training videos, related to reading activity ideas, staff development activities, among others. The platform also allows Teachers to upload documents and resources they want to share with their colleagues.

Technical assistance. Through a collaborative effort from Auxiliary Secretariat of Academic Affairs and the Auxiliary Secretariat of Federal Affairs personnel, technical assistance teams committees composed of representatives of Central Level, Regional LEA personnel meet on a monthly basis to coordinate oversight and support activities and identify the appropriate support needed to enable schools to achieve school improvement goals. PRDE has also funded SIT teams and technology teams, where these assist the School Director in the periodic review and updating of the DEE so that it is available to all PRDE officials and School Community.

Every year, the Title I Program provides technical assistance to schools in the development of their School Improvement Plan, which summarizes its objectives and goals for the school year. The plan is based on a comprehensive needs assessment that includes information on teachers' professional development priorities, need of resources and the instructional practices that are needed. Our technical assistance to Regional LEAs and schools, included a series of workshops and orientations related to DEE development, use of Title I school-wide funds and other program requirements.

Schools are to develop their DEE based on the results presented in the School Report card. Information included in the School Report Card is from prior year META-PR scores having to do with academic achievement, the whole child, and teachers allowing schools to **measure progress**, issue progress reports, and establish priorities based on those needs in order to produce activities to close the gap in their DEE.

On-site visits: In addition, technical assistance was provided to improve outcomes for students with disabilities is focused on priorities and indicators in the federally required State Performance

Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR). Special education also provide on-site technical assistance to LEAs in instituting appropriate policies and procedures with the goal of improving outcomes for students with disabilities.

Monitoring Process

PRDE also uses monitoring visits to identify areas where technical assistances is necessary. PRDE's monitoring process focuses on meeting program quality as well as compliance with federal requirements. Activities include:

- Monitoring a representative sample of schools each year to ensure that these schools are receiving the support they need to meet the needs of second language learner students.
- Reviewing interventions to ensure the causes of their performance challenges are addressed.
- Analyzing progress report on schools, including data use and teacher planning.
- Reviewing district implementation plans.
- Reviewing district-level plans to Ensure Districts meet result in systemic change in the school and improve the quality of leadership, improved teacher quality, professional development, alignment and sequencing of the curriculum, and parental involvement and school community.
- Providing oversight of fiscal and programmatic aspects of school improvement initiatives funded through 1003 (a) funds.

Monitors send referral to the applicable program or division, to notify needs for improvement in any specific areas. The Title I Program and personnel from the regions and districts are responsible on reviewing the results from the interventions performed to the schools. With this information, PRDE is able to modify the services offered to the school or apply more rigorous interventions to obtain better results.

The PRDE monitoring process is designed to facilitate the development of a culture of ongoing communication within schools, between schools, between districts and regions, and in the public education system of PRDE. The effective use of trained staff, monitoring tools, trained staff, and established monitoring calendars facilitate the monitoring activities. The training provided to monitoring staff and the monitoring instruments used to conduct the monitoring address both the compliance and fiscal elements of compliance for the Title I program.

Diagram 12: Monitoring Calendar and School and District Monitoring Visits

Monitoring visits are established on the monitoring calendar and are scheduled with the schools. Trained staff visit schools and review school procedures and practices related to the Title I program. After the visit is completed a formal letter of the monitoring results is developed and sent to the district and or school director. In addition, the information is provided to District Technical Assistance staff so that appropriate follow-up can be completed after the monitoring unit visit. The results of the monitoring and school visit is recorded on an online platform and easily retrievable by other staff requiring the information. Through the Support and Academic monitoring system, (SAMA, per its acronym in Spanish), the PRDE allows the central and district staff the opportunity to track the monitoring and technical assistance processes that are being provided to districts and schools.

The monitoring process is conducted through an established collaborative model between central level and educational regions personnel and is an integrated process within Title programs to reduce the need for isolated multiple monitoring sessions. The monitoring process includes programmatic and fiscal components and includes technical assistance, focused support and the development of a Corrective Action Plan. The focus will be on continuous improvement, service and support rather than just compliance.

Corrective Action Plans

If findings of program noncompliance are identified, schools and districts are required to provide evidence of corrective action. Schools and districts must respond to findings by submitting evidence of compliance including but not limited to work plans, individualized student plans, teachers planning, examples of students' school work and activities, portfolios, test results, parental notification and any of the programs' forms. When school-level compliance issues are identified, the district must submit a corrective action plan that outlines strategies and activities to provide additional support to schools.

The Monitoring Unit will notify the selected schools for monitoring visits in writing. Evidence of corrective action and subsequent compliance is required by PRDE staff and must be submitted by the district or school in writing on form AEIXXX in accordance with the established program schedule.

PRDE will continue working to incorporate the information and process developed for programmatic and academic monitoring and technical assistance for Title I schools.

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.

PRDE understands that performing more rigorous interventions or purposeful professional development certifications will assist those districts with a significant number or percentage of schools that are consistently identified by the State for comprehensive support and improvement / targeted support and improvement plans.

As mentioned on the ***More Rigorous Interventions*** section, through PRDE's comprehensive data collection effort to understand the specific situations in each of our school communities, it has set as a goal to move students to more productive learning environment and/or combine schools that are "Excellent" so that more students can benefit from effective instructional practices. This **restructuring** will improve academic outcomes and better align resources for the schools and its students.

If necessary, PRDE will also explore the possibility of **partnership schools** for those schools that do not meet the improvement requirements and assigning personnel from PRDE central level to a struggling district. Another option is to engage Organizations that contract services like curriculum development, assessment design, professional development, systems implementation, back-office services, teacher recruitment, and facility services for their individual schools to provide centralized support to struggling Regional LEAs.

PRDE will identify an external partner to conduct qualitative needs assessments at both the school and district levels. The PRDE will work with IHEs and other external partners to develop local, effective, and cost-efficient **external evaluators** and evaluation systems and will work collaboratively with the LEA/school to examine the findings of the needs assessment and provide support in the development of an appropriate and actionable improvement plan.

And for those schools that cannot meet the exit criteria, the PRDE will provide the assistance of School Improvement Teams (SIT) to support to the School Director in the drafting a new DEE.

5. **<u>Disproportionate Rates of Access to Educators</u> (*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.[12]

In 2014 PRDE has developed the Teacher Equity Plan in an effort to ensure that all students receive education by excellent teachers. This plan complies with all the requirements of the USDE in the components of the Teacher Equity Plan. It ensures that qualified and effective teachers have access to all necessary support systems to teach all students regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, and / or geographic location.

Unlike the continental United States, where minorities are determined based on ethnic and racial backgrounds, in Puerto Rico, the majority of students are Hispanic and no such distinctions are made for educational purposes. Therefore, the PRDE defines students with high special needs that belong to at least one of the following groups as minority:

1. students with disabilities
2. students with Spanish language limitations
3. immigrant students, and
4. highly talented students.

For the purposes of this equity plan, PRDE uses school-level data and student data to analyze and calculate potential gaps in each of the three regulatory metrics: non-qualified teachers, teachers teaching out of their academic preparation and teachers without experience.

In fiscal years 2016-2017, PRDE school system consisted of 1,292 schools, including 931 elementary schools, 167 secondary level, 184 all level schools (combination of grades pertaining to previous levels), and 10 Post-Secondary Education Technology Schools and Centers for Adult Education. PRDE had 639 schools located in rural areas and 653 schools within urban areas. In addition to the distinctiveness of the system, schools located in the municipalities of Vieques and Culebra are reached by ferry or by plane, which represents additional challenges for the PRDE. The student population in 2016-2017 was approximately 365,181. The poverty level of schools is determined by the percent of students from low-income families enrolled in the school. The determination that a low-income family is based on the same data that PRDE uses to allocate Title I part A funds to its schools under Title I, section 113 (c) (1).

[12] 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.

Schools are classified into four quartiles. Schools with the highest poverty level (lowest incomes) are in the fourth quartile (Q4) and schools with the lowest poverty level have the first quartile (Q1). The emphasis will be on the gaps in Q4 schools.

Strategies to Address Disproportionate Representation

PRDE recognizes that number of inexperienced, unqualified teachers, teachers outside their field could increase if there is no effective recruitment and retention method that directly addresses these needs During the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school year PRDE engaged in ongoing revision to its recruitment and retention processes to ensure the equitable distribution and/or designation of highly qualified, certified and experienced teachers to fill vacant positions. PRDE has faced different challenges: the vacancies resulting from the licenses granted, such as unpaid leave for studies, personal licenses, and licenses to work in other agencies.

Many of these vacancies were not considered during the process of evaluation of proposals and resources assessment needed for the School Year 2017-2018 due to:

1. Most of these employees had notified their immediate supervisors that they would report for the start of school;
2. Some of these vacancies arose from requests made during the month of August 2017;
3. Teachers who accepted job offers in the northern states after the start of the school year; this one is particularly the most important because PRDE has lost many experienced teachers who moved to the continental United States. As a result, the PRDE has hire a limited amount of inexperienced teachers to fill these positions.
4. The PRDE does not have sufficient funds to recruit all the necessary positions. By exception, we are covering some positions in the face of the inaction of some employees, by not executing their tasks in an appropriate and responsible manner.

According to the Learning Policy Institute, there are five factors that influence the teacher's decision about whether to request, maintain, or withdraw from the system. These factors are: salary and other compensation, preparation and cost of entry, recruitment and management of staff, encouragement and support for new teachers, and working conditions, including school leadership, professional collaboration and shared decision-making, accountability systems, and learning and teaching resources.

Among the strategies that the PRDE will use to eliminate the equity gaps and address disproportionate representation are:

Strategy 1: Ensure effective management of the human resources

Strategy 2: Strengthen Teacher preparation and In Service Training Programs

Strategy 3: Commitment of PRDE staff to the Equal Access Initiative for all students' background information and the current situation

Mentoring Program: Research indicates that a high percentage of new teachers participating in the induction program with mentors continue teaching in the classroom. PRDE has established induction and mentoring programs in some schools; however, there is no public policy to implement induction programs in all schools. PRDE is currently working to develop these programs by engaging retired educators who were highly effective.

Teacher Preparation: Currently, the Program Accreditation Council for Educators (CAEP) requires teacher preparation programs to support new teachers in their first five years of teaching as part of their accreditation. PRDE began implementing this initiative in collaboration with teacher preparation programs to avoid duplicity of effort of time and resources with the Mentoring Program mentioned above

PRDE believes that improvements in teacher preparation programs will lead to better prepared teachers in all schools. We are currently conducting an analysis to determine the relationship between PCMAS scores and student outcomes. In addition, we are conducting and analysis of teacher availability (excess and shortage) to determine how to better align certification programs with our human resource needs.

PRDE has established several alliances that will allow greater presence and participation in the Institute of Higher Education with the purpose of establishing academic policies in accordance with the current needs of teachers. We are engaged in the following collaborative partnerships with universities need to ensure that their students not only have the skills and knowledge of the school-level curriculum content but also possess the social skills of their students and school communities.

PRDE has engaged IHE's in monthly discussions on the PRDE professional development priorities based on educator needs and student outcome data. PD projects and initiatives that are being developed through this collaboration include:

- STEM
- Educational Leadership
- Differentiated Instruction
- Problem Based Learning
- Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
- Career and Technical Education
- Use of Technology in Educational Instruction
- Training on best practices and instructional strategies for students with disabilities.

Incentivized Placement: PRDE is refining a new program it developed in 2016-2017 to incentive placement of teachers in schools with the greatest need. Implementation of a program to place teachers in schools where the PRDE has difficulties of staffing and retention rates of effective teacher needs to be increased. The program consists in offering a bonus to teachers who voluntarily accept placement in Receiving schools or Priority Schools. The PRDE will provide a (one-time)

$1,000 bonus to highly qualified system teachers identified as available resources in the abovementioned subjects, in order to increase retention of teachers in schools that are classified as having low academic achievement and low income.

Teacher Recertification Programs: The purpose of the Teaching Certifications Division is to interpret, administer and enforce the laws and regulations to certify teachers in public and private schools in Puerto Rico, guaranteeing the right of every aspiring teacher to obtain the Regular Certificate for which it was formally prepared.

The PRDE has regulations in place to carry out these processes. The current regulations provide, in general terms, three possible routes for obtaining a regular certification as follows:

Traditional Route: Way to obtain a regular certificate as teacher, having completed an academic degree in education and fulfilling the certification requirements established by the Regulation, in the category that the candidate wishes to be certified. Certification courses must be part of the academic programs authorized by the Higher Education Council of PR (CESPR, acronym in Spanish) to the institution of higher education. The traditional route certification requires: a baccalaureate degree in education with a specialty (and a minimum of 21 credits) in a specific academic area; course of methodology for teaching this subject; a course of teaching practice in the area to be certified or its equivalent; to approve the corresponding Teacher Certification Test (PCMAS, acronym in Spanish); to approve a course related to the nature of the exceptional child, including the concepts of technological assistance and inclusion; to approve a course on the integration of technology in education; to approve a course of History of Puerto Rico; to approve a course of History of United States; GPA and specialty point average of not less than 3.00;

Recertification Route: The way to obtain a regular certificate as teacher, when the candidate already has a regular teacher certificate and meets the requirements of another certification, established by the Regulation in the category in which the candidate wishes to be certified. The courses for recertification should be part of the academic programs authorized by the CESPR to the institution of higher education.

Certification via recertification route requires: regular teacher certification; a lower concentration (18 university credits at the undergraduate, graduate or combination of both levels), including a course on teaching methodology in the area of recertification; to approve the corresponding to PCMAS, GPA and specialty point average of not less than 3.00;

Alternative Route: Way to obtain a regular certificate as teacher, after having completed at least a baccalaureate, which is NOT in education, and complying with the certification requirements established by the Regulation in the category in which it is requested. The

courses for the alternate route should be part of the academic programs authorized by the CESPR to the institution of higher education. Certification via alternative route requires: bachelor's, master's or doctorate's degree; 21 university credits in the academic area requesting the certificate; 15 basic credits in education that include the philosophical, sociological and psychological foundations of the education; a course of teaching practice in the specialty or its equivalent; additional requirements, if applicable.

These strategies will prepare teachers to work in communities with special needs, low performing schools, and schools with a high incidence of violence. However, during the past years PRDE has experienced a decrease in the number of students in the public system. In 2013 the students of the public education system totaled 434,609; for 2014, the amount was reduced to 423,934; in 2015, 410,950. Today, the total number of students enrolled is 365,112 in 1,292 schools. This is equivalent to a 14% decrease over a period of four years. The United States Census projects that by 2050 the general population of Puerto Rico would hover around 2.3 million. In addition, the fiscal problems Puerto Rico is facing, has led to an unprecedented migratory trend. As a consequence of this situation, the PRDE has experienced a surplus of teachers without available school placement in the subject for which they are certified, or in the school in which they work. While it is true that teachers can be reassigned to other teaching categories, these alternatives are limited.

For this reason, the PRDE has proposed to the Senate of Puerto Rico to create a law that will ensure the permanence of Public School Teachers in Puerto Rico. Through this law, the PRDE will be able to promote the certification of teachers in areas of high demand in the Department of Education, maintain the status of regular employees to teachers who, as a result of the processes of redesign and / or consolidation of schools of the Department of Education, are surplus and are reassigned to work in a teaching category for which they do not possess the corresponding educational certificate; establish the academic preparation requirements that these teachers must complete and the time limit they have to meet the requirements of the position; and for other related purposes.

During the school redesign process, the reassignment and / or transfer-reassignment of teachers with probationary or permanent status will be authorized to other teaching categories for which they do not hold a regular certificate; provided, that:

1. The Secretary of Education shall have the authority to create a process for carrying out reassignments and / or transfers-reassignments to teachers who are declared surplus. At the time of the process, consideration should be given to the need for service of the receiving school, the preparation and experience of the teacher declared surplus, the years of service, the school in which he currently provides services, among other requirements for the implementation of the process of reassignment and / or transfer-reassignment.

2. The reassigned and / or transferred-reassigned teacher shall participate in the PPM program, designed by the PRDE to meet the academic preparation requirements and other requirements of the position in accordance with applicable law.
3. A period of two (2) years is established, from the implementation of the PPM, so that the teachers complete all the requirements of the PPM.
4. Prior to the participation of the PPM, any teacher selected to participate in it shall be evaluated by the Teaching Certifications Division to determine the requirements that may be lacking to obtain the regular teacher certificate in the category to which it was reassigned and / or relocated-reassigned. This includes, but is not limited to, academic preparation and Teacher Certification Test (PCMAS);
5. During the reassignment and / or relocation-reassignment process, the Department of Education may not affect the probative or permanent status of the reassigned or transferred-reassigned teacher;
6. Reassignment or reassignment for the redesign of schools will be conducted prior to the relocation of other teachers and prior to initiating the process of recruiting teachers for the next school year;
7. The implementation by the Department of Education of the reallocation and / or relocation-reassignment process will not constitute a violation of existing collective agreements nor constitute an illegal practice;
8. The reassignment and / or transfer-reassignment cannot be used as a disciplinary measure, it cannot be costly for the teacher, nor can it be done arbitrarily;
9. At the time of reassignment and / or relocation, the Department of Education will give priority to areas of difficult recruitment, including special education, elementary English, and secondary education - English, mathematics, chemistry, and physical.
10. The reassigned and / or transferred teacher who, without valid justification, does not comply with the PPM required by the Department of Education, in the required time, will be dismissed.
11. If a vacancy arises during the reassignment and / or relocation-reassignment process at the school where the teacher was found to be in surplus (by withdrawal, death, etc.), the teacher may be given the option to be reassigned to remain in the category with priority over any existing shift list.
12. The reassignment and / or relocation-reassignment of the teacher shall take effect after five (5) calendar days have elapsed from the date of written notice thereof to the employee. Said notification must inform the teacher about the procedure to be followed in case of not agreeing with the decision, as well as the date on which it will take effect.

Teacher and Principal Support System

In order to identify effective teachers and principals, the PRDE's developed an educator evaluation system. The system has strengthened the process of identifying effective teachers and provided a support system to increase the teacher's professional skills, knowledge and effectiveness.

In the 2017-2018 academic year, the PRDE will be implementing a new Teacher Evaluation process. The new Teacher Evaluation System aims to strengthen the teacher's capabilities to achieve the transformation of schools. It is a three-step process consisting of two visits and evaluation, which documents, through observation, the areas of strength and opportunity of the teacher, as well as the next steps to receive academic support and technical assistance. Through this system, the PRDE seeks to use the results of the formative evaluation results to analyze, plan and improve educational practice. This way PRDE can formalize the efforts and support that will be offered to teachers to make changes in their professional practice to benefit all students.

The Teacher Evaluation System is designed to ensure the continuing professional development of educators and to enrich the quality of teaching in schools and student learning.

Through this rigorous and transparent teacher evaluation, which will be performed annually, PRDE will support the system with a two-fold purpose: Identifying effective and non-effective teachers and then developing a professional development growth or improvement plan. The identification of effective teachers supports providing all students equitable access to quality education. The system has been designed to provide fair and uniform evaluations offering valuable information regarding professional growth needs to develop professional development opportunities for both effective and non-effective teachers that will result in improved student achievement.

Through this system, the PRDE seeks to use the results of the formative evaluation results to analyze, plan and improve educational practice. This way PRDE can formalize the efforts and support that will be offered to teachers to make changes in their professional practice to benefit all students.

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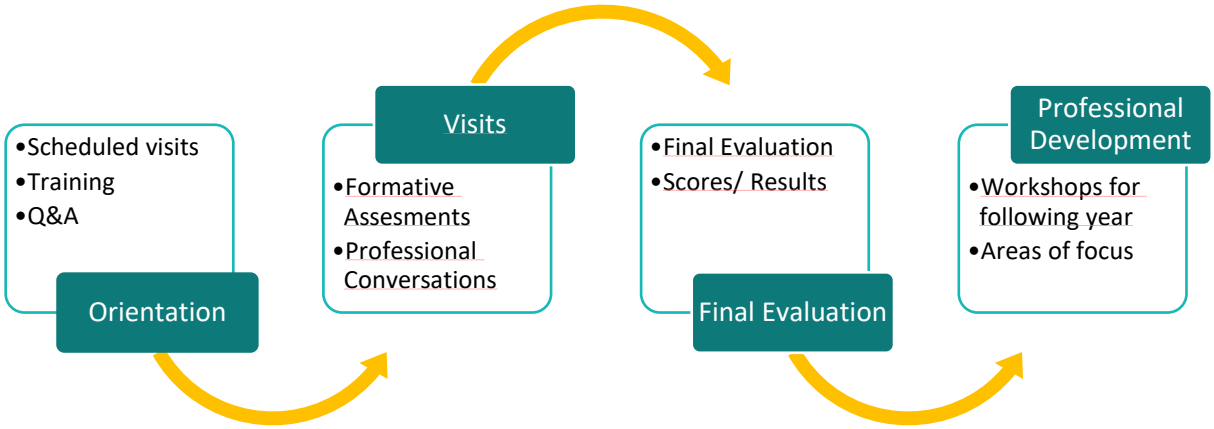
Table 30: Definitions of Effective, Ineffective, Out of Field and Inexperienced Teacher

Term	Definition
Effective teacher	Teachers and principals with more than three years of experience who receive the following results in their evaluations: 1. Exemplary 2. Competent
Ineffective teacher	Teachers and principals with more than three years of experience: 1. Minimum execution 2. Ineffective execution Teachers and principals with 0-3 years of experience: Ineffective execution under basic ineffective teacher is one who constantly fails to meet expectations and requires a change in performance due to the minimum level of competence, or One who gets a result of "Ineffective" or "Needs Improvement" in his/her evaluation.
Out of Field Teacher	Teacher teaching in the subject in which is not properly certified, according to the state law/requirement. Teacher who has not demonstrated competence in a subject for course content.
Inexperienced Teacher	Teacher with less than five years of experience. *(Other states established three years of experience.)* An inexperienced teacher is considered a beginner if meets with the following requirements: 1. Completed the Practitioner Teacher Program 2. Has initial or temporary license issued by the Board of Education. 3. Participates in induction / mentoring program 4. Teachers in their first year "rate"

The teacher evaluation system is based on:

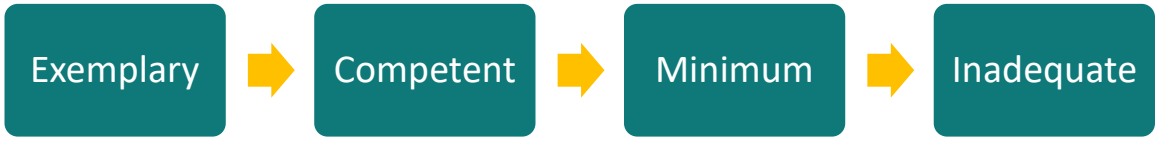
- Professional teacher standards
- Support for the continuing professional growth of teachers
- Goal setting for teacher's professional performance
- Teacher compliance to improve student academic achievement
- Teachers' opportunities to explore new tools, methodologies and approaches to improve teaching and learning processes that promote experiences for differentiated education.

Diagram 13: Phases of Teacher Evaluation Process



Once the evaluation is completed, the teaching staff can be classified into one of the following categories:

Diagram 14: Teacher Level of Execution



Based on evaluation results an Individual Professional Development Plan will be developed for the teacher at the beginning of each academic year. The implementation of professional development will be aligned with student academic achievement outcomes (META-PR), growth in school achievement, problem-based learning (PBL), and teacher assessment results.

These plans will have a duration of one year in the case of Individual Professional Development Plans of permanent school directors with exemplary or competent score, and two years for Individual Professional Development Plans of permanent school directors with minimal and inadequate score.

The principal evaluation system is based on:

- PRDE's policy document: *Perfil del Director de Escuela del Departamento de Educación Pública de Puerto Rico* which states and addresses the areas school principals are expected to be knowledgeable and skillful at. These include:
    - The school principal as planner and evaluator

- The school principal as an instructional leader
- The principal as an organizational leader
- The principal as an administrative leader
- The principal as an ethical leader

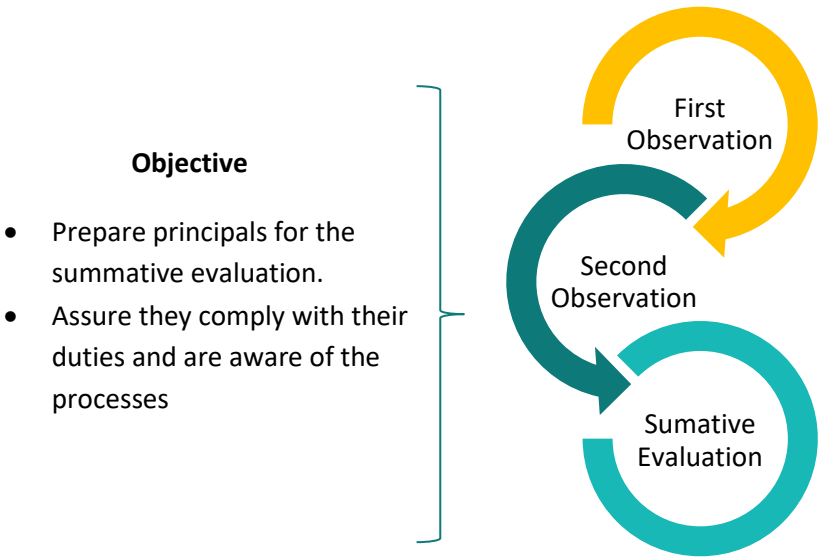
- Puerto Rico's public law: Ley Núm. 149-1999,"Ley Orgánica del DEPR, which gives the PRDE legal authority to evaluate educators performance.

The three dimensions contemplated in the evaluation process can be seen in the table below:

Table 31: Dimensions of the Principal Evaluation Process

Dimensión	Number of Indicators	% of Weight
Administration and Supervision	20	60.60%
Instrucction / Data Analysis	9	27.27%
Results of Student Test, State Assessment (METAS PR) and Special Projects	4	12.12%
	3	**100%**

Diagram 15: Phases of the Principal Evaluation Process



The levels of execution for school principals are also categorized as: exemplary, competent, minimum and inadequate. Puerto Rico strives to have school directors of the highest administrative capacity. The PRDE has developed a Principal Academy on educational leadership. Through this initiative, the PRDE identifies and trains those directors who have been effective and have had an exemplary evaluation to use them as Mentoring Directors in those schools that have not demonstrated student educational growth and where the evaluations of principals have not been exemplary. The use of technology has been promoted in the academy. As such, videos that are relevant to the management of situations in schools are being created. These will allow principals to observe best practices that can be replicated. The topics of the academies will be identified to support the needs of the directors and their supervisors.

Publicly Report Progress

PRDE Website: The PRDE publishes in its website: http://de.gobierno.pr/conoce-tu-escuela, information regarding the school performance, profile, and information over the preparation of teachers for the following three components:

- The professional qualifications of all teachers (i.e. high school and other advanced degrees);
- The progress percentage of all teachers who are teaching with provisional (certificate) credentials and;
- The percentage of classes not being taught by highly qualified teachers.

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.

Puerto Rico is in dire need of implementing initiatives that improve school climate and their environment, as well as the relationships between the various components of the school community, so that it is safe and optimal space for learning. As detailed above, PRDE conducted an assessment to document school-level needs for resources and practices that would improve school quality. PRDE is committed to ensuring all students have conditions that enable them to acquire knowledge and develop the skills they needed It is well known that positive school environments foster the social, emotional and academic wellbeing of all students.

In fiscal year 2017-2018, the PRDE has also received funds from the ESSA Title IV, Part A new formula grant, for the purpose of improving academic achievement by increasing the capacity of schools to provide all students with access to a well-rounded education, and school conditions for

student learning to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students. These funds will provide Puerto Rico with an additional opportunity to provide monitoring, training, technical assistance, and capacity building to support Districts on improving school conditions for student learning, including activities that create safe, healthy, and affirming school environments.

Bullying Prevention and Awareness

PRDE has in place a public policy to prevent, intervene and follow up on all types of bullying cases; with the establishment of the Alexander Law, a greater rigor is imposed on the process of attention and penalization of this type of cases. In addition, the statute directs the Council of Education of Puerto Rico (CEPR) to promote the applicable regulations that must include any private educational institution within the harassment case management protocol.

For the 2017-18 academic year, PRDE will be implementing a project that consists of an anti-bullying campaign throughout the island to foster safe, healthy and supportive school environment. Among the activities that will support the anti-bullying campaign, the PRDE will provide training and guidance to the school personnel. Also, orientations to parents and students on effective discipline practices that promote orderly and healthy school climates. An innovative communication service tool to address the bullying problem, will also be introduced in schools.

The bullying reporting tool will allow counselors to meet students where they are –with text and online messaging – to help solve issues. By reducing the stigma of communicating with trusted adults, the service will allows students to open-up and break the 'code of silence'. Schools consistently report helping students who have never previously reached out for assistance.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

The PRDE has also implemented the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) Plan which manages inappropriate behaviors that affect school climate, to foster an environment conducive to learning and to increase student achievement. The PRDE's intention with the implementation of plan is to address behavioral problems and violence faced in schools.

As mentioned above, PBIS is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students.

The interagency collaboration was established and agreements were reached with agencies and entities that should begin to develop programs and workshops on harassment, bullying and abuse. The PRDE has preliminary identified that it will use the fund assignment to provide services in the following areas:

- Training for school directors to empower them in the processes established in the agency's public policy on prevention

- Training staff, parents, and students in topics such as strategies for prevention, identification and management of such cases
- Intervention and monitoring violent behavior among students

This will be accomplished by establishing new plans where teachers are trained recognize such cases and learn strategies to resolve behaviors in the classrooms and how to communicate the concerns in order to receive extra support from their directors and their school's staff. The PRDE believes that students should remain in the class room to avoid they suffer academically or socially.

Cooperative/Restorative Discipline

The need for the implementation of initiatives focused on ensuring that all students have positive learning environments that are safe, supportive, and engaging has ample evidence, including studies completed locally and nationally, as well as lessons learned from best practices and research on the field of Social Emotional Learning. In the case of Puerto Rico, many studies have captured the urgent need.

Restorative justice practices aim to hold students accountable and to change their behavior. Research shows that the use of restorative justice techniques can decrease misbehavior and suspension rates. Furthermore, restorative justice practices can be used in many different situations and can be tweaked to fit the students involved or the behavior targeted. It focusses on the damage, rather than the offender, in an effort to make a change in the students' worldview in order for him to emphasize with the victim and recognize the repercussion of his actions.

The PRDE will begin implementing restorative and SEL practices in a small scale as to determine its effectiveness and perform any changes needed. This implementation will vary based on specific school needs. At the same time, the Students Code of Conduct will be revised in order to decrease exclusionary discipline practices (out of school suspensions and expulsions) and to give the regional LEAs a legal frame, focus on restorative and SEL practices, from where they can establish their own, according to the particular needs of their region.

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.

The PRDE has carried out a variety of strategies using local funding sources in order to support student transitions and reduce the risk of students dropping out of school. Puerto Rico is fully committed to engaging students about their educational experiences and keeping them in schools.

High Schools

Per PRDE's most recent School Dropout report (issued in September 2016), presents that students from middle and high school grades show a higher tendency of dropping out before reaching the 11th grade. Out of 12,741 of the students that left the public system during 2015-16, 695 or .05% of the students left due to disciplinary or personal issues; 207 or .01% went to a juvenile or correctional institution; 7,371 or 57.8% moved to the United States; while the remaining of the students, 4,467 or 35% left because of their interest in an alternate or private education.

Every year more students show their interest of a different setting, a different pace or a different time to learn. Effective alternative education, gives these students another path to high school graduation.

In 2012, Puerto Rico established the 213 Act for the development of Alternative Education in Puerto Rico. It consist of various centers that provide an alternative education with individualized support for out-of-school children or youth with a high tendency of school dropout. Project C.A.S.A. is the Center for sustainable academic support for students. This project provides socio-educational workshops, bringing to the students the information and training necessary to possess the social and emotional skills they need to prevent risk situations. Social workers are to identify children and youth with high-risk potential for early school leaving. Students referred by a school social worker are provided the alternative to participate of the C.A.S.A. project. Social workers who identify students in risk of dropping out of school must submit a referral to the PRDE Alternative Education Program, to proceed with the enrollment in the C.A.S.A project.

For the fiscal year 2016-2017, the project C.A.S.A provided academic services to 1,850 students, reaching school retention of 1,770 students. In addition, a total of 770 of the students were studying the 12th grade, and reached a 100% graduation rate.

Middle Schools

Student face many challenges during their transition from middle to high school; it is a time, physical, emotional, and cognitive changes, as well as an increased desire for independence from parents. During this time of transition, students may develop lower self-esteem and fears about new social circumstances, often resulting in anxiety and negative behaviors. This may result in demonstrating a diminished engagement and attendance by the end of their first middle school year. Due to behavior problems, suspensions and expulsions are higher in ninth grade than any other high school grade level and are a significant setback for students. Therefore, loss of instructional time as a result of suspension and expulsions may contribute to academic failure.

In 2014, Puerto Rico established the 37 Act to create the "Scholar Retention Program" under the Department of Education. As a reinforcement of this law, PRDE established CC 16 2013-2014 regarding the School Retention. The purpose of the UNARE (Unidad de Atención Para la Retención Escolar, acronym in Spanish) unit is to impact those students who are at risk of dropping

out and showed patterns of absenteeism and class failures in the last school year and reduce school dropout. Some of the patterns are:

- Tardiness and unjustified class breaks
- Low academic achievement
- School failure or possible school failure
- Chronological age on grade
- Family with inadequate relationships among its members
- Other situations that may be school dropout factors

Some of the key to the effectiveness of the UNARE project are visits to homes to closely observe the real needs of these student and his family, as well as follow-up visits. Also, UNARE has as a priority to reinsert the student in the schools system or in programs whose purpose is for the student to complete his post-secondary studies. The services are offered with the help of an interdisciplinary team composed of social workers, professional counselors, psychologists, clerical typists and administrative assistants in each of the educational regions.

Post-Secondary

The PRDE strongly believes it is important for our students continue their education after high school. School counselors play an important role in student's transition from high school to college career. They encourage a college-going mindset among students and explain how to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). For the FY 2017-2018, the PRDE will certify all counselors working at high school levels in the orientation and guidance they may provide students who are interested in college preparedness. Upon certification, counselors will be able to provide students guidance on the preparation, application of the College Board test, university application, identify interest on certain careers, and guidance regarding the ability of students to complete and submit the FAFSA application form. In the future, the PRDE will work towards exposing students earlier to university, occupational, and post-secondary education by implementing individual development plans.

Also, in 2014, the University of Puerto Rico certified that high school students who master PRDE's rigorous standards would not require remedial coursework once in college. PRDE provides communication tools to increase awareness and knowledge of college requirements and options for parents and students.

Family Engagement

Another effective tool that PRDE encourages for an effective school transitions is Family Engagement. Family plays a significant role in guiding their children through middle to high school transition. Studies have found that students whose parents monitored and positively intervened in their child's activities (e.g., schoolwork, peers, participation) were more likely to

transition easily into high school. When schools and teachers encourage family participation, they have higher levels of involvement. Students whose parents are involved are usually more adjusted, have lower dropout rates, and higher achievement.

Through the Family Engagement initiative, the PRDE will design, develop, implement and disseminate a communication technology system. A meeting will be held between the families and the school component of schools participating in the Title I, Part A program of the seven (7) educational regions. This with the active participation of families in order to contribute to academic and personal development of the student. Through the development of projects and workshops, families will needs of our students.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

Through the PBIS program, PRDE seeks to manage inappropriate behaviors that affect school climate, to foster an environment conducive to learning and to increase student achievement. This professional development program, engages the collaborative involvement of parents, students, the community adjacent to the campus, and all school staff to creatively address behavioral problems and violence faced by schools. It will allow participants to learn how to implement a Positive School Behavior Support System and achieve a Positive and Creative School Climate.

During the 2017-2018 school year, PRDE expects that 70% of eligible project participants will be able to increase their knowledge about the PBIS and how to implement it in their school. Progress in knowledge will be evidenced by annual pre and post tests administered to participants.

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.

The PRDE Title I, Part D program provides supplemental educational services and other supports to children and youth in juvenile institutions and correctional facilities to provide services that will assist students in making a successful transition between correctional facilities and locally operated program. As stated in ESEA section 1414(a)(1)(B), the services included within this provision are related to meeting the educational needs of neglected, delinquent, and at-risk children and youth and to integrate with other programs under this Act, as deemed appropriate.

Annually, the PRDE signs an agreement with the Puerto Rico Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (DCR) and the Administration of Youth Institutions (AYI), an operational component of DCR, to provide the services that must be carried out during the transition between correctional facilities and local programs. Under this agreement, the program reserves federal funds for these services, and ensures the entities meet and agree on the terms and conditions to improve academic, career and technical skills of children under the program. PRDE works hand by hand with DCR and AYI to plan and obtain a multidisciplinary, more complete and integrated approach that takes into account all the needs of these students, including but not limited to the knowledge of the skills needed to earn regular high school diploma or its equivalent and transitioning to postsecondary education, career and technical education or employment.

In addition, the PRDE ensures interagency/intersystem collaborations among all entities involved in the transition process with this agreement, which includes workforce development, education, social services, health and mental health services, and employment service providers.

For the new academic year, PRDE will implement a new Correctional School System. This system will be part of the Department of Education and it will be responsible for implementing or adjusting the initiatives that will meet the needs of its participants, including the transition between correctional facilities and locally operated programs. The new Correctional School System, will ensure that students entering a correctional or juvenile facility are provided with appropriate levels of instruction and coursework, including contextualized learning and entrepreneurial skills; continue earning credits to obtain their regular high school diploma or its equivalent and make a successful transition to postsecondary education, career and technical education, or employment.

To effectively achieve a successful movement between correctional facilities and locally operated programs, the program offers its participants services from educators, social workers, counselors,

psychologists and other professional personnel that are in charge of providing different services related to the transition process for each of the participants. Some of these activities are:

- Developing an individual transition plan, updated on a quarterly basis
- Sending report cards home to parents, guardians or legal tutors
- Maintaining current (up to date) transcripts
- Provide "Parent Encounters" activities, as an opportunity for parents to reinforcement their children behavior modification techniques, and use effective communication skills.

Authorized personnel from the juvenile institutions and correctional facility educators, social workers, counselors, and/or psychologists) are responsible or preparing individual records including educational backgrounds, credit transcripts, and personal information for each student. An entrance interview is held with each participant by a team of professionals with knowledge of the student's educational, behavioral, emotional, and social and health needs, in order to identify appropriate instructional and support services. This initiates the process of gathering all the necessary cumulative information from a student's school or local program to help inform the treatment and educational programming at the juvenile institution or correctional facility.

Also, upon entrance to a juvenile institution or correctional facility, each student is provided a diagnostic test to identify the student's academic need, allowing the program to better provide the appropriate educational services based on an individual student's specific needs, thus providing eligible students with the same opportunities for academic success as their peers in traditional public schools.

Additional activities that contribute to a successful transition between correctional facilities and locally operated program are Job and Studies Fairs. This is an excellent educational and employment activity that assists young people prior to release into their community. The activity allows different universities and employment agencies that travel to the facility and offer their services to the Title I program, Part D participants. The program coordinates with public and / or private organizations to provide the opportunity for young people participating in the Program, the participation of Employment Fairs, University Orientations and any activity that offers youth opportunities for integration into the community. The Program offers guidance, counseling and social work services for career exploration that may result in identifying the interests of the participants.

Also, personnel of the correctional institution (counselors and social worker) assists the youth with the reentry necessary steps, as processing records transfer to the public and private schools, universities and institutes so that the young people continue studying in their reentry to the community.

It offers trainings during their stay at the facility, related to the Integration into the World of Work – and discusses topics related to jobs in demand to motivate young people to study in areas of need. As it encourages the participants to continue studying by offering different career interest tests to investigate the professional interest of the participants it also offers educational seminars on topics such as, but not limited to:

- How to prepare a resume (participants prepare a resume in the seminar)
- Self-esteem
- Prepare for the future
- The importance of Rehabilitation

As a way to involve families, the program has established communication with participants' parents and guardians for their participation in the Parent Day activity and to extend information about the status of youth participating in the Special Education Program (i.e. sharing of parental rights for disabled youth). This is an effort to keep parents involved, as these youths were treated as adults while in custody of the Correction Administration. The PRDE plans to develop an entrepreneurial program for kids with special needs, and special education youth.

PRDE's transition plan addresses the youth's entire ecology. The youth is supported as they reenter their home communities by involving their parents and managing their relationship into a healthy and constructive manner. Therefore, the involvement of their families and communities is considered essential for an effective transition. Events like "Parent Encounters" are coordinated with parents and family members, in order to disseminate the programmatic progress of the youth.

Local PRDE Circular Letter notifies family members and/or parents every 10 weeks, to empower or encourage them to participate in or support students in the delivery of the academic achievement report of their youth. This way, parents are kept informed about the progress of their children and where they are within their education process.

As an outreach event, the program coordinates various Parent Encounters, which consists of a parent activity where tools are offered to better assist students with their academic improvement and keeping a healthy self-esteem. These consist of focused discussions of outreach strategies; trust building, communication mechanisms, and family support services.

It also establishes communication links with the institution's criminal partner personnel, in order to see the participant as a whole and verify their situation in the institution such as custody, housing, marital status and other information that is in the private records of the young people and that only has access through this personnel.

Communication links are also established with the medical area and Special Education Program to verify if there are any health situations affecting the teaching-learning process (i.e. ADHD). Written consent of the participants or guardians is required before any medical testing, so as not to violate the HIPPA Act.

The program will work with children and youth who were school dropouts before entering the correctional or juvenile facility so that youth and children are encouraged to return to school upon completion of the term of imprisonment or provide the child or youth with the skills necessary to obtain employment, continue their education or obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent if the child or youth does not wish to return to school. To achieve this, the program has established a follow-up for its program graduates where it communicates through telephone calls and through Community Social Work. It invites graduates to participate in workshops that will assist them on keeping focused on continuity of studies and reduction of recidivism.

The personnel (counselor, teacher, social worker) prepares an exit plan jointly with participants, to ensure that all graduates have a plan when leaving the facility that contemplates continuity of studies through technical institutes or universities. It completes for each young participant a document: entitled: Follow-up in the Transition Process, where it documents the follow up given to the young graduates for 90 days.

Also, communication links (i.e. emails, phone calls, mail) are created with the persons who will receive them at their place of housing upon leaving. It also follows-up to young people who are transferred to another correctional institution in order to help them to continue studying in a new institution. Letters are sent (correspondence to the places where the young people indicated that they were going to live) to inquire about their educational future.

As well, strategic objectives have been developed system-wide to increase the retention rate. PRDE promotes school retention by providing different academic offerings, adjustments to teaching practices, a system to monitor at-risk students and to ensure that the support they need is provided to stay within the education system. In addition, the Department has set strategic objectives concentrated in academic achievement. Concerning academic achievement, PRDE promotes the development of an instructional sequence aligned to the official curriculum to meet the particular needs of students, who at least have proficiency of Spanish, English, Mathematics, and Science academic standards, according to the META-PR test and the distribution of student grades.

PRDE ensures that students within a juvenile institution or correctional facility have access to high-quality education, so they can demonstrate their proficiency levels and academic growth through META-PR, Puerto Rico's high quality and aligned assessment that measures the proficiency and academic growth of students in the content areas of Spanish, math and English as a second language in third through eighth and eleventh grade.

For the occupational and technical education part, the Agency promotes that the secondary and post-secondary levels, meet the standards of excellence that ensure the recognition of the community as an alternative to study, in compliance with the provisions of the Federal Law Carl D. Perkins. During their stay at the facility, the PRDE will offer a sequence of courses providing students with the academic and technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for further

education and for careers in current or emerging employment sectors. Through classroom activities, student will be able to develop higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, improve work attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills, and occupation-specific skills.

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.

The Neglected and Delinquent program objectives and outcomes have been established to achieve the goal of providing both support and educational services to children and youth who have been placed in a local or state secure care institution. Objectives include providing supplemental services to this population and to promote student success at meeting the state's rigorous academic and career-technical standards, becoming productive members of society and reducing the probability of returning to a juvenile or adult secure-care institution.

Program Objectives:

- Improve education services and recruit resources (i.e. alliance with workforce) for the juvenile-correctional facilities;
- Provide high quality education programs to prepare youth for secondary school completion and increase the percent of eligible students who graduate from high school;
- Provide tools that helps the youth in employment search or further education;
- Train teachers and other professional personnel (i.e. psychologist, counselors and social workers) in strategies of curricular integration, reading comprehension for students with academic backwardness, legal aspects of reasonable accommodation, among other topics.
- Provide activities to facilitate the successful transition of youth who are incarcerated between the correctional programs and schools; and also to
- Coordinate activities with the PRDE's School Retention Programs to prevent at-risk youth from dropping out of school.
- Decrease dropout rates of students who were served in a secure-care facility and transitioned back to their educational programs.

PRDE has identified that the educational services in correctional and juvenile facilities are often inadequate, despite the fact that providing education has been linked to decreases in rates of recidivism and better educational experiences and reintegration upon leaving the facilities. For this reason, through the implementation of the new Correctional School System, PRDE is moving to

improve the education services and timely recruitment of resources at the juvenile-correctional facilities. PRDE will now be responsible of providing high quality education programs to prepare the youth for secondary school completion. In addition, PRDE will provide resources and opportunities for technical assistance to allow the program to better meet the needs of neglected, delinquent and at-risk youth. The new Correctional School System will work with the timely recruitment of psychologists, social workers, and teachers (tutoring services) in order to provide academic and supplemental services at the beginning of the academic year, and ensure services are provided throughout the number of days that school must be in session, which is 181 days.

PRDE will work with direct response to inquiries with the support of the National Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Neglected or Delinquent Youth (NDTAC), which is supported by the U.S. Department of Education. NDTAC serves as a national resource center to provide direct assistance to states, schools, communities and parents seeking information on the education of neglected, delinquent or at-risk children and youth.

The correctional education program office at the PRDE will also conduct technical assistance site visits to assist juvenile institutions and correctional facilities on the successful implementation of the program, and ensure compliance with policies, regulations under the Neglected and Delinquent program.

In regards to the program objective to assist the youth in employment search or further education, the neglected and delinquent program offers students Job and Studies Fairs, while being in the juvenile institution and correctional facility. This is one of the opportunities offered in the transition of N&D program, as it allows youth to participate of Employment Fairs, University Orientations and any activity that offers youth opportunities for integration into the community. The Program offers guidance, counseling and social work services for career exploration that may result in the interest of the participants.

Program Outcome:

When a youth enters a secure-care facility, the N&D transition process begins. Practices that supports the youth and leads him or her to a successful exit from the system and within the community are set into place. Personnel from the secure-care facility requests the education records from the educational agency or school that the youth is coming from. Transfer of the participant's educational records complies with local and federal privacy laws, as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99. Some of the information included in the participant's education record are grades, local assessments results, evaluations, behavior records, previous placements, and immunization records. To ensure education records are accurate, complete and maintained, the Title I, Part D monitors a sample of these records to ensure the secure-care facility maintains the required documents in the youth record.

The PRDE is developing an annual professional development plan for approximately 60 professional that will provide academic services within the juvenile institutions and correctional facilities, in order to ensure these are equipped with the program information and provide students with a safe, healthy, facility-wide climate that prioritizes education, excellent conditions for learning, and encourages the necessary behavioral and social support services that address the individual needs of all youth, including those with disabilities.

Program objectives and outcomes are aligned to the joint guidance released from the U. S. Departments of Justice and Education and required in ESSA. Program effectiveness is assessed in accordance with the main principles of PRDE. The principles are: 1. Academic Achievement of students (i.e., rigorous and relevant curricula aligned with state academic and career and technical education standards that utilize instructional methods, tools, materials, and practices that promote college and career readiness) 2. The child in totality (i.e. a safe, healthy, facility-wide climate that prioritizes education, excellent conditions for learning, and encourages the necessary behavioral and social support services that address the individual needs of all youth, including those with disabilities), and 3. Leadership and Professional Development (i.e. Recruitment, employment, and retention of qualified education staff with skills relevant in juvenile justice settings who can positively impact long-term student outcomes through demonstrated abilities to create and sustain effective teaching and learning environments).

Upon entrance, each student is interviewed by a team of professionals with knowledge of the student's educational, behavioral, emotional, social and health needs, in order to identify appropriate instructional and support services, if needed. This initiates the process of gathering all the necessary cumulative information from a student's school or local program to the juvenile institution or correctional facility.

Also, upon entrance to a juvenile institution or correctional facility, each student is provided a diagnostic test to identify the student's academic need, allowing the program provide the appropriate educational services based on an individual student's specific needs, thus providing eligible students with the same opportunities for academic success as their peers in traditional public schools. Results of these tests will allow PRDE trace performance against goals for each of the children attended.

With the new Correctional System, participants will be offered the regular curriculum education that is aligned with the PRCS. The PRCS ensures that instructional materials are not limited to textbooks and promote the use of instructional practices that are research-based and consistently implements within each grade level and content area. This will allow the participants to be involved in and make progress in the same curriculum that is provided to students in the rest of PRDE's school system. Participants must have access to high-quality educational services designed to meet their needs and improve their educational outcomes. Ensuring access to high-quality education,

will allow students to demonstrate their proficiency levels and academic growth through META-PR[13].

Family is notified of any academic progress, change in behavior, mental health needs and treatment their child has received or shown during their stay at the secure-care facility. This way they are informed on how they may support their child to ensure that positive habits continue after exit. Another family involvement activity carried out by the N&D program, is providing tools and communication links to parents to enhance their parenting or behavioral management skills.

Diagram 16: Correctional youth cycle

Annually, the N&D program requires the Department of Correction and Juvenile Institutions, an end-of-year report, summarizing both budget and program effectiveness and the expected outcomes, as whether the correctional school was able to increase students' pre and post test scores in reading and math, increase the number of high school diplomas, and/or increase the percentage of youth who reenter school upon discharge. This allows the N&D program to identify areas where technical assistance is most needed, and consider if modification of the services provided to participants is necessary.

[13] META-PR - Puerto Rico's high quality and aligned assessment that measures the proficiency and academic growth of students in the content areas of Spanish, math and English as a second language in third through eighth and eleventh grade.

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.

SEA Activities

PRDE sets aside 5% of the TII, Part A funds for state level activities. One percent (1%) of the funds are used for state level administrative activities related to human, technical, technology, and fiscal resources needed to provide support and technical assistance for effective instruction. Resources include the design of rubrics to guide effective content and instruction, digital platforms that provide data for assessing and evaluating instructional activities and their effectiveness, monitoring to provide ongoing support, funds appropriation to supplement instruction with evidenced based practices and LEA support to facilitate processes and implementation of best practices that result in student achievement.

These resources provide data at the central, Regional LEAs and school levels used to determine progress, needs and information for decision making to improve academic instruction and student achievement. In addition, these resources provide valuable information for funds appropriation and for making necessary adjustments. Data provided has demonstrated low student scores in Math, Science and language acquisition. To attend these needs PRDE has appropriated funds to develop evidence based projects that yield student achievement improvement. These include STEM, Bilingual, and Art Integration in Language acquisition projects. Adjustments to the plans are made based on performance data.

State funds are also used to support and provide assistance to Region/LEAs in the implementation of the teacher and principal support system. These activities trainings include topics such as: the use of evaluation results to inform decision making regarding professional development and improvement strategies, retaining effective teachers and developing teacher leadership, coaches and mentors.

Additionally, 4% is used for capacity building leadership academies for school principals, teachers, and other academic leaders with the objective of strengthening the teaching and learning process to improve student outcomes. To accomplish this principal and teacher academies focus on strengthening school leadership, human and fiscal resource management, operational issues, as well as instructional improvement. Another 2% is being used for teacher academies.

Through the leadership academies, the PRDE will provide professional development to teachers so that these may impact the improvement of the academic achievement of its students, and evidence this improvement in the student's proficiency tests and corresponding distribution of grades (A, B, and C); META-PR and META-PR Alterna and the results of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP); College Board and Advance Placement Tests, as applicable.

Determining the Need for Professional Development

PRDE is committed to ensuring our professional development offerings guarantee high quality professional development that is responsive to the needs of educators and aligned to PRDE priorities, *Serie A-902 Ofrecimiento del Desarrollo Profesional* of the PRDE Public Policy Compendium.

To identify needs, PRDE collects and analyzes data from the school DEEs, data platforms, results of standardized exams, grades, surveys, results of teacher evaluation, and educator individual professional development plans.

Review and approval of DEE by Regional LEA and Central level staff ensure that school level Professional development is focused on and responsive to schools specific needs. Consistent with PRDE's vision of providing all children with an excellent education, high quality professional development for educators is a top priority. All of the activities funded by Title II Part A provide professional growth opportunities and enhance the instructional and leadership skills of educators.

PRDE's professional development is designed to provide educators with evidence based tools and resources that promote effective instruction. Given that in the 2016-2017 school year, 2,525 registered incidents of discipline occurred in schools in Puerto Rico. , PRDE implemented a professional development initiative to coach teachers how to identify and understand such behavioral problems. The professional development also included presenting effective teaching strategies that help improve academic achievement and minimize problem behaviors in the classroom. They are taught to use of visual resources and positive and continuous reinforcement to prevent crises that affect academic achievement in the classroom.

In the 2017-2018 school year, special emphasis is being placed on differentiated instruction, use of technology, project based learning and team teaching. The knowledge and skills gained through these opportunities will strengthen the quality of the teaching and learning process in the classroom resulting in improved student achievement.

These professional development activities are focused on educators' and students' specific needs to improve student academic achievement. As a result, PRDE expects increases in student performance, as evidenced by results of the state assessment, student grades distribution, AYP results and College Board advanced Placement test.

To ensure the implementation of best practices PRDE's solicitations for professional learning require the use of evidence based strategies and delivery methods that take into account a variety of modalities and topics. Examples include:

- Job embedded instructional support
- Teacher and principal induction
- Mentoring
- Study groups
- Coaching
- Leadership academies
- Workshops
- Virtual (Digital) learning communities
- Demonstration lessons
- Communities of practice
- Work study groups
- Videos on demand of model classroom instruction
- Conferences workshops and seminars
- Technology-based programs (workshops, webinars, videos).
- Online professional development offer teachers the opportunity to select the workshop that meets their individual needs in a more flexible schedule
- Project-based learning
- Team teaching
- Online lesson planning
- Data analysis
- Assessing, measuring, and evaluation of special needs students.

Vendor Review and Selection

PRDE provides a menu of professional development options that are aligned to PRDE strategies being promoted to assure having a pool of teachers well versed and knowledgeable in content and strategies that can be shared in work study groups and professional learning communities. Proposals submitted by external providers in response to PRDE's RFP are evaluated and those that are aligned to PRDE requirements are included in a catalog that is made available to schools and districts. Requirements are rigorous, totally aligned to professional development needs to promote student achievement. Examples of proposal requirements specify that the PD:

- design must include instructional strategies for the general population, as well as SL and students with special needs.
- must be focused on student achievement and focused on classroom instruction.
- demonstrates that knowledge acquired can be transferred to the classroom
- describes how the PD will be evaluated, including pre and post-tests, activity evaluations and satisfaction surveys.
- must be aligned to PRDE's standards and expectations for the grade and subject
- must include mentoring and coaching
- demonstration classes, webinars and workshops must focus on academic subject content and relevant instructional strategies by a specialist on the subject who will demonstrate the conceptual development and its application.

- workshops must align theory with practice to guide the teachers learning process developing and/or increasing knowledge, skills, building capacity of participants.
- Seminars and conferences must provide the opportunity to construct knowledge by interactive activities.

These professional development activities are focused on educators' and students' specific needs to improve student academic achievement. As a result, PRDE expects increases in student performance, as evidenced by results of the state assessment, student grades distribution, AYP results and College Board advanced Placement test.

Professional Development for Advanced Placement

PRDE has contracted College Board to offer teachers professional development on test core analysis to improve their skills in identifying areas where students may need reinforcement or improvement and determine next steps or offerings at the school level, guided by those needs to prepare students and increase participation in advanced placement courses.

PRDE already has an advanced placement program in place as part of PRDE activities to students for college. The courses are graded 1-5. Those students who pass the course exams with a 3, 4, or 5 are given the opportunity of applying for college credits. Currently, 136 of the 206 high schools have students participating in advanced courses. The goal is to have 100% of the schools with students participating in advanced placement courses. This year PRDE has started a project to administer the SAT and ACT to 11th grade students for early admission or as a try out to get a clearer profile for college life. Furthermore, to continue increasing the number of participants in advanced placement courses PRDE has also will offer 9th grade students an additional assessment (PIENSE, acronym in Spanish). This assessment provides information on student's cognitive development and achievement in Spanish, English and Mathematics. PIENSE is aligned with PRDE's Spanish and English Language proficiency objectives, as well as the development of math understanding through the comprehension of concepts, skills and problem- solving procedures. PIENSE provides predictive information in preparation for the college entrance exam. It facilitates information to identify areas in need of reinforcement or improvement in grades 8 and 10. PIENSE results, in addition to those of the state assessment and students grades will provide a student profile that will assist in identifying candidates for advance placement.

PRDE has also developed teacher academies to increase teachers' knowledge on the state assessments and strengthen skills on their use to improve class room instruction. Teachers are expected to increase capacity on how to assess and transfer knowledge in developing assessments in the classroom, improving formats to assess students and develop activities better aligned to content and curriculum. The academies include workshops on:

- How to develop and write items for the state assessments aligned to the standards and curriculum of the subjects that are included in the state assessment.

- Content alignment
- Technical procedures regarding test development – content and bias
- Use of data to improve classroom instruction.

Special education teachers will also participate in an academy on the use of standards for the portfolio used in the alternate state assessment for students with special needs.

Ensuring Outcomes

PRDE's process for requesting professional development funds requires that the solicitor demonstrate how the use of funds will improve student outcomes. These expectations are outlined in RFPs and work plan templates. The review and approval is used to ensure that professional development aligns with PRDE's curriculum standards and expectations. Both must be aligned to the teacher's needs assessment, professional development plan, curriculum, teacher professional standards, and PRDE priorities. These professional learning activities are meant to:

- Promote educator reflection on results and identification of activities and strategies to improve instruction.
- Assure educators analyze and utilize student performance to develop and provide planned and informed instruction.
- Allow teachers and academic leaders to make educated changes or improvements in their professional practice.
- Create professional performance objectives that will improve student achievement. Teachers are expected to implement the knowledge and skills acquired in their classrooms, the result should be reflected in increased student achievement, which will be evidenced by student grades on measures for interim progress.
- Impact positively on the results of teacher and principal evaluations. The results of teacher and principal evaluations will also provide data on the effectiveness of the PD and on adjustments that may be needed to improve teaching and ensure increases in student achievement.

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.

PRDE has developed the Teacher Equity Plan in an effort to ensure that all students receive education by excellent teachers. This plan complies with all the requirements of the USDE in the components of the Teacher Equity Plan. It ensures that qualified and effective teachers have access

to all necessary support systems to teach all students regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, and / or geographic location. The Plan includes PRDE efforts to reduce gaps and achieve greater equity in our educational system so that all students receive education by excellent teachers. It ensures that qualified and effective teachers have access to all necessary support systems to teach all students regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, and / or geographic location.

The PRDE is in the process of revising its recruitment and retention processes to ensure the equitable distribution and/or designation of highly qualified, certified and experienced teachers to fill vacant positions.

Among the strategies that the PRDE will use to eliminate the equity gaps are:

Strategy 1: Ensure effective management of the human resources

Strategy 2: Strengthen Teacher preparation and In Service Training Programs

Strategy 3: Commitment of PRDE staff to the Equal Access Initiative for all students' background information and the current situation.

The PRDE will use Title II, Part A funds to support initiatives that provide access to effective teacher for all students by providing activities that include:

1. Induction and mentoring programs for new and inexperienced teachers (0-3 years) and school directors
2. Professional development for out of field, alternate route, and non-certified teachers. Activities will include mentoring, coaching, tuition assistance, workshops, online learning, and job embedded instructional support
3. Improvements in teacher preparation
4. Instructional support to districts to design and implement strategies that address the professional preparation needs of inexperienced, out of field, non-certified and alternate certification teachers
5. Training for principals and academic leaders to assess teacher and student performance, providing feedback and to use data for decision-making on professional development improvement strategies to identify and assess student needs and provide differentiated instruction
6. Partnerships with higher education institutions that lead to improved academic achievement by aligning teacher preparation programs and professional development projects with PRDE's priorities. The outcomes from these partnerships will result in a workforce of qualified teachers that can work in critical shortage areas such as special education, Spanish language learners, and students in poverty.

7. Certification and recertification in teacher shortage areas. IHE's have shown a commitment to partner with PRDE by developing and submitting concept papers describing professional development projects of their institution, which are aligned to PRDE priorities. Monthly meetings are held to maintain ongoing collaboration.
8. Incentivized Placement: PRDE is implementing a program to place teachers in schools that has difficulties with staffing and retention rates of effective teachers. The program consists in offering a bonus to approximately 700 teachers who voluntarily requested to be relocated. The PRDE will provide a (one-time) $1,000 bonus to approximately 700 highly qualified system teachers identified as available resources in the abovementioned subjects, in order to increase retention of teachers in schools that are classified as having low performing schools, and schools with a high incidence of violence.
9. Teachers' reskilling in emerging disciplines such as entrepreneurship education.
10. Teaching in context leveraging exposure in the classroom in the classroom, in the school and through educational fieldtrips.

The activities outlined above are part of PRDE's strategies to promote access to effective teachers for all students.

The PRDE recognizes that access to effective teachers is the state responsibility. Accordingly, PRDE established an internal group to support the effective implementation and follow up of equitable access for all students to effective educators. However, aligned to PRDE's process of developing a new structure (Regional LEA), the PRDE will allow a greater degree of administrative and academic control of the region under the overall direction of the LEA Director. The agency, as SEA, will be requiring Regional LEAs to complete an application according to federal regulations in order to receive funds to implement their activities under a federal program. Once the model is fully implemented in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the PRDE will provide orientations to all schools and LEA personnel in charge of completing this task. The applications will be evaluated to ensure they are based on the identified needs of each region which should be included according to the purpose of each Title and to guarantee they are aligned to the goals and priorities of the Agency.

Ensuring equitable access to effective teachers for all students is an ongoing process; therefore, PRDE will maintain updated information on all teachers' school assignment (non-qualified teachers, out of field teachers, inexperienced teachers) to identify gaps and take necessary measures to eliminate or narrow the gaps associated with providing access to effective teachers to all students. Currently, the identified gaps for the access to effective teachers are in the areas of special education and schools with students in high poverty; therefore, the focus of the PRDE follow up and support will be in these areas. PRDE plans to implement incentives for existing teachers to help fill the spots where support is needed.

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 purpose of the Teaching Certifications Division is to interpret, administer and enforce the laws and regulations to certify teachers in public and private schools in Puerto Rico, guaranteeing the right of every aspiring teacher to obtain the Regular Certificate for which it was formally prepared. The PRDE has regulations in place to carry out these processes. The current regulations provide, in general terms, three possible routes for obtaining a regular certification as follows:

Traditional Route: Way to obtain a regular certificate as teacher, having completed an academic degree in education and fulfilling the certification requirements established by the Regulation, in the category that the candidate wishes to be certified. Certification courses must be part of the academic programs authorized by the CESPR to the institution of higher education. The traditional route certification requires: a baccalaureate degree in education with a specialty (and a minimum of 21 credits) in a specific academic area; course of methodology for teaching this subject; a course of teaching practice in the area to be certified or its equivalent; to approve the corresponding Teacher Certification Test (PCMAS, acronym in Spanish); to approve a course related to the nature of the exceptional child, including the concepts of technological assistance and inclusion; to approve a course on the integration of technology in education; to approve a course of History of Puerto Rico; to approve a course of History of United States; GPA and specialty point average of not less than 3.00;

Recertification Route: The way to obtain a regular certificate as teacher, when the candidate already has a regular teacher certificate and meets the requirements of another certification, established by the Regulation in the category in which the candidate wishes to be certified. The courses for recertification should be part of the academic programs authorized by the CESPR to the institution of higher education.

Certification via recertification route requires: regular teacher certification; a lower concentration (18 university credits at the undergraduate, graduate or combination of both levels), including a course on teaching methodology in the area of recertification; to approve the corresponding PCMAS, GPA and specialty point average of not less than 3.00;

Alternative Route: Way to obtain a regular certificate as teacher, after having completed at least a baccalaureate, which is NOT in education, and complying with the certification requirements established by the Regulation in the category in which it is requested. The courses for the alternate route should be part of the academic programs authorized by the CESPR to the institution of higher education. Certification via alternative route requires: bachelor's, master's or doctorate's degree; 21 university credits in the academic area requesting the certificate; 15 basic credits in education that include the philosophical, sociological and psychological foundations of the education; a course of teaching practice in the specialty or its equivalent; additional requirements, if applicable.

The types of certificates that are issued are the following:

- Academics: Early Childhood Education; Pre-school Early Childhood Education; Elementary Level (k-3); Elementary Level (4-6); Elementary Level English (k-6); Physical Education (K-12); Foreign Languages (k-12); Bilingual Education (k-12); Fine Arts (k-12) - Visual Arts, General Music, General Music Instrumental, General Music Vocal, Dance, Theater, Ballet; Health Education (k-12); Secondary Education – Spanish, English, Social Studies, History, Biology, Chemistry, General Science, Environmental Sciences, Earth Sciences, Mathematics; Computer Utilization Resource (k-12); Radio and Television Production Resource; Librarian; Master in Adult Education.
- Special Education: Special Education (k-12); Visual Impairments; Deaf and Partial Deaf; Deaf-blind; Autism; Early Childhood Education; Adapted Physical Education; Principles of Technology Education in Special Education; Family and Consumer Education in Special Education; Commercial Education in Special Education; Marketing in Special Education; Industrial Education in Special Education.
- Occupational Education: Principles of Technology Education; Family and Consumer Education; Family and Consumer Education - Occupational (Culinary Arts, Pastry, Floral Design, Event & Convention Coordination, Child Care Services, Dressmaker, Hotel Management); Commercial Education; Marketing; Marketing with specialization in Hospitality and Tourism; Industrial Education (22 offers) - with Examining Board (12 offers) - without Examining Board (10 offers); Agricultural Education - Non-occupational; Agricultural Education - Occupational (9 offers); Specialized Courses In Aeronautical Technical Maintenance; Health Related Occupations; Dental Assistant; Pharmacy Technician; Emergency Medical Technician: Paramedic.
- Montessori: Infants and Toddlers, (0-3 years); Child's House, (3-6 years old); Elementary, (6-9 years old); Elementary, (9-12 years old), Youth House, (12-17 years old), Director of Montessori School.
- Teaching Support: Educational Technology Specialist; School Social Worker; School Counselor; Curriculum Specialist; Teacher Research Specialist; Special Education Research Specialist; Special Education Evaluator; Occupational Program Coordinator.
- Administrative: School Director (k-12); Director of Specialized School (k-12); Director of Occupational School; Director of Specialized Occupational; School Superintendent; Teacher Facilitator. Post-secondary: General Education: Spanish, English, Mathematics, Social Studies and History, Biology and Physics; Engineering: Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Chemistry, Electronics, Instrumentation; Telecommunications; Refrigeration and Air Conditioning; Biomedical Sciences; Health Sciences: Nursing, Radiological Technology; Graphic Arts; Business Administration: Office Administrative Systems,

Accounting, Management and Marketing; Technology in: Information Systems, Environmental Quality, Hardware and Tools; Director Postsecondary; Postsecondary Teacher Facilitator; Postsecondary Social Worker; Postsecondary Professional Counselor; Coordinator of Technical Education and Placements; Postsecondary Librarian; Sports and Recreation Coordinator.

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.

To ensure all students, including struggling learners and students with special needs have access to quality education PRDE is putting in place a structured, evidenced based principal academy that will strengthen and expand the skills and capacity of Region LEAs and school principals around best practices to provide the leadership that can transform low performing schools and improve student outcomes. Participants will be trained on how to gather qualitative, quantitative and observational evidence about teacher capacity for instructional leadership and serving the needs of diverse learners, as well as focusing their time on supporting teachers. Principals will prepare a strategic leadership plan for their individual school based on school level data, focused on improving curriculum and delivering well designed instruction to all students to increase student achievement.

Puerto Rico is determined to train teachers so all our children can receive all the tools they need to thrive. PRDE improves the skills of teachers, principals and other school leaders by offering professional training specifically designed to:

- Enhance educators' knowledge in identifying students with special learning needs, Spanish learners, students with low literacy and gifted and talented students by utilizing resources and tools provided by Central level and district staff that coordinate the programs and services that are provided to the students.
- Principals, social workers, and school counselors are also engaged in supporting educators in the identification process.
- Provide for the professional learning needs of teachers to attend students with low literacy levels. Training includes assessment, groupings based on data and specific instructional activities to increase literacy levels.
- Parent engagement is encouraged in all PRDE planning for special populations and in instances where needed, they also participate in the implementation of various activities.

- PRDE provides a diversified continuum of resources, tools, training, and opportunities for stakeholder engagement to improve the instructional skills of educators with an emphasis on special populations.
  - Data Platforms
  - Written material
  - Procedures Manual
  - Policy Letters, rules and regulations
  - Professional Learning Communities
- Teachers should participate in community, sectors development events.

School budgets include T-II Part A funds awards that are used to provide professional development activities designed with the specific academic needs of the students and teachers. Regional LEA superintendents, academic programs directors, and academic unit staff also provide professional development opportunities for teachers to attend students with specific learning needs.

Gifted and Talented

PRDE public policy on identification and services to gifted and talented students is contained in Serie A-700 Ofrecimiento del Desarrollo Profesional of the PRDE Public Policy Compendium. As stated in the policy each school creates a committee to identify and screen for gifted and talented students. To improve educator skills in identifying and provide appropriate instruction PRDE has established a partnership with the Puerto Rico Gifted and Talented Alliance, a gifted and talented professional development organization to provide training to improve teacher skills and create a succession of teachers for other gifted and talent schools. The professional development of the teacher trains them to identify students and how to attend to their learning needs. Through this alliance PRDE is placing public school teachers in a specialized school for gifted and talented students for a year where they will team teach with the school's teachers. This initiative will serve as a lab to train teachers who be better prepared to identify and offer academic instruction to gifted and talented students.

Special Needs

Partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education Improving teacher preparation programs for content areas, specific to the needs identified for the student population. Monthly meetings held with IHE's include discussions on the training needs of special education teachers and subject matter classroom teachers to develop courses and projects on instructional strategies to address student needs and increase student outcomes. As an example, a webinar, available to all teachers was offered on "The Role of Educators Regarding Learning Needs". Special emphasis was given to learning challenges in science confronted by special education students. Collaborations with the IHEs have been established to identify and promote the provision of college courses specific

to special populations that will better prepare pedagogy students, aspiring to be teachers, which can also serve as professional learning for PRDE educators.

Collaboration with universities to identify and promote the provision of de college courses that are specific to special populations that will better prepare pedagogy students, aspiring to be teachers and can also serve as professional learning for PRDE educators. As an example a webinar was offered available to all teachers on "The Role of Educators Regarding Learning Needs". Special emphasis was given to learning challenges in science confronted by special education students.

Differentiating Instruction to Address Diverse Needs in the Classroom

Title I, Part A funds were allocated for teacher's daily planning instruction online. This tool will allow teachers to have more access to differentiated activities to support specific learning needs and interest of students in the classroom. The online program provides for monitoring by principals and facilitators, who will offer teachers technical and academic support in the classroom as needed. Additionally, beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year, teachers and students will be provided a data based online library for use in the classrooms. It is a more effective technological platform to increase student learning and provide technical assistance and professional development for teachers and administrators to aid them in more effectively leveraging the technological resources they currently have.

To support implementation of the tool, the PRDE is conducting trainings and providing tailored supports to professionalize teachers and directors when it comes to professional development. The trainings provide teachers with resources and a professional platform where they receive training in the areas of literacy, leadership, advocacy, and evaluation. The PRDE is committed to train effective teachers to give the highest quality education to our students.

SL students:

The SLA (Spanish Language Acquisition) program is also responsible for providing supplemental professional development activities for the teachers and other school personnel that provides services to SLs. During the second semester of 2016-2017 school year, they received professional development effective opportunities related to topics on establishing learning objectives, differentiated instruction, instructional strategies, and educational support for second language learners. Among the professional development activities, Title III program includes and will continue including the following topics:

a. Scientific Base and Effective Teaching Strategies to work with Spanish as Second Language Students
b. Spanish Language Development Standards-WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment)

c. The advantages of integrating Ludic Activities and Students Learning Styles to help ELL and SLL students to learn an L2.

d. Teaching Strategies

e. Reading Comprehension Through Urban Art and Music

f. Folk Tales: Understanding Reading and Writing

g. Strategies for Reading Comprehension

h. Drama: A Different Tool for Teaching and Evaluating a Concept

i. Using Achieve3000 and Middlebury Interactive Language as tools for learning a language (technology integration)

j. Reader's Theater for Language Acquisition

k. Content Academic Topics Based on Needs Assessments and Students' Achievement Progress Data

l. Technology Based Education

m. Visual Communication

n. Utilizing and Integrating Creativity to develop an L2

These activities are part of the Professional Development Program designed specifically for these personnel and will continue to be provided for 2017-2018 school year. Likewise, district personnel, including facilitators, will provide support to teachers through "job embedded" professional development. The support provided by the district personnel will be aligned with the specific necessities established by the COREL and the school's DEE using the mentioned topics as reference.

Reporting Outcomes

PRDE is aware that in order to improve academic outcomes PRDE needs better data. Comprehensive data collection to understand the specific situations of schools has been made. As a result, PRDE is expanding the systems of data information to make informed decisions. To achieve this, PRDE is adhering to best practices in Data Driven Decision making (DDDM) at the classroom, Region/LEA as well as island wide.

The implementation of professional development will be aligned with student achievement outcomes. As a result, PRDE expects that the professional development projects, initiatives and activates developed will lead to high academic achievement of all students, especially student subgroups who are behind in reaching goals. Through the implementation of the Teacher and Principal Support System PRDE will gather implementation data that will demonstrate the degree to which changes in practice, promoted through professional development are resulting in

improved student outcomes. Indicators in the teacher evaluation rubric provide data on the use of best practices. Some of the premises include:

- Use of evidence based strategies
- Use of PRDE platforms
- Use of data: student data, diagnostics, test results and student observation among others, practices
- Differentiate instruction
- Use of technology
- Engaging students on reflection processes on their test results to determine necessary adjustments
- Creation of a productive environment in the classroom

In addition, to teacher assessment results, growth in school achievement, problem based learning (PBL) and student performance in the state assessments will serve to report outcomes. The PRDE publishes in its website: http://de.gobierno.pr/conoce-tu-escuela, information regarding specific school performance, profile, and information over the preparation of teachers.

The expansion of the data systems and platforms will allow PRDE to collect the information that will be conducive to informed decision making and report outcomes efficiently.

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.

PRDE employs various strategies to obtain the necessary data to assist in the decision-making process and to improve the support under the Title II, Part A. PRDE has several platforms that provides data from all schools and districts that are used as a measure to identify the activities that represent the best use of Title II, Part A funds.

These data platforms include:

- **DEE.** Each school develops a school improvement plan, which summarizes its objectives and goals for the school year. This year the school comprehensive plan has been totally redesigned and for the first time is based on current year student data. This has given PRDE a clearer idea of student needs and guided professional development plan. Professional development is being focused on attending those content areas in need of improvement.
- **The Teacher and Principal Evaluation System.** In order to identify effective teachers and principals, the PRDE's developed an educator evaluation system. The system has strengthened the process of identifying effective teachers and provided a support system to

increase the teacher's professional skills, knowledge and effectiveness A revised version will be implemented in the 2017-2018 academic year. The new Teacher Evaluation System aims to strengthen the teacher's capabilities to achieve the transformation of schools. It is a three-step process consisting of two visits and evaluation, documenting through observation, the areas of strength and opportunity of the teacher, as well as the next steps to receive academic support and technical assistance. This data as the basis for creating the Individual Professional Development Plan (PIDP) of each teacher and principal. The plan contains the areas of opportunity for professional growth. The Districts and Central level Teacher Professional Development personnel have access to the results, which are used to determine the required professional development. PRDE uses this information to train teachers in areas where they are struggling, and supports principles promote student achievement. Through this system, the PRDE seeks to use the results of the formative evaluation results to analyze, plan and improve educational practice. The System is designed to ensure the continuing professional development of educators and to enrich the quality of teaching in schools and student learning.

- **Student Information System (SIE).** The results of standardized tests, grades reports, etc. are used to determine the students' academic growth and needs.
- **SL –** PRDE uses LASLinks a research-based, Spanish language proficiency **assessment** that measures the speaking, listening, reading, writing, and comprehension skills of K–12 students who are non-native speakers to identify students who qualify for services. It aids teachers to identify language difficulties a student may have in Spanish and track and monitor progress in attaining Spanish language proficiency. Comprehensive language proficiency data is used to target instruction to meet each student's needs and help speed progress toward Spanish language proficiency. This data is used to ensure that teachers and other school personnel that provide services for SLs are well prepared by providing sustained professional development activities in areas directly related to learning a second language. Emphasis is given to teachers who have SL students enrolled in their classroom for professional development opportunities related to second language acquisition. The professional development plan includes sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data driven and classroom focused training related to the assessed needs among teachers and student academic progress data.
- **MIPE-** "Mi Portal Especial (MiPE)" is the Special Education Information System and is the primary tool for special educations teachers and personnel. The system began with its electronic IEP module in March 2012 as a pilot project in the Ponce region. In October 2012, the system was published live with the student module, which included the registration process for the special education program and other key program processes. The MiPE achieved an integration between the SIS and the special education program, where all students in MiPE have a SIS number and a registration number. This integration

facilitates data quality that allows PRDE to make decisions, integrated with the information available in the SIS. In October 2015, the evaluation for eligibility to related services module was include in the MiPE and in August 2016, the electronic coordination of therapy services was also incorporated.

MiPE supports PRDE's yearly decision and planning related to the student needs, based in the information that is captured in the electronics IEP's and other modules in MiPE. These indicators reflect each student individual academics needs which allows PRDE to effectively allocate the resources in the critical areas of needs. MiPE permits schools to set the academic baseline regarding the areas that teachers need to reinforce through professional development content or instructional practices that are needed to increase each student academic growth.

- **Pearson Access Net** – is a secure zone platform that provides PRDE with data related to state assessments results. The platform allows schools to make direct access to reports on individual student performance, results by classroom, grade, subject matter and standards, among other. The results are used as part of the decision making process on PRDE priorities and adjustments needed to address student needs.
- **SLDS:** is the Educational Performance Information Portal, where the PRDE is able to integrate transactional systems, and bring functionality of the K-12 student information. The SLDs portal has established a renewed data governance and quality model in the agency. The portal provides a search tools to obtain information regarding student profile, general demographics, assistance, discipline, results of the academic achievement tests, and grades.

Consultation

PRDE recognizes that ongoing and meaningful stakeholder engagement is essential to the effective development and successful implementation of Puerto Rico's initiatives and programs to provide students with an excellent education, including use of federal funds. To that effect, PRDE provides a variety of avenues and opportunities for interested individuals and organizations to review PRDE documents and policy. A concrete example is the extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation process used to develop the ESSA plan. Stakeholders' feedback were considered during the process on decision points, options, recommendations, and drafts and provided feedback throughout the design and development of our ESSA plan. In addition, PRDE believes the stakeholder consultation and plan development process should be as meaningful and transparent as possible. Efforts to create transparency included frequent and widely disseminated updates on the process, timelines, and opportunities to engage stakeholders at different stages and levels of design and implementation of projects and initiatives.

PRDE administers surveys to gather input from the general public, interested parties and school community members on proposed improvements to the public education system, and invites the general public to participate in consultation processes.

Methods for consultation:

- **Surveys and Focus Groups.** Teacher, principal, leadership staff, parents, and community provide feedback that is used to determine professional training needs.
- **PRDE Website:** provides opportunities for stakeholder feedback on various topics including school report cards, school profiles, and other data related to the PRDE public school system.
- **Stakeholder Meetings:** PRDE has integrated various stakeholders to promote best practices to benefit the academic growth of all students. The Department hosts several stakeholder committees (i.e. Secretary's Office Student Counseling Committee; General Flexibility Committee; Title I Practitioner Committee; Title III Student Needs Attendance Committee; Parent and Student Committee; Education, Evaluation and Professional Development Committee; and Evaluation Committee) that gather their enrollment during providing quality education for students.

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.

Improvements in teacher preparation programs will lead to better prepared teachers in all schools. PRDE has established several alliances that will allow greater presence and participation of the Institutes of Higher Education with the purpose of establishing academic policies in accordance with the current needs of teachers. Universities need to ensure that their students not only have the skills and knowledge of the school-level curriculum content but also possess knowledge about the social skills of their students and school communities.

PRDE holds monthly meetings with IHEs to develop and maintain collaborative efforts to align teacher preparation programs to the agency's needs and academic priorities. PRDE has engaged the IHEs in interactive discussions on strategies and activities to attend the areas identified. Among these are: effective instructional practices, problem based learning, use of technology, differentiated instruction, strengthening educational leadership, effective practices for classroom management, and restorative discipline. PRDE's scope for the collaboration includes developing projects and courses that will also support the development of programs at the district and school levels to impact their major areas of priority. Consequently, at PRDE's request, IHE's have submitted projects, courses and work plans specifically designed to attend the needs and priorities.

As result of the PRDE/IHE collaboration PRDE expects to:

- Promote teacher preparation programs and courses aligned to the agency', district and schools' specific needs and priorities.
- Increase participation and involvement of the IHEs with schools.
- Develop new professional development programs and training for teachers and principals (certification and induction)
- Provide meaningful professional learning activities for educators based on educators and student needs.

PRDE has identified teachers' need of knowledge and skills to serve talented and gifted students. To that effect, PRDE has created a partnership with The Puerto Rico Gifted and Talented Alliance to train teachers, using team teaching strategies to identify and offer academic instructional offers focused on effective, evidence based practices developed specifically to attend the needs of talented and gifted students.

In addition, to improving the teacher preparation program, PRDE will submit a bill to maintain regular teacher status for teachers who, as a result of the redesign of the school where they work, are considered surplus and are reassigned to work in a teaching category for which they do not possess the regular certificate. These teachers will be reassigned to difficult recruitment categories. In that manner PRDE guarantees the employment of surplus teachers, while meeting the agency's need in areas such as special education, elementary English, secondary English, and others.

Among other things:

- prior to participation in the Teacher Preparation Program (PPM, per its acronym in Spanish), the teacher must be evaluated by the Teaching Certifications Division to determine the requirements that may be missing for obtaining the regular teacher certificate in the category to which was reassigned.
- reassigned employees must participate in a PPM, designed by PRDE, to complete the requirements for academic preparation and other job requirements (difficult recruitment)
- the period to complete the PPM will not exceed two (2) years, starting from its implementation by the PRDE.

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.

Meaningful Consultation

The PRDE established and implemented timely and meaningful consultation with the community by holding a meeting with participants that are representative of the Puerto Rico's geographic diversity, i.e. state, district, and school employees, community and business partners, parents, guardians and students whom are all stakeholders in the PRDE and represent groups by race, gender, general and special education, rural and urban areas. During the meeting, PRDE collected feedback on the Title III program's entrance and exit procedures. He was part of the summer camp and he was excited about it and about going back to school. Those who attended, agreed that the integration of fine arts: drama, songs and ludic activities are appropriate strategies to teach and learn the language.

Based on input received by participants that are representative of the state's geographic diversity of the Island, PRDE is committed to ensure student are evaluated and placed within 30 days of enrollment. The SLA program is currently revising and will continue to perform the analysis about screener test options during the 2017- 2018 school year; to ensure the best use of resources, facilitate and speed up entrance criteria processes.

PRDE is considering restructuring the identification procedure by developing a standardized internal process for the test administration. This will provide schools the opportunity to control the entrance criteria by evaluating the student immediately after enrollment in schools in Puerto Rico. PRDE is receiving technical assistance on this matter to assure that it makes the correct decisions for the benefit of the students, in order to continue with the corresponding procedures.

On June 27, 2017, the PRDE held a stakeholder meeting to gather input on ESSA topics, providing them the opportunity to collaborate in the development of ESSA Plan and the enhancement activities that will be carried out for instructional language programs support. The meeting integrated representatives from school districts, school directors, staff from central level, technical assistance providers, consultants, Spanish Learners parents and Spanish Learners students. The subjects discussed were related to Program Purposes according to ESSA, Allowable Activities for Spanish Learners Subgroup, Immigrant Students, their teachers and families; Entrance and Exit

Criteria, Gathering of Recommendations and Opinions, Spanish Learners Experiences Sharing and Survey Session.

After providing key elements and information to the participants, the contributors shared experiences, including Spanish Learners successful cases on making progress towards attaining Spanish proficiency and comments regarding areas of improvement for providing better services. The stakeholders were asked to fill out a document with their recommendations, the challenges they face daily considering their very own experiences from the different perspectives. The feedback gathered gave the PRDE important information to consider when making standardized statewide decisions that affect all Title III, Part A personnel, students and their families.

To continue the consultations and collection of feedback for the ESSA consolidated state plan, the PRDE administered a survey providing stakeholders and the general public the opportunity to express opinion and concerns regarding the establishment of long-term goals for SL. The general public and stakeholders were advised of the link to the survey through public forums with the Secretary, written official communication, school and district communications, and on the PRDE's online and social media forums (Facebook, Twitter, and website). The PRDE continued using this strategy to gather the input on key aspects of the entrance and exiting criteria, implementation of the SLA program, monitoring and technical assistance. All information, comments, opinions and contributions were considered in the development of this section of the plan. An official communication will be issued including the standardized procedures, to ensure all regional, district and school staff are informed. As well, on an on-going basis, orientations will be offered to provide the time to clarify any concerns related to the program procedures.

Future Activities

PRDE will schedule regular quarterly meetings with representatives of the staff and parents from regional SLA centers coordinated by the Program at PRDE Central Level, and industry/subject experts. These SLA centers are been developed in schools with ten or more SL students enrolled and are to provide supplemental services to enhance language instructional programs. These meetings are going to be forums were satisfaction surveys will be administered in order to collect data and opinions. The participation of families in the development of the student language enhancement education plan is required and services will be provided for them too, according to a needs assessment. Their opinions and ideas will be integrated in order to provide quality services.

Schools with SLA will be provided with a SLA information poster to display at their schools and contact information for any further assistance needed. In addition, important information necessary to disseminate so that program implementation metrics and corresponding outcomes metrics can be improved include: graphics on SL students achievements, entrance and exit criteria outcomes, rate of attendance to student supplemental services, rate of attendance on students and families

support activities, integration of strategies to enhance language instructional programs and attendance for professional development activities, among others.

Entrance Procedures

The following figure outlines the procedures for identification of SLA students:

Diagram 17. Entrance Process

Step 1	• Home Language Survey
Step 2	• School Director validates the HLS student's data
Step 3	• Administration of the Screener Test • Within 30 days of Enrollment
Step 4	• Parental notification
Step 5	• Student Placement and Services

The SLA program has developed standardized forms that comply with the law, state and federal regulations to be used for the following procedures. Each form serves a different purpose within the entrance and exiting criteria established. The entrance criteria for the Title III, Part A program are standardized across all the PRDE's schools. Students who enroll for the first time in a PRDE school or return after withdrawing from the PRDE system, are provided a Home Language Survey, (HLS) Form AEI001, as part of the enrollment package, which can be completed in-person or online.

Currently an external provider is responsible for coordinating with school personnel and scheduling the administration of the LAS Links screener to SL candidates. The administration is conducted at the school level or in locations identified by PRDE. After the administration of the LAS Links, the external provider provides the SLA Program Director with the results. The SLA Director is in charge of delivering the students results to the schools, so that the placement of the student is completed and the parent can be notified. SL candidates who are assessed and demonstrate to be non-proficient in the Spanish language are enrolled into the Title III program and the information is entered into the SIE system. The school is responsible for developing a SLA school plan as well as an individualized student plan. In cases where parents and or guardians are not interested in the program services, the school informs them of their right to refuse the program

services. However, as required by law, the school will continue to use strategies that ensure that the SL student is making progress in developing Spanish as well as being proficient in their academic achievement and meeting the state challenging standards. These strategies will be aligned with the objectives and activities of other services provided by other programs the student is eligible for such as special education or *Title I.*

All Spanish learners are required to have an individualized educational and language development plan to describe all the services and support that will be provided to the student. In addition, the school must create a school plan to ensure the implementation of services for the SL students and their families. This plan will be aligned with the results of the needs assessments administered to parents and school personnel, along with the students LAS Links, grades, META-PR or Alternate META-PR outcomes. The school director is responsible for disseminating and orientating parents and school personnel on the program services and requirements. The activities for parental and family engagement must be consistent with needs identified in consultation with them. As well, the school should provide professional development activities to ensure that teachers and other staff are prepared to address SL students' needs.

Exit Procedures

The following figure outlines the procedures for exiting SLA students from the Title III program:

Diagram 18: Exit Procedures

Step 1	•Annual Proficiency Assessment
Step 2	•Proficiency Score in the Annual Language Proficiency Assessment + Fulfilling one of the additional requirements established: **(**A grade of A, B or C in Spanish, Mathematics and Science, Exit Recommendation Letter from the School Director based on a variety of data or Exit Recommendation Letter from the Parent)
Step 3	•Exit from Title III Spanish Language Acquisition Program
Step 4	• Academic follow up for 4 years (ongoing)

Annual Proficiency Assessment

All SL students are annually administered the Language Proficiency assessment to determine the students' progress toward learning the Spanish language. The SLA Program Director and the PRDE Assessment Unit Director coordinate the administration logistics, student lists and data, dates and times for the evaluations with the external provider, who is responsible of the administration and correction of the annual assessment. In addition, the provider must deliver the results to the SLA Program Director, who is responsible for handing over the student's results to the schools, so that the cycle is completed and the parent can be notified. The District Facilitators and members of the LRC must be informed on the proficiency results of the student.

The results of the annual assessment test are classified into five scales of proficiency level based on a composite score of the four domains areas evaluated. Students that obtain results of 4 or 5 in the proficiency level scales are considered proficient in Spanish. A proficiency score is one of the requirements to exit the Program. The external provider that administers the tests will conduct trainings on how to analyze the results in order to make data-based decisions for SL placement, instruction, topics related to teacher's instructional planning taking into consideration the student's needs and proficiency results.

Proficiency Level 1: Beginning A Level-1 student is beginning to develop receptive and productive uses of Spanish in the school context, although comprehension may be demonstrated nonverbally or through the native language, rather than in Spanish.

Proficiency Level 2: Early Intermediate A Level-2 student is developing the ability to communicate in Spanish within the school context. Errors impede basic communication and comprehension. Lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features of Spanish are emerging.

Proficiency Level 3: Intermediate A Level-3 student is developing the ability to communicate effectively in Spanish across a range of grade-level appropriate language demands in the school context. Errors interfere with communication and comprehension. Repetition and negotiation are often needed. The student exhibits a limited range of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features when addressing new and familiar topics.

Proficiency Level 4: Proficient A Level-4 student communicates effectively in Spanish across a range of grade-level appropriate language demands in the school context, even though errors occur. The student exhibits productive and receptive control of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features when addressing new and familiar topics.

Proficiency Level 5: Above Proficient A Level-5 student communicates effectively in English, with few if any errors, across a wide range of grade-level appropriate language demands in the school context. The student commands a high degree of productive and receptive control of

lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features when addressing new and familiar topics.

A SL student is exited from the program upon achievement of a proficiency score on the annual assessment and the achievement of one of the following requirements:

1. A grade of A, B or C in Spanish, Mathematics and Science
2. Exit Recommendation Letter from the School Director based on a variety of data gathered in a portfolio that will include evidence of the students projects and assignments, demonstrating Spanish Language Acquisition (an example of the format and a list of documents that will have to be included will be available in the PRDE webpage)
3. Exit Recommendation Letter from the Parent

The academic achievement of Former Spanish Language Learners will be monitored by the Academic Affairs Department, Spanish Language Acquisition Program for a period of four years as required by ESSA. The grades and results from the META-PR and META-PR Alterna will be analyzed to confirm that former SLs achieve academic standards. If academic difficulty is identified during the monitoring period, the student will be assessed individually and re-evaluated, if necessary, to identify the reasons for this failure and provide additional academic support.

English as a second language

The PRDE is analyzing options thoroughly for new initiatives as to provide Title III services to students who are learning English as a second language through a pilot project. The English Learners Project will be implemented in phases such as the following:

- First Phase (2017-2018): The first phase is directed to all the students that are part of the Spanish as a Second Language and Immigrants Program, that have scored basic or pre-basic on the Standardized State Test META-PR on the English subject (4th-12th) and the students from kindergarten up to third grade that did not master the English skills in the diagnostic test of the PRDE. These students will have conversational English classes using theater and music strategies, after school tutoring and supplementary English material.
- Second Phase (2017-2018): The determination of the student participation for this project will be based on the scores from the English part on the META-PR. Those students will be classified taking into consideration who scored basic or pre-basic during 2016-2017 administration (4th -12th). For kindergarten up to third grade, the participants will be those that did not master the English skills in the diagnostic test of the PRDE. These students will have conversational English classes using theater and music strategies, after school tutoring and supplementary English material.

PRDE is currently consulting with the United States Department of Education (USDE) on the use the Title III–A federal funds to provide services for English Learners and we are waiting for

the response on this matter. Additionally we are seeking for Technical Assistance and best practices from other States to better implement this project.

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 Spanish Learners Progress

As stated in the Title I, Part A section of this plan, the State designed long-term goals for Spanish Language proficiency established under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii), including measurements of interim progress towards meeting such goals, based on the State's Spanish language proficiency assessment under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(G). The baseline for long term goals for PRDE's Spanish Learners was set using actual data from the 2016 PRDE's Report Card. This goal was set to see progress over a 5-year period. However, PRDE has determined that it will revise this goal in the 3rd year in order to see the student's achievement. When establishing the goal, PRDE set academic year 2015-2016 data as the baseline.

PRDE will help its new Regional LEAs develop and implement strategies that ensure they can meet the state designed long term goals. In accordance, Table 32 presents examples of the effective strategies that should be used with the Spanish learners' students. As required by federal regulation, to increase the student's language complexity, the PRDE adopted the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA). Spanish Language Development (SLD) standards. These standards are aligned with the State's Spanish language proficiency assessment.

Accordingly, the Program will use different strategies to achieve measurements of interim progress and the long-term goals based on the State's Spanish language proficiency assessment under ESEA; such as tutoring, team teaching and virtual teaching. The tutoring section integrates fine arts, using drama, among others, as a technique. These strategies will help to lower the student's affective filter and to help them to be more eager to acquire the Spanish language. Also, a Spanish Club, will be established at each school integrating SL program participants. It will help students to interact with one another and learn vocabulary from each other while they find a common ground between them. In the Spanish Club, the teacher will be responsible to provide activities to increase student's vocabulary. The Program will also provide additional teachers or tutors to those students that are presenting a difficulty on acquiring the language, and therefore are having

problems with their academic achievement. The teachers or tutor will mentor the homeroom teacher and will also team-teach with him/her. The same teacher or tutor will also do one on one teaching when needed.

Table 32. Strategies and program interventions towards meeting established long-term goals integrating WIDA standards

Goal	Program Interventions	Evaluation	6-months Achievement Goals	2-year Achievement Goals
Increase Language Complexity to a level 6 (WIDA Standards) by the end of SY 2019-2020.	To improve Spanish reading and writing skills, SLs will be participate in: **-Tutoring 3 to 5 times per week for 2 hours** using Theatrical Scripts as teaching tool. -Teacher-student virtual tutoring. -Team-teaching with two teachers (home room teacher and other) one teacher is bilingual.	Reading Pre and post test Writing Pre and post-test. Analytical rubrics Classroom work Grades Portfolio	Student will **advance 2 levels** from the baseline as established on the WIDA Standards in Speaking and Writing after 6 months of enrollment in the program. Student will communicate in Spanish while **decreasing the code switching to 40%** in the main language 6 months of enrollment in the program.	Student will **achieve level 6** based on WIDA Standards: Speaking and Writing Performance after 2 years in the Program. Student will communicate in Spanish while **decreasing code switching by 80%** in the main language after 2 years in the Program.
Increase Language use and forms to a level 6 (WIDA Standards) by the end of SY 2019-2020.	Students will receive **tutoring** for analyzing language structure and grammar (verb tenses, sentence construction, among others) **3 to 5 times per week for 2 hours** within language use will lead to increase in Language Use and Form.	Grammar pre and post-test. Analytical rubrics Attendance rosters Portfolio Classroom performance Grades	Student will **advance 2 levels** based on the WIDA Standards: Speaking and Writing after 6 months of enrollment in the program. Student will be proficient in a **minimum of 50% of grammar rules** (verb tenses, sentence construction, among others) after 6 months of enrollment in the program.	Student will **achieve level 6** based on WIDA Standards Speaking and Writing Performance after two years in the Program. Student will be proficient in a **minimum of 70% of grammar rules** (verb tenses, sentence construction, among others) after 2 years in the Program.
Increase Spanish Vocabulary to a level 6 (WIDA Standards) by the end of SY 2019-2020.	Students will participate in **Spanish Club a minimum of 1 time a week** to practice vocabulary with their Spanish speaking peers. **Teach a minimum of 20 vocabulary words** aligned with the topic and daily use of words for communication in the real world.	Vocabulary pre and post test Vocabulary Checklists Classroom Observation notes Academic Portfolio Attendance rosters Lesson Plans	Student will **advance 2 levels** based on WIDA's Speaking and Writing Performance after 6 months of enrollment in the program. Students will use a **minimum of 40% of the words** correctly after 6 months of enrollment in the program.	Student will **achieve level 6** based on WIDA Standards Speaking and Writing Performance after two years in the Program. Students will use **a minimum of 80 % of the words** correctly after 2 years in the Program.

The Spanish Acquisition Program has established activities to ensure that students achieve growth in the Spanish language and succeed in the classroom according to the same academic state standards established for all students and all subgroups. Thus, the achievement of goals towards meeting the WIDA SLD standards should reflect students' accomplishments towards meeting proficiency in the Spanish Language Proficiency Assessment. The Spanish Acquisition Program has established activities to ensure that students achieve growth in the Spanish language and succeed in the classroom according to the same academic state standards established for all students and all subgroups. Thus, the achievement of goals towards meeting the WIDA SLD standards should reflect students' accomplishments towards meeting proficiency in the Spanish Language Proficiency Assessment. 23% of the Spanish Learners attained proficiency during 2016-2017 academic year. This rate shows the baseline where PRDE will start calculating the SLP students' progress as established by the ambitious long term goals.

To ensure the needs of the SLP students in the academic content area are met for achieving state standards, the Title III program will provide sustained professional development for all SL teachers. The topics are selected based on the grades and META-PR or Alternate META-PR outcomes for this subgroup. Additionally, the SLA program will provide academic resources, equipment, software and instructional materials designed to support academic content areas. Academic support will be data-driven and designed to develop and grow the knowledge and skills necessary for students to succeed. In order to encourage the coordination of services with other programs, if necessary, as established by ESSA requirement of promoting a well-rounded education, the student's integral needs have been and will continue to be analyzed. The goal is to assist SLs to meet the program's exiting criteria and the challenging State academic standards as all students are expected to meet.

Furthermore, as mentioned before, the services to provide student support must be described in the individualized plan. After the parent is notified that the student is enroll in a language instruction educational program, the student begins to receive Title III supplemental services too. All services the student receives are unique and are designed to meet the language needs of the student as well as contribute to academic achievement. The program services provided to the student include after-hours tutoring, classroom support, academic resources, supplemental instructional materials, integration of technology, accommodations on standardized exams and classroom evaluations, extracurricular activities such as cultural events and field trips, family literacy nights, and other community sponsored events related to second language acquisition and academic achievement in needed areas. To help parents and guardians with supporting their children at home, the school will conduct a needs assessment for them to indicate workshops and resources that they feel will help them support their child's academics at home. The school director will ensure that family support activities are designed to meet the needs of the students and parents and will provide services in this area at the school. The SLA will supplement these services with Title III, Part A funds, based on the needs assessment results.

Teacher Support

The School Director conducts a needs assessment of the teachers and other school personnel that serve students identified as SL to identify their topics of interest for future workshops. This assessment is conducted to determine priorities, differentiated teaching strategies integrating WIDA standards, instructional planning, strategies to improve language transition, and other relevant topics to improve academic support. The SLA program will focus on teachers who have SL students enrolled in their classroom for professional development opportunities related to second language acquisition. The professional development innovative plan includes sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data driven and classroom focused training related to the assessed needs among teachers and student academic progress data aligned with the three main goals established by the PRDE. In addition, as part of the professional development opportunities, the Title III program will provide coaching such as team teaching, lesson planning and assessment, and peer observations for SL teachers to ensure they have the necessary knowledge and teaching methods to apply in the classrooms and to provide direct services to students that are unique according to their individual needs.

Among the professional development activities, Title III program includes and will continue including the following topics:

a. Scientific Base Teaching Strategies for Spanish as Second Language Students.
b. Spanish as Second Language Standards-WIDA
c. The advantages of integrating Ludic Activities and Students Learning Styles to help ELL and SLL students to learn an L2.
d. Teaching Strategies
e. Reading Comprehension Through Urban Art and Music
f. Folk Tales: Understanding Reading and Writing
g. Strategies for Reading Comprehension
h. Drama: A Different Tool for Teaching and Evaluating a concept
i. Using *Achieve3000* and *Middlebury Interactive Language* as tools for learning a language
j. *Reader's Theater* for Language Acquisition
k. Content Academic topics based on needs assessments and students' achievement progress data
l. Technology based education
m. Visual communication
n. Creativity

District facilitators from all subject matter areas, offer and will continue offering support to school personnel through the "Job Embedded" professional development modality as stated before. The program it's in the process of contracting personnel for each Educational Region to enhance language instruction educational programs within the schools.

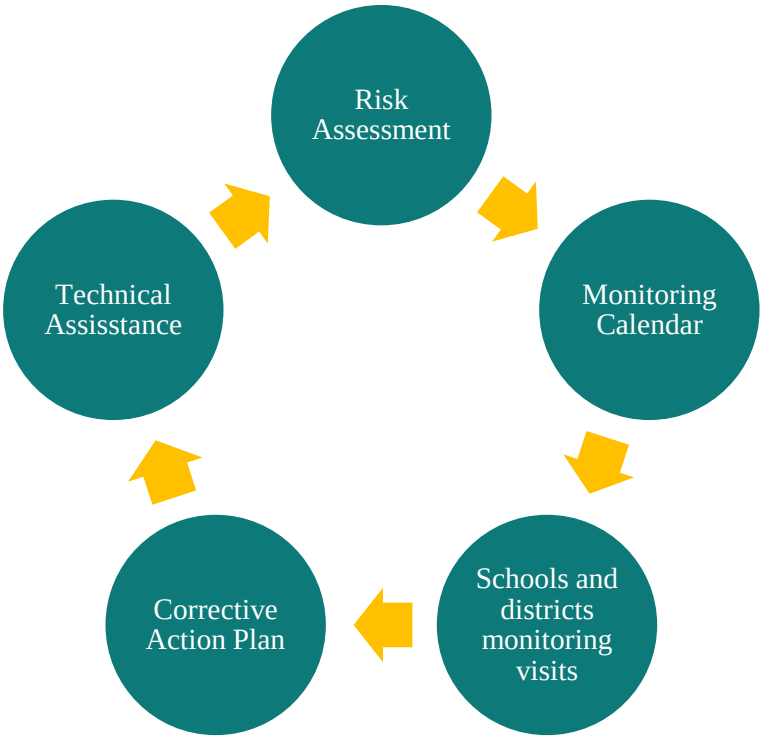
As other support activity to ensure that Spanish Learners meet the challenging State academic standards, beginning on August 2017, the PRDE will offer tutoring in Spanish for SLPs and immigrant students as a focus activity. These tutoring activities will be offered after school. Co-curricular activities will be integrated with the inclusion of fine arts as well, with theater strategies and integrating technology, to teach Spanish language arts skills. An alliance will be established with the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture to provide workshops. Through alliances with the community, higher education institutions, and other programs; family literacy and other parent engagement activities will be designed to promote academic support in the home. This will aim to take care of other students needs that impact progress achievement of long term goals related to Spanish Language proficiency attainment.

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.

PRDE's current monitoring process focuses on meeting federal requirements and includes:

- Monitoring a representative sample of schools each year to ensure that these schools are receiving the support they need to meet the needs of second language learner students.
- Reviewing interventions to ensure the causes of their performance challenges are addressed.
- Analyzing progress report on schools, including data use and teacher planning.
- Reviewing district implementation plans to ensure that interventions are appropriate and effective, and meet federal and state expectations.
- Reviewing district-level plans to ensure they will result in systemic change in the school and improve the quality of leadership, improved teacher quality, professional development, alignment and sequencing of the curriculum, and parental involvement and school community.
- Providing oversight of fiscal and programmatic aspects of school improvement initiatives funded through 1003 (a) funds

Diagram 19: Monitoring and Technical Assistance Cycle



Risk Management

The PRDE has designed a consolidated risk assessment procedure to determine the schools and districts that require the most attention and is based on past and current performance of meeting the Title III program requirements, among others. The central level monitoring unit will use the risk assessment to identify and monitor the progress of each school receiving Title III funds, especially those who have been challenging in the past based on the risk assessment. The risk assessment will include the evaluation of the following risk factors:

1. Students who have not presented a growth of 6% or more in the annual test.
2. Students who have not achieved proficiency in Spanish language in 4 years.
3. Schools with more than 10 Spanish Learners
4. Schools with Spanish learners who belong to the Special Education Program (placed in a self-contained Special Education classroom).

The Program projects to visit all schools that have SLP students enrolled. For the risk assessment, the Program will prioritize some schools, taking into consideration students that have been enrolled in the program for four years or more and schools with 10 students or more participating from the Program.

A state designed uniform monitoring process has been established outlining the procedures and guidelines utilized to monitor the progress of SLs' achievement of Spanish proficiency. Monitoring is performed by the PRDE Monitoring Unit of the Auxiliary Secretariat of Federal Affairs. Monitoring includes both desk monitoring and on-site visits by division staff from the Educational Regions.

Monitoring Process

The PRDE monitoring process is designed to facilitate the development of a culture of ongoing communication within schools, between schools, between districts and regions, and in the public education system of PRDE. The effective use of trained staff, monitoring tools, and established monitoring calendars facilitate the monitoring activities. The training provided to monitoring staff and the monitoring instruments used to conduct the desk monitoring and monitoring visits address both the compliance and fiscal elements for the Title III program. If findings arise after a monitoring is performed, all districts and schools are responsible for submitting all required monitoring documents to address monitoring findings. These documents could be key evidences that demonstrate compliance with the programs requirements and/or Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) to address non-compliance issues. Once the monitoring unit receives these, visits are conducted so the PRDE staff can determine whether the submitted evidence meets the corresponding compliance requirements.

Monitoring Calendar and School and District Monitoring Visits

Monitoring visits are established on the monitoring calendar and are scheduled with the schools. Trained staff visit schools and review school procedures and practices related to the Title III program. After the visit is completed a formal letter stating the monitoring results is developed and sent to the district and or school director. The school director is responsible for meeting with the school personnel to discuss the results of the monitoring visit and compliance items. In addition, the information is provided to District Technical Assistance staff so that appropriate follow-up visits and technical assistance is scheduled. The results of monitoring and school visits are recorded on an online platform and easily retrievable by other staff requiring the information. The online SAMA platform provides to the central and district staff the opportunity to track the monitoring and technical assistance activities that are being provided to districts and schools.

The monitoring process is conducted through an established collaborative model between central level and educational regions personnel and is an integrated process within Title programs to reduce the need for isolated multiple monitoring sessions. The monitoring process includes programmatic and fiscal components and includes technical assistance and focused support on the development of Corrective Action Plans. The focus is of continuous improvement, service and support rather than just compliance.

Corrective Action Plan

If findings of program noncompliance are identified, schools and districts are required to provide evidence of corrective actions. Schools and districts must respond to findings by submitting evidence of compliance including but not limited to HLS, school work plans, individualized student plans, teachers planning strategies, examples of students' school work and activities, portfolios, test results, parental notification and any of the program required forms. When school-level compliance issues are identified, the district must submit a corrective action plan that outlines strategies and activities to provide additional support to schools.

Academic Monitoring and Technical Assistance

The SEA will monitor the progress of each school and eligible entities receiving services or subgrants from Title III, Part A program that are helping Spanish learners achieve Spanish proficiency. During the visits, the program personnel it's revising all SL students individualized plans. Based on the student's, individualized plan, interventions and outcomes, technical assistance and support will be provided to teachers and other personnel. The Spanish Language Acquisition Program oversight and will continue over sighting the language acquisition and academic progress of the SL students by analyzing their 10, 20, 30 and 40 weeks' grades, performance in the META-PR and Alternate META-PR, and the results of the Annual Spanish Language Proficiency Test. A report is generated to identify students that are demonstrating low performance in the results of the mentioned evaluations, separately and/or combined. After the report is generated, low performing students and students that have been enrolled in the Program for four years or more are flagged, to schedule visits or communications with the school and identify specific needs that must be addressed. The SLA Program maintains close monitoring and technical assistance in the schools with SLs enrolled, providing specific attention to those that do not demonstrate student progress towards achieving Spanish language proficiency as described before.

Facilitators and District personnel are and will continue to follow up on activities to ensure that Spanish Language Instructional Programs are implemented, utilizing effective strategies in the classrooms such as: integrating technology, integrating fine arts and utilizing Project Based Learning, among others. The goal is to assure that schools are integrating services and supplementing with activities funded with Title III, reviewing the participation of teachers in professional development programs and the coordination of parental and family engagement activities. In addition, the integration of the WIDA standards in the teachers instructional planning and the coordination of services with other programs will be revised, as necessary, to ensure the student is receiving all the support needed and described in the individualized plan.

Steps the SEA will take to further assist eligible entities if the strategies funded under Title III, Part A are not effective

PRDE will further assist schools and eligible entities if the strategies funded under Title III, Part A are not effective, by providing technical assistance and modifying school and individualized plans to address key needs. The visitation calendar will be established, prioritizing the schools with students that have been enrolled in the Program for four years or more and low performing students, considering that the strategies that these schools are implementing are not effective or to search for other areas of need. During the visits, the program staff will complete a report establishing areas of improvement and recommendations to be implemented. Accordingly, during the first semester of the 2017-2018 school year, orientations, trainings, technical assistance, supplemental materials and other activities will be offered for these school directors, teachers and personnel. After the first intervention, a second visit or communication must take place to follow up on additional necessary actions, like providing coaching to teachers in the classroom, among other instructional support activities.

The SLA program receives and will continue receiving requests for support from the schools and teachers. Accordingly, the program coordinates the provision of instructional support to modify activities or approaches for student services to minimize instructional interruption and enhance the services provided to SL students and families. These requests are occurring on an on-going basis. The Program is working to complete the administrative efforts necessary to assure availability of resources, emphasizing with the identified schools' which strategies are not effective.

PRDE developed rubrics, forms and report templates to standardize the information gathering process and visitation and communications reports. These forms will be available in the PRDE web page for all school, regional and district personnel benefit.

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.

PRDE supports that all students should receive a high-quality education that also provides well-rounded experiences and prepares all students for life after high school. By supporting the whole child and a supportive learning environment, PRDE will promote equity and excellence for all of our students. It is imperative that students have access to coursework and activities that interest them. The new block grant authorized under ESSA provides an opportunity for statewide activity and support for district initiatives for well-rounded learning. Puerto Rico expects to use its statewide activity funds to meet PRDE's main goals. These are:

1. **Academic Achievement of students** (i.e. shift away from the current climate of high-stakes testing in favor of an educational system that is measured by the robustness of students' health, well-being, and happiness, which profoundly affect their academic achievement.). Also, develop World Competitive Citizens given today's global economy and the reduction of the Puerto Rican population and markets we need to develop citizens that can compete at the world-level for jobs or via their own enterprises.
2. **Attending the Whole Child** (i.e. a safe, healthy, facility-wide climate that prioritizes education, excellent conditions for learning, and encourages the necessary behavioral and social support services that address the individual needs of all youth, including those with disabilities), and
3. **Leadership and Professional Development** (i.e. Training for school directors, teachers and other staff to empower them in the processes established in the agency's public policy on prevention, and provide resources and guidance to parents and students on how to prevent, identify and manage bullying, harassment, violence and abuse behaviors).

PRDE's state-level activities will be supported in part by Title IV, Part A funds to address the needs of the whole child, specifically attending the students' social and emotional well-being. PRDE, will encourage schools to review its student's behavior, risk factors and safety issues as needs that impact students' academic success, and the program be able to use the Title IV-A funds to implement the appropriate interventions and professional development to address issues such as bullying and harassment, as well as questionable disciplinary practices.

PRDE has identified the following focus areas:

- Safe school environment
- Values/Character
- Violence/Relationships
- Overview and introduction of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

- Principles of Conflict Prevention and Management
- Using Problem-Solving Approaches to Discipline
- Bullying Prevention Education
- Suicide Prevention Education
- School Climate Improvements that Foster and Sustain Safe and Supportive Schools
- Entrepreneurial mindset
- financial management
- collaboration and team building
- project management
- self-awareness and self-direction
- life-long learning
- create problem solving
- environmental protection
- handling change sustainably
- leadership

Every student deserves to be treated with respect and have a safe and civil learning environment. The PRDE is committed to fostering safe, healthy, and supportive school environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying to ensure maximum learning for every student. PRDE is aware that bullying cases are not being reported by students or school personnel, and that most of them are victims of heavy jokes, verbal harassment, violation of privacy, discrimination by race or religion, and gender discrimination. Recent studies have shown that two (2) out of every ten (10) students suffer from bullying and school violence, "and according to information provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco), verbal harassment is the most typical, but also has increased through Internet and networks social". This data suggest that additional supports and resources are needed for educators and school leaders to implement PRDE's protocol, as established by PRDE's compendium public policy.

In addition, PRDE will implement a project that consists of an anti-bullying campaign throughout the island to foster safe, healthy and supportive school environment. Among the activities that will support the anti-bullying campaign, the PRDE will provide training and guidance to the school personnel. Also, orientations to parents and students on effective discipline practices that promote orderly and healthy school climates.

For the 2017-18 academic year, the PRDE will introduce the use of a communication service tool in its schools to address the bullying problem. This tool will allow counselors to meet students where they are – with text and online messaging – to help solve issues. By reducing the stigma of communicating with trusted adults, the service will allows students to open-up and break the 'code of silence'. Schools consistently report helping students who have never previously reached out for assistance.

In addition, as part the Organic Law of the Department (Law 149, amended in 2008), the PRDE rejects any act of violence that affects the moral or physical integrity of its students. Towards this end, the PRDE established a policy (included in PRDE's compendium policy), as its protocol for the prevention, intervention and follow-up of cases of school bullying among students of public schools in Puerto Rico. Every child must learn how to interact with others and deal with challenging situations, and addressing bullying is important to the well-being and safety of all

students. Students who avoid school because of bullying will suffer academically as well as socially.

PRDE has identified the need for the implementation of initiatives focused on ensuring that all students have positive learning environments that are safe, supportive, and engaging has ample evidence, including studies completed locally and nationally, as well as lessons learned from best practices and research on the field of Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

Through restorative justice practices, PRDE aims to hold students accountable and to change their behavior. Research shows that the use of restorative justice techniques can decrease misbehavior and suspension rates. Furthermore, restorative justice practices can be used in many different situations and can be tweaked to fit the students involved or the behavior targeted. It focusses on the damage, rather than the offender, in an effort to make a change in the students' worldview in order for him to emphasize with the victim and recognize the repercussion of his actions.

The PRDE will begin implementing restorative and SEL practices in a small scale as to determine its effectiveness and perform any changes needed. This implementation will vary based on specific school needs. At the same time, the Students Code of Conduct will be revised in order to decrease exclusionary discipline practices (out of school suspensions and expulsions) and to give the regional LEAs a legal frame, focus on restorative and SEL practices, from where they can establish their own, according to the particular needs of their region.

School Climate

Part of Title IV, Part A fund assignment will be used to provide services in the following areas:

- Training and Technical Assistance for school directors to empower them in the processes established in the agency's public policy on bullying prevention, awareness and managements of cases, and family engagement.
- Train staff, parents, and students in topics such as strategies for prevention, identification and management of such cases. Various training materials will be distributed as to electronic and paper how-to guides for student and staff, posters for awareness, and training/Implementation checklist.
- Intervention and monitoring of violent behavior among students.

SEA will be responsible on developing the overarching guidelines and frameworks to be used and establish implementation metrics. The Regional LEAs will receive technical assistance and guidance in the development and implementation of the Bullying work plan and the program will be responsible of evaluating the performance of the implementation process.

Monitoring over how funds are being expended by Regional LEAs, and progress of Regional LEAs toward meeting the grant objectives. In future years monitoring results will also be used to inform

technical assistance and training provided. Monitor the effectiveness of activities will allow the SEA improve the program prospectively.

Family Engagement

Evidence supports that gaps in educational opportunity and achievement will only be fully remedied when those closest to low-income students—parents, families, and communities—are meaningfully engaged by their teachers, schools, and districts. Therefore, the PRDE intends to use funds from a variety of federal and state sources, including part of Title IV, Part A to promote high-impact parent, family, community and school engagement that is collaborative, culturally competent, trauma-informed, and focused on supporting the whole child academically, socially, and emotionally.

To create a shared vision, the PRDE will engage key stakeholders in conversation to develop a statewide definition and common language around parent, family, and community engagement. Research also demonstrates that overall family well-being is strongly correlated to children's school readiness. Feedback from stakeholders participating in school supports discussion groups will highlight the areas where the PRDE can support effective parent, family, and community engagement. PRDE will offer Bullying Prevention presentations as a research-based resource that can help stakeholder members lead bullying prevention efforts in their local community. School administrators, including principals, district-level administrators, superintendents and school board members, can also use these research-based best practices in bullying prevention and response. High-quality training helps family and school staff understand the nature of bullying and its effects; how to work with others to prevent bullying; what policies and rules are in place; and how to stop bullying if it is observed, reported, or suspected.

The PRDE fosters the development of multi-sector community support teams that leverages the human capital and resources of the school neighbors and the municipality to help assess the school needs and develops the improvement through and enrichment plan and its implementation with excellence.

PRDE's public policy also establishes that schools should have a School Coexistence Committee (CoCE), composed of a Social Worker, School Counselor or Librarian, and at least one regular teacher and one special education teacher. Is their responsibility to assist the principal at all stages to comply with the PRDE's public policy. This committee is created by the School Council and directed by the director. The representatives of the CoCE meets at the beginning of the school year and develops an internal action plan based on the results of a school climate survey.

Implementation of the grant will be coordinated with other state and federal programs and systems within PRDE in order to streamline access to provide coherent supports.

2. **<u>Awarding Subgrants</u>** *(ESEA section 4103(c)(2)(B))*: Describe how the SEA will ensure that awards made to LEAs under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 are in amounts that are consistent with ESEA section 4105(a)(2).

The PRDE plans to administer Title IV, Part A funds by formula. In accordance with section 4105(a)(2) of ESSA, PRDE will ensure that no allocation is in an amount that is less than $10,000. To comply with this requirement, PRDE will run an internal formula based on 4105(a)(1) and any U.S. Department of Education guidance related to Title IV, Part A Regional LEA allocations.

Of its total allocation, PRDE will award 95 percent of the grant to provide a resource to districts to prioritize and determine how best to serve their students and ensure a well-rounded education in a safe and healthy environment. Through its pre-award planning process, PRDE will perform a series of hands-on workshop designed help the participants identify the essential elements to consider when conceptualizing and drafting a work plan, the integration of the elements in the work plan that identify compliance with the law, and basic concepts in the process of structuring a work plan, including but not limited to the minimum of funds to be allocated to the work plan.

PRDE will complete a review and approval process to validate submitted work plans are aligned and in compliance with the requirements under *ESEA section 4103 through 4105* of Title IV, Part A funds.

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 Title IV, Part B, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) grant program, supports the creation of community learning centers that offer well-rounded educational experiences to all students, including female students, English learners, children with disabilities, and low-income students during non-school hours. PRDE improves student's education through the 21st CCLC Program by supervising the awarding of funds to eligible organizations and providing technical assistance (TA) to sub grantees. 21st CCLC services support state strategies in helping children to succeed academically through:

1. Provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including providing tutorial services to help students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, to meet the challenging State academic standards;
2. Offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development activities, service learning, nutrition and health education, drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, arts, music, physical fitness and wellness programs, technology education programs, financial literacy programs, environmental literacy programs, mathematics, science, career and technical programs, internship or apprenticeship programs, and other ties to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students; and
3. Offers families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

Program activities are based on an assessment of objective data regarding the need before and after school programs and activities in the schools and communities. The needs assessment identifies services gaps, coordination between existing programs and services, and additional background data and related information about the students, families and communities. Stakeholders, including schools, parents-guardians, and community partners are engaged in the needs assessment. Data considered in the needs assessment, includes but is not limited to poverty level data, grades, graduation rate, and dropout rates.

Community centers also coordinate transportation services and snacks for its participants. Considering that services are during non-school hours, sub grantees also provide school/center

security to their students. Similarly, the program has offering of services for private schools in order to attend students from the public system and private schools.

In addition, community centers offer literacy and related educational development opportunities to the families and communities in order to empower them with any resources and information needed to promote a high quality education for their children. They are offered workshops that encourage self-employment, English courses, basic use of computers, and even confectionery courses. As required by ESSA, PRDE engages, on an ongoing basis, with families and other community partners in the implementation of programs to support students. Regardless of income or background, research has shown that students from families who are engaged in their education earn better grades and test scores; enroll in higher-level courses and programs; are more likely to be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits; have better school attendance; show improved behavior and have better social skills; and graduate and go on to postsecondary education.

The 21st CCLC provide a broad array of services, programs, and activities outside of the regular school day, designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students. Activities include behavioral and social services that individual needs that profoundly affect academic success. Some of the PRDE's 21st CCLC activities include, but are not limited to:

- Academic enrichment
- Tutoring & mentoring programs
- Technology programs
- English development classes
- Counseling programs
- Entrepreneurial education
- Parent involvement/family literacy
- Recreational activities

Statewide Activities

The department utilizes its 21st CCLC statewide activity funds to ensure that services provided are aligned with the PRDE goals and practices.

- monitoring and evaluating programs
- supporting capacity building
- providing training and technical assistance to applicants (sub grantees)
- supporting the statewide evaluation of the program

The PRDE considers essential to access and collect appropriate progress report and evaluation data from its sub grantees. All funded 21st CCLC community centers are expected to participate in a rigorous evaluation process that includes the collection of the attendance, academic achievement and disciplinary information for the students served.

The department uses a risk-based protocol to determine which 21st CCLC projects are to be monitored each year. PRDE will conduct regular and systematic reviews of grantees to monitor the compliance with Federal statutes and regulations, including both desk-monitoring and on-site visits. These periodic reviews help the program ensure sub-grantees are presenting fiscal and

programmatic reports on a timely basis, and that services are aligned to the needs identified in schools.

The 21st CCLC program provides technical assistance with sub grantees and staff members each year. These meetings focus on a variety of topics including but not limited to fiscal management, family engagement, and evaluation activities that provides an opportunity to grantees to share best practices. At the beginning of each calendar year, the 21st CCLC program provides and orientation of the program fiscal procedures manual and grant guidelines. On-going communication is conducted between the director and each sub grantee. At the beginning of each academic year, the 21st CCLC Procedures Manual is provided to sub grantees containing all deliverable templates, agreed upon procedures (AUP) and guidance documents for sub-grantees throughout the five year funding cycle. Technical Assistance is also provided to all sub-grantees on how to properly complete deliverables and AUPs.

Also, PRDE contracts an external evaluator to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and monitor the effectiveness of 21st CCLC programs in order to refine, improve and strengthen the program and its outcomes.

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.

Entities eligible to apply for 21st CCLC grants include: public schools, community and faith based organizations, institutions of higher education, public or private entities, or a consortium of two or more such agencies, organizations, or entities.

A competitive process takes place in compliance with the procedures contained in the manuals established by PRDE. Process is performed through an open competition so interested entities are able to participate and submit an RFP application. Later, an orientation is provided in order to discuss the proposal information, additional documents that need to be submitted, and the date of submission.

When proposals are received, a rigorous peer review process is performed by knowledgeable and experienced reviewers to score each proposal based on an established rubric. Each reader is assigned to a two or three person panel reviewing the same group of applications. For each application assigned, each reviewer must provide independent, detailed, objective, well-written and constructive comments. Proposals are evaluated for basic eligibility, qualifications and criteria, and a validation that the services included in the proposal will serve:

- Students who primarily attend schools implementing comprehensive or targeted support and improvement activities under Section 1111(d) of ESSA; or
- Students attending other schools determined by the LEA to be in need of intervention and support; and
- Families of students in the two above categories.

Each team works to reach consensus on a final score for each proposal. Scores are then ranked by the readers and the highest scoring grants reflecting priority areas are funded until available funding is depleted. Proposals that achieve the highest score are presented to the program, so they determine which entities will be granted funds. There is no guarantee that submission of a proposal will result in funding or funding at the requested level. Only proposals that meet all eligibility criteria and that are scored by the expert review panel at the minimum point determined or higher on the review rubric will be considered for funding.

For continuing proposals, the 21st CLCC program performs an analysis based on a set of performance indicators used to determine which continuing sub grantees' have demonstrated progress towards meeting the goals. These goals are established on the basis of prior data collected by the Program and a set of indicators that measure if participating students meet the challenging State academic standards. A final recommendation of the 21st CLCC program is provided to the Secretary of Education of Puerto Rico, presenting which sub grantees, with continuing proposals may result in funding or funding at the requested level.

Subsequently, PRDE initiates the contract or agreement process so the entity may begin the offering services as established in their proposal. All application decisions are final. Applicants will receive formal notification regarding the status of their application prior to the start of the next funding cycle.

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 PRDE will use the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) grants to assist rural districts improve their instruction and academic achievement.

PRDE has reviewed the Program and Eligibility Requirements and the various ways it may support activities authorized under ESSA, including:

- Recruitment and retention of teachers, including use for signing bonuses and other incentives
- Professional development for teachers, including programs that train teachers to utilize technology to improve instruction or work with students with special needs
- Educational technology, including software and hardware
- Parental and community involvement activities, and
- Other activities authorized under ESSA

As established by ESEA section 5223(b)(1), PRDE will apply for funds of the Rural Low-Income School (RLIS) Program for the 2018-2019 Academic Year.

Identification of Rural Schools – eligibility

PRDE analyzed school data and utilized a methodology with the Puerto Rico Census Information. The Census states that in order to make the data more useful for statistical analysis, there was a need for a geographic entity that would better represent the urban development centered on the seats of municipality government.

In order to identify the schools located in rural or urban areas, a spatial overlay analysis was carried out using GIS technology. A spatial join was specifically produced using the geodata of location of the schools with the geodata of urban and rural zones, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/reference/ua/Defining_Rural.pdf and provided by the same entity https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php . As part of the process of spatial union, the characteristics of urban areas provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, as geographically agreed with these areas. Once the two geodata were integrated, they were filtered to those schools located in rural areas, as part of the process of spatial union. The high number of urban schools is a result of the fact that they are located in areas that the Census has called "Urban Clusters". Puerto Rico, unlike other areas in the USA, has much of its territory in classified urban areas. This is probably as a result of our island feature and population density is on average higher than in

other areas or jurisdictions in the USA. However, the advantage of using this methodology is that it is 100% compatible and standard when comparing Puerto Rico with other US jurisdictions.

Schools receiving REAP funds will identify needs from the DEE, based on data to determine priorities and where resources are needed. These assessments will be performed to assure that the strategies that will be employed will satisfy those particular needs. The goal is to assure that disadvantaged students from rural areas are provided with the services they are entitled to, and as a result they can have access to a well-rounded education to improve their academic achievement. PRDE is focus on preparing students from rural areas to achieve the same level of proficiency and have access to higher education resources to be successful after high school and can prepare well for their next professional goals.

Table 33: PRDE's program objectives and outcomes for RLIS

Objective	Outcome	When
Ensure timely application for RLIS funds through the ESSA consolidated application	Increase the opportunity for all students to meet the challenging state academic standards and accountability performance goals	Annually in spring
Ensure rural schools are monitored for alignment between grant application and use of funds for authorized activities and progress toward goals	Recommendations for improvement to support appropriate use of funds and application goals	Annually in spring
Ensure rural schools set performance goals	Measurement to monitor progress of all students to meet the challenging state academic standards and accountability performance goals.	Annually in summer
Ensure rural schools report their use of funds	Accurately populate the consolidated state performance report	Annually in winter
Engage rural schools in ongoing, collaborative discussion to determine needs	Provide appropriate professional development, technical assistance and/or resources	Annually, starting in August

The specific measurable program objectives and outcomes for each participating rural school related to the RLIS program will be driven by the needs and key planning decisions identified in each rural school DEE needs assessment plan for educating its students.

2. **<u>Technical Assistance</u>** *(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.

PRDE will provide technical assistance and trainings to support schools in the completion of their DEE needs assessment. The DEE will include which activities under the Rural and Low-Income School Program the school will be participating in and describe program objectives and outcomes specifically addressing how these funds will help students meet the challenging State academic standards. Unique needs of rural schools frequently lack the personnel and resources needed. They usually reflect increasing levels of student poverty, which is linked with demographic trends in rural communities themselves. Students in rural schools are far less likely to attend college, for example, while services and extracurricular activities are generally far less available than in urban areas. Therefore, RLIS funds may be used for a variety of activities including teacher recruitment and professional development, support for educational technology, and parental and community involvement activities, entrepreneurial education, technology literacy, educational field trips that enrich and increase exposure, and occupational and post-secondary education exposure and orientation.

The department uses a risk-based protocol to determine which schools are to be monitored each year. PRDE will conduct reviews of schools to monitor the compliance with Federal statutes and regulations. These site visits will help the program ensure rural schools services are aligned to the needs identified in their DEE.

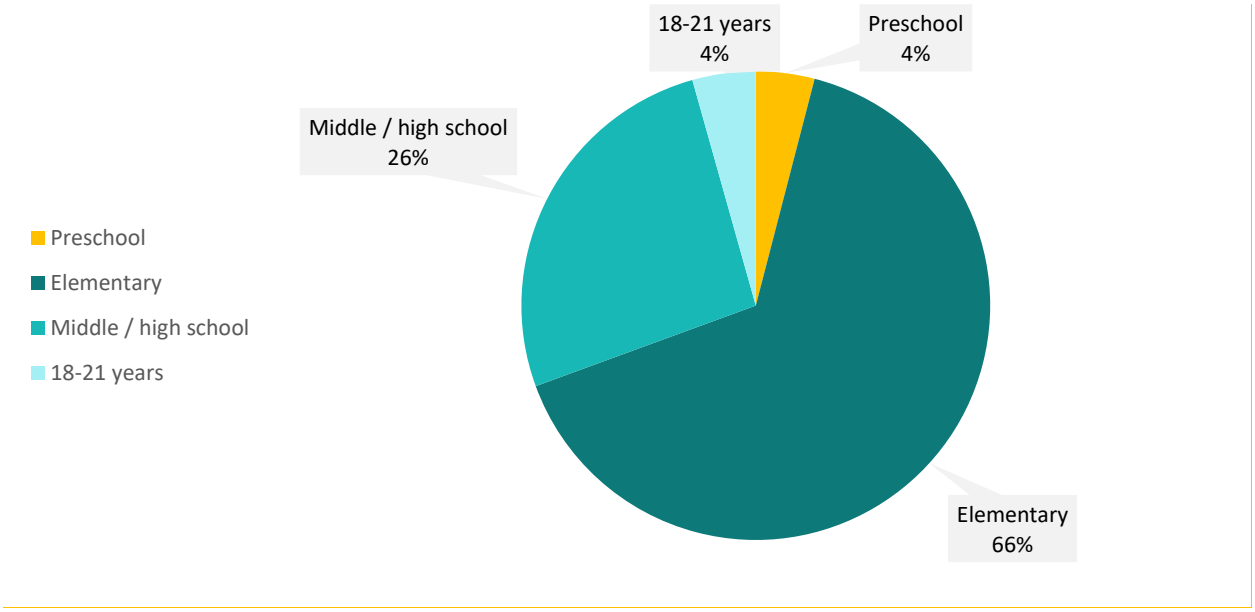
The PRDE will also provide technical assistance on the implementation of RLIS funded programs, based on the allowable use(s) of funds the rural schools selects to use for its RLIS program.

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.

For the purpose of ensuring homeless children and youths are afforded the same educational opportunities as all other children and youths, PRDE has established procedures to identify homeless children and youth and to assess their needs. For the fiscal year 2016-2017, a total of 4,329 children and youth homeless where provided services. Composition of the population is as follows:

Graph 14: FY 2016-17 Homeless population



PRDE's homeless population belong to one of the following four groups: (a) children who are on their own and homeless but with families at home; (b) children who are on their own and homeless without identified families; (c) homeless children with families who are also homeless; and (d) runaways or those whose families have forced them to leave the home. According to the most recent data (FY2016-2017), from the 4,330 homeless children reported, there were more males than females. They often experience unsafe, unsanitary, or inadequate living conditions and a wide range of mental health problems, including more externalizing mental health problems (e.g., drug abuse) among males and more internalizing mental health problems (e.g., depression) among females. PRDE has identified that individual reactions to being homeless are influenced by a

variety of factors including length of time without a home, reasons for homelessness, access to family and other support systems, availability of resources, age, gender, and psychological variables such as temperament, resilience, and sociability.

Identifying homeless children and youth

On an annual basis, the PRDE issues an official communication to all its school personnel defining a homeless youth as a youth who "lacks a fixed, regular, and nighttime residence" or an "individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a) a supervised or publically operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill; or c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings." This definition includes both youth who are unaccompanied by families and those who are homeless with their families.

Also, during the school year, a Census/Profile of identified students is also conducted. The purpose of this census is to identify homeless students, their place of residence, services received and requested. Within the schools, the social worker or school counselor completes and certifies the document (census / profile) with the information provided by the parent, guardian or unaccompanied minor. The school director then certifies the content of the form as correct and sends it to the region's worker or director of the Homeless Education Program for Children and Youth.

Runaway and shelters also collaborate in identifying youth and supporting street outreach, emergency shelters and longer-term transitional living and maternity group home programs serving, and protecting young people experiencing homelessness.

In shelters, the social worker of the educational region prepares the census and certifies the content of the form as correct and complete. The shelter director then certifies the information provided in the census as correct. This form is prepared at the beginning of the school year and updated during the year as often as other children are enrolled in the Homeless Education Program. The liaison of the program of the educational region sends a duly signed electronic copy to the Central Office of PRDE with attention to the Coordinator of the Program.

Students identified as homeless, are flagged in the PRDE's SIE System. This "flagging" is accessible only to those that provide state reporting or monitoring academic success. At a minimum, liaisons monitor students' progress, grades, attendance, most recent residence, and services provided. This allows liaisons to continue providing services, even if students move to another school or region.

Once identification of homeless students is performed, PRDE works on the dissemination of homeless guidance, documents, and surveys to schools and communities to ensure that identified

homeless children and youths are afforded the same opportunities to be successful learners as all children and youths. The homeless education liaisons are trained to educate and work closely with all personnel in the school district as well as with community social service agencies to properly identify a homeless children or youths. Regional homeless liaisons works closely and collaboratively with the Family Department of Puerto Rico and with the Administration for the Integral Development and Childhood Care (ACUDEN, per its acronym in Spanish) to identify and serve young children and their families to ensure educational services and family stability. The PRDE also works in collaboration with the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) agency with the identification of homeless children and youth, dissemination of the Homeless program and providing housing.

To identify the children and youth needs, the participating shelters and schools develop a work plan for the provision of the services. The purpose of the work plan for the Homeless Children and Youth Program is to establish the needs of students so that they can receive adequate, viable, sustainable, and aligned educational services. At schools, the school director completes and certifies that the plan is correct, complete, and aligned with the student's needs. The director sends the plan to the social worker or director of the program of the corresponding educational region. In the case of shelters, the social worker (liaison) of the program is the one that completes and certifies the work plan. Also, the program makes sure high mobility homeless students receive appropriate services, by situating their social workers to those regional areas experiencing an increase in student mobility.

Student mobility is often related to residential mobility, such as when a family becomes homeless or moves due to changes in a parent's job. Homeless students are likelier than other students to change schools not just several times in their school career, but multiple times in a single year. Also, they remain more mobile than other students even after their families find stable homes. Situating social workers in regions where a higher number of homeless students is identified, allows the program to ensure these homeless students are provided the services they are eligible to receive and on the time they need them.

Access to needs

To ensure that children and youths who are homeless have access to public education and are supported in their efforts, the PRDE has adopted and implemented policies and procedures guaranteeing the evaluation and identification of these individuals.

The PRDE's Homeless Children and Youth program provides support and technical assistance in accordance with the McKinney-Vento non-regulatory guidance by ensuring all regions utilize the following activities, strategies, and tools to help ensure that all students experiencing homelessness are identified and have access to educational programming and supports.

The program coordinator provides regional homeless liaisons with a student residency questionnaire to prevent the stigmatization of students and reduce defensiveness of adult

caregivers by preventing students and families from feeling singled out. The program coordinate professional development and training at least once annually to heighten awareness with training that focuses on the definition of homelessness; signs of homelessness; the impact of homelessness on students; and the steps that should be taken once a potentially homeless student is identified including how to connect the student with appropriate housing and service providers.

The regional liaison serves as one of the primary contacts between homeless families and school staff, district personnel, shelter workers, and other service providers. The liaison is the person responsible of coordinating services to ensure that homeless children and youths enroll in school and have the opportunity to succeed academically. In addition, regional liaisons shall utilize existing resources including counseling and other supports.

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.

PRDE has in place, dispute resolution procedures regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth. In the event that an initial grievance is received, the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth will be instructed of the right to file a formal complaint. Then, an investigation of the situation is begun. This investigation is carried out by the program's social worker, who will immediately communicate by telephone or visit the school director who is denying services (eligibility, school selection, school access, among others) to the homeless child or youth. Program or district personnel of the program that receive a complaint will initiate the corresponding investigation process.

Then, the school director will be orientated on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, on the rights of the children and youth participating in the program and the applicable laws established by the Puerto Rico Family Department; among other regulations. Subsequently, a complaint process is immediately placed for the director, district lead in charge, or Title I, A Coordinator, at the regional level. If an agreement between both parties is established, it must be ensured that they guarantee the right that the student has to receive the services and the complaint process will not proceed.

Upon receipt of the formal complaint, the district personnel or the Title I Coordinator shall, within the next 24 hours, submit it to the Regional Director who will intervene in the dispute resolution process. The Regional Director will have two working days to resolve the complaint (dispute). If the complaint is not resolved within that time, it will be referred to the Homeless Program Coordinator by telephone and a written communication will be sent to the Auxiliary Secretariat of Federal Affairs. The Coordinator of the Program will proceed to resolve the complaint in three

days. Otherwise, the complaint will be submitted to the Legal Division of the Department of Education to take the corresponding action.

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending to the resolution of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.

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 program has developed, promoted, and raised awareness, increased understanding and sensitivity towards homeless children and youth. The identification of non-educational needs, educational needs and student rights is worked through training and professional development activities to school and support staff that serve this population. In addition, the program works with offering technical assistance, orientations on a monthly basis, dissemination of the program, and coordination with other agencies that provide services to homeless children and youth, as community based organizations to include Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and runaway and homeless shelters on a regular basis.

As part of the family engagement initiatives the PRDE has implemented, a variety of brochures, handouts, and documents are disseminated annually, along with the PRDE's public policy which is published through Official Communications to all PRDE personnel. The PRDE promotes high-impact parent, family, community and school engagement to support the whole child academically, socially, and emotionally. Family brochures are designed to convey information in an easily understood format, and these are distributed for placement in locations such as schools, shelters, and public plazas, to educate the public about the educational rights of homeless children and youth.

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4. **<u>Access to Services</u>** *(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.

The liaisons for each of the seven Regional LEAs must ensure that homeless children receive the services that they need to become successful learners. Liaisons are to work with other service providers in their region, such shelters, food banks, and health and housing providers to assist families in homeless situations and be able to provide services that address the needs of homeless families and to identify children age birth to 5 years who are in need of early childhood education services.

PRDE has established the importance of early childhood to strengthen comprehensive development, and ensure successful scholar preparation and life success. First priority is given to children at preschool screenings who are determined to be at risk of academic failures due to environmental and developmental delays. Per recent data, the PRDE served a total of 4,330 homeless children and youth during FY 2016-2017. A disproportionate share of children come from low income working families, or homeless families. Homeless children and youths are a priority in this high-risk category and if slots are available at the time of enrollment, homeless children must be enrolled immediately. If no slots are available, the child must be place at the top of the program's waiting list. Some of the considerations, the regional homeless liaison takes into consideration is the child's attachment to preschool teachers and staff; the impact of school climate on the child, including the school's safety; the availability and quality of services to meet the child's comprehensive needs, including academic, nutritional, health, developmental, and social-emotional needs; and travel time to and from the school.

PRDE believes that the educational development and success of all children can be significantly enhanced when children participate in early childhood programs. Homeless liaisons will also assist families to access federally funded Head Start programs, when appropriate. Regional homeless liaisons works closely and collaboratively with the Family Department of Puerto Rico

and with the Administration for the ACUDEN that serve young children and their families to ensure equitable access to preschool programs and other services.

Head Start has specific local criteria for meeting the needs of homeless children in the community. Head Start provides information about families their staff identifies as in need of homeless education services. Head Start programs identify a need that closely aligns their family service provisions for early childhood students with local homeless education liaisons to coordinate services, and staff members often have collaborative relationships with local public health clinics and may be able to obtain immunization records to ensure that homeless children do not receive excessive immunizations due to their living situation. PRDE collects data through the SIE. Data collected through SIS for kindergarten through grade 12 is significantly higher than birth to age 5 data. Based on research, there are more children between birth and age 5 that are in a homeless situation than any other age group.

For students assisting the elementary and secondary level, homelessness may become a barrier to participating in extracurricular activities and even enrolling in school. Homeless students who change schools during the school year may lack birth certificates, physical examinations, and other documents normally required prior to participation. The McKinney-Vento Act provides legal rights and support to help ensure that students experiencing homelessness can participate fully in extracurricular school activities. Schools are required to enroll children and youths experiencing homelessness immediately. Therefore, homeless students must be allowed to enroll and participate immediately in class and other academic activities and extracurricular school activities, such as sports, music, and clubs. Support is provided so that students can attend school consistently and provide and strengthen academic areas. The needs of these students is assessed and a service plan is adapted academically as needed. Alternate education is established, coordinated and referred to the students who are identified in need for the completion of their secondary education.

While targeted remedial services and other supports are important, PRDE will engage in additional efforts to thoroughly expand practices and policies that secure appropriate credit for coursework satisfactorily completed for homeless youth and youth separated from school. Technical assistance and training efforts to address these specific requirements are just one step in this process. Additional development and issuance of state level guidance to schools will provide additional support in securing progress in this newly defined provision.

The additional targeted supplemental remedial services and other supports will include:

- Opportunities to meet the same state academic achievement standards/requirements through course articulation, rigor, and, planning
- Assistance to advise, prepare and improve readiness outcomes through Advanced Placement, SAT, and counseling services

- Alternative educational opportunities, which are flexible through online learning, credit recovery, remedial, independent study, employment internship, and supplemental instruction.
- Entrepreneurial education, financial management, and technological literacy

Also, part of the assessment liaisons perform is to ensure homeless children stay in school and help bring them up to the same academic level as their peers. Tutoring is important to help homeless student bridge gaps in their education. Schools refer students to appropriate services and the Homeless program pays for tutoring sessions. Tutors meet with students at homeless shelters when a designated room is available, at community centers, or at school. Other services coordinated by liaisons is the purchase of materials and provision of snacks during the after hours' tutoring services, school uniforms, ear aid, and eyeglasses, among others.

As part of the support that PRDE provides to school personnel, the Homeless program ensures that homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, summer school, career and technical education, and advanced placement programs. If barriers are present, parents or guardians are directed to communicate concerns to their respective school personnel, principals and/or other school leaders. If not resolved at the school level, the Homeless program has in place detailed procedures on how to resolve dispute issues.

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

To address problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youth, the PRDE has issued an Official Communication, dated September 11, 2011, where it established the rules and procedures to ensure homeless children and youth are allowed to be enrolled at school. Per official communication, all homeless children are to be enrolled, while these are in the process of gathering or obtaining the following necessary documentation:

- Residency area
- Immunization records and birth certificate
- Medical and academic records

- School uniform
- Parent or legal custody
- A representing adult during the enrollment process
- Other required document

On a monthly basis, the program ensure through monitoring visits, that school Regional LEAs continue to follow all state and federal guideline regarding immediately enrolling children and youths who are homeless, even if the child or youth is unable to produce the records normally required for enrollment (such as previous academic records, records of immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, proof of guardianship, birth certificates, or other documentation), has missed application or enrollment deadlines during a period of homelessness, or has outstanding fees. Liaisons provide assistance in obtaining relevant academic or other records as collaborating with the Puerto Rico Department of Health in obtaining the students immunization records.

The Official Communication established policies to meet with immediate enrollment of a student experiencing homelessness regardless of the student's ability to provide immunization records upon enrollment.

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.

In 2014, Puerto Rico established the 37 Act to create the "Scholar Retention Program" under the Department of Education. The purpose of UNARE, per its acronym in Spanish, is to impact those students who showed patterns of absenteeism and class failures in the last school year and reduce school dropout. Some of the patterns are:

- Tardiness and unjustified class breaks
- Low academic achievement
- School failure or possible school failure
- Chronological age on grade
- Family with inadequate relationships among its members
- Other situations that may be school dropout factors

Upon receipt of student referral, the UNARE project coordinates home visits to closely observe the real needs of these student and his family, as well as follow-up visits. Also, UNARE has as a

priority to reinsert the student in the schools system or in programs whose purpose is for the student to complete his post-secondary studies. UNARE project offers its services to all children and youth, including homeless.

Other activities offered by the program and that eliminates barriers to school enrollment and retention, is the availability of sports and other extra-curricular activities; hiring teachers in these areas. Homeless students are also offered to participate in summer school programs. Accordingly, a homeless student who is enrolled at school should be provided with transportation to summer school, if the student needs summer school to ensure academic success. Lack of such transportation would be a barrier to the student's attendance, even if the district does not provide transportation to permanently housed students. Also, liaisons assist homeless pregnant girls in receiving medical assistance and insurance.

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 program has develop, promote, and raise awareness, increase understanding and sensitivity towards homeless children and youth. The identification of non-educational needs, educational needs and student rights is worked through training and professional development activities to school and support staff that serve this population. In addition, the program works with offering technical assistance, orientations, dissemination of the program, and coordination with other agencies that provide services to homeless children and youth. Training and supporting school counselors ensures that the unique needs of homeless students are addressed as they carry out these expectations.

School counselors assists homeless youth with college readiness and preparation. They encourage a college-going mindset among homeless youth and help these youth cover college application expenses. Counselors explain homeless students how to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and if there are any career test that the homeless youth is interested on taking. During FY 2017-2018, the PRDE will certify all counselors working at high school levels in the orientation and guidance they may provide students who are interested in college preparedness. Upon certification, counselors will be able to provide students guidance on the preparation, application of the College Board test, university application, identify interest on certain careers, and guidance regarding the ability of homeless students to complete and submit the FAFSA application form.

Appendix A: Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)

Instructions: In the text box below, describe 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 provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions.

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 04/30/2020)

The PRDE adheres to Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). In carrying out its educational mission, the PRDE will ensure to the fullest extent possible equitable access to, participation in, and appropriate educational opportunities for individuals served. Federally funded activities, programs, and services will be accessible to all teachers, students and program beneficiaries and other PRDE personnel and staff.

The PRDE ensures equal access and participation to all persons regardless of their race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, citizenship status, disability, gender or sexual orientation in its education programs, services, and/or activities. For all activities supported by federal assistance through our grant application process, PRDE will fully enforce all federal and state laws and regulations designed to ensure equitable access to all program beneficiaries and to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

Steps taken to ensure equitable access may include, but are not limited to:

- Holding program related sessions/activities in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible and compliant facilities
- Printing materials in multiple languages
- Offering multi-lingual services for participants and others as needed and appropriate
- Responsiveness to cultural differences
- Fostering a positive school climate through restorative practices
- Conducting outreach efforts and target marketing to those not likely to participate
- Making program materials available in braille, via audiotapes, or by providing interpretation services
- Providing assistive technology devices to translate/make accessible grant and program materials for participants requiring such accommodations (i.e. inclined planes, communicators (Go Talk 9), FM equipment, electronic Braille notepads and programmed computers that facilitate learning for students who cannot read or are blind, printers, reading guides, equipment to expand font size and chairs adapted for lounges, wheelchairs).

- Using technologies to convey content of program materials
- Using materials that include strategies for addressing the needs of all participants
- Development and/or acquisition and dissemination of culturally relevant and sensitive curriculum and informational materials
- Use of transportation services that include handicapped accommodations
- Adapted Physical Education - A diversified program of development activities, games, sports, and rhythms tailored to the needs and interests of students with disabilities who cannot benefit from unrestricted participation in vigorous Regular Physical Education program activities
- Providing School nurses and social work services

Appendix B: List of acronyms

Acronym	Definition of acronym
ACUDEN *	Administration for the Integral Development and Childhood Care
AYI	Administration of Youth Institutions
AUP	Agreed Upon Procedures
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AMOS	Annual Measurable Objectives
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CCLC	Century Community Learning Centers
DEE*	School Improvement Plan
CSI	Comprehensive Support and Improvement
COREL*	Language Revision Committee
CAPS	Corrective Action Plans
CEPR	Council of Education of Puerto Rico
CSPR	Consolidated State Performance Report
DDDM	Data Driven Decision Making
ELP	English Language Proficiency
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
ESSA	Every Student Suceed Act
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
CESPR*	Higher Education Council of PR
HUD	Housing and Urban Development
PIDP*	Individual Professional Development Plan
PEI*	Individualized Education Program
IHE	Institute of Higher Education
LSP	Limited Spanish Proficient
LTGA	Long Term Goals for Academic Achievement
META-PR	Measurement and Evaluation for Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico test
NDTAC	National Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Neglected or Delinquent Youth
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act
PIENSE*	Evaluation test for Secondary Level

Acronym	Definition of Acronym
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support
RLA	Reading Language Arts
CAEP	Program Accreditation Council for Educators
PPAA*	Puerto Rican Tests for Academic Achievement
PRCS	Puerto Rico Core Standards
DCR*	Puerto Rico Department of Correction and Rehabilitation
PRDE	Puerto Rico Department of Education
RFP	Request for Proposal
REAP	Rural Education Achievement Program
RLIS	Rural Low-Income School
COCE	School Coexistence Committee
SIT	School Improvement Team
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
SLD	Spanish Language Development
MIPE*	Special Education Information System- Mi Portal Especial
SPP/APR	State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report
SIE	Student Information System
TSI	Targeted Support and Improvement
PCMAS*	Teacher Certification Test
PPM*	Teacher Preparation Program
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
UNARE*	School Retention Unit
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WIDA	World Class Instructional Design and Assessment

*Per its acronym in Spanish