
MAINE

ESEA Flexibility

Request for Window 3



Original Application: September 6, 2012
Revised Application: August 2, 2013
Revised Application: July 29, 2015

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

OMB Number: 1810-0581

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0581. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 336 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is offering each State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs), and its schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity will provide educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. This flexibility is intended to build on and support the significant State and local reform efforts already underway in critical areas such as transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness.

The Department invites interested SEAs to request this flexibility pursuant to the authority in section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which allows the Secretary to waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for an SEA that receives funds under a program authorized by the ESEA and requests a waiver. Under this flexibility, the Department would grant waivers through the 2014–2015 school year.

Review and Evaluation of Requests

The Department will use a review process that will include both external peer reviewers and staff reviewers to evaluate SEA requests for this flexibility. This review process will help ensure that each request for this flexibility approved by the Department is consistent with the principles described in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which are designed to support State efforts to improve student academic achievement and increase the quality of instruction, and is both educationally and technically sound. Reviewers will evaluate whether and how each request for this flexibility will support a comprehensive and coherent set of improvements in the areas of standards and assessments, accountability, and teacher and principal effectiveness that will lead to improved student outcomes. Each SEA will have an opportunity, if necessary, to clarify its plans for peer and staff reviewers and to answer any questions reviewers may have. The peer reviewers will then provide comments to the Department. Taking those comments into consideration, the Secretary will make a decision regarding each SEA's request for this flexibility. If an SEA's request for this flexibility is not granted, reviewers and the Department will provide feedback to the SEA about the components of the SEA's request that need additional development in order for the request to be approved.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

An SEA seeking approval to implement this flexibility must submit a high-quality request that addresses all aspects of the principles and waivers and, in each place where a plan is required, includes a high-quality plan. Consistent with ESEA section 9401(d)(1), the Secretary intends to grant waivers that are included in this flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year for SEAs that request the flexibility in “Window 3” (*i.e.*, the September 2012 submission window for peer review in October 2012). The Department is asking SEAs to submit requests that include plans through the 2014–2015 school year in order to provide a complete picture of the SEA’s reform efforts. The Department will not accept a request that meets only some of the principles of this flexibility.

This *ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3* is intended for use by SEAs requesting ESEA flexibility in September 2012 for peer review in October 2012. The timelines incorporated into this request reflect the timelines for the waivers, key principles, and action items of ESEA flexibility for an SEA that is requesting flexibility in this third window.

High-Quality Request: A high-quality request for this flexibility is one that is comprehensive and coherent in its approach, and that clearly indicates how this flexibility will help an SEA and its LEAs improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students.

A high-quality request will (1) if an SEA has already met a principle, provide a description of how it has done so, including evidence as required; and (2) if an SEA has not yet met a principle, describe how it will meet the principle on the required timelines, including any progress to date. For example, an SEA that has not adopted minimum guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with Principle 3 by the time it submits its request for the flexibility will need to provide a plan demonstrating that it will do so by the end of the 2012–2013 school year. In each such case, an SEA’s plan must include, at a minimum, the following elements for each principle that the SEA has not yet met:

1. **Key milestones and activities:** Significant milestones to be achieved in order to meet a given principle, and essential activities to be accomplished in order to reach the key milestones. The SEA should also include any essential activities that have already been completed or key milestones that have already been reached so that reviewers can understand the context for and fully evaluate the SEA’s plan to meet a given principle.
2. **Detailed timeline:** A specific schedule setting forth the dates on which key activities will begin and be completed and milestones will be achieved so that the SEA can meet the principle by the required date.
3. **Party or parties responsible:** Identification of the SEA staff (*e.g.*, position, title, or office) and, as appropriate, others who will be responsible for ensuring that each key activity is accomplished.

4. **Evidence:** Where required, documentation to support the plan and demonstrate the SEA’s progress in implementing the plan. This *ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3* indicates the specific evidence that the SEA must either include in its request or provide at a future reporting date.
5. **Resources:** Resources necessary to complete the key activities, including staff time and additional funding.
6. **Significant obstacles:** Any major obstacles that may hinder completion of key milestones and activities (*e.g.*, State laws that need to be changed) and a plan to overcome them.

Included on page 19 of this document is an example of a format for a table that an SEA may use to submit a plan that is required for any principle of this flexibility that the SEA has not already met. An SEA that elects to use this format may also supplement the table with text that provides an overview of the plan.

An SEA should keep in mind the required timelines for meeting each principle and develop credible plans that allow for completion of the activities necessary to meet each principle. Although the plan for each principle will reflect that particular principle, as discussed above, an SEA should look across all plans to make sure that it puts forward a comprehensive and coherent request for this flexibility.

Preparing the Request: To prepare a high-quality request, it is extremely important that an SEA refer to all of the provided resources, including the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which includes the principles, definitions, and timelines; the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance for Window 3*, which includes the criteria that will be used by the peer reviewers to determine if the request meets the principles of this flexibility; and the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions*, which provides additional guidance for SEAs in preparing their requests.

As used in this request form, the following terms have the definitions set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*: (1) college- and career-ready standards, (2) focus school, (3) high-quality assessment, (4) priority school, (5) reward school, (6) standards that are common to a significant number of States, (7) State network of institutions of higher education, (8) student growth, and (9) turnaround principles.

Each request must include:

- A table of contents and a list of attachments, using the forms on pages 1 and 2.
- The cover sheet (p. 3), waivers requested (p. 4-6), and assurances (p. 7-8).
- A description of how the SEA has met the consultation requirements (p. 9).
- Evidence and plans to meet the principles (p. 10-18). An SEA will enter narrative text in the text boxes provided, complete the required tables, and provide other required evidence. An SEA may supplement the narrative text in a text box with attachments,

which will be included in an appendix. Any supplemental attachments that are included in an appendix must be referenced in the related narrative text.

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

Process for Submitting the Request: An SEA must submit a request to the Department to receive the flexibility. This request form and other pertinent documents are available on the Department's Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility>.

Electronic Submission: The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA's request for the flexibility electronically. The SEA should submit it to the following address: ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

Paper Submission: In the alternative, an SEA may submit the original and two copies of its request for the flexibility to the following address:

Paul S. Brown, Acting Director
Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W320
Washington, DC 20202-6132

Due to potential delays in processing mail sent through the U.S. Postal Service, SEAs are encouraged to use alternate carriers for paper submissions.

REQUEST SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The submission due date for Window 3 is September 6, 2012.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SEAS

The Department has conducted a number of webinars to assist SEAs in preparing their requests and to respond to questions. Please visit the Department's Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility> for copies of previously conducted webinars and information on upcoming webinars.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact the Department by e-mail at ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Insert page numbers prior to submitting the request, and place the table of contents in front of the SEA’s flexibility request.

CONTENTS		PAGE
Cover Sheet for ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3		5
Waivers		6
Assurances		9
Consultation		12
Evaluation		25
Overview of SEA’s Request for the ESEA Flexibility		26
Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students		
1.A	Adopt college- and career-ready standards	29
1.B	Transition to college- and career-ready standards	32
1.C	Develop and administer annual, statewide, aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth	56
Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support		
2.A	Develop and implement a State-based system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support	65
2.B	Set ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives	84
2.C	Reward schools	86
2.D	Priority schools	88
2.E	Focus schools	98
2.F	Provide incentives and supports for other Title I schools	104
2.G	Build SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning	113
Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership		
3.A	Develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	121

3.B	Ensure LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	141
-----	--	-----

TABLE OF CONTENTS, CONTINUED

For each attachment included in the ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3, label the attachment with the corresponding number from the list of attachments below and indicate the page number where the attachment is located. If an attachment is not applicable to the SEA’s request, indicate “N/A” instead of a page number. Reference relevant attachments in the narrative portions of the request.

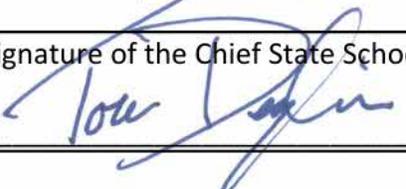
LABEL	LIST OF ATTACHMENTS	PAGE
1	Notice to LEAs	A - 1
2a	Comments on request received from LEAs and Others, Fall 2011	A - 3
2b	Comments on request received from LEAs and Others, August 2012	A - 11
3	Notice and information provided to the public regarding the request	A - 26
4	Evidence that the State has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with the State’s standards adoption process	A - 35
5	Memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs) certifying that meeting the State’s standards corresponds to being college- and career-ready without the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level	A - 47
6	State’s Race to the Top Assessment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	A - 56
7	Evidence that the SEA has submitted high-quality assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review, or a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review (if applicable)	N/A
8	A copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011-2012 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups (if applicable)	A - 74
9	Table 2: Reward, Priority, and Focus Schools	A - 76
10	A copy of the guidelines that the SEA has developed and adopted for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems (if applicable)	N/A
11	Evidence that the SEA has adopted all of the guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	N/A

LABEL	LIST OF APPENDICES	PAGE
1	“Education Evolving: Maine’s Plan for Putting Learners First,” Maine Department of Education Strategic Plan, January 2012	App - 1
2	Common Core ELA and Mathematics Implementation Plans	App - 38
3	“College and Career Readiness in Maine: Report to the Education Coordinating Committee, Submitted by the College Transitions Working Group, July 30, 2012	App - 49
4	“Expanding Access, Increasing Participation: Post-secondary Educational Opportunities During High School,” Interim Report of the Governor’s	

	Task Force	App - 111
5	Impact on School Accountability Index of the Transition to Smarter Balanced Assessments	App - 125
6	“Global Best Practices Toolkit”	App - 127
7	List of Indistar® indicators, with required improvement steps and strategies for Maine Priority and Focus schools	App - 178
8	Alignment between Indistar® indicators and ESEA Turnaround Principles	App - 188
9	Maine’s Educator Effectiveness Law; Public Law 2011, chapter 635 (LD 1858)	App - 100
10	Maine Educator Effectiveness Council, Report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, November, 2012	App - 192
11	Maine Educator Effectiveness Council, An Addendum to the Council Report, May, 2013	App - 201
12	Lewiston Public Schools Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Program, part of the Maine Schools for Excellence project	App - 308
13	Priority Notice: Regarding Educator Evaluation and Support Systems	App -338

LABEL	LIST OF ATTACHMENTS	PAGE
1R	Comments on request received from LEAs and Others, January – March 2015	RA - 1
2R	Notice and information provided to the public regarding the request	RA - 16
3R	Evidence of State communication with a variety of stakeholders	RA - 18
4R	Table 2: Reward, Priority and Focus Schools	RA - 39
5R	Proposed Extended PEPG Implementation Timeline	RA - 41
6R	Proposed Responses to US DE Peer Review	RA - 42
7R	L.D. 692	RA - 53
8R	Chapter 180-Revised	RA - 59
9R	Notice & comments received pertaining to Maine’s Proposed ESEA Renewal May 2015	RA - 75
10R	Sample Project Management Document	RA - 93

COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester: Maine Department of Education	Requester's Mailing Address: 23 State House Station Augusta, Maine 04333
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request Name: Rachelle Tome Position and Office: Acting Deputy Commissioner, Maine Department of Education Contact's Mailing Address: 23 State House Station Augusta, Maine 04333 Telephone: (207) 624-6708 Fax: (207) 624-6706 Email address: Rachelle.Tome@maine.gov	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Thomas Desjardin	Telephone: (207)624 - 6620
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X 	Date: 7/29/15
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of ESEA flexibility.	

WAIVERS

By submitting this updated ESEA flexibility request, the SEA renews its request for flexibility through waivers of the nine ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements, as well as any optional waivers the SEA has chosen to request under ESEA flexibility, by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested.

1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State’s proficient level of academic achievement on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.
2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.
3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.
4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.
5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a school-wide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the

document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.

6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve any of the State’s priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State’s reward schools that meet the definition of “reward schools” set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.

9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.

Optional Flexibilities:

If an SEA chooses to request waivers of any of the following requirements, it should check the corresponding box(es) below:

10. The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (*i.e.*, before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.

11. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA’s State-developed differentiated

recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools.

12. The requirements in ESEA section 1113(a)(3)-(4) and (c)(1) that require an LEA to serve eligible schools under Title I in rank order of poverty and to allocate Title I, Part A funds based on that rank ordering. The SEA requests this waiver in order to permit its LEAs to serve a Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent that the SEA has identified as a priority school even if that school does not otherwise rank sufficiently high to be served under ESEA section 1113.

13. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver in addition to waiver #6 so that, when it has remaining section 1003(a) funds after ensuring that all priority and focus schools have sufficient funds to carry out interventions, it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs to provide interventions and supports for low-achieving students in other Title I schools when one or more subgroups miss either AMOs or graduation rate targets or both over a number of years.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #13, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request that it has a process to ensure, on an annual basis, that all of its priority and focus schools will have sufficient funding to implement their required interventions prior to distributing ESEA section 1003(a) funds to other Title I schools.

Page 93 Reallocation formula

14. The requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(1)(B) and 1111(b)(3)(C)(i) that, respectively, require the SEA to apply the same academic content and academic achievement standards to all public schools and public school children in the State and to administer the same academic assessments to measure the achievement of all students. The SEA requests this waiver so that it is not required to double test a student who is not yet enrolled in high school but who takes advanced, high school level, mathematics coursework. The SEA would assess such a student with the corresponding advanced, high school level assessment in place of the mathematics assessment the SEA would otherwise administer to the student for the grade in which the student is enrolled. For Federal accountability purposes, the SEA will use the results of the advanced, high school level, mathematics assessment in the year in which the assessment is administered and will administer one or more additional advanced, high school level, mathematics assessments to such students in high school, consistent with the State's mathematics content standards, and use the results in high school accountability determinations.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #14, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request how it will ensure that every student in the State has the opportunity to be prepared for and take courses at an advanced level prior to high school.

Click here to enter page numbers where edits have been made and where new attachments have been added. Do not insert new text here – insert new text in redline into the revised request.

ASSURANCES

By submitting this request, the SEA assures that:

- 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of ESEA flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.
- 2. It has adopted English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State’s college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the State’s college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)
- 3. It will administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State’s college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)
- 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State’s ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii) no later than the 2015–2016 school year. (Principle 1)
- 5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)
- 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)
- 7. It will annually make public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools

prior to the start of the school year as well as publicly recognize its reward schools, and will update its lists of priority and focus schools at least every three years. (Principle 2)

If the SEA is not submitting with its renewal request its updated list of priority and focus schools, based on the most recent available data, for implementation beginning in the 2015–2016 school year, it must also assure that:

8. It will provide to the Department, no later than January 31, 2016, an updated list of priority and focus schools, identified based on school year 2014–2015 data, for implementation beginning in the 2016–2017 school year.
9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)
10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its ESEA flexibility request.
11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs. (Attachment 2)
12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the SEA customarily provides such notice and information to the public (e.g., by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice. (Attachment 3)
13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout its ESEA flexibility request, and will ensure that all such reports, data, and evidence are accurate, reliable, and complete or, if it is aware of issues related to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of its reports, data, or evidence, it will disclose those issues.
14. It will report annually on its State report card and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the “all students” group, each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II), and for any combined subgroup (as applicable): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State’s annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. In addition, it will annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively. It will ensure that all reporting is consistent with *State and Local Report Cards Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended Non-Regulatory Guidance* (February 8, 2013).

Principle 3 Assurances

Each SEA must select the appropriate option and, in doing so, assures that:

Option A	Option B	Option C
<input type="checkbox"/> 15.a. The SEA is on track to fully implementing Principle 3, including incorporation of student growth based on State assessments into educator ratings for teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals.	<p>If an SEA that is administering new State assessments during the 2014–2015 school year is requesting one additional year to incorporate student growth based on these assessments, it will:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 15.b.i. Continue to ensure that its LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation systems using multiple measures, and that the SEA or its LEAs will calculate student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year for all teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals; and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 15.b.ii. Ensure that each teacher of a tested grade and subject and all principals will receive their student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year.</p>	<p>If the SEA is requesting modifications to its teacher and principal evaluation and support system guidelines or implementation timeline other than those described in Option B, which require additional flexibility from the guidance in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility</i> as well as the documents related to the additional flexibility offered by the Assistant Secretary in a letter dated August 2, 2013, it will:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15.c. Provide a narrative response in its redlined ESEA flexibility request as described in Section II of the ESEA flexibility renewal guidance.</p>

CONSULTATION

NOTE: All sections in *bold italics in P1 and P2* were added to the original flexibility waiver submittal.

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State’s Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. *A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.*

After nearly 12 months of thoughtful and frequent conversations with educators, students, parents, and business and community members across the state, Maine decided to take advantage of this waiver opportunity. We believe the flexibility provided – especially the ability to more meaningfully define proficiency while also considering student growth, and the ability to provide a broader range of school-based supports with fewer restrictions – will better inform and support school improvement across the state.

Once a determination was made to pursue ESEA flexibility, a plan was created that enabled more focused discussions on the request for flexibility. For several months prior to submitting our request for flexibility in September of 2012, four workgroups consisting of teachers, principals, superintendents, and Maine Department of Education (DOE) staff members worked tirelessly and shared their wisdom and insight to develop Maine’s ESEA flexibility request.

1. The Steering Committee consisted of a district administrator of English Learner services, the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Education and key Department staff, and executive directors from our professional organizations (Maine Education Association (MEA), Maine School Superintendents Association (MSSA), Maine School Boards Association (MSBA), Maine Principals’ Association (MPA) and the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC)). The Steering Committee provided overall guidance and ongoing engagement with stakeholders.
2. The Annual Measurable Objectives Workgroup developed the methodology for determining overall student proficiency targets, the School Accountability Index, and the method of placing schools into one of several school performance levels as required by U.S. Department of Education. The methodology was refined as feedback was received through public meetings and surveys; AMOs and the School Accountability Index for submission in September were finalized on August 30, 2012.

3. The Interventions and Supports Workgroup helped design a system of comprehensive and responsive improvement activities in which our lowest performing schools must engage and crafted the array of resources that will be provided to help them.
4. The Maine Educator Effectiveness Council, established by the Legislature in the spring of 2012, has been working on its charge of recommending a system of performance evaluation and professional growth (PEPG). The Council’s foundational work during the summer of 2012 provides sufficient evidence to the US DE that a collaborative process is underway to ensure creation and implementation of a thoughtful and informed system to evaluate and support teachers and leaders, and the November 2012 report and May 2013 Addendum demonstrate that the work has continued beyond the development of the initial ESEA flexibility application.

Below are the Workgroup descriptions and membership lists :

Steering Committee
<p>Charge:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalize membership in the working groups 2. Provide overview, guidance, and support to each of the working groups 3. Receive the reports of the working groups and craft the core components of a statewide accountability system to recommend to the Commissioner 4. Support the engagement of key stakeholder groups, including members of representing all official student subgroups
<p>Deliverables</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarified charge for each of the working groups 2. List of recommended individuals to serve in the working groups 3. List of individuals and/or organizations representing students from various subgroups 4. Input and feedback from individuals and/or organizations representing students from various subgroups 5. Recommended elements of statewide accountability system that meet the requirements of the current ESEA Flexibility program and, if applicable, any future guidance resulting from a reauthorized ESEA 6. Formal presentation(s) of the statewide accountability model to education stakeholders across the state

Steering Committee Membership

Name	Position	Representing
Steve Bowen	Commissioner	Maine Department of Education
Dick Durost	Executive Director	Maine Principals' Association
Dale Douglass	Executive Director	Maine School Boards Association
Sandra MacArthur	Executive Director	Maine School Superintendents' Association
Jill Adams	Executive Director	Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities
Rob Walker	Executive Director	Maine Education Association
Lois Kilby-Chesley	President	Maine Education Association
Robin Fleck	ELL Coordinator, Auburn School Department	Participating at the request of the Maine DOE
Jaci Holmes	Federal-State Legislative Liaison	Maine DOE
Dan Hupp	Director of Standards and Assessment	Maine DOE
Rachelle Tome	ESEA Federal Programs Director	Maine DOE
David Connerty-Marin	Communications Director	Maine DOE
Deb Friedman	Director, Policy and Programs	Maine DOE
Mark Kostin	Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership	Facilitator

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) Working Group

Charge:

1. Identify the student assessments that will be used to determine the level of proficiency of students (all and subgroups) in a school
2. Determine additional student learning measures, if applicable, to be used
3. Determine specific proficiency benchmarks to be used to determine a school's accountability status

4. Propose at least four different levels of school performance commensurate with the ESEA flexibility guidelines (i.e. priority, focus, and reward)
5. Work with the Interventions & Support Working Group to determine the manner in which schools and/or districts can exit any identified status associated with poor performance

Deliverables:

1. List of student learning assessments
2. List of other measures of student learning
3. List of AMO targets by year
4. List of school and/or district performance designations
5. Process by which schools and/or districts deemed to have poor performance leave their status

AMO Working Group Membership

Name	Position	Appointed by:
Paul Austin	Special Services Director, Brunswick School Department	Maine Administrators of Services to Children with Disabilities
Barbara Powers	Superintendent, Falmouth School Department	Maine School Superintendents Association
Amanda Cooper	Teacher, Gorham Middle School	Maine Education Association
Linda MacKenzie	Principal, Stearns High School	Maine Principals' Association
Kristin Wells	ESL Teacher, K-12, Wells-Ogunquit CSD	Serving at the request of the Maine DOE
Steve Bowen	Commissioner, Maine Department of Education	Maine DOE
Rachelle Tome	ESEA Federal Programs Director	Maine DOE
Deb Friedman	Director, Policy and Programs	Maine DOE
Dan Hupp	Director of Standards and Assessments	Maine DOE
Nancy Mullins	Director of ESL and Bilingual Programs	Maine DOE
Bill Hurwitch	Project Manager, SLDS	Maine DOE

Name	Position	Appointed by:
George Tucker	Distinguished Educator, School Improvement Consultant	Maine DOE
Mark Kostin	Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership	Facilitator

Interventions and Supports Workgroup (I&S)

Charge:

1. Determine and name at least four levels of overall student and/or district performance compared to the established AMOs
2. These performance levels must meet the stated requirements of the current ESEA flexibility opportunity (i.e. priority, focus, and reward) and any other guidance resulting from reauthorization of ESEA
3. Determine the support to be provided and the interventions to be implemented for schools and/or districts that have been identified, commensurate with the specific areas of need
4. Determine the process by which schools and/or districts identified as needing support will be identified and apply for funds
5. Develop the system by which the DOE will provide ongoing support for schools and/or districts in this category
6. Develop the manner in which reward schools will be recognized along with any other possible relief and/or compensation
7. Determine the manner in which schools and/or districts can exit their stated status
8. Work in conjunction with the AMO Working Group when necessary

Deliverables:

1. List and description of status categories
2. Document outlining the differentiated support and interventions based on performance categories
3. Process for accessing and monitoring the use of targeted resources
4. Description of DOE intervention and support model
5. List of recognitions, relief, and/or compensation for reward schools
6. Description of steps for exiting status

I&S Workgroup Membership

Name	Position	Appointed by:
-------------	-----------------	----------------------

Name	Position	Appointed by:
Deborah Emery	Principal, Henry Cottrell School, Monmouth (RSU 2)	Maine Principals' Association
Susan Pratt	Superintendent, RSU 40 (Union)	Maine Superintendents' Association
Joyce Blakney	Mathematics Teacher, Waterville High School	Maine Education Association
Steve Bowen	Commissioner	Maine DOE
Rachelle Tome	ESEA Federal Programs Director	Maine DOE
Deb Friedman	Director, Policy and Programs	Maine DOE
Steve Vose	Title 1-A School Improvement	Maine DOE
Mark Kostin	Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership	Facilitator

Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC)**(Charge and Membership Specified in Public Law 2011, chapter 635, LD 1858)****Charge:**

Recommend the following elements of a “Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth System:

- Sets of Professional Practice Standards for Teachers and for Principals
- A 4-level rating scale with clear definitions
- Potential measures of student learning and growth
- Major components of an evaluation process, e.g., training, methods of gathering evidence, weighting of measures
- A system of supports and professional development linked to ratings, including professional improvement plan

Deliverables:

Recommendations for transmittal to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, by November 1, 2012, regarding the matters listed above.

MEEC Membership

Name	Position	Interest Represented
Linda Bleile	Principal, Wiscasset Middle School	Maine Principal’s Association
Steve Bowen	Commissioner	Maine DOE
James Cote	President & CEO, Associated Builders and Contractors	Business Community
Brian Doore	Assistant Research Professor, University of Maine	Faculty of an approved educator preparation program
Becky Fles	School Board Chair, RSU 11 (Gardiner)	Maine School Boards Association
Susan Grondin	English Language Arts Teacher, Lewiston Middle School	Maine Education Association
Chris Hall	VP, Government Relations Portland Regional Chamber	Business Community
Scott Harrison	Project Director, Maine Schools for Excellence	Public Member

Name	Position	Interest Represented
Maureen King	School Board Member, RSU 21	Maine School Boards Association
Grace Leavitt	Foreign Language and Literature Teacher, Greely High School	Maine Education Association
Linda McLeod	Principal, Indian Island School	Maine Indian Education
Barbara Moody	Director of Teacher Education, Husson University	Public Member
Mary Payne	Teacher, Messalonskee High School	Maine Education Association
Sylvia Pease	Superintendent, SAD 55 (Hiram)	Maine School Superintendents Association
Nancy Perkins	Chair, Certification Committee Maine State Board of Education	Maine State Board of Education
John Soifer	Special Education Teacher Skowhegan High School	Maine Education Association

Staff Resources (non-members)

Deb Friedman	Director, Policy and Programs, Maine DOE
Meghan Southworth	ESEA Title II Teacher Quality, Maine DOE
Mark Kostin	Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership, Facilitator

All 4 work groups consisted of representatives from the school, community, district, and state levels – teachers, principals, superintendents, board members, and other community members. The groups met at least once a month during the development of the flexibility application, as reflected in the list of meeting dates below:

2012 Meeting Dates Prior to Submission of the Initial Application for Flexibility

Steering Committee

- May 11, 9 to 11 am
- May 31, 9 to 11 am
- June 21, 2 to 4 pm
- July 25, 1 to 3 pm

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) Workgroup

- May 22, 1 to 5 pm (Joint meeting with I&S)
- June 5, 8 am to noon
- June 20, noon to 4 pm
- July 2, 8 am to noon
- July 23, 8 am to noon
- August 14, 8 am to noon
- August 30, 3 pm to 4:30 pm

Interventions and Supports (I&S) Workgroup

- May 22, 1 to 5 pm (Joint meeting with AMO)
- June 13, 1 to 5 pm
- July 18, 9 am to 3 pm
- August 3, 8:30 am to noon
- August 16, 9:30 am to 12:30

Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC)

- May 29, 1 to 4 pm
- June 20, 9 am to 3 pm
- July 9, 9 am to 3 pm
- July 27, 9 am to 3 pm
- August 10, 9 am to 3 pm
- August 24, 9 am to 3 pm

The list of Workgroup Meeting Dates is reorganized below by month, illustrating the iterative nature of the Steering Committee-Workgroup structure. This enabled the Steering Committee to receive updates on the work of the content-specific workgroups, and to provide feedback to the department on the progress of the workgroups.

May

- May 11 Steering Committee
- May 22 Joint Meeting of AMO and I&S
- May 29 MEEC
- May 31 Steering Committee

June

- June 5 AMO
- June 13 I&S
- June 20 AMO
- June 20 MEEC
- June 21 Steering Committee

July

- July 2 AMO
- July 9 MEEC
- July 18 I&S
- July 23 AMO
- July 25 Steering Committee
- July 27 MEEC

August

- August 3 I&S
- August 10 MEEC
- August 14 AMO
- August 16 I&S
- August 24 MEEC
- August 30 AMO

All of these Workgroup meetings were open to public and announced through Maine DOE Dispatches and the weekly Commissioner's Updates. (Dispatches are included in Commissioner's Updates, which have a subscriber list of 2860, including all superintendents in the State.) See Attachment 3 for a list of key public notice and comment opportunities.

As the meetings progressed, materials were posted on the ESEA Flexibility Website, and opportunities for providing comments were provided, including web-based submittal opportunities and surveys. These were used to create the long-term agenda and to collect feedback as the discussions progressed.

The charge to the Workgroups was driven in part by the results of a Fall 2011 survey, which helped establish the direction of Maine's application. The Maine DOE also held Fall 2011 webinars to inform the public about the flexibility proposal from the USDE.

After all of these stakeholder recommendations were more fully developed by the Workgroups, a summary describing the major components of Maine's request was released through the Maine DOE website and via the Commissioner Update on August 16, 2012 (see Attachment 3). An online survey was developed to solicit feedback and ideas based on the summary, and three public forums were held (including one online webinar) where the Commissioner described the plan and asked participants for their feedback and ideas. The feedback from the summary, public comment sessions, the Workgroups' websites, and an August 2012 survey was collected and organized into categories corresponding to each of the Workgroups (see Attachment 2). The Workgroups were reconvened to consider the feedback and, where possible and appropriate, this proposal was modified.

Following receipt of Peer Reviewer Comments from the U.S. Department of Education in November, 2012, the Maine DOE met internally to consider responses to those comments.

Once we had absorbed and considered possible changes, we met with the “Super-Stakeholder Group” to ask for comment on our proposed changes. That meeting took place on January 31, 2013.

The Maine DOE continues to work alongside practitioners through the Maine Title I Educators Network, and Transformational Leaders Network (TLN). Staff from Maine DOE also provide regular updates and gather feedbacks from a number of educational groups, including the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association (MCLA). The Maine Title I Educators Network provides the Department with an opportunity to meet with Title I practitioners on a quarterly basis to review, present and discuss new initiatives and innovative Title I programming ideas in addition to sharing updates pertaining to Title I. The Maine Title I Educators Network strives to support effective Title IA programming in Maine Schools.

<https://sites.google.com/site/metitleone/>

The TLN, an additional support provided to principals of schools identified as priority status allows for cohort collaboration between school improvement coaches and priority school principals. Leadership development, a key focus of TLN meetings, assists principals in building school capacity while providing principals with key skills and strategies for engaging staff in school improvement process at their school building. This network also provides unique feedback reading the implementation of Maine’s flexibility waiver, with their, “feet on the ground.” perspective.

2. *A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes.*

Maine DOE involved diverse communities in the development of the request by:

- Including professionals working with English Learners (AMO, Steering Committee), students with disabilities (Steering Committee, AMO), business organizations (MEEC) and Maine Indian Education schools (MEEC) on the working groups that developed various aspects of this application;
- Meeting with Portland and Bangor-area students in December of 2011 to get initial thoughts on how to measure the effectiveness of schools and teachers;
- Asking school professionals to invite parents of EL students and students with disabilities to attend public forums on the application;
- Personal communication with a representative of the Bangor Chapter of the NAACP, issuing an invitation to a public forum on the request; and
- Inviting general public engagement throughout the process of developing the request, through numerous press releases and Commissioner’s Update articles.

Maine DOE has diligently continued open dialogue with stakeholders around ESEA Flexibility and more recently the ESEA Flexibility Renewal opportunity. A summary describing Maine’s approved ESEA Flexibility request was released through the Maine DOE website and via the Commissioner’s Update on January 28, 2015. An online survey was developed to solicit feedback and ideas based on the existing flexibility provisions. The Committee of Practitioners met on January 22, 2015 and provided invaluable insight from a diverse group of stakeholders regarding the implementation of current ESEA Flexibility and potential revisions for the renewal request.

More recently Maine has specifically solicited feedback from LEAs regarding the proposed revisions contained within the ESEA Flexibility Renewal request. LEAs received a request for feedback through a variety of mechanisms including the Commissioner’s Update (May 13, 2015) and an e-mail blast (May 14, 2015) to superintendents and NCLB Coordinators through Maine’s NCLB Consolidated Application. To date, only four responses have been received. The Committee of Practitioners also received a specific email (May 14, 2015) requesting feedback. Further conversation and discussion with the Committee of Practitioners will be conducted during the May 29, 2015 meeting. A copy of request notifications and received feedback will be contained in the attached appendix.

The Chief Academic Officer will be presenting a conference seminar during the 104th Commissioner’s Conference for Superintendents on June 29, 2015. All LEAs will be represented at this conference. This session will provide an update of the current status of ESEA Accountability, including expectations for 2014-15, any updates related to Maine’s Flexibility renewal request, the process of amending the waiver, feedback regarding proposed changes for said amendment and the status of reauthorization.

The current Committee of Practitioners has the following representation:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Interest Represented</i>
<i>Doretta Callahan</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Teaching Staff</i>
<i>Brian Carpenter</i>	<i>Superintendent</i>	<i>Administration</i>
<i>Melissa Corey</i>	<i>Title I Teacher</i>	<i>Teaching Staff</i>
<i>Deb Davis</i>	<i>Maine Developmental Disabilities Council</i>	<i>Parent</i>
<i>Karen Douglas</i>	<i>Literacy Specialist</i>	<i>Teaching Staff</i>
<i>Wendy Dunbar</i>	<i>Literacy Specialist/Title I Coordinator</i>	<i>Teaching Staff</i>
<i>Becky Foley</i>	<i>Assistant Superintendent</i>	<i>Administration</i>
<i>Jackie Godbout</i>	<i>Title IA Consultant</i>	<i>Maine DOE</i>
<i>Kathy Harris</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>LEA Administration</i>
<i>Patricia Hayden</i>	<i>Director of Instruction</i>	<i>LEA Administration</i>
<i>Debbie Hogate</i>	<i>Title IA Coordinator</i>	<i>LEA Administration</i>
<i>Anne Jordan</i>	<i>NCLB Coordinator</i>	<i>LEA Administration</i>
<i>Gillian Kirk</i>	<i>Intervention Specialist/Title I Coordinator</i>	<i>Teaching Staff</i>

Janette Kirk	Title I Director	Maine DOE
Deborah Levesque	NCLB Coordinator	LEA Administration
Lori Lodge	Title I District Coordinator	LEA Administration
Robert MacDonald	Assistant Superintendent	LEA Administration
Stephanie Marshall	Teacher	Teaching Staff
Sue Martin	Chief Academic Officer	LEA Administration
Erica Mazzeo	Curriculum Director	LEA Administration
Jodi McGuire	Director of Instructional Supports	LEA Pupil Services
Deb McIntyre	Assistant Superintendent/ESEA Coordinator	LEA Administration
Laura Miller	Principal	Administration
Lori Prestridge	Special Education Director	Department of Corrections
Marge Ryder	Title I Coordinator	LEA Administration
Kim Schroeter	Director of Instruction/Title I	LEA Administration
Rachelle Tome	Chief Academic Officer	Maine DOE
George Tucker	School Improvement	Maine DOE
Heather Wilmot	Director of Student Services	Pupil Services
Lisa Wojcik	Library Media Specialist	Department of Corrections

In addition to the Committee of Practitioners, the Maine Department of Education continues to embrace opportunities provided by the Maine Title I Educators Network to share and request feedback and insight regarding the implementation of the current ESEA Flexibility. The Maine Title I Educators Network (MTEN) convenes quarterly to share best practice, discuss new and innovative approaches and ideas in addition to receiving technical assistance and pertinent information pertaining to Title I.

As part of Maine DOE's recent efforts to develop Educator Equity plans, focus groups convened to gather stakeholder feedback highlighted the need for a mechanism to provide ongoing feedback. As a small state, it has at times been challenging to attain the desired levels of stakeholder participation needed to ensure robust feedback. Maine DOE intends to act on this feedback and will continue to explore opportunities and strategies to more effectively engage stakeholders in the work of the Department on a more regular basis. The Maine DOE will strive to provide information to and request feedback from stakeholders to ensure an open process and transparency with Department initiatives and programs.

EVALUATION

The Department encourages an SEA that receives approval to implement the flexibility to collaborate with the Department to evaluate at least one program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs implement under principle 1, 2, or 3. Upon receipt of approval of the flexibility, an interested SEA will need to nominate for evaluation a program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs will implement under principles 1, 2, or 3. The Department will work with the SEA to determine the feasibility and design of the evaluation and, if it is determined to be feasible and appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

Check here if you are interested in collaborating with the Department in this evaluation, if your request for the flexibility is approved.

**Maine elected to not participate in the Evaluation opportunity because it is likely to require Maine DOE staff resources to participate, even though the U.S. Department of Education pays for the evaluation to be conducted. Without knowing more about the required Maine DOE resources, we are reluctant to commit to participating in an evaluation.

OVERVIEW OF SEA’S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY

Provide an overview (about 500 words) of the SEA’s request for the flexibility that:

- 1. explains the SEA’s comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA’s strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and*
- 2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA’s and its LEAs’ ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.*

In January of 2012, Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen released a Strategic Plan for the Maine Department of Education, “Education Evolving: Maine’s Plan for Putting Learners First.” Education Evolving was developed in consultation with educators from across the state. (See Appendix 1) In the Plan’s preface, Commissioner Bowen outlined four challenges that Maine confronts as it seeks to ensure that all of its young people graduate from its schools ready for college, careers, and civic life.

The first challenge is that student outcomes in Maine are stagnant, with test scores and graduation rates showing little growth. The second challenge is that this lack of achievement growth comes despite the state’s compliance with the No Child Left behind Act of 2001, which imposed the state’s current system of school and district accountability. Despite more than a decade of standardized testing, the identification of schools based on student outcomes and the imposition of a number of initiatives to turn around underperforming schools, student outcomes remain stubbornly flat.

The third challenge is that the failure of the No Child Left Behind model suggests that simply tweaking the existing accountability structure imposed by the law is not enough. What is needed is an entirely new approach to public schooling, an approach that adapts our schools to meet the needs of learners, rather than requiring learners to adapt to the needs of our schools.

The fourth challenge is that we must undertake this transformation from an industrial-age, factory-era model of schooling to a 21st century model of schooling that customizes learning for all students, and we must do it within existing resources. Building a new system of school and district accountability under an ESEA waiver is a critical step in the transformation Maine must undertake to meet these challenges. Educators across Maine, whose experience and insights drove the development of the Department’s strategic plan, see the current accountability provisions of No Child Left Behind as significant barriers to transformation. Rather than providing educators with the tools necessary to meet the needs of all students, the current NCLB framework, stands in the way of meaningful change.

- Maine’s goal with its ESEA flexibility proposal, therefore, is to take the first step in the development of a new state accountability system, one that supports the kind of systems change that meeting the challenges confronting us requires. If we are serious about meeting the needs of each individual learner, the state’s accountability system must measure the progress of each student toward the attainment of college and career-ready standards.
- This assessment of student outcomes should use multiple measures that indicate not only a student’s achievement of certain learning standards at a fixed point in time, but that student’s achievement growth over the course of his or her school career.
- These measures of student achievement and growth should be used to determine the extent to which each Maine school and educator is meeting the needs of the students they serve. Such determinations should be reported in a manner that is clear and concise, providing educators, parents and the public with an accurate account of student outcomes.
- Schools that are identified as struggling to meet the learning needs of students must be required to develop and implement detailed plans to improve student outcomes, and should be provided with targeted assistance designed to support those improvement efforts.
- Educators who are identified, though a combination of measures of professional practice and assessments of student achievement and growth, should be provided with the professional development and support needed to help them meet the needs of all learners.

Maine’s ESEA flexibility proposal is built around these core concepts, and is thus critical to the state’s overall efforts, driven by the Strategic Plan, to build a more customized, student-centered educational system.

Maine has experienced several changes in leadership at the Department of Education since the initial approval of Maine’s ESEA Flexibility Request. Former commissioner Stephen Bowen resigned in September, 2013, just after Maine received approval. Commissioner James Rier was appointed February 20, 2014 and unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, stepped down from his post in late October 2014 with Rachelle Tome, Chief Academic Officer appointed as Acting Commissioner in the interim. On December 23, 2013, Governor Paul LePage appointed Tom Desjardin as Acting Commissioner.

During this time of transition, Maine DOE has remained steadfast and unwavering in its efforts to build a more customized, student-centered educational system.

- ***Maine has successfully developed and implemented a state accountability system, in addition to federal ESEA accountability, that measures the progress of each student toward the attainment of college and career-ready standards.***
- ***The assessment of student outcomes utilizes multiple measures indicating not only student achievement of identified learning standards but documents growth over the course of the student's school career.***
- ***The measures of student achievement and growth guide the Maine Accountability System identifying how each Maine school and educator is meeting the needs of the students they serve.***
- ***Schools identified as struggling are required to develop and implement detailed plans to improve student outcomes. These schools receive additional targeted assistance in order to support the implementation and development of school improvement efforts and whole school reform.***
- ***Educators identified through a combination of professional practice and assessments of student achievement and growth are provided with professional development and additional supports to help them meet the needs of all learners.***

Maine's ESEA flexibility renewal proposal continues to build upon these core concepts providing a more customized, student-centered educational system.

PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p> <p>ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)</p>
--	---

Maine DOE is deeply committed to establishing clear, ambitious, and rigorous learning standards that, when met, will provide students with a solid foundation for success in post-secondary education and careers of their choice upon graduation. This work started at least fifteen years ago with the adoption of Maine’s *Learning Results* standards in 1996. These include content standards in eight areas, framed by an overarching set of Guiding Principles that describe the knowledge and skills believed necessary to prepare every student for college, careers and civic life. The eight content areas are: Career and Education Development; English Language Arts; Health Education and Physical Education; Mathematics; Science and Technology; Social Studies; Visual and Performing Arts; and World Languages.

Maine’s learning standards were revised in 2007, and are now called *Maine Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction* commonly referred to as the MLR’s. These revised

standards reflect the knowledge and skills essential for college, career, and citizenship in the 21st century. They took effect on October 22, 2007.

Included in the MLRs is a set of cross-cutting 21st century skills, competencies and habits of mind deemed to be essential to success in the world beyond high school. These five broad skills are intended to be practiced and assessed across all content areas beginning in Kindergarten and culminating in high school with increasing complexity and sophistication. These are summarized here and more fully described on the Maine DOE website:

<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/2007MLRGuidingPrinciples.pdf>. To succeed in the 21st century, a Maine graduate must be a:

1. Clear and effective communicator;
2. Self-directed and lifelong learner;
3. Creative and practical problem-solver;
4. Responsible and involved citizen; and
5. Integrated and informed thinker.

With the recent passage of legislation mandating a proficiency-based high school diploma, Maine's school districts will soon be required to certify that students are proficient in these skills – in addition to being proficient in the standards articulated in the eight content areas.

For purposes of state and federal accountability, a portion of the Maine Learning Results standards were adopted as a separate rule: DOE Rule Chapter 131. That rule includes the mathematics and English language arts/Literacy standards that are used for federal accountability purposes, as well as Science standards that are used for state assessment purposes.

In the Spring of 2010, in anticipation of filing an application for Race-to-the-Top funds, the Maine DOE sought and received clear statutory authority to proceed with adoption of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English language arts. (See Attachment 4-d, Public Law 2009, chapter 647). That legislation authorized the Department to adopt the standards through emergency rulemaking. Since the State did not receive Race-to-the-Top funding, the Department elected to conduct a regular rulemaking process, rather than going through the temporary, fast-track emergency process.

Maine has a somewhat unusual process for agency rulemaking, when the Legislature considers the rule to be “major substantive.” Those rules must go through a legislative process as well as the administrative rulemaking process. The agency starts the process by proposing a rule, holding a public hearing on the proposal and offering opportunity for written comment. Once the agency considers and responds to public comment, and makes any changes needed to reflect public comment, the agency “provisionally” adopts the rule and files it with the Legislature for review and for authority to proceed to final adoption.

Maine DOE conducted the administrative rulemaking process to incorporate the Common Core Standards for ELA/Literacy and mathematics into Rule Chapter 131, between August 2 and October 7, 2010. The Department provisionally adopted the rule on October 7, 2010 and submitted it to the Legislature. As is customary for rules review, the Office of the Revisor of

Statutes drafted a Resolve, LD 6, which proposed to authorize the Maine DOE to finally adopt the Common Core standards as an amendment to Rule Chapter 131. The Resolve was referred to the Joint Standing Committee on Education, where it received unanimous approval, was ultimately passed by the full Legislature and was signed by Governor LePage. Evidence of final adoption, through a filing with the Secretary of State, is included in Attachment 4-a. Attachment 4-b is an excerpt from the adopted rule and Attachment 4-c is the Legislative Resolve authorizing final adoption of the rule.

1.B TRANSITION TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Provide the SEA’s plan to transition to and implement no later than the 2013–2014 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools and include an explanation of how this transition plan is likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards. The Department encourages an SEA to include in its plan activities related to each of the italicized questions in the corresponding section of the document titled ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance for Window 3, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.

.....

In anticipation of Common Core adoption, the Maine DOE developed a comprehensive roll-out plan to ensure awareness, facilitate transition and support implementation of the Common Core standards, and to ensure that all students were able to access and achieve the standards. The plan had four phases: 1) Common Core awareness across all impacted practitioners during the 2011-2012 school year, 2) initial transition to the Common Core in the 2012-2013 school year followed by, 3) full implementation of the standards in the 2013-14 school year, and 4) assessment beginning in the spring of 2015.

In an effort to avoid “the silo-ing syndrome” within the Department, a coordinated plan for transitioning to the Common Core was created incorporating all divisions and sub-teams within Maine DOE. Those divisions specifically targeted included:

- Content Specialists in all content areas with special focus on ELA and Mathematics (CS –ELA, CS- Math),
- Career and Technical Education (CTE),
- Higher Education (HE),
- Services for Students with Disabilities (SWD),
- English Learners (EL),
- Title 1 Continuous Improvement Priority Schools (CIPS),
- Title II A & B (TIIAB),
- Adult Education (AE),
- Maine’s Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI),
- Early Childhood Development (ECD),
- Standards Based Implementation Team (SBI),
- State Longitudinal Data System Team (SLDS),
- Communications and Public Information Team (CPI),

- Customized Learning Implementation (CLI).

From Early Childhood through Higher Education, the Maine DOE has coordinated the Common Core implementation process, with a team of Maine DOE staff members working across content areas to increase educator awareness of how the Common Core impacts their work.

We view the adoption of the Common Core as the focal point around which all educational programs can be coordinated in order to ensure that all students graduate from Maine high schools college, career and citizenship ready, fully equipped with the knowledge and skills required in the 21st century, and requiring no remediation before embarking on their choice of post-secondary opportunities. In order to ensure that all students have a chance to achieve the standards, the Department expects that all Common Core professional development opportunities hosted, facilitated, or sponsored by the Maine DOE content specialists will be designed to include professionals serving students with disabilities and English learners, as well as including education administrators.

The Maine DOE has invested heavily in development and roll-out of the Common Core State Standards by dedicating staff to participate in Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) professional development opportunities. Maine has participated (via a 6-member cross-agency team) in each of the Implementing the Common Core Standards SCASS meetings held during the past two years. Additionally, Department staff continue to participate in the ELA, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education SCASS work. In each case, Maine DOE staff have received and contributed to the national creation and sharing of Common Core supports and materials.

Awareness:

Maine's strategy for increasing awareness of the Common Core was to integrate Common Core throughout its trainings. During the 2010-2011 school year Maine DOE held various workshops across the state, hosted by districts, regional curriculum groups, and higher education, to inform the field of the new standards and where to find information and support.

A webpage for mathematics, <http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/standards.html>, a webpage for English Language Arts, <http://maine.gov/education/lres/ela/standards.html>, and an overarching Common Core webpage for DOE, <http://maine.gov/education/lres/commoncore/index.html>, were developed.

Materials focusing on awareness are posted at the following site for the field to access under the introduction module for math and ELA:

http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss_pd.html
http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss_modules.html

The mathematics and English Language Arts specialists also made presentations at regional superintendent meetings, and meetings of curriculum coordinators and Career and Technical Education (CTE) directors across the state.

Maine DOE in collaboration with the Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Maine (ATOMIM) offered a series of Dine and Discuss Sessions focusing on developing a deep

understanding of the 8 Mathematical Practices in the 2010-2011 school year. During the 2011-2012 school year the Dine and Discuss Sessions targeted two audiences: elementary with a focus on algebraic thinking and the common core standards, and high school with a focus on reasoning and sense making and the common core standards.

Educators who work with students with disabilities were provided focused information on June 25, 2012, when Maine DOE mathematics and ELA/literacy specialists presented at a conference sponsored by the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC). The presentation was designed to inform special education directors and teachers of the new standards and where to find information and support.

Maine DOE staff prepared to work with educators of English Learners by attending a five-day institute sponsored by The Illinois Resource Center (IRC) and World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) to learn a process focused on coordinating the use of multiple sets of standards to support the academic language development of English language learners (ELL) focusing on the Common Core State Standards. On November 7, 2012, the Maine DOE mathematics and science specialists held a webinar providing a brief history of the CCSSM and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the resources available to help increase the awareness and communication among EL teachers and content area teachers. Additional support for educators of English learners is found at:

<http://www.maine.gov/education/esl/esllinks.htm>.

During the 2012-2013 school year, the Maine DOE mathematics and ELA/literacy specialists continue to ensure all teachers, including special education and EL teachers, are aware of the standards and the implementation timeline.

Transition:

Maine DOE elected not to devote resources to completing a crosswalk document between the New England Common Assessment (NECAP) Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and the Common Core State Standards (Common Core) for Mathematics or English Language Arts. Instead, Maine DOE made available to the state's educators the crosswalk completed by Rhode Island, as we share the same NECAP standards. This work which identifies the shifts is located at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Common-Core/CCSS-vs-GLE-GSE-Overview-Document-ELA.pdf>

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Common-Core/CCSS-vs-GLE-GSE-Overview-Document-Mathematics.pdf>

Implementation:

Implementation of the Common Core will include adapting textbooks, changing materials, and adopting texts, with the goal to change practice in the classroom. The beginning of the implementation process began with a webinar series created and delivered to address alignment and implementation. These webinars and resource materials for Math and ELA/literacy are posted at the following site for the field to access:

http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss_pd.html

http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss_modules.html

Presentations by Maine DOE mathematics and ELA/literacy specialists at the annual Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Maine (ATOMIM) conference were focused on implementation of the Common Core using the critical focus areas and also aligning tasks to the mathematical practices, mathematical content and content literacy standards for science and technology subjects.

The creation of a complete eighth grade digital math textbook, supporting the common core state standards, developed by a classroom teacher in collaboration with the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) team was released as a full Open Educational Resource (OER) in September, 2012.

More detailed implementation plans for Mathematics and ELA can be found in Appendix 2.

Ongoing Support:

Ongoing support to improve instruction using Common Core standards is being provided in the 2012-2013 school year. Continuing to use the math standards as the example, during the 2012-2013 school year, the Dine and Discuss session was a two-part series focusing on instructional implications regarding the changing student expectations required by the Smarter Balanced Assessment that Maine will be transitioning to in the 2014-15 school year. ATOMIM also hosted an online book study that focused on transitioning and implementing the Common Core State Standards. The book study culminated with a keynote presentation by the author at the annual state math conference. .

Maine DOE mathematics specialists and Maine DOE MLTI will collaboratively provide full day professional development sessions across the state looking at sample tasks aligned to the Common Core State Standards and use of technology to support student learning and understanding addressing content, pedagogy and technology knowledge. The sessions will be provided for the elementary, middle school, and high school level.

As with all professional development, the materials used during the sessions provided will be posted on the department's Math webpage:

http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss_pd.htmlThe Maine DOE has made available to districts four interactive **Common Core State Standards Noteshare Notebooks** organized by grade spans K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and high school. Contained in each of these interactive notebooks are professional development support materials for teachers to aid in the understanding and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

As a classroom teacher, time is limited for searching out support materials to gain a deep understanding of the new standards and how to align these to current classroom practices and curriculum. These notebooks have embedded links to resources in the appropriate place within

the standards document. As teachers read through the document they have all the links to resources, webinars, and hands-on activities for supporting the transition to and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

A series of webinars/ professional development sessions were provided to inform teachers of this resource and how to best use the resource in their work at their district/classroom level. All professional development opportunities will encourage all teachers of mathematics, special education and English learners, to attend and participate. These notebooks can be found at:

Grades K-2: <http://mlti.cross.doe.msln.net/NoteShare/Notebooks/CommonCore/MathK2/>

Grades 3-5: <http://mlti.cross.doe.msln.net/NoteShare/Notebooks/CommonCore/math35/>

Grades 6-8: <http://mlti.cross.doe.msln.net/NoteShare/Notebooks/CommonCore/Math68/>

High School: <http://mlti.cross.doe.msln.net/NoteShare/Notebooks/CommonCore/Math912>

The notebooks will be updated on a regular basis as new resources and materials become available at both the state and national level.

Among the supports provided to educators who work with the Common Core English Language Arts standards is a series of Webinars focused on ELA shifts, curriculum alignment and Smarter Balanced Assessment Considerations. The Webinars, as well as additional resource materials, are located at <http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/professionaldevelopment.html>.

The Department’s ELA and Literacy specialists are preparing for three 2-day conferences this summer, entitled the “Summer Literacy Institute: Shifting Practices to Meet Common Goals.” Schools are invited to send teams of educators to the Institute to explore shifting of curriculum and instructional practices during the transition to Common Core standards. This two day institute will provide teams with support to make these critical shifts.

The ELA and Literacy specialists continue to provide site-based, school district workshops and technical assistance, as requested, as well as workshops and presentations for statewide organizations and institutions of higher education.

Maine DOE will continue to work in collaboration with districts/schools, curriculum coordinators, and CTE directors to work with all staff to support understanding, transition, and implementation of the Common Core across the state by providing professional development opportunities in various locations.

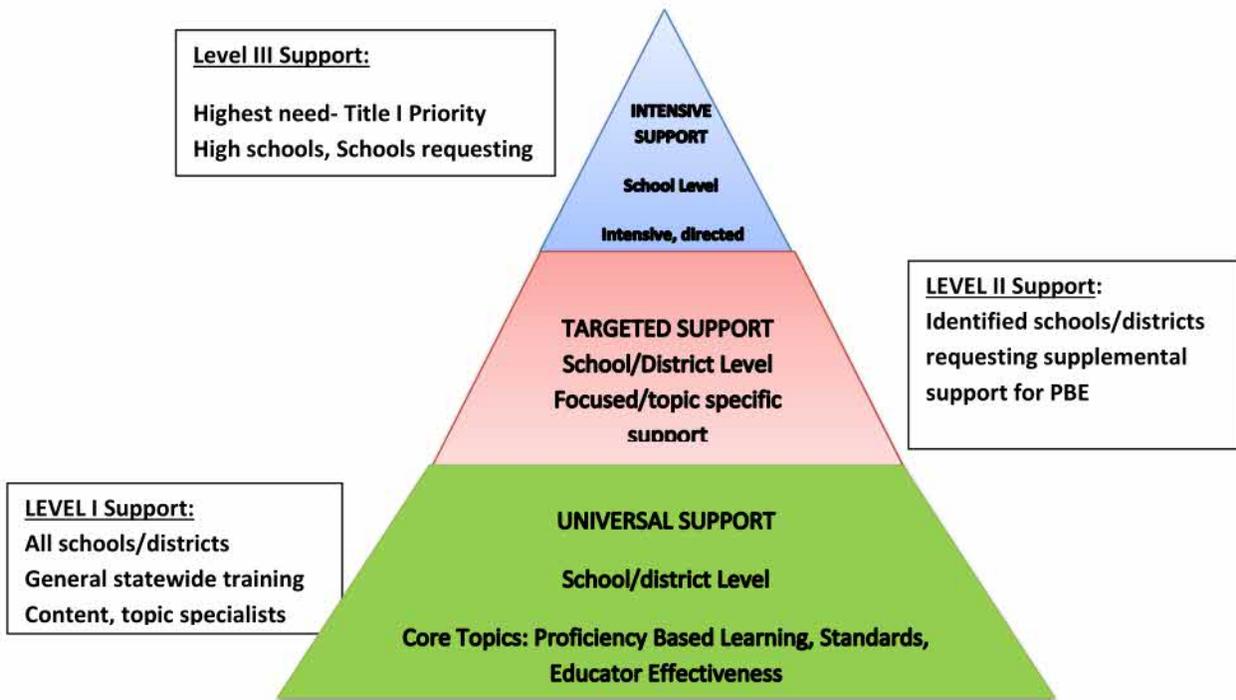
Maine’s Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) team is aligning its professional development and other work with the Common Core, to help educators use technology effectively in teaching to the Common Core standards. MLTI will be adding two new professional development integrators with language in the RFP specifically requesting Common Core integration. The team will be adding targeted content specific professional develop for the upcoming school year focusing on Common Core and digital citizenship. The team has and will continue to assist Common Core presentations with Maine DOE personnel. Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) professional development opportunities can be found at:

<http://maine.gov/mlti/events/index.shtml>

An institute of Maine DOE ESL/Bilingual Programs in collaboration with Project Reach will host a 3-day Summer Academy during June 25-27, 2013 with the focus on “Working with Common Core State Standards (Common Core) and WIDA English Language Development Standards (ELD)” www.maine.gov/education/esl/conferences.htm

Educators working with students with disabilities will benefit from work being done through the state’s 2011 State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). Goal 3 for the SPDG work is to increase the number of Maine special educators who write and implement IEPs so that they are aligned with the Common Core in ELA and math. It is the intent of the Implementation Team to design and develop a statewide sustainable professional development plan that will provide training and technical assistance to all SAUs. The following school districts are involved in the work: RSU #2, RSU #15, and Westbrook. There have been numerous planning meetings throughout the 2012-13 school year. The primary focus of the planning sessions was to prepare for a major professional development conference focusing on proficiency-based education in relation to the Common Core, standards-based IEP goals, developing collaborative partnerships among educators and other topics. The conference, with expected attendance of 200 educators, will take place on June 24-26, 2013. Collaboration between regular education and designated special education personnel will continue after the conference, aided by the hiring of a Maine DOE staff person to work on standards-based initiatives.

Since receiving approval in 2013, the Department has continued to provide support for the implementation of college- and career- ready standards. The Department has also continued efforts to increase collaboration across teams and to develop a more cohesive approach to the support and technical assistance provided to schools and districts. The Learning Systems Team includes five academic sub-teams: Adult Education, Assessment and Accountability, Career and Technical Education, Standards and Instructional supports, and Student Support Services. These five groups meet together as a whole every other month to discuss, collaborate and develop plans to address common issues. During those months when a full team meeting is not scheduled, the time is dedicated to cross teaming, providing teams with the time needed for developing and planning specific projects. Representatives from the Department’s Special Services team, which supports students with disabilities; our Learning Through Technologies team, which oversees Maine’s laptop initiative and digital learning in schools; and our Finance and Data team participate in these monthly meetings, as well as with individual team discussions, to increase awareness and collaboration across the Department. Likewise, members of the Learning Systems Team regularly participate in the meetings for the Special Services team, Learning Through Technologies team, and our Finance and Data team. This has proven to be a more effective mechanism for delivering consistent messaging and coordinated technical assistance to the field. Two key examples of this effort include the collaboration between the Standards and Instructional Support team; the Assessment and Accountability team, whose members include the Title I School Improvement team; and the Special Services team. Members of these groups worked together to plan and provide technical assistance support to school and district staff members regarding proficiency based education and the development of Individualized Educational Program (IEP) goals and to coordinate efforts to address State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) Goal 3 requirements.



Workshops and training related to the implementation of Maine’s learning standards and outlined in Maine’s initial application have continued. Maine DOE continues to employ a structure which mimics a Response to Intervention support model, with tiered, differentiated support for schools and districts. (See diagram above) a variety of offerings have been provided, such as the Cross Discipline Literacy Network (CDLN) Mathematics Strand. The CDLN, created in 2012, provides professional development and support for literacy in various content areas. During this past year, the focus has been on mathematics. Other professional development opportunities included summer literacy training and the Maine Governor’s Academy for STEM Education Leadership, based on the model of the successful National Academy for Science and Mathematics Education Leadership, and Principals Outreach, which are regional meeting designed to build capacity of school administrators as instructional leaders.

Looking forward, the Department will continue to employ the planning structure outlined earlier and has developed plans to provide continued support for the implementation of standards through proficiency- based education. The Standards and Instructional Support team has developed a project management plan which identifies a variety of supports and training opportunities for the 2015-16 school year. This includes statewide regional events and more individualized directed support for those schools indicating a high level of need based on data from Title I School Improvement efforts and proficiency based implementation activities. In order to ensure that all students will graduate college and career ready, including those in specific groups such as low achieving, economically disadvantaged, English learners, and students with disabilities, the Maine DOE created a data planning room, where

multiple data elements can be viewed and shared discussed as part of the process for implementing the support structure outlined above. Examples of shared information include high needs schools grouped regionally using school grades from Maine’s School Performance grading system, Title I accountability status, math and reading achievement data, and year at a glance professional development opportunities. This planning room allows for more effective and cohesive collaboration across teams, such as the NCLB team, the Standards and Instructional Support Team, and the Special Services team. This allows department staff, overseeing the needs of students in various groups, such as low achieving, economically disadvantaged, English learners, and students with disabilities, to discuss and plan supports for teachers and students in all groups.

Maine DOE will continue to employ the planning room in order to evaluate data on a regular basis and to inform the development of needed supports, as well as monitoring progress. Maine DOE intends to expand data provided to include additional information, including disaggregated subgroups data for graduation rates, student achievement, college readiness, truancy and dropout rates. Information related to progress reports from Title I schools currently identified as Priority or Focus will also be shared, as well as progress reports related to the implementation of proficiency- based education and readiness for providing proficiency based diplomas. Reviewed, providing opportunities for feedback and identification of needs from the field. This review and subsequent planning discussions will allow Maine DOE to identify schools needing additional supports, as outlined in the support structure above.

Monitoring

To monitor implementation of the Common Core Standards, the department will develop a survey, which must be completed and verified by each district superintendent and school principal. Within the survey, respondents will be asked to evaluate and quantify the extent to which all educators have implemented –and all students have had the opportunity to learn the Common Core State Standards. The survey requires documentation of the same across all reported sub-groups of Maine’s assessment and accountability systems.

As an audit on this system, Department personnel associated with Title I and Special Education will verify the survey results when in the field conducting compliance visits as part of the Department’s “subrecipient monitoring” process (described further in section 1.B). Based on the responses to the survey, Maine DOE, in partnership with the state’s public Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), will implement a system of in-person and web-based resources to target the gaps identified by the survey of local practices.

- *Does the SEA intend to analyze the extent of alignment between the State’s current content standards and the college- and career-ready standards to determine similarities and differences between those two sets of standards? If so, will the results be used to inform the transition to college- and career-ready standards?*

During the 2011-12 school year, educators were provided with an analysis of the similarities and differences between the two sets of standards. Throughout the transition process, Maine

DOE focused on the intended instructional changes necessary for full implementation and not on alignment studies. Rather, the Maine DOE staff members directed practitioners to the Rhode Island DOE comparison of NECAP to Common Core. These links are contained within a larger document distributed during Maine DOE trainings that details Maine’s strategy of transitioning to the Common Core:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Common-Core/CCSS-vs-GLE-GSE-Overview-Document-ELA.pdf>

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Common-Core/CCSS-vs-GLE-GSE-Overview-Document-Mathematics.pdf>

In August 2014, as part of Maine’s transition to proficiency- based learning and new statutory requirements for proficiency- based diplomas, beginning in 2017-18, Maine DOE collected information which informed district status toward the implementation of college- and career- ready standards and readiness to provide- proficiency based diplomas. A full and complete outline of the process can be found on the Department’s Getting to Proficiency” website: www.maine.gov/doe/proficiency/ This comprehensive review process includes site visits and opportunities for ongoing technical assistance and support.

- *Does the SEA intend to analyze the linguistic demands of the State’s college- and career-ready standards to inform the development of ELP standards corresponding to the college- and career-ready standards and to ensure that English Learners will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to inform revision of the ELP standards and support English Learners in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?*

Maine DOE will understand the linguistic demands of the Common Core standards through its participation in the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium. Staff from the Department have participated in, and benefitted from the work of WIDA to ensure correspondence between the Common Core and ELP standards.

As part of the cross-team collaboration within the Maine DOE, content specialists have made presentations regarding the Common Core to EL professionals, and have learned from ESL professionals what’s needed to help English learners meet the Common Core. That Maine DOE staff learning is disseminated to the field through numerous professional development opportunities.

Maine DOE has also created and made available to the field workshops, such as one offered in October this year in Freeport, Maine entitled “The 2012 WIDA English Language Development standards,” a Webinar for EL professionals on “The New Common Core Math Standards and the Next Generation of Science Standards,” taught by Maine DOE content Specialists, and a

Summer Academy to be held in Maine in June of 2013 entitled “Working with Common Core State Standards (Common Core) and WIDA English Language Development Standards (ELD).” Also, the Title III staff members conduct bi-monthly teleconferences with EL staff to determine needs of the field.

Maine DOE is continuing efforts to support English learners and with our ongoing participation in the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium.

- *Does the SEA intend to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to support students with disabilities in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?*

Maine is involved in a number of initiatives aimed at ensuring that students with disabilities can access and achieve the Common Core standards. Maine’s general practitioner professional development opportunities are open to teachers of students with disabilities, and specific targeted professional development is offered as well, including presentations at conferences of the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC), a statewide organization.

Maine is a Tier II Affiliated state in The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC), a consortium of states developing a new alternate assessment tool for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. In addition to developing an assessment, NCSC is developing aligned curriculum, instruction and professional development for teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities. As a Tier II state, Maine will have access to curriculum, instruction and professional development opportunities provided by NCSC, as well as providing beta-testing of the assessment instrument.

Maine’s professional development efforts for teachers of students with disabilities are enhanced through Maine’s 2011 State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). Goal 3 of the Department’s grant is to increase the number of Maine special educators who write and implement IEPs so that they are aligned with the Common Core in ELA and math. It is the intent of the Goal 3 Common Core Implementation Team to design and develop a statewide sustainable professional development plan that will provide training and technical assistance to all SAUs with regard to serving students with special needs. SPDG Goal 3 Common Core team is doing this work through a pilot project, which is comprised of:

- Four information gatherings with Maine DOE Common Core personnel and special education personnel;
- Four planning meetings with RSU #2 and RSU #15 to develop a statewide sustainable professional development plan for special educators on the development of IEPs in alignment with the Common Core in ELA and math;
- Monthly meetings with RSU #2, RSU #15, and Westbrook to develop the statewide sustainable plan, piloting of the plan with the 3 SAUs represented on the Goal 3

Common Core Implementation Team throughout the 2012-13 school year, and the launching of the statewide training to targeted SAUs in the Spring and Fall of 2013. SAUs will be targeted based on general supervision system monitoring visits. Following training of those SAUs, trainings will be open to other SAUs.

- June 2012 attendance by SPDG Director and SPDG Coordinator at the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC) Director’s Academy which included:
 - What does standards instruction mean for special education learners and educators? An inside look at modifications made to IEP’s and 504 plans when working within a standards-based model was provided along with how accommodations and modifications can be made to help all learners acquire proficiency in each standard will be shared. Additionally, the evolution of intervention and the strategic response to intervention data was discussed.
 - Common Core State Standards for Math and ELA by Maine Dept. of Education, Language Arts and Mathematics Specialist provided an overview of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Math, including focus on the principles that are foundational to the design and implementation of the standards, as well as the timeline for implementation. Information about how the Common Core connects to State level assessment will be highlighted. Web-based tools to assist with implementation of the Common Core were shared.
 - The Standards-Based Individualized Education Program was presented by Sharen Bertrando, and Silvia DeRuvo who are both Special Education Development Program Specialists from WestEd. This training provided an overview of the key elements of a standards-based education aligned to the Common Core Standards for students with disabilities including alignment of instruction to the Common Core Standards, driven by data based decision making on school-wide measures as well as individualized progress monitoring data points and diagnostic assessments. In addition, they addressed Aligning the Common Core Standards to Specially Designed Academic Instruction which focused on the application of Common Core Standards aligned IEP goals in classroom instruction for students of varying degrees of disability and on the instructional process that supports different entry points in which classroom instruction aligned to the goals is designed to meet student needs from the least complex to the most complex tasks including, tasks the embed the standard, classroom tasks that focus on modified standards, classroom tasks that allow for a different response format and tasks that focus on the standard as it is written.

Maine will continue to review and revise, as needed, special education policy and practices in order to more fully support this work. Maine will continue to share evidence-based best practices with regard to special education services. This will help meet Maine’s goal that all students with special learning needs have access to efficient, effective and appropriate services that help them succeed.

- *Does the SEA intend to conduct outreach on and dissemination of the college- and career-ready standards? If so, does the SEA’s plan reach the appropriate stakeholders, including educators, administrators, families, and IHEs? Is it likely that the plan will result in all stakeholders increasing their awareness of the State’s college- and career-ready standards?*

In addition to the webinars and conferences involving educators directly affected by the Common Core, Maine DOE has made long-term efforts to disseminate and explain college and career-ready standards through the work of our Communications Team, through presentations and workshops at conferences and smaller public forums.

Our Commissioner’s Update, sent weekly to almost 3,000 subscribers, contains articles and links to information on numerous subjects, including Common Core implementation updates. The updates are often forwarded by LEA administrators to all faculty and staff in each school and are archived on the Maine DOE website at <http://mainedoenews.net/category/publications/commissioners-updates/>.

As Commissioner Bowen is a member of the Chiefs for Change (C4C), the Department submitted an application and received approval for a \$200,000/year grant for Common Core Communications. The grant will allow us to hire a full-time coordinator and ½ time support position to focus solely on outreach and communications regarding all aspects of implementing the CCSS across the PK-20 population, with an emphasis on subgroup opportunities. Among the duties of the coordinator will be:

- Creation of a communications plan for implementing rigorous standards (Common Core, Next Generation Science standards, etc.), and associated communications needs in the areas of Smarter Balanced Assessments **and other state summative assessments**, proficiency-based education, customized learning and other related areas;
- Development and sharing of talking points, toolkits and materials for school districts to use with parents, teachers, school board members and others to explain and engender support for the move to rigorous common standards and the practices that will support effective implementation;
- Creation of an extensive Common Core Website with information that explains the Common Core to multiple audiences, including educators, parents and legislators and provides effective materials from Department content specialists;
- Creating and offering public forums, teacher and principal workshops and other events; and

- Working with the “Core to College” grant-funded position to facilitate shared ownership of college and career readiness by K-12 and post-secondary sectors.

Furthermore, outreach is provided by content area. For example, during the 2010-2011 school year Maine DOE held various workshops across the state, hosted by districts, regional curriculum groups, and higher education, to inform the field of the new standards and where to find information and support. For example, a webpage for English language arts information was developed and located at: <http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/standards.html>

Maine’s higher education community has been aware of, and involved from the beginning in embracing the Common Core standards and Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) initiatives. Early in the process, Maine’s public higher education institutions signed MOUs agreeing to participate in the development of assessments and agreeing to adopt policies accepting proficiency in the Common Core, as shown by SBAC assessments, as sufficient to avoid the need for remedial services in their institutions. (See Attachment 5).

Finally, Commissioner Bowen reinvigorated the Education Coordinating Committee, a group consisting of the Commissioner and the Board Chairs and Presidents of the Maine Maritime Academy and each of Maine’s higher education systems – the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System.

The ECC met March 13, 2012 and agreed to place college readiness and transition as its top priorities. It formed The College Transitions Working Group (CTWG) which is focused specifically on these issues at the interface of K-12 and higher education. The CTWG report was submitted July 30, 2012 to the Commissioner of Education who is the Chair of the ECC. The CTWG report is attached as Appendix 3.

- *Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and other supports to prepare teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new standards? If so, will the planned professional development and supports prepare teachers to teach to the new standards, use instructional materials aligned with those standards, and use data on multiple measures of student performance (e.g., data from formative, benchmark, and summative assessments) to inform instruction?*

On February 4, 2013, Commissioner Bowen convened a meeting of all professional development providers who work for and with the Department to launch a new vision of support to local schools and districts. The vision calls for integrated delivery of support from all the Maine DOE sub-teams. Going forward, all professional development will be designed and developed from conception with meaningful application for all educators, including educators of Students with Disabilities, English Learners, and students with low Socio-Economic Status and will incorporate the talents of the IHEs whenever possible. This will be a major departure from the “siloes” delivery models of the past, but the Department stands poised and ready to embrace this vision as “the new normal”. Of course, we will continue to provide targeted

support to educators who need specialized skills and knowledge to teach students with disabilities and English learners.

Educators of English Learners

The Maine Department of Education continues to work with WIDA to bring professional development to the educators of English learners. In the summer of 2013 in conjunction with University of Maine's Project Reach, there will be a 3-day academy led by a WIDA Trainer to guide educators through a structured process that will "unpack" the Common Core State Standards and connect the academic language of those content standards to the appropriate language standards. Participants will design an articulated plan for standards referenced curriculum, instruction and assessment for their language education programs.

Districts are being encouraged to send teams to the academy, specifically English language arts teachers to accompany the ESL teachers. Maine Department of Education continues to model the education of English learners as the responsibility of all educators by including in its professional development trainings on the Common Core Math and English language arts standards the need to identify the language demands in each standard.

In addition, the Title III Director for the Maine Department of Education serves on the Advisory Board of Project Reach and works closely with Project Reach to bring systemic and sustainable professional development on the math standards to educators of English learners. Project Reach is a \$1.8 million, five-year professional development grant housed at the University of Maine. Project Reach supports research-based professional development activities specifically designed to improve classroom instruction for English Learners (ELs) across Maine's diverse educational and geographic settings. The project focuses specific efforts on future and current teachers of English learners from STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) areas.

In April of 2013, the Maine Department of Education hosted, in collaboration with the University of Maine, training on working with Common Core math standards. More than 12 districts sent teams that include ESL teachers as well as math content teachers to develop strategies for all teachers to work with all students.

These are activities of the initial year across the five-year cycle. The next year's professional development activities will be based on a needs-assessment conducted in the Spring of 2013.

University of Southern Maine addresses the new Common Core standards in its Content-Based Curriculum for English Language Learners course. The large majority of all ESL endorsed teachers in the state of Maine are either educated at the University of Maine through Project Reach or at the University of Southern Maine. These two institutions of higher education are currently the only higher education institutions in Maine that provide pre-service coursework for educators of English learners.

The Maine DOE in conjunction with higher education institutions (USM and/or UM) is pursuing

the feasibility of offering online to teams of ESL and content teachers a course that provides ways of constructing and delivering content for English learners according to specific alignment criteria. Participants will triangulate Common Core State Standards, WIDA English Language Development standards and WIDA level descriptors to construct curriculum.

Educators of Students with Disabilities

In 2011, Maine received a 5-year, \$3.2 million, IDEA State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). Among the goals and supporting objectives of the grant are the following:

Goal 3: Increase educators' knowledge and instructional usage of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English-language arts and mathematics for children with disabilities.

Objective 3.1: To increase the number of special educators who write and implement IEPs so that they are aligned with the CCSS in English-language arts and mathematics.

Objective 3.1.1. Coordinate with state PK-12 activities and ongoing professional development activities to implement the CCSS.

Objective 3.1.2. Develop and provide professional development for special educators on the development of IEPs in alignment with the CCSS in English-language arts and mathematics.

To achieve this goal and its supporting objectives, the Maine DOE has established a committee of stakeholders and has scheduled professional development sessions that are designed to include each SAU and special purpose private school as training cohorts. The training and technical assistance will continue during the remaining three years of the grant.

We are currently awaiting budget approval to hire a person with special education expertise and skills in standards-based instruction and system change, to work with schools on the CCSS. This person will be tasked with the responsibility of working with SAUs to get improved results on Indicator 3 of our State Performance Plan that involves performance and participation on statewide assessments. We intend to have this person on board by the end of the Summer of 2013.

Through the SPDG grant, we are working with Maine's institutions of higher education. A stakeholder group representing each University of Maine campus meets on a regular basis to plan for better preparation and retention of teachers and related service providers for children with disabilities.

The State Director of Special Services has contracted with the Northeast Regional Resource Center, Steve Hamilton (Northeast Comprehensive Center liaison to Maine), Silvia DeRuvo (NERRC associate and liaison to the SISEP center on implementation science) Susan Hayes of Learning Innovations at WestEd came to Maine on February 20, 2013 to help develop a

statewide approach to improving outcomes for students with disabilities. Involved in the planning were state consultants and administrators representing children with disabilities, children who are English-language learners, NCLB, Maine DOE content and assessment specialists, and consultants responsible for Maine’s implementation of the CCSS. The purpose of our planning is to develop a coordinated approach to our work that results in improved results for all children, including children with disabilities and children who are English-language learners. Successful work in other states will inform our practice.

Maine understands that children with disabilities tend to achieve best when there is quality instruction for all. We intend to work together towards that end.

Professional Development Opportunities for all Educators

The Maine Professional Development Model (MPDM) is intended to provide guidance, resources and templates for educators, education agencies, professional organizations (teachers, administrators, school boards), local education agencies (SAUs), higher education, and other providers of professional development in the state of Maine.

DOE’s Title II department made grants to support professional development in LEAs during the 2011-12 school year, funded with Title IIA Improving Teacher Quality State Grants funds and Title IIB Math Science Partnerships Grants. Many of the grant applications specifically focused on teaching to the Common Core. Examples of these include:

ESEA Title II grants

Title IIA

- MSAD 6 (Buxton, Maine)
Teacher leaders were trained in Standards-Based Mathematics Curriculum and Methodology, including those necessary to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, as well as data analysis in order to support the ongoing professional development of every mathematics teacher.
- MSAD 23 (Carmel, Maine)
Teachers and administrators conducted research to find grade level assessments that teachers can use on a regular basis. The District hired a consultant to help guide them to find that assessment tool(s), share with staff best practices in math instruction, and review their math curriculum for continuity with the Learning Results and the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
- MSAD 32 (Ashland, Maine) and MSAD 1 (Presque Isle, Maine)
Teachers were afforded the opportunity to attend local, regional and state workshops that were approved by the district and that fit into the district's plan for improving classroom instruction for all students in the content area of math, including implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
- Fayette School Department
Each teacher produced an assessment profile/needs of students using end of the year

2010 assessment data and upcoming 2011 assessment data to analyze specific weaknesses of students' in math. Professional development workshops targeted these specific weaknesses. Math interventions were developed and used with students. Students were made aware of the Common Core State Standards for Math and learning targets in order to set goals and monitor their own learning.

Title IIB.

- Western Maine Mathematics and Science Collaborative, September 2011 to August 2014. Serving 55 teachers and administrators. Includes the following goals: increase middle and high school teachers' and administrators' mathematical content and pedagogical learning, especially as needed to support struggling learners and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics; increase middle and high school science, math, and special education teachers' content knowledge related to math and science within the CTE programs, especially as needed to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and the Next Generation Science Standards; and increase elementary teacher leaders' content and pedagogical knowledge of mathematics, especially as needed to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
- Early Mathematical Thinking Enhancement Project, September 2010 to August 2013. Serving 138 teachers and administrators, includes as goals: Expand the work of Early Mathematical Thinking (EMT) formative assessment in K-4 mathematics; B: Increase teacher mathematical content and pedagogical knowledge, especially as needed to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics; and Align the EMT screening items to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
- Learn, Experience, Apply in a Regional Network - Mathematics!, September 2010 to August 2013, serving 9 teachers and 300 students; and Midcoast Maine Mentoring Mathematics and Career Technical Education, September 2011 to August, 2014, serving 14 teachers and 450 students. Goals include: continue to refine a model of professional development to improve teachers' content knowledge, content specific pedagogical knowledge and skills, and instructional practices in measurement and approximation, data analysis and statistics, and probability, especially as needed to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics; and improve middle, high, and career technical students' achievement in measurement and approximation, data analysis and statistics and probability, in order to be college and career ready..

Governor's Academy – past, present, and future

Maine offers its science and math teachers a robust professional development opportunity, through the Governor's Academy for Science and Mathematics Leadership. The Governor's Academy is a 2-year long project that provides professional development, with the aim of producing teacher-leaders in the fields of science and mathematics. In 2011, the third cohort group "graduated" from the Academy. The cohort groups have generated a relatively small but strong and well-informed cadre of science and mathematics leaders in Maine.

Many of the Academy fellows lead content area professional development efforts throughout the state and have been recognized for their teaching expertise through recognition in the Presidential Award Program, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification and other national recognition programs. Many of the fellows have stepped into regional and state-level leadership positions.

These teacher leaders are well equipped to support mathematics and science education reform in Maine schools. The implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and the anticipated implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), with its strong focus on engineering, make the development and support of leadership in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) more critical than ever.

The Fourth Cohort of the Governor’s Academy is focusing on STEM Education Leadership. This cohort will run from 2012-2014. The cohort consists of 25 fellows and 10 mentors (former academy fellows). The group has met twice to date, in December of 2012 and April of 2013. They will meet again in June. The focus is on integrating the CCSS and BGSS to support and foster STEM education.

- *Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and supports to prepare principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership based on the new standards? If so, will this plan prepare principals to do so?*

Under the leadership of the Superintendent of Instruction, the Department has greatly expanded professional development offerings for principals and other school leaders. A proposed statewide Leadership Training institute for the summer of 2012 was replaced with smaller, regional leadership training programs for superintendents, district administrators and principals. In addition Maine school based administrators have been and continue to be provided with general content background and transitional timeline information towards the 2014-15 implementation of Common Core assessment. Individual content specialists in ELA and mathematics have provided multiple statewide workshops on content and have established websites providing insights on content expectations. The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium will provide sample assessment items for schools to utilize in 2013-14 and principals will be apprised of these procedures and released items. The DOE staff will continue to assist principals with the implementation of these new expectations.

The Maine Principal's Association also provides statewide training opportunities at annual conference sessions by working with DOE staff and school district practitioners to improve the capacity of building leaders to understand both content depth and the assessment results. Interpreting these results and adjusting instructional practice accordingly is an essential component of principal leadership. Additionally a collaborative between the Maine Development Foundation and the Maine Principals’ Association, with the assistance and support of the UNUM Insurance Company and the DOE is providing a year-long training experience to Principals and Superintendents on educational leadership to improve student

achievement.

The Maine School Superintendent Association also annually invites principals and superintendents to present and learn about transformational practices to embrace the Common Core and improve student achievement.

- *Does the SEA propose to develop and disseminate high-quality instructional materials aligned with the new standards? If so, are the instructional materials designed (or will they be designed) to support the teaching and learning of all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students?*

Maine will take advantage of the availability of high-quality instructional materials produced in national and regional efforts, such as the National Center and State Collaborative and the Council of Chief State School Officers' State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards. The Maine DOE is focusing on working with other states in the creation of high-quality materials and on ensuring that we have the delivery systems to share those materials with local practitioners. For example, the Department is in the process of creating a web-based collaboration platform called the Online Communities of Practice, through which practitioners will share resources, problem-solve and coordinate efforts in implementation of the Common Core, as well as other initiatives.

- *Does the SEA plan to expand access to college-level courses or their prerequisites, dual enrollment courses, or accelerated learning opportunities? If so, will this plan lead to more students having access to courses that prepare them for college and a career?*

One of the major education policy initiatives advanced by Maine Governor Paul LePage has been to expand access to early postsecondary learning opportunities for Maine's high school students and comprehensively address issues of credit transfers from one educational institution to another. Upon taking office, the Governor, through Executive Order, created a task force on early post-secondary access, which has met regularly for more than a year and is currently developing a post-secondary access proposal to take to the legislature in the upcoming legislative session. The task force issued an interim report containing a series of policy recommendations for school, district and higher education leaders. (See Appendix 4). Legislation to implement some of the recommendations, L.D. 963, is pending before the Legislature in the First Regular Session of the 126th Legislature (2013). The legislation would broaden eligibility for state-funded dual enrollment (the "Aspirations program"), require the Department to provide information on available early post-secondary opportunities and establish a standing Commission on Early Postsecondary Access.

The Department has undertaken a series of other actions to provide students with a broad array of courses and educational opportunities designed to help each student achieve college and career-ready standards.

- During the last legislative session, the Department advanced legislation to ensure that

all of Maine’s Career and Technical Education centers adopt national career and industry standards, providing more students with the opportunity to graduate with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in industry. This legislation also created a process to streamline the transfer of credits from the state’s CTE centers to its Community College system.

- The state is supporting a handful of pilot programs designed to create college and career pathways for students, including a pilot program involving a high school, a Career and Technical Education center, a Community College and the state’s flagship public university. Students in the pilot will be able to follow a specially designed course pathway providing the opportunity to pursue a number of college and career opportunities.
- Understanding that the rural nature of Maine often makes transportation a barrier to educational opportunities, the state has been actively developing a comprehensive plan to expand access to online and digital learning opportunities. The state already supports a highly-successful program to provide more than a dozen AP courses online to students across Maine, and is developing plans to expand that program and provide a greater variety of online learning options aligned to the Common Core standards. A task force, created by legislation earlier this year, is at work developing a roadmap to expand access to learning opportunities like these.
- The Department is working with Maine’s higher education community in unprecedented ways to better align the state’s secondary and post-secondary institutions. Earlier this year, a commission was created to review how the state’s public postsecondary institutions determine college readiness, with the goal of better coordinating secondary coursework to ensure alignment with college readiness indicators.

The Department is committed to expanding learning opportunities for all of Maine students, to ensure that all students are prepared for college, careers and civic life upon graduation.

- *Does the SEA intend to work with the State’s IHEs and other teacher and principal preparation programs to better prepare—*
 - *incoming teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new college- and career-ready standards; and*
 - *incoming principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership on teaching to the new standards?*
- If so, will the implementation of the plan likely improve the preparation of incoming teachers and principals?*

The Maine State Board of Education has authority to review and approve educator preparation programs in the State. The Board in 2011 convened a Task Force to recommend revisions to the rule governing approval of educator prep programs (Rule Chapter 114). See <http://www.maine.gov/doe/rule/changes/chapter114/index.html> for an explanation of the rationale and members of the Task Force. Among other changes, the proposed rule adopts

InTASC and ISLLC standards for teacher candidate preparation, and continues to stress the need for alignment of teacher preparation with the Maine Learning standards, which includes the Common Core standards. Unit Standard 2.1.2(e) requires teachers to incorporate tools of language development into planning and instruction, including strategies for making content accessible to English language learners and for evaluating and supporting their development of English proficiency.

With regard to teaching students with disabilities, the IDEA State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) described in section 1.B enables the Department to work with Maine’s institutions of higher education. A stakeholder group representing each University of Maine campus meets on a regular basis to plan for better preparation and retention of teachers and related service providers for children with disabilities.

To build on the initial set of meetings held last year between the Maine DOE and the state’s Institutions of Higher Education, a multi-pronged approach to ensure increased and on-going collaboration has been developed.

First, we have recently hired a new Higher Education Specialist, whose job description includes new and specific Department-IHE liaison duties.

Second, the Department has been approached (one of two states) by the Core to College (C2C) foundations. C2C is a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors with funding provided by Lumina Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The partnering foundations have a **shared aspiration** to improve student outcomes in both K-12 and postsecondary education. This includes reducing the number and percent of students requiring developmental education upon college enrollment, reducing the average time to postsecondary credential and reducing the average cost per postsecondary completion. Central to Maine’s C2C application is the hiring of a full-time position and a support position to focus on year-round collaboration efforts between Maine’s DOE and IHEs.

Third, the College Transitions Working Group described earlier in this section also focuses on the preparation of teachers and principals. Throughout the course of the waiver, the CTWG will continue to work with teacher education deans and directors, both public and private, to redesign policies, programs and professional development (led by Associate Provost/Ed Dean from University of Maine-Farmington).

- *Does the SEA plan to evaluate its current assessments and increase the rigor of those assessments and their alignment with the State’s college- and career-ready standards, in order to better prepare students and teachers for the new assessments through one or more of the following strategies:*
 - *Raising the State’s academic achievement standards on its current assessments to ensure that they reflect a level of postsecondary readiness, or are being*

increased over time to that level of rigor? (E.g., the SEA might compare current achievement standards to a measure of postsecondary readiness by back-mapping from college entrance requirements or remediation rates, analyzing the relationship between proficient scores on the State assessments and the ACT or SAT scores accepted by most of the State’s 4-year public IHEs, or conducting NAEP mapping studies.)

- *Augmenting or revising current State assessments by adding questions, removing questions, or varying formats in order to better align those assessments with the State’s college- and career-ready standards?*
- *Implementing another strategy to increase the rigor of current assessments, such as using the “advanced” performance level on State assessments instead of the “proficient” performance level as the goal for individual student performance or using college-preparatory assessments or other advanced tests on which IHEs grant course credits to entering college students to determine whether students are prepared for postsecondary success?*

If so, is this activity likely to result in an increase in the rigor of the State’s current assessments and their alignment with college- and career-ready standards?

Maine will be *revising current State assessments* to reflect the transition to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts. Maine students in grades 3-8 currently take the NECAP tests, developed and implemented in collaboration with three other states in New England. ***NECAP testing will continue through the fall of 2012 and 2013, with some adjustments to reflect the transition to the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics.*** Beginning in the Spring of 2015, students will take the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) tests. ***As required by legislative action, Maine will administer a different assessment in spring 2016. This new assessment will continue to be aligned to Maine’s college and career readiness standards. Acquisition of the assessment is underway.***

State department of education staff members from the NECAP states have thoroughly compared the Common Core with the NECAP Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and Grade Span Expectations (GSEs). Following comparison, the staff developed the plan for transition to Smarter Balanced Assessment of the Common Core standards, calling for removal of questions from the 2013 administration of the NECAP mathematics test for grades 3-8.

The transition plan was reviewed by the assessment specialists and content specialists from Maine (and each NECAP state) as well as by the states’ assessment contractors and the NECAP Technical Advisory Committee. The transition plan has been posted on the Maine DOE Website at <http://www.maine.gov/education/necap/index.html> and included in numerous professional development materials provided to educators – including materials for those who teach Special Education and English Learners. See the transition plan timeline at the end of this section for more details.

To ensure that Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessments are integrated into higher education, Chancellor Page of the University of Maine System has named Allyson Handley, president of UM-Augusta as the state’s IHE lead to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. The assessment will be used as Maine’s accountability instrument and will measure the Common Core State Standards. Each of Maine’s IHEs has signed an MOU stating they will use the student results from the SBAC for placement decisions –specifically: students who score at the proficient level will be placed directly into credit-bearing courses and will be exempted from remedial coursework. (Attachment 5) ***Moving forward, Maine DOE will continue to work with representatives of Maine’s IHEs to ensure that the information from the assessments administered in 2016 and beyond continue to inform placement decisions.***

- *Does the SEA intend to analyze the factors that need to be addressed in preparing teachers of students with disabilities participating in a State’s alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards (AA-MAAS) in order to ensure these students can participate in the assessments that will be aligned with college and career-ready standards?*

Maine does not currently have an assessment based on modified academic achievement standards. We believe SBAC assessments will provide sufficient accommodations and modifications to allow the majority of students with disabilities to participate in the regular SBAC assessment. The April 2012 description of the development of the SBAC assessments aims to provide the accommodations necessary to enable students who might otherwise take such alternate assessment to take the regular assessment: “The Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines include six documents that are intended to be used by item writers and accessibility experts to make items and tasks accessible to as many students as possible.”¹

- *Does the SEA propose other activities in its transition plan? If so, is it likely that these activities will support the transition to and implementation of the State’s college- and career-ready standards?*

For a learner-centered educational system to function, all the elements of that system must be carefully aligned to allow learners to move at their own pace and have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Too frequently, however, the various pieces of the educational system are disconnected from one another. Early childhood programs are disconnected from the elementary school programs they feed into. A middle school may embrace a learner-centered model, but the high school its students are to attend does not. Barriers are sometimes erected that prevent students from having access to Career and Technical Education programs, or that complicate the transition from high school to post-secondary educational opportunities.

¹ p. 18, <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/TaskItemSpecifications/ItemSpecifications/GeneralItemSpecifications.pdf>

Every effort will be made, from the highest levels, to ensure that educational programs are fully aligned and that they all embrace a model of schooling that puts the needs of the learner first. Some of this important work is already underway.

- Recent meetings between the Maine DOE and the state’s institutions of public higher education have resulted in an agreement to establish a collaborative working group to focus exclusively on post-secondary transition issues. Specifically, work is underway to ensure collaboration on the definition and indicators of college and career readiness, while our Community College systems is working with our Career and Technical Education centers to ensure a smooth transition to higher education for CTE students.
- At the other end of the age spectrum, while Maine did not win a federal Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant, which was aimed at improving early childhood programming, state officials have moved ahead with as much of the proposed work as possible, including the development of a permanent inter-agency working group devoted to coordinating early childhood policies and practices.
- Last legislative session, legislation was passed to more fully align the state’s Career and Technical Education programs with industry-recognized career standards as well as the Common Core standards. These efforts will ensure that students at our CTE centers will receive a rigorous, standards-based education.
- Each of these efforts represents a significant step toward a more fully aligned educational system from early childhood into adulthood.

Maine DOE’s efforts to provide technical assistance and professional development to all educators have continued. As outlined earlier, Maine enlists a comprehensive approach to providing professional development and support that is designed to be inclusive of all educators, including those who may work primarily with students with disabilities or English learners. Our belief is that on order to provide effective differentiation and support, teachers of all populations need to learn together. Many of the strategies that support students with disabilities also support English learners and other students who may be experiencing academic challenges. To that end, Maine DOE planning teams make every effort to include representation for all student populations as part of the planning process. Our school improvement coaches are an integral part of the Special Services planning groups, to ensure that needs of Maine’s Focus schools are met. Likewise, representatives from the Special Services team and our specialist for English learners participate in planning with the Standards and Instructional Support team. This ensures that Maine is proving comprehensive and cohesive support to all teachers, for all students.

1.C DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER ANNUAL, STATEWIDE, ALIGNED, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition.</p> <p>i. Attach the State’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. (Attachment 6)</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Provide the SEA’s plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014-2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.</p>	<p>Option C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the SEA has submitted these assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review or attach a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)</p>
---	--	--

Maine is a governing member of SBAC. The image below explains the SBAC assessment system, and the timeline following the image illustrates the progress toward implementation of SBAC and implementation of other major education reform initiatives, including proficiency-based learning and graduation standards.

SMARTER
Balanced Assessment Consortium**A Summary of Core Components**STATE STATUS Governing Advisory

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is one of two multistate consortia awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop an **assessment system based on the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS)**. To achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, SBAC is committed to ensuring that assessment and instruction embody the CCSS and that all students, regardless of disability, language, or subgroup status, have the opportunity to learn this valued content and show what they know and can do.

With strong support from participating states, institutions of higher education, and industry, SBAC will develop a balanced set of measures and tools, each designed to serve specific purposes. Together, these components will provide student data throughout the academic year that will inform instruction, guide interventions, help target professional development, and ensure an accurate measure of each student's progress toward career and college readiness.

The core components of SBAC are:**Summative assessments:**

- Mandatory comprehensive accountability measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered in the last 12 weeks of the school year in grades 3–8 and high school for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics;
- Designed to provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of students' progress toward and attainment of the knowledge and skills required to be college and career ready;
- Capitalize on the strengths of computer adaptive testing, i.e., efficient and precise measurement across the full range of achievement and quick turnaround of results;
- Produce composite content area scores, based on the computer-adaptive items and performance tasks.

Interim assessments:

- Optional comprehensive and content-cluster measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered at locally determined intervals;
- Designed as item sets that can provide actionable information about student progress;
- Serve as the source for interpretive guides that use publicly released items and tasks;
- Grounded in cognitive development theory about how learning progresses across grades and how college- and career-readiness emerge over time;
- Involve a large teacher role in developing and scoring constructed response items and performance tasks;
- Afford teachers and administrators the flexibility to:
 - select item sets that provide deep, focused measurement of specific content clusters embedded in the CCSS;
 - administer these assessments at strategic points in the instructional year;
 - use results to better understand students' strengths and limitations in relation to the standards;
 - support state-level accountability systems using end-of-course assessments.

System Features

- Ensures coverage of the full range of ELA and mathematics standards and breadth of achievement levels by combining a variety of item types (i.e., selected-response, constructed response, and technology-enhanced) and performance tasks, which require application of knowledge and skills.
- Provides comprehensive, research-based support, technical assistance, and professional development so that teachers can use assessment data to improve teaching and learning in line with the standards.
- Provides online, tailored reports that link to instructional and professional development resources.

Formative tools and processes:

- Provides resources for teachers on how to collect and use information about student success in acquisition of the CCSS;
- Will be used by teachers and students to diagnose a student's learning needs, check for misconceptions, and/or to provide evidence of progress toward learning goals.

	School Year 2012-13		School Year 2013-14		School Year 2014-15		School Year 2015-16		School Year 2016-17		School Year 2017-18	
	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June
Common Core	(Sept)											
NECAP	✓ (Oct)		✓ Last test									
MHSA ELA & math		✓ (May)		Last test (May)								
SBAC						1 st test		✓		✓		✓
MHSA Science		✓ (May)		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
Gr 5-8 Science		✓ (May)		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
Stds-Based Diploma		Stds-based tools 3/1	Transition Plan (7/1)								✓	
Teacher and Principal Effectiveness	Department works with MEEC to develop recommendations implementing LD 1858 (5/12-5/13) MEEC Reports to Ed Comm (Nov 2012, May 2013)		SAUs develop and adopt locally-determined evaluation and support systems consistent with state guidelines		SAUs pilot locally-determined evaluation and support systems, adjust as needed and submit to Department for approval (2014-15)				Full implementation of locally-determined evaluation and support systems. (2015-16)			

	School Year 2012-13		School Year 2013-14		School Year 2014-15		School Year 2015-16		School Year 2016-17		School Year 2017-18	
	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June	July Dec	Jan June
ESEA Flex.	Wrkgtps convene (May 2012) App Due (Sept 6)		Projected implementation of Maine-developed accountability, recognition and support system.									



Please note that Maine’s assessment system for federal accountability includes the NECAP test in math and ELA for grades 3-8 and the Maine High School Assessment (MHSA) in Grade 11. The NECAP is administered in the fall of each year; the MHSA is administered in the spring. Therefore, during the transition to SBAC, the last NECAP testing will be done in the fall of 2013, while the last MHSA is in the spring of 2014. SBAC will be administered in the spring of 2015. While the timing of the last tests is different, the schedule above ensures that each required grade will be assessed during each of the school years of transition to SBAC, school years 2013-14 and 2014-15, and subsequent years.

The Department has continued to move forward with plans to transition to assessments aligned to Maine’s college and career readiness standards outlined in the 2013 approved waiver application. In 2014, a number of schools participated in field test for both the assessments developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and the National Center State collaborative (NCSC), with over 20,000 students taking part. Schools are currently in the midst of administering the SBAC assessments to students in grade 3-8 and the 3rd year of high school. Likewise, the NSCS will be launched within the next few weeks. Maine DOE also provided the Digital Library and interim assessments developed by SBAC as additional tools designed to enhance and support instruction. Maine also continues to participate in the development of updated English language proficiency assessments through membership in the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium. A field test is scheduled for spring 2015, with full implementation beginning in spring 2016.

Changes to Maine’s assessment timeline

With regard to the Principle 1 requirements of ESEA flexibility, Maine finds itself in a different position than was the case at the time of our submission in March, 2015. In 2011, Maine adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as its College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy. Schools and their educators have been working hard to make corresponding changes to their curriculum and instruction with full implementation expected by 2013-14. The spring of 2014-15 was the first year of a statewide assessment aligned to the new CCR standards, and it was marked by a successful administration of the Maine Educational Assessment for Mathematics and ELA/Literacy, which utilized the assessment developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.

In the spring of 2015, before the testing window had even closed, Maine’s legislature enacted LD 1276, An Act to Improve Educational Assessments of Maine Students. Approved by the Governor on June 16 as Private and Special Law 2015, Chapter 10, it, “Directs the Department of Education to terminate the State’s membership in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.” The discontinuation of membership in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium means that we will not be able to use the Smarter Balanced Assessment in future years.

It is important to note that Maine’s CCR standards were not impacted by this legislation and represent the same standards adopted in 2011. Also, Maine’s alternate assessment, developed

by the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC), is not impacted by this legislation and will continue going forward.

The Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE) is now establishing a procurement process to secure an assessment for the spring of 2015. We know the timeline is not ideal, but we continue to be committed to the principles of high-quality assessment. We accept the challenge to provide an assessment that is valid, reliable, and fair for its intended purposes, that is aligned with Maine’s college- and career-ready standards, and that provides an accurate measure of student growth.

Maine’s plan to develop and administer high-quality assessments addresses the following components:

- *The process and timeline for development of test blueprints and item specifications;*
- *The review and selection of items for inclusion in the assessment (including through piloting);*
- *Scaling and scoring procedures to be used;*
- *Test administration procedures, including selection and use of appropriate accommodations;*
- *Data analysis proposed to document validity and reliability of the assessments;*
- *An independent evaluation of alignment of the assessment with the State’s college- and career-ready standards;*
- *The process and timeline for setting college- and career-ready achievement standards and the method and timeline to validate those achievement standards; and*
- *Meaningful report formats to communicate results to students, parents and educators.*

Implementation Summer 2015 – Summer 2016

The table below provides an overview of the operational assessment milestones, and specific details regarding each activity are delineated in the paragraphs that follow.

Activity	Timeline
Staff a task force of education stakeholders to advise on an RFP for the assessment of Mathematics and ELA/Literacy	June 2015
Advised by the task force, develop a 3-year RFP (one year with two optional renewals)	July 2015
Release RFP, hold Bidders' Conference, receive proposals	August 2015
Review proposals, conduct final negotiations, make decision, launch contract	September 2015
Work through detailed contract specification and timelines	October 2015
Work with the National Center for Assessment on a thorough review of assessment quality and alignment guided by CCSSO criteria	November 2015
Determine any deficits in the 2016 assessment quality and/or alignment, and whether a new RFP will be required for subsequent years	December 2015
Finalize all manuals and training for the 2016 administration	January 2016
Administer 2016 assessment	April-May 2016
Report results from the 2016 administration bridging to the 2015 Smarter Balanced assessment	Summer 2016

The process and timeline for development of test blueprints and item specifications: *The aggressive timeline presented by the spring decision of Maine's legislature, we will not be in a position to go through our typical test specification and development process. Rather, we will seek an existing assessment with established alignment to the CCSS that has already been successfully utilized, at least as a field test. We would be open to another collaborative arrangement with other states.*

The review and selection of items for inclusion in the assessment (including through piloting): *We will include in our RFP CCSSO's (2015) Criteria for Procuring and Evaluating*

High-Quality Assessments. *Potential vendors will have the opportunity to provide evidence based on their established development processes, existing data, and an array of exemplars. An independent review of quality and alignment led by the National Center for Assessment will help us to determine any deficits to be addressed for subsequent administration, or whether ultimately we need to go through any procurement process for subsequent administrations.*

Scaling and scoring procedures to be used: *Through the 2015 administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment, Maine’s educators will have been exposed to the rigor a higher level of expectations. The 2015 results are serving as a new baseline year for our new trajectory toward college- and career-readiness. To the extent possible, we intend to link the new assessment to the Smarter Balanced Assessment and to carry forward the Smarter Balanced achievement levels. We are in communication with the Smarter Balanced Consortium about the possibility of embedding Smarter Balanced items for linking purposes.*

Test administration procedures, including selection and use of appropriate accommodations: *The Smarter Balanced Assessment introduced a set of accommodations that had not been possible with previous assessments in Maine (e.g., embedded ASL, translations). We will work with our stakeholders to establish priorities for accommodations. We expect that the allowable and feasible list of accommodations/supports will be something between what Maine has historically allowed and what was possible through the Smarter Balanced Consortium.*

Data analysis proposed to document validity and reliability of the assessments: *The Center for Assessment will support us with a design for data collection and analysis to establish the validity and reliability of the new assessment system.*

An independent evaluation of alignment of the assessment with the state’s college- and career-ready standards: *An independent review of quality and alignment led by the National Center for Assessment, guided by CCSSO’s (2015) Criteria for Procuring and Evaluating High-Quality Assessments, will help us to determine any deficits to be addressed for subsequent administration, or whether ultimately we need to go through any procurement process for subsequent administrations.*

The process and timeline for setting college- and career-ready achievement standards and the method and timeline to validate those achievement standards: *To the extent possible, we intend to link the new assessment to the Smarter Balanced Assessment and to carry forward the Smarter Balanced achievement levels. We are in communication with the Smarter Balanced Consortium about the possibility of embedding Smarter Balanced items for linking purposes.*

Meaningful report formats to communicate results to students, parents and educators: *Maine uses a combination of reporting formats to display assessment data in differing levels of detail to answer different questions for different audiences. Attractive and colorful paper reports of individual student results are provided for parents along with*

comparative data to aide interpretation. Online reports of aggregate student data are provided online, both in static form and in interactive form. Some reports are available to the general public and employ stringent suppression rules to protect the privacy of student data. Other reports are designed for an exclusive audience with password-protected access and don't require the same suppression rules. Each year we review reports and determine how to make them clearer, more informative, and more readily accessible.

PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

2.A DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STATE-BASED SYSTEM OF DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA’s plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2013–2014 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

Since December of 2011, Maine has engaged in a statewide discussion leading to establishment of a system for meaningfully measuring student and school growth. Through these discussions, core principles of Maine’s plan for a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system were established. These principles include a commitment to:

1. Establish rigorous learning standards and expectations in reading and mathematics – discussed in Principle 1;
2. Identify and provide targeted and specialized support for Maine’s lowest performing schools (Priority schools);
3. Identify and provide targeted and specialized support for Maine schools with the greatest within-school achievement gaps (Focus schools);
4. Reward the schools with the very best achievement levels and those with significant year-to-year improvements (Reward schools);
5. Provide schools and districts with annual accountability reports with ambitious proficiency goals (new six-year goals) and annual measurable objectives (AMOs) that require every school and district to improve proficiency rates for every student subgroup;
6. Ensure that every Maine school benefits from the instructional practices, organizational design, leadership approaches, and successful parent and community partnerships in place; and
7. Develop a system of statewide and regional supports, including vibrant networks that nurture and grow the capacity for educational excellence envisioned for the

state of Maine. These networks and supports will be made available to all schools, regardless of their Title I status and their performance.

With these principles established, Maine’s Department of Education and our education stakeholders worked to create a system based on two overarching goals: (1) Maine’s high school graduation rate will be 90%; and (2) the percentage of Maine students not meeting learning expectations will decrease by at least half by the 2017-18 school year (in six years)

Maine will use four types of analysis to separate Title 1 schools into 5 categories, and to provide the data needed to inform the interventions and supports to be provided to schools in each category. The following is a brief description of each type of analysis, and a summary of the 5 categories of schools. Additional detail will be provided in Sections 2.D, 2.E and 2.F. These analyses will also provide the basis for determining “Reward” school status, which is described further in Section 2.C.

Maine will use four types of analysis to differentiate among schools

Maine will use the following types of analysis to differentiate among schools to ensure that our recognition, accountability, and support will be directed to the appropriate schools:

School achievement and progress on state assessments

This analysis looks at rates of student proficiency in math and reading as measured by the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) assessments in grades 3-8; the Maine High School Assessment (MHSA) in Grade 11 and the Personalized Alternate Assessment Portfolio (PAAP). To target the greatest amount of assistance to schools with the greatest need, we will identify schools with the lowest 3-year-average student proficiency for the “Whole School” group as “Priority” schools. However, to recognize that some schools with the lowest proficiency rates are already taking steps to improve performance, schools with above-average rates of growth in proficiency will be removed from the Priority category and reviewed for placement in other categories.

Maine’s final administration of the NECAP assessments was conducted in Fall 2013. Commencing in school year 2014-15, Maine will implement the Maine Educational Assessment for Mathematics and English Language Arts developed by SBAC which will provide baseline assessment data for meeting Maine’s updated College and Career Readiness Standards for students in grades 3-8 and in the 3rd year of High School. Maine intends to maintain 2014-15 status identifications through the 2015-16 year and will not identify any new priority or focus schools. Schools previously identified as Priority or Focus will continue to receive the necessary supports from Maine DOE and the School Improvement Coaches. Following the Spring 2015 administration of the SBAC developed assessments, school progress will be reviewed; schools performing in the lowest 5% and not currently identified as priority or focus will be eligible for increased support in 2015-16. Assessment data available in spring 2016 will provide

the first available data to inform growth and progress towards meeting targets. Maine DOE intends to submit an amendment by January 31, 2016, based on pending guidance from US DE, in order to reestablish trajectories based on new assessments. School identifications will resume in 2016-17. For 2014-15, Maine has identified 26 priority schools. This represents 9 additional priority schools identified in 2014-15.

Within-school achievement gaps

The within-school achievement gap index (WSAGI) will identify schools with the highest gaps in achievement between high-performing and low-performing student subgroups. Performance of subgroups with at least 10 members (n-size of 10+) will be analyzed. Those schools with the highest gaps in achievement will be identified as “Focus” schools. Assistance provided to Focus schools will be targeted toward assisting the subgroup or subgroups whose low performance led to identification as a Focus school.

For the 2014-2015 school year, 49 schools have now been identified as Focus on the basis of failing to meet its AMOs in either the whole group or super-subgroup performance. This represents 14 schools identified in 2014-2015

For the 2014-2015 school year, 49 schools have now been identified as Focus on the basis of assessment data identifying the highest gaps in achievement between high-performing and low-performing student groups. This represents 14 schools identified in 2014-2015

Additional subgroup analyses

In addition to identifying schools with the greatest achievement gaps among subgroups, Maine will use additional analyses to ensure that schools with struggling subgroups will be identified for intervention and support. For these analyses, we will look at both the ESEA subgroups with an n-size of at least 10 and a “super-subgroup.”

We have reduced the minimum student group size (the n-size) from 20 to 10; the result of the reduction is that an additional 89 schools will be required to undertake improvement planning focused on subgroup performance. If any subgroup fails to meet its AMOs, the school must file an improvement plan with the Department as part of its annual consolidated application.

Although we have reduced the n-size used in our ESEA accountability system from 20 to 10, there are still many student subgroups in Maine schools that do not meet the n-size. To ensure that they are accounted for, we have created a “super-subgroup” that includes each student who meets one or more of the following descriptions: a student with a disability, a student who qualifies for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, or a student who is African-American, Native American or Hispanic. If either the whole school or the super-subgroup fails to meet or make sufficient progress toward its AMO in both math

and reading, the school is a Monitor school. We identified 22 schools for Monitor status on the basis of super-subgroup performance.

For the 2014-2015 school year, 175 schools have now been identified for Monitor status on the basis of failing to meet its AMOs in either the whole group or super-subgroup performance.

School accountability index (SAI)

The SAI is derived from multiple data points: proficiency in math and reading compared to the school's 6th year proficiency goal; proficiency compared to the expected annual growth (the annual measurable objective or AMO); for elementary schools, the school's median student growth percentile in math and reading and, for high schools the 4-year and 5-year graduation rates as compared to the state goal of 90%. Schools with the lowest SAI are identified as "Monitor" schools, unless they have already been identified as Priority or Focus schools. Schools with the highest SAI are eligible to be considered for Reward status.

**Schools will be placed into one of 5 categories,
with differentiated interventions and supports based on placement**

Based on these analyses, Maine's 380 Title 1-receiving schools will be divided into five categories of schools for purposes of implementing the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system.

Maine continues to provide differentiated supports to the 355 Title I-receiving schools dividing them into the five identified categories discussed below.

First Year of the Accountability System

In the first year of the accountability system, schools will be placed into categories as follows:

Priority Schools. A number of schools equal to 5% of Title 1 schools (19 schools) will be identified as Priority schools. Each Title 1 school meeting any of the following is a Priority school:

- A School Improvement Grant (SIG) school with one or more years remaining on its 3-year plan;
- A Title-1-receiving or Title-1-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60% ; or
- A school with the lowest 3-year average achievement on the School Achievement and Progress (SAP) list and with below-average 3-year progress will be added to the list of SIG schools, as needed to ensure that 5% of Title I schools are identified as Priority schools. However, schools with a testing number of 20

or fewer in the whole school that meet this criterion will be removed from Priority and placed in Monitor in the first year of the accountability system; if they continue to meet this criterion in the 2nd year, they move back to Priority status.

Focus Schools. A number of schools equal to 10% of Title 1 schools (38 schools) will be identified as Focus Schools. A Focus school is a Title 1 school with one of the greatest within-school achievement gaps calculated using a within-school achievement gap index.

Monitor Schools. Each Title 1 school meeting any of the following will be categorized as a Monitor school (unless it is a Priority or Focus school).

- A school in the 15% of schools with the lowest (SAI);
- A school in the 25% of schools with the highest within-school achievement gap indexes for reading or mathematics;
- A school in which either the whole school or the super-subgroup is failing to meet or make sufficient progress toward AMOs in both reading and math. (For example, if the super-subgroup made sufficient progress toward its AMO in reading and the whole school met its AMO in math, the school would NOT be classified as a Monitor school under this criterion. If the super-subgroup failed to meet or make sufficient progress in both reading and math, the school WOULD be a Monitor school);
- A school with a 12th grade that has a graduation rate below the state target of 90% for the whole school or any subgroup;
- A school with a testing enrollment of fewer than 20 in the whole school (small school) that would have qualified for Priority school status based on the SAP analysis in the first year of the accountability system. If the school's data continues to be below the threshold used for identifying Priority schools in year 1, the school will be reclassified as a Priority school.

Schools identified as Monitor for 3 consecutive years will be reviewed and added to either the Priority group for low achievement and progress in the whole school, or the Focus group for low performing subgroups.

Progressing Schools. A Progressing School is a school that meets all of the following criteria:

- It is not identified as a Priority, Focus or Monitor school; and
- The whole school group and the super-subgroup are meeting or making sufficient progress toward AMOs for math or reading (in other words, each of the 2 groups met an AMO or made sufficient progress toward an AMO in at least one of the 2 subject areas)

Meeting Schools. A Title I school that meets all of the following criteria:

- Meeting math and reading AMOs for the whole school and the super-subgroup;
- Meeting participation targets for subgroups meeting the minimum n-size of 41;

- For a school with a 12th grade, meeting the graduation target for the whole school and for each student subgroup;
- For schools with grades 3-8, meeting the schoolwide ADA (average daily attendance) target; and
- NOT in the 25% of Title I schools with the highest within-school achievement gap indexes in either reading or mathematics.

Second and Subsequent Years of the Accountability System

After the first year of the new accountability system, all schools will be reviewed using the same process as described above, with the following exceptions:

(1) Schools identified as Priority and Focus schools in Year 1 will continue in the same category for at least 2 more years, until they meet criteria for exiting that status;

(2) Any school that falls below the Year-1 benchmarks for identification of Priority or Focus schools will be added to the category of Priority or Focus (e.g., a school in Year 2 with school achievement and growth lower than the achievement and growth numbers that caused a school to be placed in Priority status in Year 1 will be placed in Priority status in Year 2); ***For 2014 identifications, the identification of new priority schools was delayed due to unexpected data reporting challenges. For this cohort of schools, an adjusted timeline will be applied. Priority schools will begin planning January 1, 2015 with full implementation of all seven turnaround principles beginning in 2015-16. School Improvement coaches will verify implementation of the seven principles by September 1, 2015. Data from spring 2018 will be used to determine exit status. Should a school not implement all seven turnaround principles by the beginning of 2015-16, the first full year of implementation will begin as soon as the implementation of all seven turnaround principles have been verified. School identifications will be posted to the Maine DOE website as an integral part of the NCLB Report Cards.***

(3) Any school that was excluded from Priority status solely because of its small size (schoolwide testing numbers of 20 or lower) will be placed in Priority status if its SAP ranking stays within the Year-1 benchmark for identification of Priority schools; and

(4) If a school has been in the Monitor category for 3 consecutive years, it will be reviewed and added to either the Priority group for low achievement and progress in the whole school, or the Focus group for low performing subgroups. ***For the 2015-16 school year, if a school that has been in monitor status for two years is in the lowest 5% of performance in the new SBAC developed assessment, the school will be added to either the Priority or Focus school list.***

(5) In order for a school to be identified as meeting, it must continue to meet all of the criteria outlined for identification as Meeting in Year 1.

For 2014 -15, Maine has identified:

- **26 schools to receive Priority supports.**
 - **17 are in their second year of receiving supports**
 - **9 are newly identified priority schools**
- **49 schools to received Focus supports to assist with closing the within-school achievement gap.**
 - **35 are in their second year of receiving supports**
 - **14 are newly identified focus schools**
- **175 schools as monitor schools not achieving identified AMOs**
 - **Additional 15 identified above 14 identifications**
- **81 progressing schools making sufficient progress towards identified AMOs in math or reading in the whole school and super-subgroups.**
- **14 schools meeting identified AMOs.**

The identification of Maine’s new Priority and Focus schools for 2013 -14 followed the outlined protocols. For subsequent years, any school falling below the Year-1 benchmarks for identification as Priority or Focus schools were added to the Priority or Focus categories. Schools with school a three-year average achievement lower than 50.67% proficient and growth lower than 0.72 % caused the school to be placed in Priority status. Schools identified 2014-15 were added to the Priority and Focus schools identified in 2013-14 creating a second Cohort of Priority or Focus schools.

- **26 total schools receive Priority supports.**
 - **17 are in their second year of receiving supports (identified in 2013 -14)**
 - **9 are newly identified Priority schools (identified 2014-15) and added to the original 17 schools identified as Priority schools in 2013 -14.**
- **49 schools to received Focus supports to assist with closing the within-school achievement gap.**
 - **35 are in their second year of receiving supports (identified in 2013 -14)**
 - **14 are newly identified Focus schools (identified 2014 -15) and added to the original 35 schools identified as Focus schools in 2013 -14.**

**Schools showing extraordinary performance or progress
will be eligible for recognition as Reward schools**

Maine will also recognize **Reward** schools. These schools will be differentiated in two ways:

1. **High-Performance** schools (up to 5%, or 19 schools)
 - ✓ Title I schools that rank in the top 15% on the overall SAI score and that meet all of the following criteria:
 - ✓ Identified as Meeting schools(i.e., not in the highest 25% on the within-school achievement gap or the lowest 15% on SAI; meeting AMOs for the whole school and the super-subgroup; meeting participation rates for all subgroups of 41 or

more; and meeting either the schoolwide ADA target for schools with grade 3-8 or the graduation rate target for the whole school and all subgroups for a school with a 12th grade; and

- ✓ Meeting AMOs for all student subgroups of 10 or more.

2. High-Progress Schools (up to 5%, or 19 schools)

- ✓ Title I schools demonstrating the greatest level of change on the SAP list over a 3 year period, and demonstrating the highest 3 year average among those high-progress schools and meeting all of the following criteria:
 - ✓ Meeting or exceeding at least one of their AMOs for the whole school or super-subgroup in either reading or mathematics;
 - ✓ Making sufficient progress on all other AMOs for the whole school and the super-subgroup;
 - ✓ Meeting all targets related to participation for subgroups meeting the minimum n-size of 41, school level targets for ADA for grades 3-8 and graduation rate for high school; and
 - ✓ NOT in the 25% of schools with the highest within-school achievement gap indexes in reading or math.
 - ✓ ***Do not have within-school achievement or graduation gaps that are not closing across all subgroups that meet the minimum n-size of 10.***
 - ***Data used as part of the Focus determination, which includes subgroup analysis, will be reviewed to ensure that school identified as reward schools are decreasing gaps.***

Maine will identify and recognize Reward schools annually with the criteria outlined in this section to ensure that all elements are demonstrated. Maine has currently identified 24 Reward schools who either meet the high-performance or high-progress criteria. This is broken down as follows:

- ✓ ***12 high-performance***
- ✓ ***12 high-progress***

Reward schools will be identified on the Maine DOE website to inform the NCLB Report Card.

All Maine schools will receive accountability reports

It is important to note that the requirements of the accountability system described here apply only to schools that receive federal Title I program funds. Nevertheless, in an effort to ensure schools and communities have the most meaningful information; Maine will continue to publish school- and district-based report cards, as outlined in the non-regulatory guidance for state and local report cards, dated February 8, 2013.

Schools and districts also receive a detailed accountability report indicating how well their students are performing and progressing on important outcome measures such as graduation,

participation, and attendance rates for all students, and proficiency and progress toward AMOs for all subgroups, such as economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students. This detailed internal accountability report incorporates components of the SAI and provides data which informs the school's improvement process. These reports will include the following information:

- Rate of participation for all groups meeting the minimum n-size of 41;
- Baseline proficiency data from 2011-12 assessments for all subgroups, including the super-subgroup;
- Proficiency data from the most current year of assessment data for all subgroups, including the super-subgroup;
- AMOs for the current year for all subgroups, including the super-subgroup;
- Proficiency goal for all subgroups, including the super-subgroup; and
- Schoolwide ADA rates for schools with grades 3-8
- Graduation rates for high schools for the whole school and each subgroup with n-size of 10+.

Maine DOE will also publish information related to the SAI, and within-school achievement gap indexes for mathematics and reading for all schools on the Department's Longitudinal Data site.

Maine continues to provide and publish school-and-district based report cards providing detailed accountability indicating student performance and progress pertaining to graduation, participation and attendance rates for all students, and proficiency and progress toward identified AMOs for all subgroups.

Maine will ensure that schools receiving an ESEA identification of Priority, Focus and Reward will be posted on the Maine DOE website on an annual basis.

Maine will continue to provide and publish state and local report cards containing all required components as outlined below:

- ***Student achievement data based on State assessments***
- ***Participation rate on State assessments***
- ***Student achievement based on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)***
- ***Accountability data***
- ***Graduation rate***
- ***Information on ESEA identified schools***
- ***Teacher quality data***

College-going and College-Credit Accumulation Data (State report cards only: It should be noted that Maine DOE produces the NCLB report card for state, district and school levels as outlined under ESEA section 1111(h)(1 and (h)(2). Shortly after posting the 2014-15 NCLB report cards, concerns related to data privacy were raised and the report cards were pulled from the Maine DOE website. The report cards are currently in process of being rerun and will

be reported as soon as the revision process has been completed. For 2015-16, the NCLB report cards are on scheduled for posting in mid to late September, following the completion of Department data reviews. Currently, schools status information, as well as assessment data for all schools and all required subgroups is available on the Maine DOE website in the Education Data Warehouse.

http://dw.education.maine.gov/DirectoryManager/Web/Maine_report/DTHome.aspx

The reporting of data related to College-going and College-Credit Accumulation data was delayed by formatting issues with the data files.). Steps have been underway to complete the steps need to report this data element for 2014-15 The latest (2014 graduates) National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker State reports are now loaded in the Research and Reports section of the public data warehouse. The individual high school reports will be loaded this month (there are three reports per school – Basic, Academics and Demographics, and we expect this step to be completed shortly. For 2015-16, we expect reporting to follow our expected timeline, which is to send the request file to the National Student Clearinghouse every April and post them that month. College-going reports are posted in the Education Data Warehouse.

<http://dw.education.maine.gov/DirectoryManager/Web/ResearchAndReports/ResearchAndReportsSearch.aspx?domainid=4>

Interventions and support will be provided for struggling schools, beginning with a comprehensive school assessment and planning process

In order for the State to understand the needs of its high-need schools, schools will conduct a comprehensive self-assessment. The self-assessment instrument will be aligned with the seven ESEA Turnaround Principles by:

1. Providing strong leadership by: (1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the SEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget;
2. Ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by: (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs;
3. Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;

4. Strengthening the school’s instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards;
5. Using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;
6. Establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students’ social, emotional, and health needs; and
7. Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

Currently, Title I schools implementing School Improvement Grants (SIG) use INDISTAR, an online performance management tool, to support planning and progress. Additionally, a number of Maine educators use the New England Secondary School Consortium *Global Best Practices Toolkit* (Appendix 3). Alignment to the ESEA turnaround principles will be identified for both tools. Self-assessment and planning will proceed in the following manner.

1. The self-assessment needs to be thorough and involve all faculty.
2. The DOE School Improvement Specialist will provide direct support and facilitation to the school regarding the self-assessment.
3. Once the self-assessment is complete, the school will construct a comprehensive 3-year school improvement plan addressing:
 - The results of the self-assessment;
 - The 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles; and
 - Strategies that will lead to improved student learning and growth.
4. The plan will be supported by a bank of promising strategies aligned with the turnaround principles drawn both from research and from best practices found in Maine schools that have successfully demonstrated progress under the current accountability system. This bank of promising and effective strategies will be made available to all schools in the state, regardless of their accountability status and their Title I designation.
5. The plan must be developed collaboratively by a representative group of stakeholders.
6. The plan will be submitted to the Maine DOE for review and approval. Maine DOE will use a plan review rubric aligned with the 7 turnaround principles.
7. Upon approval by the Maine DOE ESEA team, available funds will be distributed to the school.

8. Direct support will be provided by the Maine DOE via the assigned School Improvement Specialist.

Schools identified as Priority continue to utilize INDISTAR® to support school improvement planning, implementation and progress. Through continued dialogue and plan development between schools and school improvement coaches, it was determined that timelines for planning be more flexible and determined by the schools capacity for implementation. All Priority schools are still required to implement all seven turnaround principles in year one through the 18 designated indicators for improvement within their first year of identification; however, there is flexibility in how those indicators are assessed. This allows the schools greater autonomy and flexibility in identifying initial school improvement priorities and provides a more in-depth comprehensive review of the indicator with increased specificity and improvement strategy implementation with fidelity.

**A wide variety of resources and assistance
will be available to all Maine schools**

Maine is deeply committed to ensuring that the ongoing improvement efforts of our schools are well-informed and supported. To that end, a myriad of activities and resources will be made available not only to Focus and Priority schools, but to all public schools regardless of their Title I status.

The activities and resources are described in Table 1. Table 2 indicates, by school category, which of the activities or resources is required to be performed, and which is available to a school as needed and desired.

Table 1. Activities and Resources Description

Intervention & Support	Description, rationale, outcomes
Self-Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to engage in honest reflection, collaborative reflection that specifically analyzes root cause and informs areas that need highest level of intervention. This will provide baseline data for development of improvement plan.
Improvement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline annual goals, based on measurable objectives, using research-based indicators/high-leverage strategies aligned with root cause and hoped-for outcomes • Contains clear and explicit timelines • Informs ongoing reflection by providing benchmarks and progress toward target and leads to a continuous cycle of planning, implementing, reviewing

Intervention & Support	Description, rationale, outcomes
Alignment with 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As mentioned, the self-assessment and proposed strategies in Focus schools must be aligned with the 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles. The Maine DOE School Improvement Specialist assigned to each Focus school will support and ensure this alignment.
Targeted Title I accountability / ESEA directed funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title I (1003(A)) school improvement funds will be used to support Priority and Focus schools
District level set-aside of regular Title I district allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any district with a Title I school identified as a Priority or Focus school will have the option to set aside an amount up to 20% of its regular Title I-A allocation that is reasonable and necessary to implement appropriate and rigorous interventions as outlined in its school improvement plans, with matching funds available from 1003(a) funding. This requirement continues for as long as the district contains one or more Priority or Focus schools. Districts requesting matching funds will be required to submit a project sheet through the annual consolidated application process. Projects will be reviewed and approved by SEA Title I staff to ensure alignment with school improvement plans. Any district with a Title I school identified as a Monitor school will have the option to set aside an amount up to 20% of its regular Title I-A allocation that is reasonable and necessary to implement appropriate and rigorous interventions as outlined in its school improvement plans. Districts will be required to submit a project sheet through the annual consolidated application process. Projects will be reviewed and approved by SEA Title I staff to ensure alignment with school improvement plans. Priority and Focus schools not demonstrating progress during their first two years will be required to direct additional funds to support/implement higher levels of intervention beyond the capacity of 1003(a) funds. Districts required to employ the set-aside will be required to submit a project sheet through the annual NCLB consolidated application process. Projects will be reviewed and approved by Title I staff to ensure alignment with school improvement plans.

Intervention & Support	Description, rationale, outcomes
Convert to Schoolwide Title I status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority schools that do not have schoolwide Title I status will be required to change their designation so that Title I-funded services will be made available to all students. This will allow greater flexibility of use of district Title I allocation to the school and provide greater levels of resources to support school-based interventions, supports, and school improvement activities
School-based improvement team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School improvement must be a collaborative process and include all stakeholders in the school (administrators, teachers, parents, etc.). This strategy also clearly aligns with the 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles and is based on research/best practices
DOE Title I School Improvement Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides facilitation of planning process • Serves as school improvement coach providing guidance and support (technical assistance) • Serves as an external critical friend to the process • Provides monitoring from SEA level • Serves as a conduit of information between the SEA and LEA
Specialized DOE support (e.g. Response to Intervention, Students With Disabilities, English Language Learners, Content Areas and other Student Services such as truants, dropouts, homeless, migrant students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Maine DOE’s team of professionals who are responsible for organizing and providing specialized support to LEAs will be – in part - directed to serve schools identified in the new accountability system • Their work will be coordinated by the Chief Academic Officer and by the Title I School Improvement Office • This work will coordinate the sharing of resources and information and where and when appropriate, possibly provide training between the work of specialists within the SEA targeted to schools in the Title I system • This will also continue to focus on ongoing work inside the DOE to refocus and refine responsibilities of Maine DOE personnel guided by the Strategic Plan
Affinity / Special Issue Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These networks – or Professional Learning Groups – will provide opportunities for schools with issues in common to share best practices and engage in collaborative support work to address similar challenges and dilemmas • Provides a way to focus and harness specialized resources and supports for most critical needs • Results in more efficient use of resources • When appropriate, these networks will meet and continue to collaborate using online means of communication

Intervention & Support	Description, rationale, outcomes
Regional Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together schools in a region, again for efficiency • Honors unique differences across Maine’s very large geographic area • Fosters school to school relationships leading to the establishment of authentic and powerful Professional Learning Groups or Networks • DOE will facilitate a connection with already existing regional support organizations that serve schools in a particular region with established track record of successful support (e.g.(WMEC): Western Maine Educational Collaborative; CACE: Central Aroostook Council on Education; DEEP: Down East Education Partnership; etc.,)
Transformational Leaders Network (Regional and grade level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This existing network – bringing together school principals and building-based leaders – will grow and continue to assist in the planning and implementation of school improvement plans.
Quarterly/Continuous progress reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will allow Maine DOE to follow progress more closely and support mid-course corrections when needed • Leads to monitoring and supporting of the implementation of the school improvement plan • Prompts ongoing reflection in the school improvement cycle
Annual improvement plan evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-end comprehensive report illustrating progress of student learning and growth • Includes year-end budget report • Prompts reflection (lessons learned and implications for subsequent planning) • Provides evidence of implementation
Maine DOE-sponsored school improvement events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on common need as gathered from school performance data, and/or feedback from school improvement consultants, from the schools and analysis of schools’ self-assessment • Provides economy of scale for professional development • In the past, the Maine DOE has offered single and multi-day training around math, data-driven decision-making, formative assessments. The list of topics and issues addressed will expand to include ongoing support for CCR implementation.

Intervention & Support	Description, rationale, outcomes
Maine DOE web-based improvement resources for best practices (instruction, leadership, community engagement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all schools. Resources are preliminary vetted by the Maine DOE and general process for guiding the selection and implementation of tools. Schools can choose from a variety of tools (e.g. there could be several assessment and action planning tools to choose from) University faculty and researchers as part of a board of advisors to Maine DOE school improvement division along with representatives from Reward schools to provide review and consideration guidance around tools and resources
Online AMO, SAI, and Within-School Gap Index calculator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This easy-to-use online calculator will allow schools to develop their 6-year AMO targets, expected annual targets for each grade level and subgroup for reading and math, and HS graduation rate. It also provides real-time data analysis providing schools with an indication of where they are on each index.

Table 2. Interventions and supports by accountability designation

A check-mark in a box means that the intervention or support in the left-hand column is required for a school in the accountability category named across the top of the table.

	Priority	Focus	Monitor	Progressing	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Self-Assessment	✓	✓	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available
Improvement Plan	✓	✓	✓	Available*	Available*	Available	Available
Alignment with 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Targeted Title I accountability / ESEA directed funds	✓	✓	Available (if applicable)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Convert to Schoolwide Title I status	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	N/A
School-based improvement team	✓	✓	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available
DOE Specialist Assigned	✓	✓	Available	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	Priority	Focus	Monitor	Progressing	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Affinity / Special Issue Networks	√	√	√	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)
Regional Networks	√	Available (if applicable)					
Specialized DOE support (RTI, Content, etc.)	√	√	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Transformational Leaders Network	√	√	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Quarterly progress reports	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Annual improvement plan evaluation	√	√	√	N/A*	N/A*	N/A	N/A
DOE-sponsored school improvement events	√	√	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
User-friendly Maine DOE web-based improvement resources for best practices (instruction, leadership, community engagement)	√	√	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Online AMO, SAI, and Gap Index calculator	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available

* Any LEA with one or more Title I schools with subgroups not meeting AMOs or graduation rate targets, or not meeting ADA or participation targets will be required to provide improvement plans and annual reporting as a component of the consolidated application process. Improvement plans must address the AMOs and targets that were missed. Applicable interventions and supports will be made available to support improvement efforts in these schools.

The theory of action with providing these interventions and supports is that schools will improve when all stakeholders are involved in a comprehensive, collaborative, long-term

process that is informed by a research-based framework that begins by analyzing root cause and directs strategies and resources where they are needed most. In order to understand whether or not the interventions and supports are working, Priority and Focus schools will implement their comprehensive school plan and be supported by the Maine DOE for at least three years. Exit criteria are described in section 2.D.v for Priority schools and 2.E.iv for Focus schools.

After Priority and Focus schools demonstrate progress toward their targets for 3 consecutive years, they will continue to receive limited support and monitoring by Maine DOE until they exit their status.

Schools that do not demonstrate growth during the first two years of targeted support as either Priority or Focus will experience an expanded set of interventions and supports. These include:

- A Maine DOE/External review team will conduct school assessment using an instrument that is aligned with the 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles.
- The Maine DOE team will support and approve the construction of an updated school improvement plan informed by the external review.
- Focus schools not demonstrating progress during the first two years must address all 7 Turnaround Principles.
- All Priority and Focus schools not demonstrating progress during the first two years must also set-aside 20% of their district Title I allocation to support the school improvement plan. The school must submit a proposed spending plan for these funds to the Maine DOE for approval through the NCLB consolidated application process. Title I staff will review and approve plans based on alignment between the proposed activities and the school improvement plan. If there still is no improvement from year 3 to year 4, then the school must identify – with the guidance and approval of the Maine DOE, and at the district’s expense, - at least one certified specialist - whose primary responsibility will be to provide ongoing classroom-based professional development and support around the implementation of best practices for instruction. The area of expertise of this classroom-based professional and their work in the school must directly align with the identified needs that result from the externally conducted school assessment. Districts may use funds from the required 20% set-aside to meet this requirement.

2.A.ii *Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.*

Option A

- The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.

2.B SET AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Select the method the SEA will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts. If the SEA sets AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, the AMOs for LEAs, schools, or subgroups that are further behind must require greater rates of annual progress.

Option A

Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2011–2012 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.

- i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.

Six-year Proficiency Goals

Maine will establish proficiency goals in mathematics and reading in a manner that cuts in half, by 2017-18, the percentage of students who are not proficient in reading or math. Targets will be specific to each school, each subject and each subgroup within a school, including the super-subgroup. Proficiency goals will be established for each subgroup regardless of whether the minimum n-size of 10 is reached. However, only subgroups with 10 or more members (including the super-subgroup) are used in determining school categories. **Maine DOE intends to submit an amendment by January 31, 2016, based on pending guidance from US DE, in order to reestablish trajectories based on new assessments.**

Example:

(Imaginary) Pineville Middle School’s proficiency rates in the 2011-12 school year are as follows:

	Math	Reading
Caucasian/White	52	60
African American/Black	33	22
Hispanic	42	35
Asian or Pacific Islander	73	75
American Indian/Native Alaskan	50	40
Economically Disadvantaged	48	48
Students with Disabilities	38	50
Limited English Proficient	22	23
Super-subgroup	46	44

A proficiency goal for school year 2017-18 will be established for Pineville Middle School, for each subject that's assessed, and for each sub-group within that school.

An example of the calculation of the proficiency goal for one subject, demonstrating a sample of subgroups, is shown below:

Pineville Middle School, for math, for the school year 2017-18

Caucasian/White:

2011-12 proficiency rate = 52%

% of non-proficient students = 48% (100% - 52%)

Increase in proficiency needed to cut non-proficiency in half = 24 (half of 48)

Proficiency Goal = 76% (52% + 24%)

Economically Disadvantaged

2011-12 proficiency rate = 48%

% of non-proficient students = 52% (100% - 48%)

Increase in proficiency needed to cut non-proficiency in half = 26 (half of 52)

Proficiency Goal = 74% (26% + 48%)

Students with Disabilities

2011-12 proficiency rate = 38%

% of non-proficient students = 62% (100% - 38)

Increase in proficiency needed to cut non-proficiency in half = 31 (half of 62)

Proficiency Goal = 69% (31% + 38%)

Super-subgroup

2011-12 proficiency rate = 46%

% of non-proficient students = 54% (100% - 46)

Increase in proficiency needed to cut non-proficiency in half = 27 (half of 54)

Proficiency Goal = 27% + 46% = 73%

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

The annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for Pineville Middle School will be determined by dividing into 6 equal increments the percentage number needed to reach the proficiency goal over 6 years. An AMO will be determined for each school in each tested subject, for each student sub-group and for the super-subgroup

Example:

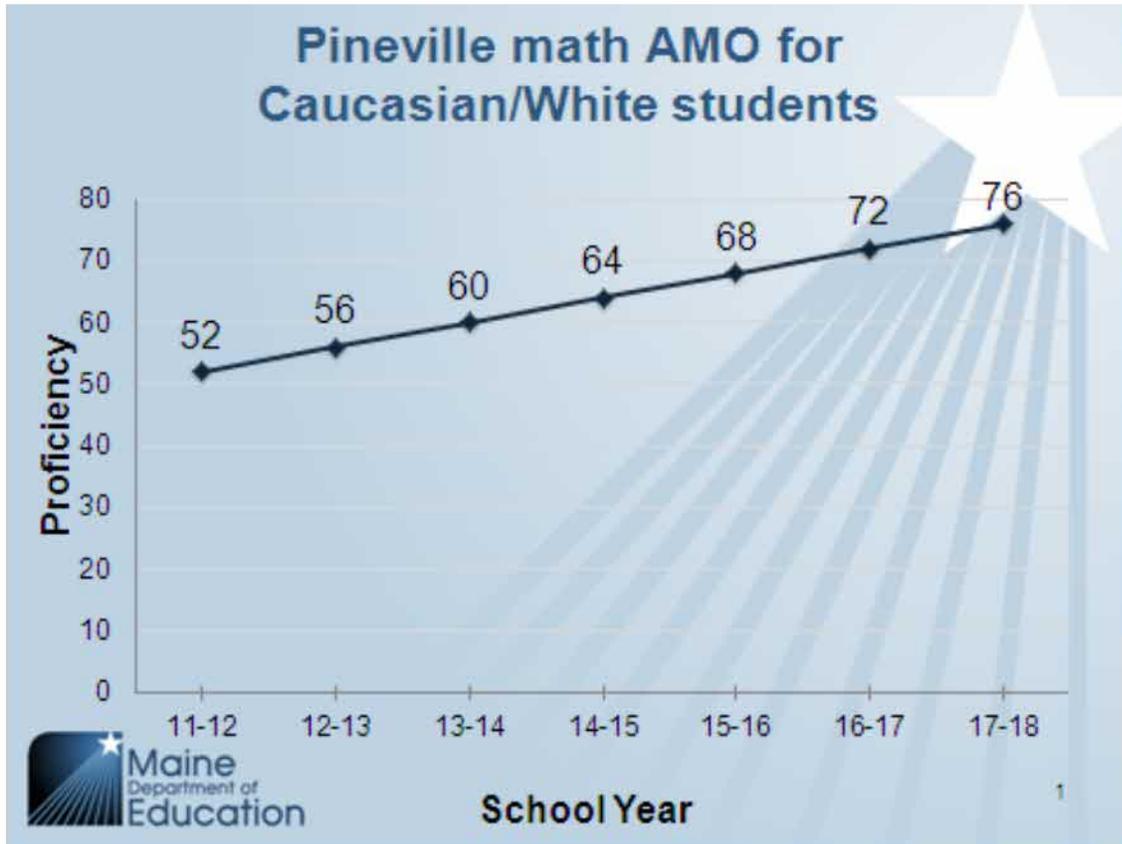
Pineville Middle School, Math

Caucasian/White

To reduce the non-proficiency rate by 50%, Pineville must increase the proficiency rate by 24 points over 6 years

24 points/6 years = 4 points/year

The proficiency rate for this subgroup must increase by 4 points each year, beginning in school year 2012-13



2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

2.C.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools . If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in ESEA Flexibility (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

A new feature of Maine’s Title I accountability system is the addition of two separate categories of reward schools: high performance schools and high progress schools.

High Performance Reward schools

Maine will recognize up to 5% of Title I schools that demonstrate the highest student achievement levels, provided they do not have high within-school achievement gaps. To be a High Performance Reward school, a school must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- ✓ Among the 15% of schools with the highest SAI; and
- ✓ Identified as a “Meeting ” school (i.e., they have met each of their AMOs for math and reading for the whole school and the super-subgroup; have met participation targets for subgroups of 41+; have met the schoolwide ADA target for grades 3-8 or the graduation rate for the whole school and all subgroups for high school; and are not in the 25% of schools with the highest within-school achievement gap indexes in math or reading); and
- ✓ Met AMOs in math and reading for each subgroup.

High Progress Reward school

In addition, Maine will recognize as a **high progress** school, up to 5% of Title I schools that do not meet the High Performance Reward school criteria, but which have demonstrated the greatest level of improvement over a 3-year period. To be a High Progress Reward school, a school must satisfy all of the following:

- ✓ Among the 15% of Title I schools demonstrating the greatest level of improvement on the School Achievement and Progress list over a 3-year period, and demonstrating the highest 3-year averages among those with high progress;
- ✓ Meeting or exceeding at least one of their AMOs for the whole school or super-subgroup in either reading or mathematics;
- ✓ Making sufficient progress on all other AMOs for the whole school and the super-subgroup. “Sufficient progress” means that they are at least 50% of the way between the prior year and the current year AMOs;
- ✓ Meeting all targets related to participation for subgroups meeting the minimum n- size of 41, schoolwide targets for ADA (for a school with grades 3-8) and graduation rate targets for whole school and subgroups (for a school with a 12th grade); and
- ✓ NOT in the 25% of schools with the highest within-school achievement gap indexes.

Maine will identify and recognize Reward schools annually with the criteria outlined in the 2013 application to ensure that all elements are demonstrated.

2.C.ii Provide the SEA’s list of reward schools in Table 2.

2.C.iii Describe how the SEA will publicly recognize and, if possible, reward highest-performing and high-progress schools.

.....

Maine has many high performing schools resulting from a myriad of innovative, best practices implemented across the state. In some instances these translate to consistent high performance among students and in other cases it is evidenced by impressive annual growth in student achievement and attainment. Maine’s high progress and high performance reward schools will be recognized in a variety of ways. Maine DOE will:

1. Announce its annual list of Reward schools in a press conference and prominently display this list on its website;
2. Profile Reward schools and feature them in the weekly Commissioner’s Update email and blog post;
3. Send every Reward school a special electronic seal that it can display on its website and stationary;
4. Invite educators from Reward schools to share their successful school improvement work with colleagues during some of the state and regional Maine DOE-sponsored events and conferences; and
5. Create a group of advisors from the group of Reward schools that will meet periodically during the year to help inform and provide feedback to the Maine DOE’s Chief Academic Officer, a senior position newly created to oversee the state’s school improvement and accountability efforts.

2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

2.D.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State’s Title I schools as priority schools. If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in ESEA Flexibility (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

Maine’s Title I receiving schools with the lowest overall performance will comprise the group of schools receiving the most comprehensive and intensive supports and will be designated as Priority schools. Maine DOE will identify at least 5% of its Title I schools in this category. As there are approximately 380 Maine schools receiving Title I funds, this means that 19 schools will receive this Priority school determination.

The following groups of schools will be placed in the Priority category:

- All Title 1-receiving or Title-1 eligible high schools with a graduation rate of 60% or lower. Currently, there are no Maine high schools that meet this criterion;

- All schools in the federal SIG program with one or more years remaining on their 3-year improvement plan. There are currently 4 schools that meet this criterion – one school recently identified for school year 2012-13 and 3 schools identified for the 2011-12 school year; and
- Schools in the lowest ranking of schools based on 3-year average proficiency in math and reading and 3-year progress as determined by the SAP list.
- ***For 2015-16 all schools identified as priority or SIG in 2014-15 and 2013-14 maintain Priority school identification.***
- ***For 2016-17 Schools in the lowest 5% of overall performance and not meeting the State average for progress will be added to existing schools identified as Priority schools. The average performance of 2014-15 and 2015-16 combined proficiency of ELA and Math will be calculated and examined. The averages will be rank ordered. A comparison of combined proficiencies for ELA and Math from 2014-15 to 2015-16 will be calculated to determine the state average for progress.***
- ***For 2017-18 Schools identified as being in the lowest 5% in 2016-17, that did not demonstrate continued progress at a rate at or above the State average for progress will be added to existing schools identified as priority schools. Progress in 2017-18 will be determined by comparing the combined proficiencies for mathematics and English language Arts in 2014-15 to 2016-17.***
 - **Number.** The number of schools to be identified from this rank-ordered list will be the number of schools needed to reach a total of 5% of Title 1 schools (19), after counting the SIG schools (4) and the below-60% graduation rate schools (0). Based on this requirement, Maine will identify the bottom 15 schools on this rank-ordered list. ***In 2015-16, the number of Title I schools will be reviewed to ensure that the required minimum of 5% have been identified as Priority for 2016-17.***
 - **Exception.** An exception to Priority designation will be made for a school with a testing population of 20 or fewer in the whole school. To address volatility of data and calculation in such small schools, a school that falls within the 15 lowest-ranking schools would be identified as a Monitor school in the first year rather than a Priority school. If the school falls within the lowest rankings for 2 consecutive years, it would be identified as a Priority school.

Schools in the lowest ranking of schools will be identified based on the criteria, and by the method, used to identify schools eligible for Title 1 School Improvement Grants. The identification for Title 1 SIG uses the following process:

1. In accordance with the U.S. Department of Education Guidance for the Title 1 School Improvement Grant, Maine reviewed each school’s annual results for reading and math for the “All Students” group on the New England Comprehensive Assessment Program (NECAP), Maine High School Assessment (MHSA) and Personalized Alternate Assessment Portfolio (PAAP).
2. A percentage of proficiency, based on the students tested compared to those with an achievement level of “meets the standard” or “exceeds the standard” was calculated for reading and then for math.
3. The two percentages (reading and math) were then averaged to create an annual percentage of proficiency. An annual percentage of proficiency was calculated for the assessment years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12, and a 3-year average of proficiency was produced based those 3 annual percentages.
4. A determination of progress was then made by calculating the change in the rate of proficiency for reading and math combined from 2009-10 to 2010-11 and from 2010-11 to 2011-12. The two rates were then totaled. A median 3-year change rate was identified.

In order to use this data for identification of Priority schools, Maine will rank-order schools based on the annual percentage of proficiency for the most recent testing year. The bottom 15 schools will be identified as Priority schools, unless any school has a 3-year change rate above the average rate. Any such school will be removed from the Priority list and replaced by the next school on the rank-ordered list. A school removed from the Priority list because of an above-average growth rate will be evaluated for placement in other categories.

As outlined in the bulleted descriptions of schools to be identified as Priority schools, the methodology for 2015-2017 has been updated to reflect Maine’s transition to assessments aligned to our updated standards.

2.D.ii Provide the SEA’s list of priority schools in Table 2.

2.D.iii Describe the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that an LEA with priority schools will implement.

.....

Once a Priority school is identified, Maine DOE assigns one of 13 School Improvement Specialists to the school. School Improvement Specialists are all former principals and many are also former superintendents or central office leaders. Collectively, they have extensive experience and expertise in the range of school grades, and have backgrounds supporting

literacy, mathematics and students with disabilities. The work of School Improvement Specialists is coordinated by a full-time Maine DOE staff member who reports directly to the Title 1 Director.

School Improvement Specialists are assigned to a school based on a match between the school needs and the experience and skill of the specialists. Each school is assigned at least one specialist; if the needs assessment indicates a greater need, an additional specialist may be assigned.

Specialists work directly with the school or LEA, as described below and act as liaison with the DOE, sharing data and information on what's working or what's not working. There are regular opportunities, supported by the Title 1 Director and program staff to continuously share information and reflect on the progress of each school. This includes monthly meetings to discuss school plans, review challenges, and share strategies for success. Title I School Improvement Specialists are included in any of the meetings and/or trainings provided for the NCLB Federal programs team and the larger Learning Systems Team. These activities provide a venue to collaborate and discuss partial-year and emerging needs of each school with the goal of taking advantage of the collective experience of the specialists. This process also ensures that there is ongoing monitoring of student performance and school implementation data leading to immediate and responsive modifications to the school's plans, if warranted.

Once assigned, the specialist facilitates and supports the school leadership in conducting an overall school needs assessment aligned with the ESEA Turnaround Principles based on the results of the self-assessment and on student achievement and attainment data, the school leadership team and the specialist will construct a 3-year school improvement plan and demonstrate how it is aligned with the ESEA Turnaround Principles.

The results of this thoughtful and collaborative process will inform the development of a multi-year school improvement plan – which will be signed by the principal, superintendent and school board chair – that must propose implementing research-based best practices that align with the ESEA Turnaround Principles. Short- and long-term goals are identified – including explicit statements about the performance of students (whole school and subgroup).

Once the needs are identified and the goals are established, a customized set of detailed strategies and action steps are identified for implementation in consultation with the Maine DOE School Improvement specialist and other experts in the Maine DOE as needed. The plan is then implemented, supported, monitored, reported, and adjusted with the support of the.

The entire process is built on and supported by Indistar®, the nationally recognized and universally used online school improvement and performance management tool used in several states, including Virginia, South Dakota, and others. Indistar® is presently used in 26 states and informs improvement work in over 6,000 schools.

Indistar® supports customized school-based improvement planning that incorporates a continuous improvement cycle aligned with ESEA Turnaround Principles and best practices. Indistar® also allows the school district to select a set of indicators (see attached table; KEY are strategies deemed to be highest leverage and represent the non-negotiables in which Priority schools in Maine will need to engage) that support the kinds of improvement activities best suited to that school’s needs.

The Maine DOE worked with Indistar® to identify the non-negotiable improvement steps and strategies known as “indicators” that are labeled with the term “KEY.” The Maine DOE School Improvement Specialist works very closely with the school’s principal and leadership team to identify and implement other indicators that best suit and meet the needs of schools.

There is an online portal in Indistar® that allows for the collection of meeting minutes, organization and presentation of quarterly data, and other data through the year. Indistar® also includes an electronic repository for planning and implementation materials that support the ongoing work of the school and ensures that strategies are identified that have the greatest likelihood of addressing the specific needs of the school and the students who are performing the poorest.

Indistar® provides online tutorials on the majority of the indicators, including videos of teachers, principals, and teams demonstrating the indicators in practice. Access will be provided to school leaders and educators as well as Maine DOE specialists who can collaborate in person and virtually throughout the year. Maine DOE specialists will review the quality and comprehensiveness of submitted plans using a rubric that is aligned with the high quality criteria established by Indistar® and developed internally at the Maine DOE

Once the improvement plan is approved by the Maine ESEA team, funds will be released to the school and implementation will occur. Implementation support and guidance will be provided by the Maine DOE School Improvement Specialist.

As discussed in Principle 2.A.i, a myriad of activities and resources will be made available to Priority schools. The Priority school activities and services are shown in the table provided in section 2.A.i.

2.D.iv Provide the timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA’s choice of timeline.

.....

Schools identified as Priority schools during the summer of 2013 – the first year of implementation – will immediately begin the cycle of needs assessment, short- and long-term

goal setting, planning, implementation, monitoring, and adjusting. It is expected that the needs-assessment will be conducted in those schools beginning in the summer and concluding in the fall so that plans can be implemented as soon as possible so that students can benefit immediately. The table below sets forth a timeline for implementing a turnaround model, demonstrating that meaningful interventions will be implemented no later than the 2014-15 school year.

Due Date Task	Task
September 3, 2013	The superintendent completes required form for implementing Turnaround Principle 1. Form will indicate whether the current principal will be replaced or will continue. Justification will be required for continuing principals, providing evidence of a track record in improving achievement and the ability to lead the turnaround effort. Assurance providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget will be required. (specific forms currently in development)
September 13, 2013	The principal completes required form providing contact information to the Maine DOE Office of School Accountability and Improvement (OSAI)
September 30, 2013	The superintendent completes required form for implementing Turnaround Principle 2. Form will indicate a review of the quality of all staff and intent to retain only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort. Assurance that school/district administration will prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools will be required. (specific forms currently in development)
September 2013 through January 2014	The principal and school improvement team leaders including SEA assigned Title I school improvement consultant will view a series of four recorded webinars on how to use Indistar® to create school improvement plans. The recorded webinars will be made available for viewing online on the Maine DOE website.
September 2013 through January 2014	The principal and school improvement team leaders including SEA assigned Title I school improvement consultant will complete required form for implementing Turnaround Principles. Form outlines initial plans for addressing each principle, with annual update required. Implementation of improvement plans will begin no later than November 1, 2013, starting with immediate, short term goals. Strategies for addressing each of the Turnaround Principles must be determined no later than January 31, 2014.
October 1, 2013	The principal and school leadership team members including SEA assigned Title I school improvement consultant will have viewed Session 1 of the recorded webinar series and will have entered into Indistar® information about the school,

	the school leadership team, demographic information, and limited academic assessment information. The timeline for viewing the webinar series represents the maximum time allowed. Schools may complete the series in a shorter timeframe, if possible.
November 1, 2013	The principal and school leadership team members including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will have viewed Session 2 of the recorded webinar series and will have completed assessment of the required indicators in Indistar®.
December 2, 2013	The principal and school leadership team members including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will have viewed Session 3 of the recorded webinar series and will have identified and recorded tasks in support of the required indicators on Indistar®
January 17, 2014	The principal and school leadership team members including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will have viewed Session 4 of the recorded webinar series on monitoring the plan and using data to update it.
January 17, 2014 and April 30, 2014	Draft school improvement plans will be submitted via the Indistar® Dashboard. The SEA Title I school Improvement consultant assigned to the school improvement team will review the school improvement plan and submit a completed Indistar® rubric to the Maine DOE Office of School Accountability and Improvement (formerly the Office of School Improvement (OSI)) The Office will spot-check and provide feedback to some schools.
June 30, 2014	Completed school improvement plans will be submitted via the Indistar® Dashboard for review and monitoring of progress toward implementation of Turnaround Principles This will inform goals and strategies for year 2.
June 30, 2014 through June 2015	The principal and school leadership team members including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will monitor the school improvement plan by recording updated tasks on Indistar®, and will continue to do so on at least a monthly basis through June 30, 2015.

Maine DOE’s team identified that three years would be the length of time to identify and implement meaningful interventions. Schools that do not demonstrate growth during the first two years of targeted support as either Priority or Focus schools will experience an expanded set of interventions and supports. These include:

- A Maine DOE/External review team that will conduct school assessment using an instrument that is aligned with the 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles.
- The Maine DOE team will support and approve the construction of an updated school improvement plan informed by the external review.

- Focus schools not demonstrating progress during the first two years must address all 7 Turnaround Principles.
- All Priority and Focus schools not demonstrating progress during the first two years must also set aside 20% of its district Title I allocation to support the school improvement plan. The school must submit a proposed project and spending plan for these funds to the Maine DOE for approval. This proposal will be submitted through the NCLB Consolidated application process. Title I staff will review and approve plans based on alignment between the proposed uses and the school improvement plan.
- If there still is no improvement from year 3 to year 4, then the school must identify – with the support and guidance of the Maine DOE, and district expense, - at least one certified specialist - whose primary responsibility will be to provide ongoing classroom-based professional development and support around the implementation of best practices for instruction. The area of expertise of this classroom-based professional and their work in the school must directly align with the identified needs that result from the externally conducted school assessment. Funds available from the required 20% district set-aside may be used to fulfill this requirement.

Maine DOE identified a second cohort of schools for Priority supports. This second cohort of priority schools were identified in addition to schools already identified as Priority schools in 2013-14. As mentioned previously on Page 57, discussion and collaboration between the School Improvement coaches and cohort one Priority school leadership teams has determined a need to provide flexibility with the implementation of identified indicators. The improvement plan implementation timeline has therefore received revisions to provide greater autonomy for the schools to complete the planning process while providing flexibility for implementation based on school capacity. The 7 required turnaround principles will be addressed during the first year of Priority school implementation.

Maine DOE has recently been able to fill longtime vacancies within the Department. This has therefore increased specifically the capacity of Title I. The two additional staff members has allowed for increased intentionality and alignment of school improvement efforts and whole school reform.

<i>Due Date Task</i>	<i>Task</i>
<i>January 23, 2015</i> <i>Planning stage</i>	<i>The superintendent completes required form for implementing Turnaround Principle1. Form will indicate whether the current principal will be replaced or will continue. Justification will be required for continuing principals, providing evidence of a track record in improving achievement and the ability to lead the turnaround effort. Assurance providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget will be required. (specific forms currently in development)</i>

	<p><i>The superintendent completes required form for implementing Turnaround Principle 2. Form will indicate a review of the quality of all staff and intent to retain only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort. Assurance that school/district administration will prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools will be required. (specific forms currently in development)</i></p> <p><i>The principal completes required form providing contact information to the Maine DOE Office of School Accountability and Improvement (OSAI)</i></p>
February 10, 2015	<p><i>The School creates a School Improvement Leadership Team with representation from the Central Office/School District. The Leadership Team will develop a six month meeting schedule.</i></p>
February 10 – March 15, 2015	<p><i>The principal, process manager and school improvement team leaders including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will view webinars provided within Indistar® around areas of focus within the school improvement plan.</i></p> <p><i>Priority schools to receive in person onsite training provided by the State Indistar® liaison on how to use Indistar® to create school improvement plans.</i></p> <p><i>All school information will be entered into Indistar® including meeting schedules, current school improvement plan, and district professional development plan for 2014-15 including summer 2015.</i></p>
<p>Continued planning</p> <p>March 1, 2015 through August 31, 2015</p>	<p><i>Process Manager enters all school information into DirigoStar and submits Draft school improvement plans via the Indistar® Dashboard.</i></p> <p><i>The SEA Title I school Improvement consultant assigned to the school improvement team will review the school improvement plan and submit a completed Indistar® rubric to the Maine DOE Office of School Accountability and Improvement (formerly the Office of School Improvement (OSI)) The Office will spot-check and provide feedback to some schools.</i></p> <p><i>The principal prepares Leadership Team agenda implementing twice monthly meetings. Process Manager to record meeting minutes.</i></p> <p><i>The principal and school improvement team leaders including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will complete required form to propose a pace for assessing, planning and assigning indicators and tasks for the required Year 1 DirigoStar Indicators.</i></p> <p><i>The principal and school leadership team members including SEA</i></p>

	<i>assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will have viewed pertinent videos contained within Indistar® relative to the Priority schools area of need.</i>
<i>Year 1 implementation begins</i> <i>September, 2015 through December, 2015</i>	<i>Completed school improvement plans will be submitted via the Indistar® Dashboard for review and monitoring of progress toward implementation of all 7 Turnaround Principles within year 1 of priority school implementation. This will inform goals and strategies for year 2.</i>
<i>September 2015 through June 2018</i>	<i>The principal and school leadership team members including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will monitor the school improvement plan by recording updated tasks on Indistar®, and will continue to do so on at least a monthly basis through June 2018.</i>

2.D.v *Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status and a justification for the criteria selected.*



In order to exit Priority status, the school must

1. Have implemented interventions aligned with the ESEA Turnaround Principles for three years;
2. Have demonstrated sustained improvement by:
 - A. Demonstrating, , an increase in the average proficiency for math and reading and demonstrating a rate of progress that is at or above the state average rate of progress;
 - B. Making AMOs for the “all student” group in reading or math (Remaining content area not making AMOs must be making sufficient progress toward making AMOs); and
3. Not be in the lowest 5% on the SAP.

In 2015-16 Maine will have only 4 schools eligible for exit review. These are Title I SIG schools. In order to exit Priority status they must not be in the lowest 5%.of the SAP in addition to demonstrating improved achievement and improved achievement over

multiple years. This will be calculated utilizing the annual proficiency calculations used for priority school identifications. Annual progress in both math and reading will be reviewed to ensure continued improvement. Maine intends to submit an amendment by January 31, 2016 for setting revised AMOs, pending guidance from US DE, and will also outline exit criteria for any non-SIG priority school identified in 2013-14 or 2014-15 ensuring priority schools eligible for exit demonstrate improved achievement and improved achievement over multiple years. These schools are not eligible for exit review prior to 2016-17.

Although a school can exit Priority status, there will be an opportunity to continue receiving support from the Maine DOE Team upon exit. Once schools officially exit their designated accountability status, a new set of Priority schools will be identified following the business rules described in section 2.D.i. so that at least 5% of Maine’s Title I schools will be identified as Priority schools.

2.E FOCUS SCHOOLS

2.E.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State’s Title I schools as “focus schools.” If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of focus schools in ESEA Flexibility (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

Maine’s Title I receiving schools that are the 10% of Title I schools with greatest within-school achievement gaps, an estimated 38 schools, will be designated as **Focus** schools. In order to provide a far more meaningful measure and place an even more critical emphasis on achievement gaps, the n-size has been decreased from 20 to 10 and the analysis will be done at the school – rather than grade – level. This will result in a more meaningful measure given the small size of most Maine schools and the relatively small size of most subgroups.

To identify Focus schools, a within-school achievement gap index will be calculated. The same formula will be used for both schools with grades 3-8 and high schools. This analysis is performed as follows:

1. First, for each subgroup in a school that meets the n-size of 10, a subgroup performance score is calculated composed of the following elements, one score for mathematics and one score for reading:

Absolute performance in math or reading of each subgroup

As defined for the SAI calculation, the percentage of students who are proficient compared to the 6th-year trajectory (improvement goal). The

calculation used for Focus school determinations will be applied to each subgroup in that subject area. This percentage is multiplied by 20.

Progress in math or reading of each subgroup

As defined for the School Accountability Index calculation, the percentage of students who are proficient compared to the annual measurable objective (AMO). The calculation used for Focus school determination will be applied to each subgroup in that subject area. This percentage is multiplied by 20.

2. Next, the 2 scores (absolute performance and progress) are added together, producing an achievement number for each subject for each student subgroup.
3. For each subject and each subgroup, the score of the lowest-performing subgroup is subtracted from the score of the highest-performing subgroup. This is the “ Within school achievement gap index.”
4. Schools are rank-ordered by within-school achievement gap index, creating 2 lists: one for mathematics and one for reading.

Within each subject, the rank-ordered list of schools will assist in identifying 10% and 25% of the Title I schools with the highest within school achievement gap.

To identify Focus schools, rank-ordered lists for mathematics and ELA will be reviewed for schools that are in the 10% of Title I schools with the highest within school achievement gap index for both mathematics and reading. These schools will be identified as Focus schools.

If the number of schools described above exceeds the number needed to meet the required 10% of Maine’s Title I schools, the within school achievement gap indexes for mathematics and reading will be combined. These totals will then be rank-ordered and used to identify the 10% of Title I schools with the highest within school achievement gap indexes for both subjects combined.

If the number of schools described above is less than the number needed to meet the required 10% of Maine’s Title I schools, those schools with the highest within school achievement gap indexes in both subjects, as described above, will be identified as Focus schools. The remaining schools will then be rank-ordered by the within school achievement gap index, with mathematics and reading in the same list. Those schools with the highest within school achievement gap index for either mathematics or reading will be identified as Focus Schools, until the number of schools equals that of 10% of Maine’s Title I schools.

2.E.ii Provide the SEA’s list of focus schools in Table 2.

2.E.iii *Describe the process and timeline the SEA will use to ensure that each LEA that has one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the LEA’s focus schools and their students. Provide examples of and justifications for the interventions focus schools will be required to implement to improve the performance of students who are the furthest behind.*

As with the Priority schools, a Maine DOE School Improvement Specialist will be assigned to each Focus school to provide guidance and support. Once the specialist is assigned, the school leadership will conduct a comprehensive school needs assessment aligned with the ESEA Turnaround Principles (facilitated and supported by the DOE School Improvement Specialist). Based on the results of the self-assessment and on student achievement data, the school leadership team and the Specialist will construct a 3-year school improvement plan designed to focus on decreasing within school gaps.

Focus schools will receive additional funding, engage in continuous school improvement and will be monitored and supported by the Maine DOE for at least three years and will be required to demonstrate progress toward their school learning targets.

Schools receiving Focus designation during the summer of 2013 – the first year of implementation -- will immediately begin a comprehensive needs assessment facilitated and guided by a School Improvement Specialist. The platform that will guide the assessment, plan development, and ongoing monitoring system is Indistar®. Each school will have to engage in series of required activities and will also be guided to implement specific strategies **and interventions aligned with the schools reason for identification, the particular needs of each school and its affected subgroups**. As part of this process, the planning team will also determine interventions and improvement activities for these identified Focus schools that will be started within the first semester. This process will be supported primarily by the specialist with significant support from the Maine DOE’s cadre of English learners and students with disabilities specialists.

The nature of the interventions and supports within the Focus schools will be dedicated to closing the within-school achievement gap. See the Table in Section 2.A.i.

Focus Schools identified in 2014-15 will implement a modified timeline similar to the 2014-15 timeline identified Priority schools. Focus school identifications posted to the Maine DOE website as an integral part to the NCLB Report Cards.

<i>Due Date Task</i>	<i>Task</i>
<i>January 23, 2015</i>	<i>The superintendent completes required assurances for Focus Schools supporting the design and implementation of the the improvement plan, interventions and Turnaround Principles.</i>
<i>Planning stage</i>	<i>The principal completes required form providing contact information to the Maine DOE Office of School Accountability and Improvement (OSAI)</i>

February 10, 2015	<i>The School creates a School Improvement Leadership Team with representation from the Central Office/School District. The Leadership Team will develop a six month meeting schedule.</i>
February 10 – March 15, 2015	<p><i>The principal, process manager and school improvement team leaders including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will view webinars provided within Indistar® around areas of focus within the school improvement plan.</i></p> <p><i>Focus Schools to receive in person onsite training provided by the State Indistar® liaison on how to use Indistar® to create school improvement plans.</i></p> <p><i>All school information will be entered into Indistar® including meeting schedules, current school improvement plan, and district professional development plan for 2014-2015 including summer 2015.</i></p>
<p><i>Continued planning</i></p> <p>March 1, 2015 through August 31, 2015</p>	<p><i>Process Manager enters all school information into DirigoStar and submits Draft school improvement plans via the Indistar® Dashboard.</i></p> <p><i>The SEA Title I school Improvement consultant assigned to the school improvement team will review the school improvement plan and submit a completed Indistar® rubric to the Maine DOE Office of School Accountability and Improvement (formerly the Office of School Improvement (OSI)) The Office will spot-check and provide feedback to some schools.</i></p> <p><i>The principal prepares Leadership Team agenda implementing twice monthly meetings. Process Manager to record meeting minutes.</i></p> <p><i>The principal and school improvement team leaders including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will complete required form to propose a pace for assessing, planning and assigning indicators and tasks for the required Year 1 DirigoStar Indicators.</i></p> <p><i>The principal and school leadership team members including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will have viewed pertinent videos contained within Indistar® relative to the focus schools area of need.</i></p> <p><i>Title I School Improvement consultant to complete and submit to Maine DOE quarterly progress monitoring reports</i></p>

September 2015 Year 1 implementation begins	Completed school improvement plans will be submitted via the Indistar® Dashboard for review and monitoring of progress toward implementation of all 7 Turnaround Principles within year 1 of focus school implementation. This will inform goals and strategies for year 2.
September, 2015 December 15, 2015	Title I School Improvement consultant to complete and submit to Maine DOE quarterly progress monitoring reports
September 2015 through June 2018	The principal and school leadership team members including SEA assigned Title I school Improvement consultant will monitor the school improvement plan by recording updated tasks on Indistar®, and will continue to do so on at least a monthly basis through June 2018.

2.E.iv *Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status and a justification for the criteria selected.*

To exit Focus status, a school must:

1. Have implemented interventions aligned with its reason for designation for three years; and
2. Demonstrate at least a 20% decrease in the gaps that led to the school's identification as a Focus school; and
3. Not have a within-school achievement gap index in the highest 10% for either reading or math for 2 consecutive years.

Once the Focus schools exit this status, there will be an opportunity to continue receiving support from the Maine DOE Team.

Maine has identified an additional 14 schools to be placed in a second cohort to receive Focus school supports. The additional 14 new focus schools were identified using the same method and processes described in the original application. Any school contained within the rank ordered list with a within-school achievement gap index higher than the within-school achievement gap index used to identify Focus schools the prior year received a Focus school identification. This brings Maine's total number of schools identified for Focus supports to 49.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

Provide the SEA's list of reward, priority, and focus schools using the Table 2 template. Use the key to indicate the criteria used to identify a school as a reward, priority, or focus school. Maine's list of Reward, Priority, and Focus schools is provided in Attachment 9.

2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE I SCHOOLS

2.F *Describe how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on the SEA’s new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, and an explanation of how these incentives and supports are likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.*

Of Maine’s approximately 600 schools, nearly 400 are eligible for Title I funding. The Maine DOE is keenly aware of the needs of its schools that do not fall into the Priority and Focus school categories and aware of the need to differentiate among schools that do not fall into the Priority and Focus categories. Maine has determined the need to divide all other Title 1 schools into 3 categories: Monitor; Progressing and Meeting.

The factors used to differentiate among schools are the following:

- **Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)** for math and reading for the whole school and subgroups, including the super-subgroup. Identification of a school varies based on whether the school is: meeting its AMOs; making sufficient progress toward meeting its AMOs; or not meeting or making sufficient progress. “Sufficient progress” is shown if the proficiency rate is at least 50% of the way between the current year’s AMO and the prior year’s AMO.
- **Targets for participation, attendance and graduation rate.** To be placed in the most positive category of “Meeting”, in addition to meeting AMOs, a school must meet the participation target of 95% for all groups with an n-size of 41 or more; Average Daily Attendance (ADA) rate of 93% for the whole school measure for a grade 3-8 school; and the graduation target of 90% for the whole school and each student subgroup with an n-size of 10 or more.
- **Within-School Achievement Gaps.** The within-school achievement gap index is explained in Section 2.E (Focus schools).
- A multi-factor **school accountability index (SAI)**. The SAI recognizes schools that make progress toward their individualized AMOs under the new accountability system, even if they do not have high proficiency rates compared to the expectation of achieving proficiency for 100% of their students. The SAI will be used to identify Monitor schools (those schools with the 15% lowest SAI) and as one of the eligibility factors for a High Performance Reward school (those in the highest 15% on the SAI). This index will contain the following four variables, and will be calculated for every school, each year, regardless of their Title I status:

1. Absolute performance

- The percentage of students determined to be proficient (meeting or exceeding grade level expectations) in reading and mathematics relative to each school’s proficiency goal
 - Student proficiency will be measured by NECAP for grades 3-8 and MHSA for grade 11, and by the Smarter Balanced Assessments beginning in the Spring of 2015 (for accountability year 2015-16). The impact of transitioning from NECAP to Smarter Balanced is discussed in Appendix 5 ;

2. Year-to-year progress

- Annual progress will be measured by an increase in the percentage of proficient students in the school from one year to the next. Progress determinations will be based on annual measurable objectives (AMOs) developed relative to the school’s proficiency goal in reading and mathematics, measured by NECAP, MHSA or Smarter Balanced Assessments as described in #1 This measure is identified as “Progress” in the table below.;

3. School Percentile Growth for schools with grades 4-8

- School growth will be measured in grades 4-8 mathematics and reading measured by NECAP following the commonly-used Colorado model now calculated and made available through Maine’s State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). This model shows how individual students and groups of students progress from year to year toward state standards, relative to their academic peers.
- The Colorado Growth Model compares each student’s performance to students in the same grade throughout the state who had similar NECAP scores in past years. The model then produces a student growth percentile, showing what percent of academic peers did the same or less well on the NECAP. For example, a student growth percentile of 65% means that the student performed as well as, or better than, 65% of students who had similar past NECAP test scores (her “academic peers.”) This is similar to the height and weight percentiles that a pediatrician shares with parents – your child is in the 65th percentile for height means that he or she is as tall as, or taller than, 65% of children of the same age.
(http://dw.education.maine.gov/DirectoryManager/Web/Maine_report/MaineLanding.aspx)
- Once each student’s student growth percentile is determined, a median student growth percentile for each school is determined for reading and for math. The school’s median growth percentile determines how many points the school receives in the SAI. The maximum number of points is 20 for math and 20 for reading. The portion of the 20 earned is determined by the following “cut-scores”, which are based on a normal distribution of median percentiles

Growth	4	8	12	16	20
Math	<35	≥35 <45	≥45 <55	≥55 <65	≥65
Reading	<35	≥35 <45	≥45 <55	≥55 <65	≥65

4. Graduation rates (4-year and 5-year) for schools with a 12th grade

- The selection of this particular measure, especially the inclusion of 5-year rate, is extremely important to Mainers. Well over 1,500 individuals responded to a series of questions in a comprehensive survey (see Attachment 2b). Of all the suggested measures, high school graduation received the highest support for inclusion as part of a more comprehensive identification process. In addition to the traditional 4-year cohort graduation rate, the AMO Workgroup – comprised of educators from across the state – determined early on that using a 5-year rate would be a meaningful measure for this purpose. The Maine DOE’s strategic plan emphasizes student-centered learning, whose primary principle is promoting learning as the constant and time as the variable. Because so many high schools continue to serve and support students who are unable to graduate in four years, the Workgroup’s decision to include the 5-year rate along with the 4-year rate demonstrates an acknowledgement of LEAs’ commitment to attaining college- and career-readiness for all of their students. During the public and online forums hosted by the Commissioner during the month of August 2012, this use of the 5-year rate was frequently highlighted by participants as one of the strong points of the proposed ESEA Flexibility request.

The following describe the ‘business rules’ used to calculate the SAI for each school, depending on the grade levels served.

School Accountability Index – Secondary Schools

Absolute Performance compared to Proficiency Goal for Whole School	
Math - % of students at or above proficient At or above Proficiency goal = 15 points % of goal X 15 (maximum of 15 points)	Reading - % of students at or above proficient At or above Proficiency goal = 15 points % of goal X 15 (maximum of 15 points)
Progress toward Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) for Whole School	
Math – Progress to % at or above Proficient (2018 Prof. goal - 2011 Prof. baseline) ÷ 2 = Improvement Goal Improvement Goal ÷ 6 = Annual Measurable Objective (Actual ÷ AMO) X 15 (maximum 15 points)	Reading – Progress to % at or above Proficient (2018 Prof. Goal - 2011 Prof. baseline) ÷ 2 = Improvement Goal Improvement Goal ÷ 6 = Annual Measurable Objective (Actual ÷ AMO) X 15 (maximum 15 points)
Graduation (State Target for Whole School)	
Goal 90%	
(4-year Graduation Rate + 5 Year Graduation Rate) divided by 2 = Average graduation rate	

(Average graduation rate) divided by (Target graduation rate of 90%) X 40 (maximum 40 points)	
School Accountability Index (SAI)	
Maximum 100 SAI points	15 points -Absolute Performance Math 15 points -Absolute Performance Reading 15 points -Progress Math 15 points –Progress Reading 40 points –Graduation

Note: If any group within the school with a minimum n-size of 41 does not have at least 95% participation in the assessment that is used for determining progress and achievement, each non-participant will be counted as non-proficient for purposes of calculating the SAI.

School Accountability Index – K-8 Schools

Absolute Performance compared to Proficiency Goal for Whole School	
Math - % of students at or above proficient At or above Proficiency goal = 20 points % of goal X 20 (maximum of 20 points)	Reading - % of students at or above proficient At or above Proficiency goal = 20 points % of goal X 20 (maximum of 20 points)
Progress toward Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) for Whole School	
Math – Progress toward % of students at or above proficient (2018 Prof. Goal - 2011 Prof. baseline) ÷ 2 = Improvement Goal Improvement Goal ÷ 6 = Annual Measurable Objective (Actual ÷ AMO) X 20 (maximum 20 points)	Reading – Progress toward % of students at or above proficient (2018 Prof. Goal - 2011 Prof. baseline) ÷ 2 = Improvement Goal Improvement Goal ÷ 6 = Annual Measurable Objective (Actual ÷ AMO) X 20 (maximum 20 points)
Growth (State Target)	
Math –Student Growth Percentile Model <35 = 4 points ≥35 <45 = 8 points ≥45 <55 = 12 points ≥55 <65 = 16 points ≥65 = 20 points	Reading –Student Growth Percentile Model <35 = 4 points ≥35 <45 = 8 points ≥45 <55 = 12 points ≥55 <65 = 16 points ≥65 = 20 points
School Accountability Index (SAI)	
Maximum 120 SAI points, converted to a 100 point basis SAI = Total points ÷ 120 X 100 (Example: 105 ÷ 120 = .875 X 100 = 87.5 points)	20 points -Absolute Performance Math 20 points -Absolute Performance Reading 20 points - Progress Math 20 points –Progress Reading 20 points –Growth Math 20 Points Growth Reading

Note: If any group within the school with a minimum n-size of 41 does not have at least 95% participation in the assessment that is used for determining progress and achievement, each non-participant will be counted as non-proficient for purposes of calculating the SAI.

Using these factors, schools that are not identified as Priority or Focus will be placed into one of the following categories:

Monitor School. A school that meets any one of the following criteria is a Monitor school:

- School in the 15% of schools with the lowest SAI (described above);
- School in the 25% of schools with the highest within-school achievement gap indexes (described in section 2.E);
- A school in which either the whole school or the super-subgroup is failing to meet or make sufficient progress toward AMOs in both reading and math. (For example, if the super-subgroup made sufficient progress toward its AMO in reading and the whole school met its AMO in math, the school would not be classified as a Monitor school under this criterion. If the super-subgroup failed to make sufficient progress in both reading and math, the school would be a Monitor school);
- A school that has not met the participation target (95%) for subgroups with an n-size of 41 or more; or has not met its whole-school ADA rate (93%) for a school with grades 3-8; or has not met the graduation target (90%) for the whole school or for any subgroup with an n-size of 10 or more; and
- A school that would be identified as a Priority school but for the fact that it has fewer than 20 test participants in the entire school. Such a school will be placed in Monitor category for one year; if it continues for a second year to fall within the lowest 5% of schools on school achievement and progress, it will be identified as “Priority.”

Progressing School. A Progressing school is one that meets all of the following criteria:

- It is not identified as a Priority, Focus or Monitor school;
- The whole school and the super-subgroup are meeting or making sufficient progress toward AMOs for at least one of the two content areas (math or reading); and
- Not in the highest 25% on within-school achievement gap index and Not in the bottom 15% on SAI; and
- For a school with a 12th grade, meeting the graduation rate target for whole school and individual subgroups of 10 or more.

Meeting School. A Meeting school is one that meets all of the following criteria:

- Meeting AMOs for the whole school and the super-subgroup in reading and math;

- Meeting participation targets for subgroups with an n-size of 41 or more, schoolwide ADA targets for grades 3-8 schools; graduation rate targets for whole school and subgroups of 10 or more; and
- Not in the 25% of schools with the highest within-school achievement gap index in reading or math.

Supports, Interventions and Incentives are provided for all Title 1 schools

As is described earlier in this request, many of the supports and interventions provided by the Maine DOE will be available to all LEAs, regardless of their accountability designation or their Title I status.

	Priority	Focus	Monitor	Progressing	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Self-Assessment	√	√	√	Available	Available	Available	Available
Improvement Plan	√	√	√	Available*	Available*	Available	Available
Alignment with 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles	√	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Targeted Title I accountability / ESEA directed funds	√	√	Available (if applicable)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Convert to Schoolwide Title I status	√	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	N/A
School-based improvement team	√	√	√	Available	Available	Available	Available
Maine DOE Specialist Assigned	√	√	Available	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Affinity / Special Issue Networks	√	√	√	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)
Regional Networks	√	Available (if applicable)					

	Priority	Focus	Monitor	Progressing	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Specialized Maine DOE support (RTI, Content, etc.)	√	√	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Transformational Leaders Network	√	√	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Quarterly progress reports	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Annual improvement plan evaluation	√	√	√	N/A*	N/A*	N/A	N/A
DOE-sponsored school improvement events	√	√	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
User-friendly Maine DOE web-based improvement resources for best practices (instruction, leadership, community engagement)	√	√	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Online AMO, SAI, and Gap Index calculator	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available

* Any LEA with one or more Title I schools with subgroups not meeting AMOs or graduation rate targets, or not meeting ADA or participation targets will be required to provide improvement plans and annual reporting as a component of the consolidated application process. The improvement plans must address the AMOs and targets that were missed. Applicable interventions and supports will be made available to support improvement efforts in these schools.

Schools have incentive to improve

Each year, the analyses described in section 2.A.i will be performed with the most recent assessment and school data. School Accountability Index and within school gap indexes for mathematics and reading will be recalculated and reviewed.

Monitor schools and Progressing schools have incentive to improve, since both are subject to a possible reclassification to Priority if they fail to stay above the benchmark used to identify schools in year 1, or Focus status if they fail to stay above the benchmark used to identify Focus schools in year 1. In addition, any school identified as a Monitor school for two or more consecutive years will be required to develop an improvement plan which must be reviewed and approved by the Title I staff. Schools identified as Monitor for 3 consecutive years will also be reclassified as either Priority or Focus, depending on the reasons for continued low performance (overall school performance or low subgroup performance.)

Maine will also provide incentives for improvement through the various efforts currently underway as part of the state's recent efforts on supporting under-performing schools. This will be accomplished by publicly acknowledging and sharing the positive efforts undertaken by schools. Throughout the spring of 2013, Commissioner Bowen visited schools in every region. Following each visit, promising practices were highlighted and shared through the Maine DOE Newsroom. <http://mainedoeneews.net/2013/05/30/commissioner-bowen-to-complete-promising-practices-tour-with-visits-to-msad-54-elementary-schools/>

It is expected that these visits will continue next year. The Department is also in the process of updating the Center for Best Practices to include tips, blogs, videos and other examples of promising practices from all schools, including those in Monitor or Progressing, who are making great strides in their efforts to improve student achievement. Most recently, Maine DOE held a series of improving school webinars, addressing a series of topics identified by schools as challenges. During these webinars, educators identified as implementing successful improvement efforts were invited to share their tips and expertise with colleagues.

To ensure inclusion in the system of supports outlined in the table above, and to ensure that schools identified as Monitor or Progressing are implementing improvement strategies and interventions, the following process will be employed.

- 1) Title I staff members are currently assigned to work with specific LEAs as part of the annual NCLB Consolidated Application and review process. These staff members will be provided with the list of Monitor and/or Progressing schools in their assigned districts. This will allow for increased awareness and better coordination of Title I programming and necessary improvement needs with the NCLB Consolidated Application and use of funds.
- 2) The list of LEAs with Monitor and/or Progressing schools will be provided to the Title II coordinator to inform and support stronger coordination in the use of Title II funds proposed through the NCLB Consolidated application process, for professional development activities designed to support improvement efforts.
- 3) Each of the Title I School Improvement specialists will be assigned as the key contact for each Monitor and Progressing schools. Specialists will communicate with each assigned school at the start of each year and as needed throughout the year. This will

ensure that schools are accessing the supports described in the table above, as well as allowing for enhanced coordination of improvement activities and communication between schools and districts regionally and statewide.

4) The Maine DOE, as a whole, is in the process of developing a more focused, statewide approach to supporting under-performing schools. This approach includes a regional focus, with a Maine DOE staff member assigned as a regional representative to each of the 9 superintendent regions in the state. Key duties for this position include serving as the key contact Maine DOE liaison for all schools and districts in each region, and communicating regularly with any active curriculum or leadership groups or networks. Monitor and Progressing schools, in addition to being assigned to a Title I School improvement Specialist, will also be assigned to the Maine DOE regional representative designated for that region. These contacts, along with other specialists for mathematics, reading, other content areas, EL or SWD, will meet on a quarterly basis to review the needs of schools in each region. This will allow for improved communication and coordination regarding any statewide or regional activities which may support school improvement efforts, will also ensure that schools are accessing the available supports.

5) Staff from either the SWD or EL Student Services Teams will provide additional supports, direct assistance and technical support to schools, in collaboration with the Title I Improvement Specialists. This might range from school visits, to providing on-site or virtual professional development and/or coaching, to designing and delivering training for schools either regionally or state-wide around specific interventions.

6) In addition, as mentioned above, Indistar® will be used to help inform the selection and implementation of the most appropriate strategies and supports for students in each school based on the specific needs-assessment and data review guided by the DOE School Improvement Specialist.

7) Finally, as will be discussed in the next section, the Maine DOE will begin to play a more active role in highlighting effective and successful practices in existence across the state as well as collect and organize a myriad of external resources and service providers aligned with specific school challenges.

Maine has identified an additional 15 monitor schools using the above criteria bringing the Monitor school identification total to 175. All schools with a Monitor identification are required to complete a school improvement plan within the NCLB Consolidated Application outlining professional development initiatives to address how the LEA will meet the needs of identified subgroups in reading and/or math.

Maine is currently in transition and in the process of administering the SBAC assessment in the spring of 2015. The implementation of the new State assessment will provide a foundation year of data, which will necessitate revised AMOs to accurately identify progress to inform status determinations for the 2016-2017 school year. Maine therefore will not be

identifying any new monitor schools for the 2015-2016 school year. School identifications will resume for the 2016-2017 school year.

Each year, Priority and focus schools are provided with additional funding, allocated from 1003(a), to support improvement activities. In December of each year, these schools will be surveyed to determine any potential funding needs that might still be needed to address the program improvement needs for that year. Following a review of responses, funding will be allocated as appropriate and any remaining funds will be made available for reallocation for use by other Title I schools. Requests will be scored and rank ordered, with Monitor schools receiving priority points to indicate a higher level of need.

2.G BUILD SEA, LEA, AND SCHOOL CAPACITY TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

- 2.G Describe the SEA’s process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:
- i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;
 - ii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources); and
 - iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools.

Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.

In recent months, a number of factors have led the Maine DOE to reassess the way it supports the state’s schools. These factors include:

- The realization that the implementation of this ESEA flexibility proposal will require a more comprehensive set of interventions and supports than the state has implemented in the past.
- The realization that Maine’s schools already confront the implementation of a number of other major initiatives, including the transition to Common Core standards, the coming transition to the SMARTER Balanced assessment system, and, pursuant to recently enacted legislation, the adoption of state-approved teacher and leader evaluation systems. Districts will require additional state support for all of these initiatives,

- Ongoing budget challenges at the local, state, and federal level suggest that no additional resources will be available to build capacity at any level, which means that both the state and local school units must become more effective within the constraints of existing resources.

In response to these challenges, the Maine DOE has begun the task of reorganizing itself and its work with the intent of improving its capacity to support Maine’s schools.

- In March of 2013, the Department hired a person to fill the newly-created position of Chief Academic Officer. This position will be responsible for leading and coordinating the work of the various instruction-related staff, teams and initiatives underway at the Department, with the goal of building greater Department capacity to support Maine’s educators within existing resources.

The Chief Academic Officer, within the two years of hiring, has successfully initiated, encouraged and implemented a collaborative approach across Maine DOE towards providing increased support to LEAs. This includes the facilitation of cross team meetings with members of the Department’s Special Services, Learning Through Technology and Education Data teams to facilitate the planning and implementation of supports and technical assistance to educators, particularly those in low performing schools. This allows for a more effective braided approach to services. In addition to more effective use of Maine DOE’s limited capacity, this approach has increased consistency in messaging as well as modeling the integrated approach we encourage districts to employ.

- Between March and June of 2013, the Department is working to create a State System of Support to better target the specific needs of Maine’s schools. A cross-agency working group has been established and is working with the Northeast Region Comprehensive Center (NERCC) and the New England Comprehensive Center (NECC) to explore the following the questions:
 - What kinds of evaluation tools can the Department make available to schools and districts to help them identify areas in need of focus?
 - How can this evaluation data, as well as data on student achievement and growth, be gathered by the Department into a central database in order to better facilitate analysis?
 - How can the Department reform its workflow model so that it can more nimbly and effectively respond to what evaluation and performance data is telling it?
 - What types of staff and service reorganization may be needed to implement these new process and procedures?
 - How can the Department better gauge the impact of the interventions and supports it does provide, and respond in ways that lead to constant improvement?

In order to facilitate a more efficient workflow, to effectively identify and coordinate supports for low performing schools with limited SEA capacity, and to effectively evaluate the impact of interventions and supports, the Department instituted a project management process to guide the implementation of key Department initiative, a tiered intervention model to differentiate the types of supports needed for schools and to prioritize services, and a data planning room to allow for a more informative space for reviewing data and coordinating school supports.

The project management tool allows for more comprehensive, coordinated planning of supports and requires cross team integration. Members of the Commissioner’s leadership team, representing Maine DOE divisions, review and provide feedback during project development. The Chief academic Officer provides ongoing oversight. See Appendix The Maine DOE’s tiered intervention model, outlined in Principle 1, allows Maine DOE staff to personalize supports for schools based on the level of need, maximizing capacity. Supports and training are developed in coordination with other Maine DOE divisions, utilizing data as a key tool. To support this data work, the data room has been instituted as a place where multiple elements can be viewed and shared discussed as part of the process for implementing the support structure outlined above. Examples of shared information include high needs schools grouped regionally using school grades from Maine’s School Performance grading system, Title I accountability status, math and reading achievement data, and year at a glance professional development opportunities. This planning room allows for more effective and cohesive collaboration across teams, such as the NCLB team, the Standards and Instructional Support Team, and the Special Services team. This allows staff, overseeing the needs of students in various groups, such as low achieving, economically disadvantaged, English learners, and students with disabilities, to discuss and plan supports for teachers and students in all groups. Maine DOE will continue to employ the planning room in order to evaluate data on a regular basis and to inform the development of needed supports, as well as monitoring progress. Maine DOE intends to expand data provided to include additional information, including disaggregated subgroups data for graduation rates, student achievement, college readiness, and truancy and dropout rates. Information related to progress reports from Title I schools currently identified as Priority or Focus will also be shared, as well as progress reports related to the implementation of proficiency based education and readiness for providing proficiency based diplomas. Reviewed, providing opportunities for feedback and identification of needs from the field. This review and subsequent planning discussions will allow Maine DOE to identify schools needing additional supports, as outlined in the Department’s tiered support structure.

- The Department’s goal is to develop action steps by July, 2013, resulting in reorganization of the Learning Systems Team to include an Office of School Accountability and Improvement (dependent on passage of legislation creating and funding a statewide accountability system) and adjustment to the sub-team structure. These changes will result in increased state capacity to support school and district improvement. The Department has set a target of having new structures and operating procedures in place by the start of the 2013-2014 school year, so that it is in a position to more capably support the state’s schools,

particularly the Monitor, Focus and Priority schools. These new structures, operating procedures, and related resources and materials will not only be used to support the school improvement efforts of our Priority, Focus, and Monitor schools, they will also be made available to help inform and guide the school improvement efforts of all schools across the state – regardless of their Title I status.

The Learning Systems Team (LST) was instituted as planned and is supervised directly by the Chief Academic Officer. The LST consists of five smaller sub-teams: NCLB, Assessment & Accountability, Special Services, Career & Technical Education, Standards & Instructional Supports, Adult Education and Health Education and Health Promotion. Team members meet at LST meetings on a bi-monthly basis. LST meetings have provided the opportunity for greater collaboration and shared training across the department between teams. Representatives from the Department’s other divisions, the Special Services team, Learning Through Technology team, and School Finance and Operations Team, as well as members of the Commissioner’s Leadership team, regularly attend LST meetings, participate in trainings and provide updates.

To strengthen its LEA monitoring capabilities, the Department has been working for the past year to develop a standardized agency-wide sub-recipient monitoring system. This system not only standardizes the processes by which Department teams monitor LEAs for program compliance, but creates a method by which LEAs deemed to be at risk for non-compliance are identified and those concerns shared across program teams. In this way, Department teams are able to target LEA’s most in need of support. This sub-recipient monitoring process will be used to review compliance with fiscal and programmatic requirements using risk assessment to focus monitoring efforts. Maine DOE has created an internal risk management team comprised of all state and federal program representatives including school finance, ESEA Titles, and IDEA Local Entitlement. A cycle for the ongoing quarterly reviews of sub-recipients is currently being developed and implemented. Prioritization of need for review is determined by surveying members of the risk management team. Those sub-recipients identified by team members with areas of concern are flagged and prioritized for review.

A monitoring assessment tool will be completed by all risk management team members. Results are compiled and shared at quarterly meetings, with a determination of status and next steps determined. Determinations could include “No risk-no further action needed;” “Minimal level of risk, some concern areas identified-continued programmatic/fiscal monitoring;” “High risk-on site visit required for further assessment and determination of actions.” For the sub-recipients identified with the latter designation, an SEA review team goes onsite to conduct a more thorough, comprehensive review. Results are collected and discussed by the risk management team, with corrective actions determined. The sub-recipient is added to the quarterly cycle for on-going progress checks and monitoring.

The Department continues its implementation of the monitoring assessment tool. Teams continue to review LEAs utilizing risk management criteria. Teams continue to monitor LEAs deemed as high risk on-site completing a more thorough, comprehensive review.

The Department is currently piloting Indistar® with its SIG schools. This web-based system is designed for use with district and/or school improvement teams to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. The effectiveness of this new tool will be monitored and possible expansion will be considered if the system proves to be an agile way to provide timely feedback to LEAs and schools.

The Department expanded implementation of Indistar® to all Priority and Focus schools in addition to identified SIG schools and is the process of exploring expansion to all schools, allowing for a systemic, and district approach to improving low performing schools. School improvement teams’ outline and report upon progress made in relation to completed and fully implemented tasks and indicators on a quarterly basis, allowing for ongoing monitoring of progress. School improvement coaches provide support and guidance to school improvement teams through coaching comments and face-to-face coaching visits.

- To provide additional support to LEAs, the Department is also piloting an “online community of practice” website, MaineLearning.net, which is designed to help educators across Maine collaborate and share best practices. The site allows educators to form online forums and discussion groups, post resources and share their knowledge about what works for students. The Department is currently planning upgrades to the site, including the development of an online resource directory through which online and digital learning resources can be identified and shared by the state’s educators. The Department sees this website as a way to overcome the barriers of time and space so that educators in schools across the state—those with high levels of student achievement and growth and those in need of assistance and support—can access ideas and resources that have proven to be effective.
- The Title I team will be developing a Title I quarterly newsletter to be distributed across the state. The newsletter will provide examples of best practice, success stories and general news/updates pertinent to all educators in Maine. Additionally, the Title I team is exploring the implementation of regional roundtables on a quarterly basis providing educators a mechanism to network, share best practice and lessons learned in addition to sharing ideas and resources. As part of these regional roundtables, the Title I team plans to target specific meetings for the purpose of providing technical assistance around parent engagement and support to Schoolwide programs. The state is also fortunate to have a number of schools and districts that have taken promising steps toward creating a proficiency-based, learner-centered instructional system. The Department’s Center for Best Practices, supported by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, was established to focus on research and reporting related to proficiency-based systems here in Maine. It serves as a clearinghouse of materials, support and case studies related to learner-centered instructional practices. Teaching has been and continues to be a largely solitary practice providing few opportunities for collaboration and sharing of best practices. The Center was designed to remove this isolation. On the Maine DOE’s website LEA leaders, school leaders, and teachers can access:

- [Case studies \(http://maine.gov/doe/cbp/case-studies/index.html\)](http://maine.gov/doe/cbp/case-studies/index.html) : Detailed reports, reflections and materials from school districts that are paving the way in proficiency-based learning.
- [Videos \(http://maine.gov/doe/cbp/videos.html\)](http://maine.gov/doe/cbp/videos.html) : Three districts showcase their best practices on film.
- [Resources \(http://maine.gov/doe/cbp/resources.html\)](http://maine.gov/doe/cbp/resources.html) : A compilation of materials used to implement learner-centered systems in each district.

The Department continues its work with this key initiative, as the Department strongly believes that a proficiency based approach provides a personalized learning model that more effectively supports all students. The Department has expanded its Getting to Proficiency website to include various resources and supports. Additionally, the Department has just completed an initial survey of districts to determine progress toward implementation. Districts were asked to provide an overview of readiness for providing proficiency based diplomas in 2017-18, and if needed to apply for one of 6 extensions. All submissions have been posted on the Department’s website. Members of the Department’s Standards and Instructional Supports team, along with Title I school improvement coaches, have been completing site visit for all schools demonstrating the greatest levels of need. (Extensions 5 and 6). This monitoring will be continued on a regular basis to ensure progress toward meeting Maine statutory requirements related to proficiency based diplomas, and to identify areas of support and technical assistance.

- The state is also bringing more accountability to Maine’s schools and school districts through the use of a clear A-F school grading system. In his State of the State address, Governor Paul LePage outlined the need to make clear information on student achievement and growth available to parents and the public. He directed Commissioner Bowen to review models in other states and develop a Maine system. On May 1st, 2013, the Department rolled out the first set of grades, based on student achievement and student growth in reading and math, as well as growth in achievement of the lowest-achieving 25% of students. See an explanation of the grading system at <http://www.maine.gov/doe/schoolreportcards/> The Administration has also submitted legislation to expand the resources of the Department to supports schools and/or districts identified by the grading system as being in need of improvement. That budget request will be taken up by the Legislature within the next month or so.

In summary, we believe that the initiatives outlined above will result in a significant increase in the Maine DOE’s capacity to support Maine’s schools and school districts, and that the tools and assistance provided by the State will in turn increase the school improvement capacity of Maine’s LEAs.

As described throughout the application, Maine DOE's focus includes building awareness, guiding the transition, implementing the planned activities, and providing ongoing support to LEAs and schools in order to improve student achievement. Maine DOE's system of accountability – starting with college-and career- readiness standards and assessments – is designed to provide feedback to assist in timely and comprehensive monitoring of and support for Priority and Focus schools.

Maine DOE is currently utilizing Indistar®, a web-based system for use with district and/or school improvement teams to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities, with its SIG schools. Title I School Improvement specialists have received additional training and this tool will be expanded for use with identified Priority and Focus schools. Districts with Monitor schools will have access to the tool, if requested.

While the Maine DOE has taken a number of steps in recent years to build its own capacity to support the state's schools and districts, work remains to more carefully align the Department's various teams and initiatives in a way that more strategically supports learning. The Department has completed the process of hiring for the newly-created position Chief Academic Officer. This position is responsible for guiding and coordinating the various learning-related staff, teams and initiatives underway at the Department, with the goal of building greater Department capacity to support Maine's educators within existing resources.

Building capacity is highly likely with the CAO coordinating support within the SEA, Maine DOE creating and maintaining online data tools for LEAs to target instruction, and providing support with tools such as the Center for Best Practices. Combined, these resources will enable the SEA and the LEAs throughout the state to target instruction and to provide support to educators based on student need.

In summary, the approval and implementation of Maine's ESEA Flexibility request in addition to increased capacity building within the Department with the hiring of a CAO and additional Department staff, puts Maine DOE in a much stronger position to support and provide increased alignment across teams and initiatives to ensure strategic learning supports are provided to LEA's.

Maine DOE has assigned School Improvement specialists with increased intentionality to better support LEA's with multiple schools identified as Priority and/or Focus. This has provided one clear consistent voice when communicating with the school and LEA in addition to a more targeted district approach specifically for the identified Priority and Focus schools. A single Priority/Focus specialist working within a single school district provides greater accountability for the LEA and the capacity for increased and more fruitful relationship building.

Maine DOE continues to develop innovative practices to ensure that all possible educational supports are provided to all Maine schools regardless of geographical location in order to better support targeted instruction meeting the needs of Maine students. A priority for the

Maine DOE at this time is Parent Engagement. The Department is in the process of evaluating its capacity to provide technical assistance and training to school districts in order to assist and strengthen parent engagement at the local level. Department staff are reviewing and researching parent engagement curriculum that would cross-sect Maine’s socio-economically diverse population. Maine DOE staff is currently exploring implementing pilot program during the 2016-17 school year. The delayed implementation provides time for additional research and communication with schools districts, the identification and selection of pilot districts and the training of necessary district and Maine DOE staff. Increasing district capacity to address and increase parental involvement at the state, district and school levels is of paramount importance.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

3.A DEVELOP AND ADOPT GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding description and evidence, as appropriate, for the option selected.

Option A	Option B	X Option C
<input type="checkbox"/> 15.a. The SEA is on track to fully implementing Principle 3, including incorporation of student growth based on State assessments into educator ratings for teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals.	<p>If an SEA that is administering new State assessments during the 2014–2015 school year is requesting one additional year to incorporate student growth based on these assessments, it will:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> 15.b.i. Continue to ensure that its LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation systems using multiple measures, and that the SEA or its LEAs will calculate student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year for all teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals; and <input type="checkbox"/> 15.b.ii. Ensure that each teacher of a tested grade and subject and all principals will receive their student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year.	<p>If the SEA is requesting modifications to its teacher and principal evaluation and support system guidelines or implementation timeline other than those described in Option B, which require additional flexibility from the guidance in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility</i> as well as the documents related to the additional flexibility offered by the Assistant Secretary in a letter dated August 2, 2013, it will:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> 15.c. Provide a narrative response in its redlined ESEA flexibility request as described in Section II of the ESEA flexibility renewal guidance.

Maine policymakers in 2012 took great strides toward measuring and improving the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders, with passage of LD 1858, “An Act to Ensure Effective Teaching and School Leadership” (Appendix 9). LD 1858, which enacted Chapter 508 into law, earned a unanimous favorable vote of the Legislature’s Joint Standing Committee on

Education and Cultural Affairs, and was ultimately passed by unanimous vote of both houses of Maine’s legislature, demonstrating that key state policymakers understand the need for the state to address educator effectiveness in a comprehensive way. The legislation lays the groundwork for Maine’s plan to meet the requirements of, and develop a high-quality plan for, Principle 3 of the ESEA Flexibility Request.

Prior to passage of LD 1858, “local control” of most education matters meant that there was little coordinated, clear policy regarding educator effectiveness. While state law provided that superintendents were responsible for evaluating staff, there was no specific requirement for evaluation of all teachers or school leaders, much less standards for doing so. The state’s only “definition” of an effective teacher was laid out in the “Ten Initial Standards for Educator Certification,” the minimal requirements to become a teacher. Past the stage where a teacher earned professional licensure, there were no statewide policies or efforts to ensure effective teachers or administrators.

LD 1858 enacted a new chapter in Maine’s Education Law, Title 20-A of the Maine Revised Statutes. This new chapter, “Chapter 508, Educator Effectiveness,” requires each of the State’s school administrative units (SAUs) to develop and implement a “performance evaluation and professional growth (PEPG) system” for all teachers and principals. Each “system” must meet state standards and be approved by the state Department of Education. This system requires:

- A clear set of professional practice standards that educators will be expected to meet
- Multiple ways of measuring an educator’s effectiveness, including evaluation of professional practices and a look at the educator’s impact on student academic progress
- Opportunities for educators to improve their effectiveness by understanding where they fall short of expectations, and a clearly spelled-out professional improvement plan designed to enable them to meet expectations.

LD 1858 laid out the basic structure of the PEPG system, created a process for fleshing out the details of the state standards and set forth a timeline for development and implementation of systems on the local level.

Key Elements of the System

The basic structure of the new Maine PEPG system is set forth in Chapter 508 of Title 20-A. Under Chapter 508, a PEPG system consists of the following elements:

1. Standards of professional practice by which the performance of educators must be evaluated;
2. Multiple measures of educator effectiveness (in addition to professional practice evaluations) including but not limited to student learning and growth, which must be a “significant factor” in determining an educator’s effectiveness rating;
3. A rating scale consisting of 4 levels of effectiveness (at least 2 levels for “effective” educators and one level for “ineffective” educators), based on multiple measures, with the professional growth opportunities and employment consequences tied to each level;

4. A process for using information from the evaluation process to inform professional development and other personnel decisions such as selection, induction, compensation assignment and dismissal of staff;
5. Implementation standards that include trained evaluators, evaluation on a regular basis, training of educators to enable them to participate in the system in a meaningful way, peer review components and a local steering committee to review and refine the local system; and
6. Opportunities for educators rated as “ineffective” to implement a professional improvement plan.
7. Opportunities for professional growth for all teachers

These basic structural components are designed to ensure that systems are transparent, fair and meaningful, and to ensure that the PEPG systems meet the criteria for ESEA Flexibility requests.

Timeline for Implementation

LD 1858 laid out a process for developing and implementing PEPG systems over a four-year period. This period complied with the ESEA flexibility request requirements, as well as providing a time for further state policymaking and local adoption, piloting and adjustment.

Unanticipated events resulted in the delay of the rulemaking process. This resulted in modest timeline adjustments. Initially the state plan included the following progression:

- In the first year following passage of LD 1858 (2012-2013), stakeholders and policymakers at the State level would work together to flesh out details of the required systems.
- In the second year 2013-2014, local SAUs would develop local systems that comply with the state requirements. There was likely to be some flexibility within the state standards, to allow variations among SAUs, so this year was intended to provide the time for local policymakers, parents, administrators and educators to create the best system for local conditions.
- In school year 2014-15, local SAUs would pilot their systems, either by using them only in certain schools, with a portion of educators or with all educators but without “counting” the results. The pilot allows people to see how the system works, and make adjustments to ensure that it meets expectations.
- In school year 2015-16, local systems would be fully implemented.

The delay of the rulemaking resulted in some SAUs proceeding with the development of their PEPG system in 2013-2014 school year, concurrent with the rulemaking. Other SAUs had to postpone the development of their PEPG systems until the summer of 2014 and fall of 2014 in order to comply with new regulations related to the composition and function of development committees.

In March 2015, Maine Legislature enacted LD 38 that impacted the previously submitted timeline.

The revised timeline is revised as follows:

2014-15: Continued development of systems; submittal by July 15, 2015 of intent to pilot required components in 2015-16

2015-16: Comprehensive pilot; adjustments; submittal for approval

2016-17: Full Implementation

In summary, 2015-16 will be a pilot year, and 2016-17 is year one of full implementation. This timeline extends the original timeline by one year to allow for a full pilot.

Fleshing out PEPG System Requirements

While LD 1858 laid out the basic structure of the required PEPG systems, it contemplated a multi-step, multi-party process for fleshing out the details. It directed the Department to promulgate rules, and directed the Department to create a stakeholder group to inform the rulemaking process and to work with the Department and the Legislature to put the finishing touches on the system over the upcoming year.

The Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC) was the 16-member stakeholder group created LD 1858 in 2012. It included teachers, administrators, state policymakers, school board members and representatives of the business community, the general public, and teacher preparation programs. Members were nominated by professional associations and other stakeholder groups and appointed by the Commissioner of Education.

The MEEC was assigned the general task of recommending standards for implementing a system of evaluation and support of teachers and principals consistent with the requirements of Title 20-A, chapter 508. The legislation directed the MEEC to send its recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by November 1, 2012, and directed the Department to take those recommendations into consideration when promulgating rules.

The Council met regularly, from May 2012 to May 2013, formulating its governing structure and work plan, and making some significant decisions about the structure of the developing systems. The Council submitted a report to the Legislature in November of 2012, including recommendations reached by consensus on some significant elements of the PEPG system. (See Appendix 10) They added an Addendum in April, 2013. (See Appendix 11)

One over-arching issue that the Council struggled with was the need to find the right balance between uniformity and flexibility. With its history of local control of education matters, Maine leans toward supporting local flexibility. An additional factor in leaning toward flexibility was that many SAUs, including those participating in the State's Maine Schools for Excellence initiative, have already spent significant resources creating robust evaluation and support systems, and the Council was reluctant to force them to throw out the work already done.

But with the desire for greater coordination and equity across the state, there was also a desire for creating more uniformity of PEPG systems. While aware and supportive of local governance and the valuable work underway, one of the Council’s earliest decisions concerned the identification of a set of professional practice standards for both teachers and principals. Because several districts were already working with practice models such as Danielson or National Board, rather than prescribe one set of standards statewide, the Council established the InTASC standards as the benchmark against which any set of standards must be aligned. At present the Department has approved five practice models aligned to the InTASC Model Core Standards (Marzano, Danielson, National Board Core Propositions, Kim Marshall and a modified Kim Marshall).

Department Rulemaking

The Department began the administrative rulemaking process in November of 2012. The proposed rule incorporated all of the consensus recommendations of the Council as of November 1st, including the professional practice standards and the criteria for determining acceptable measures of student learning and growth. Based on review of other states’ laws and on an understanding of general concerns expressed by MEEC members, the Department proposed other necessary elements of the system, such as the definition of “significant factor,” methods of combining measures to reach a rating, and implementation requirements.

Following public comments and revisions to the proposed rule, the Department submitted the rule to the Legislature for review and approval. Concerns were raised during the Legislature’s review of the rule, and the Legislature did not enact the necessary legislation to authorize the Department to finally adopt the rule. The Department restarted the rulemaking process and submitted the rule to the Legislature, for review when the session reconvened in January of 2014.

While awaiting the 2014 review and approval, the Department sent a clear message to superintendents and other school leaders that they should proceed with developing their local systems, despite the delay in a final rule. This message was provided at the annual Commissioner’s Conference for Superintendents (June 24-26, 2013) and by a Priority Notice sent to all recipients of the Commissioner’s Update. (See Attachment 13) During the 2013-2014 school year, while the rulemaking proceeded the Department provided guidance and supports to school districts as they worked on developing their PEPG systems. During the 2013-2014 school year, the Educator Effectiveness Coordinator published articles in the Commissioners Weekly Updates and met with regional groups and school leaders.

In May of 2014, the Maine Legislature authorized the Department to adopt the final rule Chapter 180, which the Department did on May 14, 2104. In the 127th legislature, in 2015, the rule was amended to accommodate US DE requirements for our waiver renewal. The resulting rule directs all districts to create a development team including key stakeholders and teachers. The teachers must be approved by a majority of the SAU teachers. The rule requires the team to reach consensus regarding the adoption of each element of a PEPG system and provides for

the default to a state developed PEPG model for SAUs which are unable to reach consensus prior to June 1, 2015. Leveraging a provision for flexibility in the rule, the SEA has extended the consensus deadline until September 30, 2015.

Despite delays in the adoption of rules, resulting from legislative amendments to Rule Chapter 180 last spring, LEAs across the state continued to work diligently to develop performance evaluation and professional growth (PEPG) systems in accordance with the provisionally adopted rule and in anticipation of the changes the SEA foresaw in the finally adopted Rule Chapter 180. Though LEAs are afforded considerable flexibility in making some decisions, and some LEAs are further ahead than others in the process, the pattern of questions and requests for supports seen in email, phone conversations as well as in audience commentary at conferences and workshops provides the basis for the progress report related to each of the main PEPG elements addressed in the sections that follow.

Organization of Renewal Inserts in Response to US DE Feedback: Consistent with the Guidelines for Renewal Process and to facilitate the US Department’s review, each instance of inserted text cites the appropriate section of the Peer Review Summary, reports the progress made by LEAs in the area under consideration, summarizes the supports provided by the SEA, and explains substantive changes to statute and rule, if any, related to each area.

I. Supporting Instructional Improvement (3.A.ii.a, Peer Review Summary)

Progress Made

Professional Practice Standards: A majority of LEAs have selected a professional practice model. As explained in our initial waiver proposal, Maine DOE has established the InTASC standards as the benchmark for the practice standards an LEA uses. Having initially approved three professional practice models, which the SEA deemed aligned with InTASC standards, the SEA has in the past year approved, at the request of districts, an additional two sets, including a locally modified version of the Kim Marshall rubrics.

Initially, the flexibility afforded LEAs in developing PEPG systems was a response to the diverse and widely dispersed districts and the attendant history of local control in the state; an added benefit of local decision-making regarding PEPG elements related to professional practice has been the deep understanding of the standards among teachers, principals and stakeholders who are involved in selecting the standards of effectiveness, which will in turn facilitate transference of that understanding to peers and colleagues as LEA’s move into the pilot phase of implementation.

SEA Supports

To support LEAs in selecting and analyzing professional practice standards for the purpose of informing instruction and evaluation, the SEA:

- Conducted and released a survey in early spring 2014 in order to help districts form networks for sharing resources related to the use of the various approved models statewide. Following the release of the survey results, regional collaboratives committed to using the same professional practice standards across member districts.
- Developed and released a state Teacher Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth Model based on the National Board Core Propositions for Teachers along with a Companion Guide to the Rubric. The state model assigns greater weight to what the SEA identifies in the model as the “Instructional Core.”
- Developed and released two state principal PEPG models that prioritize the instructional leadership of the principal in the practice standards that are the basis of the models.

II. Ongoing Feedback for Teachers for the Purpose of Improving Instruction (3.B):

Progress Made

LEAs who have adopted a set of practice standards have begun to work on the other requirements of a PEPG system related to instructional support and evaluation, such as protocols for observation and feedback, and peer review. We know anecdotally that in these areas, the state teacher PEPG model is often used as guidance. The state model includes a menu and schedule of observation, review, and feedback activities called the Points of Contact Framework (which we adapted from Minnesota’s state default model). The activities are aligned to goal-oriented professional growth plans differentiated according to summative ratings. The Points of Contact Framework exemplifies the letter and spirit of the requirements for observation, feedback, and peer review in Maine law as described in the state T-PEPG handbook:

The system of observation, review of evidence, and feedback in the T-PEPG model is predicated on the idea that students and teachers thrive and grow in a culture characterized by open doors, professional conversations and critical review of practice. The Points of Contact framework allows for a variety of teacher-selected and evaluator-selected interactions to provide multiple contexts for review and feedback by peers and evaluators and supply ample evidence for the evaluation of performance. Importantly, the activities associated with Points of Contact, such as preparing for an observation or review of artifacts, can raise a teacher’s awareness to the particulars of his or her practice and in turn foster a habit of reflection and adjustment. (p 18)

The SEA knows through anecdotal evidence that many LEAs are adopting the Points of Contact Framework either in its entirety or with slight modifications.

SEA Supports

To support LEAs in giving regular feedback to all educators that results in improved practice, the SEA has, in addition to preparing the Points of Contact framework described above:

- Organized a two-part series of workshops for principals to support them in identifying and supporting instructional practices that are aligned with the shifts in literacy and mathematics seen in the Common Core State Standards. The workshops were informed by the GLT Creating Coherence resource referenced on page 31 of the ESEA Flexibility Renewal Process FAQs. These workshops were designed by the Maine DOE Standards and Instructional Supports team, involving content area specialists, our proficiency-based education specialist, and our literacy specialists, who delivered the workshops in regional events.
- Developed and released training modules for both the teacher and the principal models in collaboration with the American Institute for Research (AIR) that are aligned with the National Board Core Propositions. LEAs that are using standards developed by Marzano, Danielson, or Kim Marshall are able to modify the modules to align with those standards, though at the time of this writing, we are not sure how many LEAs are using the modules in this way.

Changes to Statute and or Rule

- Clarify the role of the ‘principal’ who is evaluated under the law as the “person who supervises teachers in delivering the instructional program of a school.”
- Add the criterion ‘Providing meaningful feedback on instructional practice’ to the criteria for evaluator training programs
- Require that all teachers are on a professional growth plan at all times with targeted areas of improvement
- Require that a teacher whose performance is rated ineffective will receive an annual evaluation and summative effectiveness rating until the rating improves

III. Differentiating performance (3.A.i, B. i.)

Progress Made

A valuable insight gained by the SEA through the US DE peer review is the need for greater emphasis on ensuring that local PEPG systems are able to differentiate performance among teachers in order to support student growth. Not only is the SEA more aware of the importance of this purpose of a PEPG system, but in the short time since receiving the US DE review, the SEA has held up the ability of a system to differentiate as a filter for LEAs in making decisions,

and that has added clarity of intent. For example, many LEAs have sought guidance on shared attribution of student learning and growth and the SEA has begun to advise LEAs of the limitations of shared attribution as we have come to believe it is in conflict with determining the influence an individual teacher has on student progress.

SEA Supports

- Committed to using a portion of available professional development funds to support evaluator training. The SEA has considered the following approaches to delivering this support:
 - Awarding seed grants to districts to be used for evaluator training programs
 - Implementing a state-provided train-the-evaluator trainer program

Changes to Statute and or Rule

- Remove provisions for shared attribution (e.g. school-wide progress in reading)
- Require that all teachers are on a professional growth plan, regardless of effectiveness rating, with targeted areas of improvement
- Require that any teacher whose performance is rated ineffective receive an annual evaluation and summative effectiveness rating until the rating improves

IV. SEA processes for ensuring that student growth measures are rigorous and comparable (3.B)

Progress Made

Maine’s Rule Chapter 180 requires that “Student learning and growth measures must be a significant factor in the determination of the summative effectiveness rating of an educator.” In each of its iterations, the rule has clearly indicated that 20% is a safe harbor in assigning weight to the student growth factor. For example, a long-standing rule provision mandates a default to 20% if districts cannot reach consensus on their approach to making student growth a significant factor. The Department frequently points LEAs to the 20% safe harbor in its communications, as the representative example, copied verbatim from a Department email to a local superintendent, illustrates:

Example 1. Email Response to a request for a review of a local approach to the summative rating, 1/8/2015:

“Based on recent feedback from the US DE, I am not confident that we’ll be able to approve a numeric percentage weight on the student growth measure of less than 20% without certain qualifiers...So, on the percentage weight of student growth...I encourage you to make it 20%. Alternatively, you could keep a lower percentage weight but include a threshold that says a teacher whose rating is below a certain threshold may not be rated effective...another approach is to adopt a matrix (like the state model’s) that incorporates a meaningful threshold. In the state model, a teacher cannot be rated effective if the impact on student growth is low or negligible.”

In addition to the safe harbor of 20% indicated in Rule Chapter 180 is a definition of ‘significant factor’. The rule states that “To be considered ‘significant,’ student learning and growth measures must have a discernible impact on an educator’s summative effectiveness rating.” Although the rules clearly place the determination of the percentage weight of student growth at the discretion of local districts, the definition of ‘significant factor’ makes clear that the weight must be such that a “data analysis [will] demonstrate that teachers or principals who make significantly different contributions to student growth receive different summative performance ratings, all other things being equal” (ESEA Flex Renewal Process FAQ F-6). In communications with the field, the Department has consistently used language reflective of that in FAQ F-6 guidance to explain to districts the meaning of discernible impact: “(e.g.,

teachers who receive similar observation ratings and professional practice ratings but significantly different growth scores receive different summative performance ratings). A representative example of such guidance provided by the Department’s Educator Effectiveness Coordinator is copied below.

Example 2. Guidance provided in a Pilot Readiness Guide, released by the Maine DOE on April 29

Under the header “Suggested questions to answer during the pilot” in the Summative Rating section of the Guide: *“When a difference exists between rating outcomes on student learning and growth measures and ratings on other measures, does the student learning and growth rating have a discernible impact on the overall rating?”*

In summary, given:

- the default percentage weight in Rule Chapter 180 of 20% as an indicator of expectations;
- a definition of ‘significant factor’ in Rule Chapter 180 as having a ‘discernible impact’;
- explicit Maine DOE guidance reflecting ESEA Flex Renewal Process FAQ F-6 guidance;
- authorization in Rule Chapter 180 for the Maine DOE to collect information related to student learning and growth; and
- submittal requirements specific to an LEA’s approach to making student learning and growth a significant factor,

the Maine DOE is confident that LEAs not only understand the meaning of ‘significant factor’ and where the Department sets the threshold, but LEAs are also fully aware that if any LEA fails to make student learning and growth a significant factor pursuant to Rule Chapter 180 and guidance, the Department will not approve its system until the problem has been addressed.

Monitoring for Compliance

In order to ensure that LEAs are in compliance with the rules as defined in the rule and interpreted by the Department by the start of the 2016-17 school year, the Department will collect data from LEAs during the pilot year on the percentage weight assigned to the student growth factor as well as other indicators of significance. In a collaborative effort among stakeholders, Rule Chapter 180 was revised in response to the US DE’s review of Maine’s waiver application to authorize the Maine DOE to collect comprehensive data relevant to the student learning and growth element. In addition, Rule Chapter 180 was also revised to include in the list of PEPG Submittal [for approval] Requirements, “A system for the selection, development, review and approval of individual educators’ student learning and growth measures, including an explanation of how the student learning and growth measure is a significant factor in the determination of an educator’s summative effectiveness rating, in accordance with the

provisions in section 7, subsection 1.” The SEA will collect data on LEAs’ approaches to making student learning and growth a significant factor, analyzing a number of elements that contribute to significance. A determination by the SEA that an LEA has not made student growth a significant factor in educators’ ratings will result in non-approval of the local PEPG system and further guidance to bring the LEA’s system into alignment with the criteria for significance. The SEA will file a report of its findings and actions with the US DE in 2017.

SEA Supports

In response to the high need for guidance in the area of student growth measures, the SEA has developed several resources to assist LEAs in understanding the requirements and quality assurances that must inform decision making related to the student growth component and provided in-person outreach.

Web-based Resources: In December of 2014, the Educator Effectiveness website was redesigned to entertain several resources related to student learning and growth measures. According to web analytics, the Educator Effectiveness webpage has seen an increase of over 1000 visits since these resources were added:

- [Student Learning and Growth — Approaches to Measuring Teacher Effectiveness.](#) (PPTX, 2MB) This slide presentation introduces emergent thinking on a method of rating teachers on the student learning and growth component of a performance evaluation and professional growth (PEPG) system. The "Performance-Gap-Reduction" (PGR) method presents a unique approach to targeting and measuring student growth and to rating teacher impact on that growth. This resource supports districts in understanding both the PGR method and the more commonly used method. The Maine DOE welcomes input and feedback from districts who decide to use either of the methods described in this presentation.
- [High Quality Assessments in a PEPG System.](#) (PPTX, 1MB) This slide presentation prepares teachers to begin the process of selecting assessments by helping them to:
 - Understand the broad context for using student learning and growth as a measure of effectiveness
 - Understand where assessments fit in the SLO process
 - Understand the meaning of student 'growth' in a PEPG system
 - Understand the basic elements of a growth measure in a PEPG system
 - Review the guidelines for appropriate content standards
 - Review the requirements and guidelines for selection of assessments
- [Maine DOE Student Learning Objective \(SLO\) Framework Handbook for Teachers and Administrators.](#) (PDF, 1MB) [MS Word version.](#) This companion to the Maine DOE T-PEPG Model provides detailed guidance on developing Student Learning Objectives to satisfy the state’s requirements for using student academic data to

improve and evaluate the impact of teachers on student learning and growth. In preparing this document, the Department sought counsel from many experts, including Maine administrators and teachers.

- [Student Learning and Growth in a PEPG System Considerations for Special Educators](#) (PPTX, 1MB)

Outreach: Many of the web-based resources were developed for one or more of the seven presentations or workshops the SEA has conducted since September 2014, specifically on the topic of student growth measures. These events have included professional development for over 100 teachers on selecting high quality assessments for a PEPG system, a presentation on the special educator in a PEPG system, a presentation to Career and Technical Education administrators, and a nine-district, day-long workshop on student learning and growth measures. Three additional regional workshops on student growth are planned for the end of the school year. LEAs have worked hard to understand the criteria and approaches to using student growth measures to evaluate educators and many are now prepared to begin developing their local measures and selecting appropriate assessments.

Changes to Statute and or Rule

- Require the use of state assessments in ELA and math in tested grades and subjects
- Require the use of an SLO or similar structure for the development of locally determined learning and growth measures, with specific content to be included in the SLO
- Requires LEAs to establish criteria for the elements of student growth measures
- Require LEAs to implement and maintain a process for the review and approval of student growth measures

V. Statewide approach to use of state assessments

In a system that calls for multiple measures of student learning and growth, Rule Chapter 180 requires that in the appropriate tested grades, the state assessment must comprise at least one measure of effectiveness. Maine’s approach to measuring student growth based on State assessments is in keeping with the student learning and growth provisions of Rule Chapter 180. The rule requires pre- and post-assessment data as the basis for any growth measure and for the instructional cohort whose growth will be attributed to a teacher. Within that framework, LEAs will determine a mechanism for using data from the spring assessment as pre-assessment data on which to base a growth measure for the teacher in the next consecutive year. The second year’s spring assessment data will serve as the post-assessment data. For example, the grade 3 spring summative assessment will be the pre-assessment for the grade 4 cohort, and the grade 4 cohort’s spring summative assessment will be the post-assessment for that cohort, and it will be the pre-assessment for the grade 5 cohort in the following year. Thus, using the state selected assessment, which tests students in grades 3-8 and 11, all grade 4-8 teachers are

required to use the state assessment as at least one measure of effectiveness related to student growth in the summative rating.

Locally determined growth measures based on state assessment data will be developed within an SLO framework, with the LEA determining the expected growth for a teacher's or principal's cohort.

The Department will collect data on summative effectiveness ratings and student growth percentiles to monitor comparability of expectations statewide, beginning in 2017- 2018 using the assessment data from 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.

VI. Department approval and monitoring

Progress Made

The Department's rule requires each LEA to submit its plans for a Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth system to the Department, and to obtain Department approval prior to the first year of full implementation of the system. The deadline for submitting the system plan for approval is 90 days before the beginning of the first full implementation year (2016-17).

Maine DOE Annual Monitoring of Student Learning and Growth Measures and Summative Effectiveness Ratings for Maine's PEPG systems

- The Maine DOE will use the authority provided in Chapter 180 to monitor local PEPG systems using comparable measures of student growth based on student growth percentiles for tested grades 4-8 in ELA and math.
- Every year beginning in the 2017- 2018 school year, the Maine DOE will use state assessment data for ELA and math generated as part of our federal accountability under ESEA to calculate student growth. The Maine DOE will:
 1. Calculate student growth measures in the tested grades 4-8 in ELA and Math based on student growth percentiles (SPG).
 2. Seek a vendor as part of the RFP for assessment that will have the capacity to calculate the student growth percentiles on an annual basis for each classroom in each school within each school administrative unit. The RFP will be developed this summer with a projected timeline for posting in late July and proposals to be submitted by late August 2015.
 3. Identify schools with a significant number or percent of teachers that have large discrepancies between (1) the teacher's student growth as measured by SGPs and (2) the teacher's summative effectiveness rating, which includes locally determined measures of student growth on the state assessment.

4. Develop supports to increase school capacity to address the disparities and use them to ameliorate the areas of concern.
5. Require district (starting the in 2016 -2017) to report locally determined aggregate student growth measures for ELA and Math for grades 4-8 and aggregate summative effectiveness ratings by school.

Monitoring Authority

Title 20-A MRSA Section 13706 provides the Department with the authority to adopt rules to monitor PEPG systems. “The department shall also adopt rules pertaining to the ongoing monitoring of the implementation and results of district performance evaluation and professional growth systems.”

Maine DOE Rule Chapter 180 provides the Department with the authority to monitor PEPG systems. See Section 15, Subsection B below.

The Department shall implement a system of monitoring and providing feedback and support based on information gathered through the monitoring system. Ongoing monitoring may include the collection of data including but not limited to:

- A. The aggregate summative ratings for each school.
- B. The process for and frequency of observation and feedback
- C. Opportunities for targeted professional growth and improvement
- D. The types and descriptions of individual assessments used in the evaluation of educators
- E. The process for developing student learning and growth measures
- F. Exemplars of student learning and growth measures
- G. District criteria for the development, review and approval of growth measures
- H. The use of ratings for employment decisions
- I. The mechanism for sustaining the PEPG system
- J. Evaluator and educator training programs

General Information about the Student Growth in Maine’s PEPG system.

- PEPG law states that student learning and growth (SLG) on assessments must be *one factor* in a teacher or principal’s summative effectiveness rating. Another factor must be professional practice as measured through observations and evidence and according to standards and rubrics. (Districts are free to add other factors to the mix.)
- The SLG factor of a teacher or principal’s summative rating must be based on multiple measures of student learning and growth. No single SLG measure may comprise the entire SLG factor in an educator’s summative rating.
- The law states that use of the ELA/literacy and math state assessments in tested grades must be used as at least one measure (of multiple measures) of student learning and

growth for teachers and principals. Other assessments can make up the remainder of the SLG component.

- Large scale standardized tests may be the sole type of assessment used in a teacher’s rating only if the teacher agrees to this usage.
- A teacher or principal’s SLG rating is based on district-determined growth expectations for students. This is true of local, commercial and state assessments. Even if a large scale standardized assessment report includes normed proficiency/achievement benchmarks, in a PEPG system, teachers and principals are held accountable for growth.
- The amount of growth expected of students in an instructional cohort is determined by local educators and leaders.

Required process of setting a growth target using any assessment:

1. Pre-assessment data informs teachers in determining developmentally appropriate expectations for students on the summative assessment.
2. State and district guidelines help ensure that growth targets are rigorous, attainable, and developmentally appropriate.
3. A teacher or principal establishes a growth target for an instructional cohort.

National Supports that the Maine Department is utilizing:

- Kathy Dunne, Carol Keirstead and Scott Reynolds - NCC, New England Comprehensive Center
- Susan Mundry - NEERA, New England Educator Effectiveness Research Alliance
- Tim Dove, Council of Chief State School Officers
- Ellen Sherratt, The Center for Great Teachers and Leaders

SEA Supports

The SEA has developed an online survey for collecting comprehensive information from LEAs about all elements of their PEPG systems. During the last week of February 2015, the SEA launched a field test of the survey with seven districts, three of which are TIF districts. Once the field test and adjustments are complete, the SEA will have in place a monitoring tool for routinely gathering comprehensive or targeted information.

The Maine DOE will provide guidance to LEAs that has been generated from the TIF schools for local monitoring of their PEPG systems.

Changes to Statute and or Rule

- Added a provision to rule language authorizing the SEA to collect and monitor information, including but not limited to information about:

- The aggregate summative effectiveness ratings for each school.
 - The process for and frequency of observation and feedback.
 - The types and descriptions of individual assessments used in the evaluation of educators
 - The process for setting growth targets
 - Exemplars of growth targets
 - The district process and criteria for selection of assessments
 - The use of ratings for employment decisions
 - The process for sustaining the PEPG system
 - The LEA evaluator and educator training programs
 - The process for review and approval of SLOs
- Require the LEA steering committee itself to develop a plan for monitoring and evaluating the results of the pilot and implementation years.

Maine law includes a provision requiring superintendents to certify compliance with laws and rules, through a basic school approval process. Compliance with the educator evaluation system will be added as a requirement. Department staff members follow up with any indication that the LEA is not in full compliance with a requirement. Pursuant to Department Rule Chapter 125, an LEA that fails to comply with an element of basic school approval must file a corrective action plan with the Department that is acceptable to the commissioner.

While the school approval process relies on self-reporting, the Department is also developing cross-team monitoring practices that will enable staff, who are on-site at a school, to identify potential areas needing follow-up from staff. (See description of sub-recipient monitoring in section 1.B)

VII. Piloting of local systems

Progress Made

By current statute, all LEAs are required to pilot all or part of their locally-adopted PEPG systems not later than school year 2015-16. The LEA may determine which aspects of its system to pilot based on discussions with its Steering Committee. Student growth measures are required to be included in the pilot.

SEA Supports

The SEA developed an online survey for collecting comprehensive information from LEAs about all elements of their PEPG systems. During the last week of February 2015, the SEA launched a field test of the survey with seven districts, three of which are TIF districts. Once the field test and adjustments are complete, the SEA will have in place a monitoring tool for routinely

gathering comprehensive and targeted information. Given the full pilot year, the monitoring tool will be implemented during the pilot year.

Changes to Statute or Rule

Legislation was passed in March that changes the implementation timeline to allow for a full pilot in 2015-16. To ensure that the proposed timeline would not result in a slowing down of progress, the SEA is requiring that LEAs submit by July 15, 2015 an Intent to Pilot their PEPG systems. Through the Intent-to-Pilot process, the SEA will be able to identify LEAs that are not on track to pilot by the beginning of the 2015-16 school year and will intervene with added supports.

Support for teachers of students with disabilities and English learners

Progress Made

The SEA is working to better understand the circumstances that pose challenges for the evaluation of special educators and ELL teachers. The SEA is still far from the depth of understanding needed to accurately and fairly attribute student growth to special educators and ELL teachers who function in a variety of contexts, both classroom-based and otherwise. The longer pilot phase that an extended implementation timeline would afford is the need to see how various approaches to special education and ELL teachers play out in the PEPG system. This data could then inform more concrete guidelines than the hypothetical one we are currently able to provide.

SEA Supports

In consultation with the Maine DOE Special Education Director, the SEA developed a PowerPoint for special educators (described in section III), which we presented at a state wide conference of special educators. Guidance in the PowerPoint concerning the use of IEPs for student growth measures mirrors the US DE's recommendation that the SEA "clarify that IEPs must not be used to measure student growth for the purpose of evaluating teachers" (3.A.ii.a).

Changes to Statute or Rule

The legislature has adopted statutory language that explicitly prohibits the use of IEPs for evaluation purposes.

VIII. Past and future involvement of teachers, principals and other stakeholders

History

Maine has several avenues through which teacher and administrator representatives are involved in developing and implementing PEPG systems. As part of the process for developing our flexibility application, former Commissioner Bowen created a state-level Steering Committee consisting of Department staff and representatives of all of the education professional associations, including teachers, special education administrators, principals and school boards as well as an English Language Learner program coordinator. The Steering Committee received updates on the work of all of the flexibility-related working groups, including the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council, commented on the work, made suggestions and grappled with some difficult issues that arose during development of the application.

After the application was submitted, and we received comments from the U.S. Department of Education, the Commissioner met again with the non-DOE members of the Steering Committee to explain the feedback from US DE and the Department's process for responding. These were the heads of the professional associations – Maine Principals, Teachers, Superintendents, School Boards and Special Education Directors.

The Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC) was created in the same legislation that created the requirement for LEAs to adopt and implement PEPG systems. MEEC included practitioners appointed by the teacher's, principal's, superintendents' and school boards associations. While the special education administrator's association did not have a member on MEEC, one of the 4 teachers who were appointed by the teacher's association is a special education teacher.

MEEC was authorized to continue meeting until approximately late September of 2013. The Council submitted an interim report to the Legislature in November, 2012 (see the report at <http://www.maine.gov/doe/accountability/meec.html>) and continued to meet to develop additional recommendations. MEEC members, both as a group and as individual constituencies, were closely involved in the development and Legislature's review of the Department's proposed rule. MEEC members, early in their tenure, expressed the need for ongoing oversight of the implementation of this new law. The Department is in the process of establishing an advisory council to provide oversight and advice related to educator effectiveness and proficiency-based education, two areas of Department policy with significant areas of commonality. The council will include representation from a stakeholder group similar to that of the MEEC and may include some members of the original MEEC.

With regard to involvement in local design and implementation of the PEPG system, state law requires that LEA develop their PEPG systems "in collaboration with teachers, principals, administrators, school board members, parents and other members of the public."

Progress Made

When, in the 126th legislature, the Educational and Cultural Affairs Committee amended what went on to become the finally adopted rule chapter 180, one of the amendments was to the

local development process. The amendment added to the requirement for “involvement of stakeholders” in the development process a very specific requirement that the development committee be composed of a majority of teachers and that the development committee uses a consensus-based decision making process to adopt components of the system, including the weight assigned to the student learning and growth factor. A provision allowed for the continuation of an original committee, regardless of composition, with the consent of the district teachers. This new requirement coming in April of what was the development year resulted in a significant pause in progress as LEAs sought to comply with the rule. In some cases the necessary voting and consent acquisitions could not take place until the fall of 2014, and in many cases, development committees had to revisit past decisions in order to adopt them through consensus. Despite the setbacks to progress that the new regulations caused, anecdotal evidence from teachers and administrators indicates that most development committees are working collaboratively and thoughtfully on developing their PEPG systems.

By statute, a Steering Committee composed of teachers, administrators and other school staff must be involved in refinement and review of the PEPG system. Some of the teachers on the steering committee must be appointed by the teachers’ association. The rule requires that the steering committee be formed not later than the beginning of the pilot phase.

SEA Supports

The SEA has published guidelines for the involvement of various stakeholder groups and provided a Q and A on the roles and functions of the groups.

Changes to Statute or Rule

Add a requirement that the local steering committee will provide a plan to the Maine DOE for monitoring the effectiveness of their systems.

3.B ENSURE LEAS IMPLEMENT TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- 3.B Provide the SEA’s process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA’s adopted guidelines.

The following table outlines the significant series of steps the Maine DOE and the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council have undertaken over the past several years to develop and implement a Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PEPG) system that meets the requirements of current state statute and rule. The proposed and projected steps the Maine DOE will take in the next year are shown in the attached table: *Maine DOE Responses to US DE Peer Review*.

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Enact legislation laying out basic principles for a PEPG system, and a process for fleshing out the system	Done	Commissioner	Public Law 2011, chapter 635 (LD 1858), see Appendix 9		Accomplished

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Appoint members of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC), pursuant to membership list in PL 2011, chapter 635	Done	Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; Professional Associations (MEA, MSSA, MSBA, MPA, MADSEC)	Membership List (See MEEC report, Appendix 10)		Accomplished
Schedule, plan and implement MEEC meetings	MEEC met 20 times between May 2012 and May 2013. See meeting agendas at http://www.maine.gov/doe/accountability/meec.html	Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; Council Co-chair Grace Leavitt; Mark Kostin; MEEC members	Agendas	Significant staff time of Commissioner, Policy & Programs Director; Mark Kostin will continue to be needed to staff the Council	Accomplished

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Review and track progress of school districts participating in the “Maine Schools for Excellence” (MSFE) project, funded by a federal TIF grant	Ongoing; MSFE Director made presentation to MEEC; Department and professional association heads receive quarterly updates through MSFE Executive Committee meetings	MSFE Project Director; professional association directors, Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; MEEC members	Lewiston School District TIF Progress Report. See Appendix 12 Other progress reports during throughout the year	N/A	N/A
Prepare and submit report to the Joint Standing Committee with MEEC recommendations	Report was submitted to the Legislature in November, 2012 and an Addendum was submitted in May 2013	Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; Council Co-chair Grace Leavitt; Mark Kostin; MEEC members	Report Attached as Appendix 10 and 11	Significant staff time of Commissioner and Policy & Programs Director	Accomplished

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Conduct Department rulemaking process to provide detailed standards for the PEPG system, including: Professional practice standards; Implementation requirements; teacher of record determinations	Department completed the administrative portion of the process and submitted the provisionally adopted rule to the Legislature on March 21, 2013. The Legislature did not pass legislation to finally approve the rule, so it was resubmitted in the Fall of 2013, for review in the legislative session beginning in January, 2014. The Department resubmitted the provisionally adopted rule to the Legislature in the fall of 2013. The rule was adopted in May 2014.	Policy & Programs Director, Commissioner, utilizing available recommendations from the MEEC		Significant DOE Staff Time will be needed to complete the proposed rules and to respond to public comment.	Accomplished

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Provide ongoing opportunities for involvement of all stakeholders in the development and implementation of PEPG systems that meet the requirements of state statute and rule	MEEC proposed that a stakeholder entity be formed to oversee implementation of Chapter 508, but did not specify that it be MEEC itself. The Department will establish an advisory council.	MEEC Co-Chairs; Maine DOE	Legislative authority extending MEEC operations or creating an alternative oversight entity		N/A
Provide guidance and technical assistance to the field in development of PEPG systems that meet the requirements of state statute and rule	The weekly Commissioner’s Update will include ongoing reports of rulemaking and legislative action on PEPG system requirements. Once the Legislature authorizes final rule adoption, the Department will provide information through several media, which may include Webinars, conferences, and written materials.	Office of the Commissioner	Communications and materials	Significant DOE staff time	N/A

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Implement a process for Department approval of local PEPG systems	LEAs will pilot all or part of their PEPG systems with all or some of their educators during the 2015-2016 school year and LEAs will submit their PEPG plans for approval by the Maine DOE in the spring of 2016.	Office of the Commissioner	Documentation of Maine DOE approval process described in proposed rule	Significant Maine DOE staff time	N/A
Strengthened Legislation to meet the expectations of Peer Review	127 th legislature, 2014-15	Maine DOE, Maine legislature	LD 692 Rule Chapter 180	Significant cooperation between US DE, Maine DOE and the State of Maine Legislature	Work required an unorthodox and unusual set of actions to meet US DE requirements within the short time frame.