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# **ESEA Flexibility Request**

## **CONNECTICUT**

**February 28, 2012**

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Revised February 10, 2012

U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, DC 20202

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Paperwork Burden Statement

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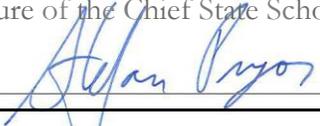
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<a href="#">Public Act 11-135</a>	
<a href="#">Connecticut Education Data and Research (CEDaR)</a>	

## COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester:  Connecticut State Department of Education	Requester's Mailing Address:  165 Capitol Avenue, Room 305 Hartford, CT 06106
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request  Charlene Russell-Tucker Chief Operating Officer Connecticut State Department of Education 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 303 Hartford, CT 06106  Telephone: 860-713-6550 Fax: 860-713-7022 E-mail address: <a href="mailto:charlene.russell-tucker@ct.gov">charlene.russell-tucker@ct.gov</a>	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): <b>Commissioner Stefan Pryor</b>	Telephone: (860) 713-6500
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:  X 	Date: February 28, 2012
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of the ESEA Flexibility.	

## WAIVERS

By submitting this flexibility request, the SEA requests flexibility through waivers of the ten ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested; a chart appended to the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions* enumerates each specific provision of which the SEA requests a waiver, which the SEA incorporates into its request by reference.

- 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 schoolwide 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.
- 10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g)(4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State’s priority schools that meet the definition of “priority schools” set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

Optional Flexibilities:

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

- 11. 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.
- 12. 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 that are not reward schools, priority schools, or focus schools.

13. 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 rank sufficiently high to be served.

**ASSURANCES**

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that:

- 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of the flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.
- 2. It will adopt 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 new college- and career-ready standards, no later than the 2013–2014 school year. (Principle 1)
- 3. It will develop and 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). (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 report to the public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools at the time the SEA is approved to implement the flexibility, and annually thereafter, it will publicly recognize its reward schools as well as make public its lists of priority and focus schools if it chooses to update those lists. (Principle 2)
- 8. Prior to submitting this request, it provided student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, all teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs, or it will do so no later than the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)

- 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 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 State 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 this request.
- 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 and for each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II): 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. It will also 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.

**If the SEA selects Option A in section 3.A of its request, indicating that it has not yet developed and adopted all the guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, it must also assure that:**

- 15. It will submit to the Department for peer review and approval a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year. (Principle 3)

## CONSULTATION

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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.1)** Did the SEA meaningfully engage and solicit input on its request from teachers and their representatives?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.2)** Is the engagement likely to lead to successful implementation of the SEA’s request due to the input and commitment of teachers and their representatives at the outset of the planning and implementation process?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.3)** Did the SEA indicate that it modified any aspect of its request based on input from teachers and their representatives?

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) strongly believes that it cannot move the state forward toward higher achievement for all students unless it involves key stakeholders in shaping its direction—especially teachers, school leaders, and other educators. Therefore, during the process of creating this ESEA Flexibility Request, the CSDE solicited input from a broad range of stakeholders, including teachers, principals, superintendents, advocacy groups, and community organizations. However, many of the initiatives described in this request have been in development prior to the flexibility process, including many parts of Principles 1 and 3 and several of the goals and interventions in Principle 2. This request builds upon existing reform efforts that have already been heavily influenced by stakeholder input.

Connecticut understands that the flexibility measures sought in this application will have a direct effect on the conditions in which educators work. Therefore, the CSDE has sought their guidance on both the waiver development process as well as in the specific content areas.

### **Modalities of Consultation**

The CSDE used several forums to invite and enable teachers and their representatives to provide input and feedback on the waiver:

- Meetings with state leaders of the Connecticut Education Association (CEA) and the Connecticut American Federation of Teachers (AFTCT);
- Committees and councils made up of teacher unions and administrators;
- Commissioner’s Listening Tour at schools and school districts across the state;
- A baseline statewide survey of superintendents;
- Public comment sessions at a regional facility open to everyone, with invitations sent to individuals and groups; and

- An [ESEA Flexibility Waiver webpage](#) on the CSDE website and an e-mail address specific to providing input on ESEA Flexibility application ([title1waivers@ct.gov](mailto:title1waivers@ct.gov)).

The forums were designed to engage teachers and representatives at various stages of the waiver process and to solicit different levels of involvement. The Commissioner’s Listening Tour and the state survey of superintendents took place early in the design period, which allowed the CSDE to gather qualitative and quantitative data to incorporate in the analysis and planning as well as to inform teachers of the CSDE’s plans. Council and committee representation by teacher unions and administrators, on the other hand, were the key channels to make sure that the CSDE proposed policies made sense at the school and classroom level. Finally, the public comment sessions and dedicated e-mail address provided the opportunity for teachers and administrators to share their comments.

**Meetings with CEA and AFTCT Leaders and Committees and Councils Made Up of Teachers and Administrators.** Over the past several months, the CSDE has met with each of the state’s two unions’ leadership over a dozen times about the Governor and Commissioner’s education reform package, which includes key elements addressed in our waiver application. The CSDE has met with each union individually and convened joint sessions with both unions. Throughout our consultations, we have aimed to incorporate stakeholders’ feedback and address their concerns. Consultations are ongoing to refine our approach as the Governor’s legislative proposal advances through the General Assembly and as the CSDE pursues its plans. Additionally, the CSDE has met with smaller groups that include teachers to discuss specific aspects of the reform package and the waiver application more generally.

**Governor’s Workshop.** On January 5, 2012, Governor Dannel P. Malloy hosted an education workshop called “2012: The Year for Education Reform” with more than 350 attendees. The workshop panels addressed each of the ESEA Flexibility principles, including college and career readiness, interventions in low-performing schools and districts, and preparing and supporting excellent teachers and school leaders. ([Agenda](#)) In the Commissioner’s opening remarks at the workshop, he confirmed Connecticut’s intent to apply for ESEA Flexibility.

**Commissioner’s Listening Tour.** The Commissioner’s Listening Tour covered 12 school districts and three educators’ groups over the course of approximately three months. The Commissioner visited both high- and low-performing districts and spoke with teachers, principals, students, and superintendents. During this tour, the Commissioner had conversations about many of the initiatives set forth in this waiver, including intervening in low-performing schools, evaluating teachers and principals, and reducing unnecessary burden on districts. These conversations helped to shape the vision for the Commissioner’s Network and the system of evaluation and support, as detailed later in Principles 2 and 3. For the Commissioner’s statewide Listening Tour schedule, see [Appendix CON 0.1](#).

**Statewide Survey of Superintendents.** A statewide survey of superintendents, conducted in December 2011, helped inform the Governor’s six principles, which were the foundation of his

the 2012 legislative package of education reforms. Specifically, survey results that directly influenced the education agenda outlined in this waiver request include:

- 53.1% of superintendents believe the CSDE is not helping close the achievement gap in their district.
  - Governor’s Principle: Authorize the intensive interventions and enable the supports necessary to turn around Connecticut’s lowest-performing schools and districts.
- 55% of superintendents believe the CSDE has not articulated a clear plan to help attract, retain, and develop teachers and administrators for Connecticut schools.
  - Governor’s Principle: Ensure that Connecticut’s schools are home to the very best teachers and principals—working within a fair system that values their skill and effectiveness over seniority and tenure.
- 67% of superintendents believe the state’s formulas for funding education are unfair or very unfair.
  - Governor’s Principle: Deliver more resources, targeted to districts with the greatest need—provided that they embrace key reforms that position Connecticut’s students for success.
- 66.9% of superintendents indicate the CSDE issues regulations too often.
  - Governor’s Principle: Unleash innovation by removing red tape and other barriers to success, especially in high-performing schools and districts.

The [full survey results](#) are available on the CSDE website.

**ESEA Flexibility Waiver Webpage, E-Mail Address, and Public Comment Sessions.** In January 2012, the CSDE created a [webpage](#) on the CSDE website with information on the flexibility request process. The CSDE posted drafts of this request in February 2012 and provided an e-mail address to receive feedback ([title1waivers@ct.gov](mailto:title1waivers@ct.gov)). Over one-third of the e-mails were from teachers and principals. For a log of e-mails, see [Appendix CON 0.2](#). In February 2012, the CSDE held four public comment sessions at the State Education Resource Center (SERC). Several teachers and administrators attended and provided public comment that the CSDE has considered. For the invitation, list of invited organizations, and summary of the outreach process, see [Appendices CON 0.3, CON 0.4, and CON 0.5](#). The following section describes the ways in which stakeholder feedback influenced this waiver application.

### **Outcomes of Consultation**

In interaction with teachers and their representatives, the CSDE discussed Connecticut’s vision for improving its education system and plans for specific areas of policy, from the interventions in our lowest performing schools to new teacher and administrator evaluation systems. Specifically, the CSDE provided the union leaders with an overall summary of the waiver application and engaged in more substantive discussions of Principles 2 and 3. In a number of aspects of the waiver plan design, the CSDE considered such feedback in modifying or evolving its plan. Below are summaries of the consultation the CSDE has conducted on each waiver area and the policy changes made with the feedback received:

**1. College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students (Principle 1).** Connecticut’s educators were critical to the CCSS adoption process. In May 2010, over 50 experts in Connecticut’s English language arts (ELA) and mathematics standards conducted a standards comparison study. In June 2010, the CSDE held a CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference to share the results of the comparison study, to offer an opportunity for educators and other stakeholders from business, industry, and communities to provide their general impressions of the new CCSS, and to recommend resources and support systems needed for effective implementation. Nearly two-thirds of attendees represented educators.

Since the standards were adopted in July 2010, teachers and administrators have been involved in CCSS presentations and trainings, and their feedback has helped shape the standards transition process. The CSDE’s submission for Principle 1 describes this consultation in greater detail.

The CSDE also discussed the CCSS adoption with teachers, parents, superintendents, and representatives of community organizations at the February 8 and 9 public comment sessions. The feedback from these sessions and from the online form resulted in several changes and clarifications to the plan:

- In response to an inquiry from the Committee of Practitioners about how the state can make it easier for parents to understand the new standards proposed under the waiver plan, the CSDE will modify the CCSS materials of the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to ensure they are user-friendly for parents. The CSDE is considering working with an outside organization to develop additional materials that help explain the new standards.
- To address a concern from the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) regarding training for State Board of Education (SBE) members, the CSDE will include the availability of summer academies for members of the local boards of education in the implementation plan.
- In response to a second inquiry from CABE concerning how the state will build regional capacity for implementation, the CSDE clarified that it will develop tools for Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) – public entities that serve as intermediaries between the CSDE and the state’s 166 districts – to use in assisting district-level implementation.

**2. State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support (Principle 2).** The CSDE consulted with the CEA and AFTCT, Connecticut’s teachers’ unions, as it developed policy, specifically on its model for intervention in low performing schools. The CSDE incorporated into the proposed model the groups’ suggestion to include school-linked services (as part of a community school model) in the Commissioner’s Network intervention. Union leaders also indicated their support for a process of diagnosis to inform intervening in low-performing schools in order to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach.

In focus groups, superintendents and principals requested that the new accountability system accord significant value to student growth and indicated a particular interest in the vertical

scale. In response to this input, the CSDE is proposing integrating a model of individual student growth into our Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs).

The CSDE also engaged superintendents in this process, which was an important step because the survey showed that superintendents do not find current interventions useful and do not have the support they need to open new schools in their districts. The CSDE's plans for recognition, accountability, and support were later posted online for comment by teachers and other representatives; they were also presented in person at four public comment sessions held at the SERC in early February. The sessions drew 70 participants, several of whom were teachers and superintendents. The CSDE also received several e-mails from science teachers throughout the state who voiced their support for the inclusion of science in the accountability system.

**3. Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership (Principle 3).** The involvement of teachers' representatives in developing the new educator evaluation guidelines has been extensive and substantive. Union representatives, school and district administrators are represented on the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), a statutorily mandated council charged with the development of the new evaluation guidelines. PEAC members include the state Commissioners of Education and Higher Education or their designees, representatives from CABE, the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, the CEA, the AFTCT, and others selected by the Commissioner of Education, including representatives from higher education and the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), an organization that represents the state's principals. PEAC must meet at least once every three months.

PEAC and the CSDE sought input from school districts—the entities that operate schools, including RESCs and charter schools—on the evaluation systems through a survey of districts. Through the survey, the CSDE conducted a baseline assessment of current district evaluation systems for teachers and leaders. Since this work began, teachers have had consistent representation at the table voicing their needs and concerns.

Earlier this month, the CSDE published the complete plan for the development of guidelines for the new evaluation and support system on the CSDE's website for teachers, administrators, superintendents, students, and parents to view and comment (see following section for more details). Examples of feedback that the CSDE received include the following: the validity of performance indicators is critical to assessing performance levels of teachers; feedback from peers, students, and parents is very important to teachers' professional development; and evaluators must be properly trained to ensure the evaluation systems work well. These echoed the points raised by PEAC members and will be addressed in the CSDE and PEAC's work going forward.

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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.4)** Did the SEA meaningfully engage and solicit 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?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.5)** Is the engagement likely to lead to successful implementation of the SEA’s request due to the input and commitment of relevant stakeholders at the outset of the planning and implementation process?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.6)** Did the SEA indicate that it modified any aspect of its request based on stakeholder input?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (CON.7)** Does the input represent feedback from a diverse mix of stakeholders representing various perspectives and interests, including stakeholders from high-need communities?

### **Modalities of Consultation**

As with teachers and administrators, the CSDE has established a number of mechanisms to interact with and engage students, parents, community organizations, business leaders, as well as civil rights representatives in the policy design and planning process. The CSDE reached out in the following ways:

- Public comment sessions at regional facilities open to everyone and invitations sent to individuals and groups;
- An [ESEA Flexibility Waiver webpage](#) on the CSDE website and an e-mail address specific to providing input on ESEA Flexibility application ([title1waivers@ct.gov](mailto:title1waivers@ct.gov));
- Group meetings with members of stakeholder organizations;
- Individual meetings with leaders of stakeholder organizations; and
- Press and public announcements.

### **Consultation Activities and Timeline**

To date, the CSDE has completed the following engagement activities:

*Table CON 0.1: Stakeholder Engagement Activities and Timeline*

<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
Governor Malloy speaks to the press about Connecticut’s plans to apply for ESEA Flexibility.	Public	September 2011	Governor

<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
Commissioner visits 12 school districts during a statewide Listening Tour and requests their input on ESEA Flexibility (Windham, Meriden, New Haven, Fairfield, New Britain, Stamford, West Hartford, Norwalk, Bridgeport, New London, Colchester, and Berlin).	Principals, teachers, pupil services staff	October 18, 2011–January 9, 2012	Commissioner
The CSDE sends a survey to state superintendents to solicit feedback on all aspects of the CSDE. ( <a href="#">Survey Results</a> )	Superintendents	December 2011	Commissioner
The Commissioner addresses the Connecticut Association of Urban Superintendents (CAUS) and requests its input on key elements of the waiver.	Superintendents	December 14, 2011	Commissioner
Governor Malloy’s hosts an Education Workshop, which addresses ESEA Flexibility areas ( <a href="#">Agenda</a> ); Commissioner Pryor announces Connecticut’s intent to apply for ESEA Flexibility.	General public, policymakers, administrators	January 5, 2012	Commissioner
The CSDE meets with the Connecticut Afterschool Advisory Council to discuss optional waiver flexibility.	Practitioners, Funders, Policymakers	January 9, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE meets with a “red tape” focus group of superintendents and SBE members, convened to identify burdensome and duplicative state requirements.	Superintendents and SBE members	January 11, 2012	Deputy Chief of Staff
The CSDE meets with the Connecticut chapter of AFTCT and the CEA to discuss and receive input on ESEA Flexibility.	Union representatives	January 13, 2012	CSDE Education Consultant
The CSDE officially states its intention to apply for ESEA Flexibility on the state website.	General public	January 17, 2012	
The CSDE has first meeting with Connecticut Committee of Practitioners to provide an overview of the waiver application.	Educators and Parents	January 17, 2012	CSDE Education Consultant

<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
SERC sends an invitation on behalf of the CSDE to over 140 stakeholder groups to the ESEA Flexibility meetings on February 8 and 9; SERC also announces the dates that drafts of the request will be available on the state website, and invites feedback via a state e-mail address.	General public	January 31, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE conducts a focus group on the ESEA waiver with the CABE.	Boards of Education and policymakers	January 31, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE posts a draft of Principles 1 and 3 on its website.	Educators, general public	February 1, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE extends an invitation to its information sessions on the waiver to the general public via its website.	General public	February 1, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE presents and receives feedback from CAPSS at the organization's board meeting.	Superintendents	February 3, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE meets with the Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL) to discuss and receive input on ESEA Flexibility.	Organization that represents English language learners (ELLs), program administrators	February 3, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE consults with leadership of the CAPSS, the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), and the CABE to discuss interventions in Priority/Turnaround Schools.	Superintendents, principals, SBE members	February 4, 2012	Commissioner
The CSDE holds a second meeting with the Connecticut Community of Practitioners.	Educators and parents	February 6, 2012	CSDE Education Consultant
The CSDE posts a draft of Principle 2 on the state's website.	Educators, general public	February 7, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE meets with the CAS student group to discuss and receive feedback on ESEA flexibility.	Students	February 7, 2012	CSDE Education Consultant

<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
The CSDE holds a meeting with its staff to discuss and receive input on ESEA Flexibility.	CSDE employees	February 8, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE meets with parent/family organizations.	Parents and families	February 8, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE presents waiver components and discusses concerns at ESEA information/public comment sessions.	General public	February 8–9, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE meets with civil rights organizations to discuss and receive input on ESEA Flexibility.	Community organizations	February 9, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE meets with the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus in the state legislature to discuss the waiver application.	Policymakers	February 9, 2012	Commissioner and Chief Operating Officer
The SBE unanimously endorsed our application for ESEA flexibility following a presentation by the Commissioner. For the SBE letter of support, see <a href="#">Appendix CON 0.7</a> .	Policymakers	February 10, 2012	Commissioner
The CSDE holds a focus group discussion with the CAS to receive input on ESEA Flexibility.	Principals and policymakers	February 13, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE meets with the State Advisory Council on Special Education, which includes representatives from the Connecticut Speech, Language, and Hearing Association and the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC); the Department of Corrections; the Department of Children and Families; and parents of students with disabilities.	Parents, organizations that represent students with disabilities	February 15, 2012	Chief Operating Officer
The CSDE meets about the waiver application with the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education administrators (ConnCASE).	Organization that represents students with disabilities	February 15, 2012	Bureau Chief of Special Education

Key Activity	Stakeholder Group	Date	Person Responsible
The CSDE meets with leaders of RESCs to discuss the role they can play in assisting in the implementation of the CCSS, providing interventions and supports to low-performing schools and assisting districts with the development of teacher and leader evaluation and support.	Regional Education Leaders	February 15, 2012	Commissioner and Chief Operating Officer

For a sample of notes from these meetings, see [Appendix CON 0.6](#).

The CSDE’s public comment sessions and the online e-mail address were the most extensive forums for stakeholder engagement. The sessions included four public meetings and two meetings focused on particular stakeholder groups held at various times over two days in the CSDE’s regional office. With the help of partners at the SERC, the CSDE invited more than 1,600 individuals and groups. The CSDE sent an e-mail invitation and two follow-up e-mails and placed phone calls to those who did not respond to encourage them to register for the events.

The CSDE received over 90 e-mails addressed to [title1waivers@ct.gov](mailto:title1waivers@ct.gov). Over 33% of the e-mails were from teachers; 25% were from the general public, and nearly 10% came from institutions of higher education (IHEs), parents, and community-based organizations. While several of the e-mails expressed opposition due to concerns about cost, timing, and testing, others expressed their support, particularly concerning the inclusion of science in the CSDE’s accountability system.

For a log of e-mails and public comments, see [Appendix CON 0.2](#).

### **Outcomes of Consultation**

In all engagements with stakeholder groups, the CSDE has informed the individuals and organizations of the state’s plans, updated them on specific policy proposals, and solicited comments and feedback. All feedback has been documented, reviewed, and addressed by the CSDE teams and managers responsible for the development of the waiver. The CSDE went through the issues, considered them carefully, and determined the appropriate actions. Below are summaries of interactions and outcomes as they pertain to each section of the waiver application.

**1. College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students (Principle 1).** The CSDE engaged stakeholder groups during the CCSS adoption process. While nearly two-thirds of the June 2010 CCSS Stakeholder Conference attendees were educators, over 25% represented educational organizations, and just under 10% represented higher education institutions. Participants represented the P-20 Council, the CPAC, the CABE, the Connecticut Business and Industry

Association (CBIA), the Connecticut Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Connecticut IHEs, and the RESCs Alliance.

The CSDE is in the process of convening a CCSS implementation team with the specific mandate to ensure all constituent groups are reached. The CCSS Implementation team will include CSDE staff members that support curriculum, assessment, instruction, ELLs and students with disabilities, as well as external partners. The internal CSDE team will meet quarterly and has a mandate to reach stakeholders in adult education, early childhood, and family engagement. The team that includes partners external to the CSDE will also meet quarterly and will include members that represent IHEs, professional organizations, district-level administrators, teachers' organizations, parent organizations, and advocacy groups. The CSDE continues to seek educator input on the implementation process by providing surveys and other feedback mechanisms during statewide and local trainings. Furthermore, the CSDE has convened a stakeholder group of public and private agencies, parents, consumers, advocates, and district representatives to address the secondary transition needs of students with disabilities. This Special Education Transition Taskforce examines the CCSS and identifies those standards most appropriate for transition planning for students with disabilities.

**2. State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support (Principle 2).** In the first draft of this application, which was posted on the CSDE website and presented at the information sessions, the CSDE included student and teacher attendance as part of its accountability system. Participants at one of our information sessions and principals in our Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) focus group expressed concerns about the current research linking student attendance to achievement as well as the out-of-school factors that could influence student attendance. While the CSDE believes that student and teacher attendance is critical to the success of Connecticut students, it agrees that until it has developed more robust ways to assess school climate, it should remove these measures. Participants were also concerned about school tutoring and summer programs. The CSDE clarified that this application includes continuing summer and tutoring programs as optional interventions—rather than as requirements—for both Priority and Focus Schools.

**3. Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership (Principle 3).** The feedback the CSDE received on the development and implementation of new evaluation systems touched on three issues: 1) how to evaluate non-classroom teachers, 2) how to measure student learning, and 3) how to ensure that the process is not burdensome to teachers. As described in the implementation plan, PEAC is convening three evaluation workgroups to develop separate models for administrators, teachers, and support staff. The CSDE anticipates that the evaluation for non-classroom teachers will be addressed by either the teacher or support staff group. The state's requirements—which have just been approved by the SBE—specify that 45% of the evaluation must be based on student learning. Of this 45%, half (or 22.5%) must be based on the state test or a standardized test in grades and subjects for which no state test exists, while the other half must include other reliable and valid measures. Finally, to address concerns regarding potential burdens created by the system and inadequate support for teachers, the

CSDE clarified that the state will provide additional resources to support the implementation of the new evaluation system and associated professional development. Specifically, the proposed legislative package includes \$7.5 million for additional professional development support and technical assistance linked to the new evaluation system.

### **Continuing Engagement**

The CSDE will execute many initiatives over the next three years and remains committed to continuous engagement with stakeholders throughout this process. After the initial submission of this flexibility request, the CSDE plans to repeat certain aspects of the engagement process, including posting the submitted request for comments and requesting feedback through the [title1waivers@ct.gov](mailto:title1waivers@ct.gov) e-mail address. Furthermore, the CSDE plans to solicit feedback through e-mails and face-to-face meetings with stakeholder groups specifically concerning the following areas:

- Transition to Common Core assessments;
- Interventions in Focus Schools;
- Implementation of educator evaluation; and
- Measures of school climate, student health, and arts and fitness to include in accountability system.

While the CSDE values the input of all stakeholders, because of the particular nature of the policies proposed in this flexibility request, CSDE staff will especially seek the input of teachers, administrators, superintendents, parents, students, and advocates for high-needs students, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and racial/ethnic minorities.

Finally, stakeholder engagement specifically around the waiver request is strongly linked to the work being done throughout the state. The CSDE continues to work with other agencies to further the state's shared goals of promoting excellence for all and closing the achievement gap. Beginning in January 2012, the statutorily mandated Interagency Council for Ending the Achievement Gap will meet quarterly and will focus on the introduction of school-linked wrap-around services in low-performing schools. The CSDE Commissioner sits on the council, as do representatives from the Departments of Children and Families, Social Services, Public Health, Economic and Community Development, Administrative Services, and Policy and Management as well as the Office of the Governor and representatives from higher education.

Throughout the CSDE's conversations with stakeholders, it has heard a consistent message: Connecticut will not improve outcomes for its students with more repackaged versions of the status quo. The CSDE is invigorated by the dedication of individuals and groups in all corners of the state to improve Connecticut schools. The CSDE looks forward to continuing the dialogue with these groups throughout the coming years as they work together toward the shared goals of achieving better results for all students and ambitious levels of growth for the state's lowest-performing students.

## 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.

## 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.

The CSDE requests ESEA Flexibility because it believes that the request's principles align with the proposed direction Connecticut has developed in consultation with key stakeholders. Connecticut is committed to being a national leader in narrowing the achievement gap and creating academic excellence for all students. The initiatives proposed in this ESEA Flexibility Request and all CSDE initiatives this year—including Governor Malloy's agenda and the CSDE reorganization described in this section—aim to create a system focused at every level on preparing students for success in college and careers. The CSDE will provide educators with the support they need and will embrace performance-based accountability as a lever for continuous improvement.

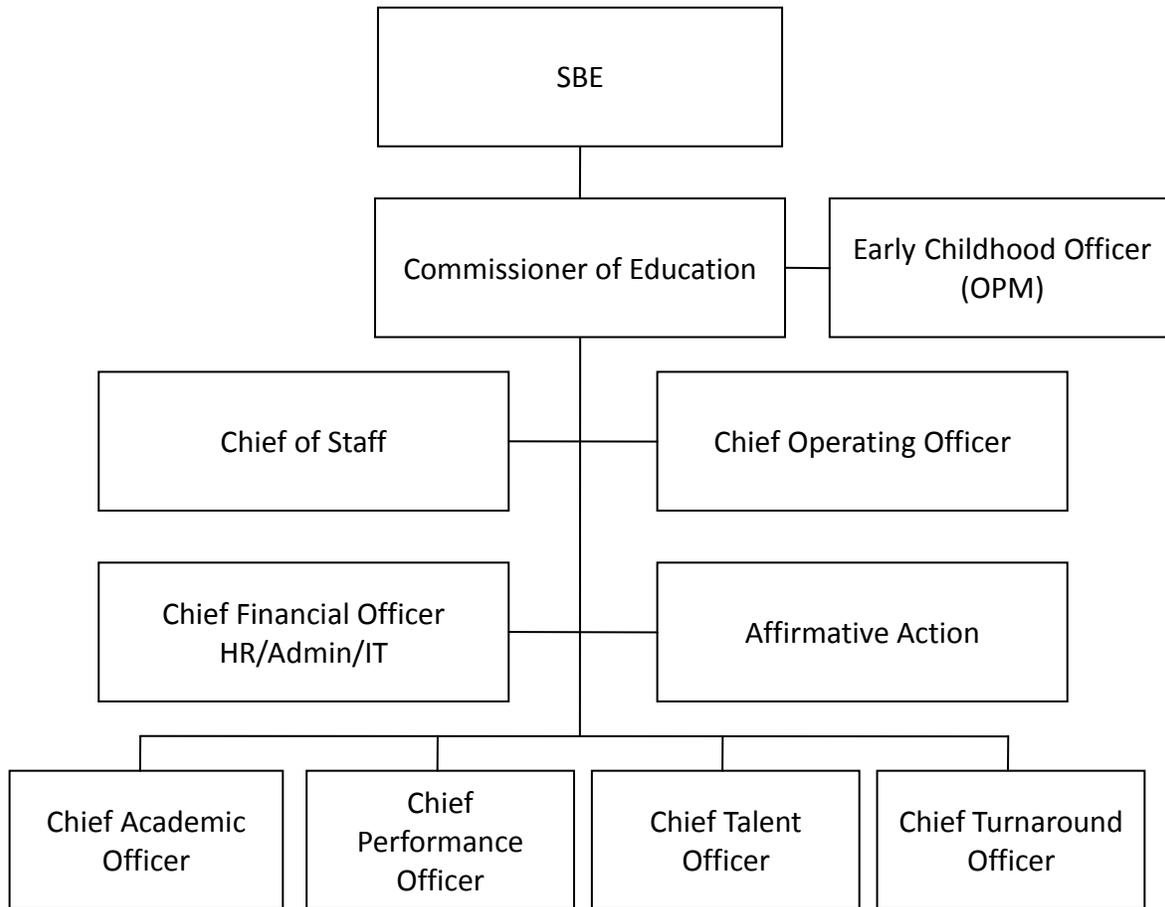
Connecticut is home to over 569,000 students and 51,500 staff members in 1,165 schools and 189 districts, including RESCs and public charter schools. The CSDE knows that to realize sustained progress over time, improvement cannot be limited to select groups of students. This is an ongoing challenge for the CSDE since the state's performance data consistently reveals troubling achievement gaps. In fact, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data shows that Connecticut is among the top 10 states with the largest achievement gaps based on every subgroup comparison, including the single largest gap for the majority of subgroups. Additionally, state-level data confirms large gaps in academic progress, graduation rates, and

other indicators between the highest- and lowest-performing students and subgroups, and these gaps are widening. The CSDE believes that the proposed policy changes outlined in this waiver will move Connecticut closer to the goal of achieving better results for all students and ambitious levels of growth for the state’s lowest-performing students.

In February 2012, Governor Malloy declared 2012 the “year for education reform” and outlined Connecticut’s policy direction. Key components of the state’s strategy include the development of the very best teachers and principals, delivery of more resources to districts that embrace reform, intervention in the state’s chronically low-performing schools, and removal of red tape and other barriers to success, especially for the state’s highest performing schools. For a complete description of the Governor’s 2012 education agenda, see [the Governor’s proposal](#) on the CSDE website.

While structural and governance changes will be central to the reform strategy, the CSDE recognizes that this work requires great talent at all levels. In January 2012, the SBE approved the Commissioner’s reorganization plan for the CSDE (*Figure OV 0.1*). The reorganization will result in a department structure based on strategic priorities rather than compliance and lays essential reform groundwork by creating the structure and capacity to implement legislative priorities and initiatives outlined in the waiver.

Figure OV 0.1: CSDE Reorganization



The reorganization aligns with Governor Malloy’s six principles of education reform (Table OV 0.2).

Table OV 0.2: Governor’s Principles and CSDE Leadership

Governor’s Principles	CSDE Leader
1) Enhance families’ access to early childhood education opportunities	Early Childhood Education Office
2) State support and intervention in low-performing schools	Chief Turnaround Officer
3) Expand high-quality school models	Chief Turnaround Officer
4) Remove red tape and other barriers to success	Chief Operating Officer
5) Develop the very best teachers and principals	Chief Talent Officer
6) Deliver more resources to districts that embrace reform	Chief Performance Officer and Chief Academic Officer

See the CSDE website for a full [presentation](#) on the CSDE reorganization.

The CSDE showed its commitment to move toward its goals when it adopted the CCSS in July 2010 (Principle 1). The CCSS adoption signaled Connecticut’s belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels. In addition to increasing rigor for all students, common standards will yield better results for highly mobile students and help decrease college remediation rates—a concern voiced by the CSDE’s higher education partners.

The CSDE recognizes that Connecticut’s educators will need to deeply engage with the standards and look carefully at how and what they teach. The CSDE will work diligently to provide guidance and support to all districts during these next few years of transition. Connecticut is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and will administer SBAC-developed assessments aligned to the CCSS in 2014–15. Until then, the CSDE will prepare students for the new assessments by adding field-test items aligned with the new college- and career-ready standards to current state assessments.

The CSDE’s proposed accountability system holds the state, districts, and schools accountable for improving the performance of all students (Principle 2). The CSDE’s aim is to offer greater flexibility and freedom to districts and schools that are high performing or improving rapidly and to provide the greatest support to the lowest-performing schools. Supporting goals include recognizing and rewarding student progress at every level and eliminating a one-size-fits-all approach to accountability and support, which several stakeholders, including superintendents, consider unhelpful.

The CSDE’s accountability system will work towards closing gaps in both performance and graduation rates. The new system features three components: a new set of measures for school performance and growth, a new classification system for all Connecticut schools, and an accompanying intervention strategy. The primary metric within the new accountability system is the School Performance Index (SPI), which measures the status of student achievement in a school. The new accountability system also includes measures of change in student achievement, student growth, college and career readiness, and is sensitive to subgroup performance. Rather than focusing exclusively on mathematics and reading, our new system will hold schools accountable for mathematics, reading, writing, and science.

The CSDE’s primary aim is for all students and subgroups to achieve, in aggregate, “Goal” on the state standardized tests. This is a higher level of performance than NCLB’s Proficient standard and it indicates that students are prepared for college and career. Our short-term target is to reduce our state’s performance deficit by half by 2018 for all schools and subgroups. To meet this goal, the state’s schools and subgroups will need to make sufficient progress each year such that, in six years, they are halfway to achieving our ultimate goal. This target requires the greatest gains for the students and subgroups that are the farthest behind in order to close the achievement gap.

Annually, the CSDE will recognize Title I or Title I-eligible schools that meet our criteria for high subgroup performance, high-progress, or high growth. Title I or Title I-eligible schools with the

lowest performance for all students will be identified as Priority Schools, referred to in this request as “Turnaround Schools.” Additionally, any Title I or Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate lower than 60 percent will automatically be included as a Turnaround School, as well as any school that is presently a SIG Tier I or Tier II school. To identify Focus Schools, the CSDE has created a “High Needs” subgroup that includes ELLs, students with disabilities, and students eligible for free and reduced lunch. We created this High Needs subgroup for Focus School identification to avoid the unwieldy process of treating each subgroup individually. To ensure that this race-neutral High Needs subgroup does not mask racial and ethnic achievement gaps, CSDE will examine all schools in the state to determine whether Hispanic or African-American subgroups perform as low as the identified High Needs subgroup. Any schools with equally low-performing Hispanic or African-American students will also be identified as Focus Schools.

The CSDE will classify all schools into five levels – Excelling, Progressing, Transition, Review, and Turnaround. The CSDE’s Turnaround and Performance Teams will partner with districts to ensure that schools in each of these categories receive appropriate levels of support. The CSDE will help build district and school capacity by increasing financial resources to the districts that need it most, partnering with districts as they plan for school intervention, and removing barriers and duplication. Pending proposed legislation in the current legislative session, the CSDE plans to provide additional funding to the state’s lowest-performing districts, conditional on district plans for reform in key areas defined by the state. The CSDE’s new Turnaround Team will act as a resource to districts as they plan for and monitor interventions in their struggling schools. The CSDE will also work to reduce barriers for districts by reforming the certification process and reducing unnecessary reporting requirements. The CSDE’s Chief Performance Officer (CPO) will utilize Connecticut’s data infrastructure to identify opportunities for improvement. The Chief Turnaround Officer (CTO) will work to turn around schools with records of persistent underperformance by providing supports, guidance, interventions, and new strategies.

Connecticut recognizes that teacher and principal evaluation and support systems are critical to fostering an environment that ensures equal opportunity and excellence for all students (Principle 3). In July 2010, state legislation created PEAC solely to assist the CSDE in developing new teacher evaluation guidelines and a data collection and evaluation support system. The CSDE has worked with PEAC on a rigorous schedule and ambitious action plan to develop the new guidelines and evaluation support systems. PEAC made several important decisions over the past several months, including the adoption of evaluation principles and the selection of the policy design approach that will allow districts to adopt a state model or design their own evaluation systems based on core requirements. In February 2012, the SBE unanimously approved the evaluation framework. Connecticut will pilot the evaluation system in select districts in 2012–13, with complete statewide rollout in 2013–14.

Finally, Connecticut plans to reduce the burden of red tape and state mandates faced by school districts (Principle 4). Based in part on the needs of school districts identified in a statewide [superintendents’ survey](#), Governor Malloy’s proposed changes to state policies will, in the short

term, provide local school districts greater flexibility to hire and develop teachers as well as free districts from excessive and redundant data reporting. To ensure continued focus in this area, Governor Malloy will convene a Red Tape Review and Removal Taskforce to examine comprehensive solutions to fixing unnecessarily burdensome state regulations and mandates. The taskforce will then review and meet over the next year, soliciting input from all stakeholders, specifically boards of education, superintendents, school leaders, teachers, and parents. The taskforce will develop initial recommendations and report to Governor Malloy and the Commissioner of Education by December 2012, ahead of the 2013 legislative session. Plans that address this principle are interwoven throughout the three sections of the flexibility request. The Governor’s [press release](#) on the Red Tape Review and Removal Taskforce can be found on the state website.

Throughout this work, Connecticut has committed itself to continuous improvement. All of the CSDE’s proposed initiatives, including this ESEA Flexibility Request, reflect a clear pathway for Connecticut to achieve its goals. The CSDE is committed to a rigorous analysis of data and student results—as well as to continuous conversations with teachers, principals, superintendents, parents, and other stakeholders—to ensure that the course it has chosen works for Connecticut’s students.

## 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.

<b>Option A</b>	<b>Option B</b>
<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><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</p>

	remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)
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## 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*, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.1)** *Is the SEA’s plan to transition to and implement college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the 2013–2014 school year realistic, of high quality? Is the SEA’s plan likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with the college- and career-ready standards?*

### College and Career Readiness

Connecticut has endorsed the Association of Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) definition of college and career readiness, which states that readiness “involves three major skill areas: core academic skills and the ability to apply those skills to concrete situations to function in the workplace and in routine daily activities; employability skills (such as critical thinking and responsibility) that are essential in any career area; and technical, job-specific skills related to a specific career pathway. These skills have been emphasized across numerous pieces of research and allow students to enter true career pathways that offer family-sustaining wages and opportunities for advancement.”

The state signaled its commitment to college and career readiness in January 2009 when an executive order established the Connecticut P-20 Council. The P-20 Council has a mandate to prepare students for college and careers, and its tasks were defined specifically as:

- Developing a public policy framework for state leaders that increases collaboration across the systems at their current and potential points of intersection;
- Exploring how the systems can work more effectively together to deliver services; and
- Realigning existing activities and operations in ways that makes the education pipeline more responsive to the diverse needs of students.

The P-20 Council has increased collaboration, information sharing, and planning among the early childhood, K–12, higher education, and workforce training sectors by disseminating meaningful data and research to educators and employers. As a result, deeper conversations have occurred between districts, IHEs, and businesses. In addition to organizing workshops and working groups on specific policy issues, it has developed a Connecticut Career and College

Readiness tool kit to inform educators, workforce representatives, parents, and other stakeholders on how to improve college and career readiness for all students.

On July 7, 2010, with a unanimous vote, Connecticut’s SBE, along with 44 states and the District of Columbia adopted new academic standards in ELA and mathematics—known as the CCSS—that establish what Connecticut’s public school students should know and be able to do as they progress through grades K–12.

The CCSS were designed to consist of fewer, clearer, and higher-level standards; to be aligned with college and work expectations; to include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order thinking skills; to build upon the strengths of current state standards; to be internationally benchmarked so that all students will be prepared to succeed in the global economy; and to be based on evidence and research.

By adopting and implementing the CCSS, Connecticut affirms its belief that all students can and should achieve at higher levels. The CSDE has worked diligently to provide guidance and support to all districts as they transition from Connecticut’s old frameworks and standards to the CCSS. The CSDE has provided support at several levels in a deliberate manner to ensure horizontal and vertical alignment of instruction based on the CCSS within the PK–16 system. Connecticut has a Preschool Curriculum Framework (PCF) for ages two and one-half through five. Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics from the PCF were aligned to the new kindergarten CCSS. The alignment reinforces that all Connecticut learners must be provided access to the CCSS-based curricula to fully prepare for college and careers.

To efficiently and effectively serve the needs of districts and relevant stakeholders, the CSDE has developed an approach to target four key areas of implementation: curriculum frameworks and materials, assessment, professional development, and communication. The CSDE CCSS leadership team will continually review and update the current implementation plan ([Appendix 1.1](#)). The CSDE’s CCSS leadership team, associate commissioners, bureau chiefs, content area staff, and many local partners including RESCs and districts are designing a self-assessment tool to help monitor the implementation process.

The CSDE believes that the implementation of the CCSS in every classroom will transform teaching and learning by requiring teachers to focus on high-priority areas, which in turn will provide all students the opportunity to gain a deep understanding of important content and develop higher-order thinking skills and will reduce the need for college remediation.

### **Foundation for Implementation: History and Timeline of the CCSS Adoption**

The CSDE has conducted a multistep process to inform and engage educators and public stakeholders during the adoption process that included the following key activities:

*Table 1.1: CCSS Adoption Timeline*

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
CSDE personnel and members of professional organizations reviewed	November 2009

the draft CCSS documents and provided feedback to the developers.	and February 2010
<p><b>Standards Comparison Study.</b> In the months leading up to the adoption of the recommendation to the SBE, the CSDE conducted a thorough standards comparison study. In February 2010, the CSDE was invited to be the first SEA to field-test a Web-based program developed by Achieve, a non-profit education organization that provides technical assistance to states on their standards, assessments, curriculum, and accountability systems. A team of CSDE curriculum consultants met with representatives of Achieve in April 2010 to learn how to use the Common Core Comparison Tool (CCCT) and to suggest improvements for its further development. The tool analyzes matches made by state standards experts and generates reports summarizing the percentage of matches and the strength of each match. It also indicates where grade-level differences exist. On May 28, 2010, CSDE content specialists and representatives from Achieve brought together over 50 experts in Connecticut’s ELA and mathematics standards to use the tool to conduct the standards comparison study. After receiving training on how to use the CCCT, the content specialists worked in pairs to identify a Connecticut standard or a set of standards that were similar in their essence to each standard. It was determined that approximately 80% of the CCSS match the Connecticut ELA standards, and 92% of the CCSS match the Connecticut mathematics standards.</p>	May 2010
<p><b>Stakeholders Conference.</b> On June 17, 2010, a CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference was held to share the results of the comparison study and to provide an opportunity for educators and other stakeholders from businesses and communities to provide their general impressions of the new CCSS and to recommend resources and support systems necessary for effective implementation. An invitation was e-mailed to 180 stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, education organizations, higher education faculty, business leaders, and community advocacy groups. Participants represented the P-20 Council, the CEA, the CPAC for students with disabilities, the CAFE, the CBIA, the Connecticut ASCD, the Connecticut Reading Association, CAS, the Connecticut Association of School Principals, the CAPSS, the CSDE, Connecticut IHEs, the CAPELL, the RESC Alliance, and the Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center. Over 100 individuals attended the Stakeholder Engagement Conference (<b>Appendix 1.2</b>). Of these individuals, 64.4% represented districts, 26.7% were from educational organizations, and 8.9% represented higher education institutions. Additionally, CSDE gave presentations to the Connecticut State Advisory Council on Special Education, which is an advisory council to the CSDE and the state’s legislative General Assembly. The council is composed of parents, legislators, state agency</p>	June 2010

representatives, and school district personnel. The CSDE also briefed the special education parent advisory committee on the CCSS and Next Generation assessments.	
<b>SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).</b> The Connecticut educational leadership (the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, the SBE Chair, the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Chancellor of the state university system, and the Chancellor of the community college system) signed a memorandum of understanding to become a governing member of the SBAC and join with 30 other states to seek federal funds under the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant to develop new systems of assessment.	June 2010
<b>Adoption of the CCSS.</b> The SBE adopted the CCSS in ELA and mathematics with a unanimous vote.	July 2010

### CCSS Implementation Timeline

The CSDE commissioned a study of the CCSS adoption process which was published in June 2010 ([Appendix 1.3](#)). Since the adoption of the CCSS, the CSDE has significantly increased communication, professional development activities, and curriculum development/revision work with districts and state and national partners. Below is the timeline of key activities.

*Table 1.2: CCSS Implementation Timeline*

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
CSDE science content and assessment experts review Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS); state science leadership team composed of CSDE state policymakers, RESC leaders, IHE faculty, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) industry representatives convenes to lead planning for NGSS adoption.	March 2010–current
The SBE adopts the CCSS.	July 2010
The CSDE launches the CCSS webpage.	August 2010
ELA and mathematics content experts develop crosswalks.	August 2010
The CSDE joins the SBAC as a governing state; five CSDE staff members participate in SBAC work groups, with two members serving as co-chairs; the CSDE hosts two statewide summer institutes on Next Generation assessments.	August 2010–present
The CSDE begins statewide transition to CCSS professional development.	October 2010
CAPELL quarterly meetings are held; biannual RESC ELL Consortia Meetings are held.	2011–12
The CSDE sponsors Rigorous Curriculum Design (RCD).	January 2011–March 2011

The CSDE aligns the ELL framework to the CCSS ELA and the CCSS Mathematical Practices.	January 2011– March 2011
The CSDE joins the State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS).	January 2011– March 2011
The CSDE joins the Implementing Common Core System (ICCS) SCASS and names a state leadership team.	January 2011– March 2011
The CSDE begins realignment of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) training modules to CCSS.	March 2011
The CSDE sponsors an IHE symposium.	April 2011
The CSDE continues professional development activities, including RCD and crosswalk development; the state leadership team develops a multi-tiered implementation plan.	May 2011– August 2011
The CSDE attends the ICCS SCASS.	August 2011
The CSDE aligns the Career and Technical Education (CTE) standards with the CCSS mathematics.	September 2011
The CSDE provides an overview of the CCSS and Next Generation assessments to administrators of special education in public and private schools.	September 2011
Connecticut and select states create the State Collaborative on English Language Acquisition (SCELA) Standards project.	October 2011
The CSDE develops and provides a regional professional development program in collaboration with RESCs.	December 2011
The CSDE attends ICCS SCASS.	December 2011
The CSDE develops a special education professional development series: Designing Standards-Based Individual Education Programs (IEPs) to Support Progress in the General Education Curriculum.	January 2012
The CSDE collaborates with RESCs and the SERC and continues to offer regional professional development.	January 2012– 15
The CSDE aligns the ELA CCSS to the CTE standards.	February 2012
The CSDE conducts the Spring Language Arts Council Meeting series.	April 2012
The CSDE sponsors the second annual IHE symposium.	April 2012
The CSDE attends the ICCS SCASS.	April 2012
The CSDE sponsors the Data Showcase Conference with a focus on CCSS implementation.	April 2012
The CSDE aligns statewide professional development to Next Generation assessments for grades 3–8 and high school.	2013–15
The CSDE pilots assessment items for the SBAC.	2013–15
The CSDE provides technical assistance for the CCSS-based curriculum.	2013–15
The CSDE provides updates to stakeholders through the Web and e-alerts.	2013–15

The leadership team will continue to revise and update Connecticut’s ICCS Implementation Plan ([see Appendix 1.1](#)), which will serve as the action plan through 2015.

From 2010 to the beginning of this year, the CSDE has focused primarily on building state capacity to support training and technical assistance, aligning the CCSS with ELL and CTE standards, supporting educators of ELL students and students with disabilities, creating instructional materials to support curriculum development in districts, and engaging stakeholders across the state. With this strong foundation in place, the CSDE will continue to offer regional professional development through collaboration with local partners, provide technical assistance on CCSS-based curriculum, transition to new assessment items, and continue communication with educators, districts, and other stakeholders.

The CSDE views the CCSS implementation as a process and not an event. Therefore, the CSDE is using a tiered approach to support CCSS implementation, knowing that different target audiences have unique needs and require specialized support. The CSDE CCSS leadership team has developed an implementation plan that consists of four key areas: communication and public outreach, curriculum frameworks and materials, professional development, and assessment. Each key area is intended to work in tandem and complement each other. Table 1.3 provides some examples of CSDE’s support to PK–16 educators and other stakeholders. The alignment between PK–12 and higher education is critical; however, no one aspect is more important than another.

Achieve is a non-profit education organization that provides technical assistance to states on their standards, assessments, curriculum, and accountability systems. Currently, Achieve is working with identified states in the development of rubrics to evaluate the quality and alignment of textbooks and other instructional materials to the CCSS. The CSDE is interested in working with Achieve and potentially utilizing the rubrics.

*Table 1.3: Key Areas of CSDE Support around CCSS*

<b>Key Area</b>	<b>State Support</b>
Communication and Public Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSDE/CCSS website</li> <li>• E-alerts</li> <li>• Face-to-face meetings and presentations for districts, professional organizations, and stakeholder groups</li> <li>• Collaboration with higher education</li> </ul>
Curriculum Frameworks and Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple crosswalk departments</li> <li>• K–12 ELA and mathematics units of study</li> <li>• Pacing guides</li> <li>• Individualized technical assistance</li> </ul>
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional and in-district trainings</li> <li>• Content-specific training</li> <li>• Symposia for higher education</li> </ul>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze existing assessments and determine possible changes to align with the CCSS</li> </ul>

### **College- and Career-Ready Standards in the Reorganized CSDE**

CSDE’s first-ever Chief Academic Officer (CAO) will be charged with improving academic excellence across all schools and leading efforts to implement clearer standards aligned with national and international benchmarks. This work includes aligning summative assessments to college and career benchmarks and collaborating with districts and schools to facilitate more expansive use of formative assessments to help inform instructional practices—helping educators identify problems and prescribe interventions. The CAO will also lead Connecticut’s collaboration with 44 other states and the District of Columbia that are implementing the CCSS, helping the CSDE identify and introduce best practices. The CAO will work with the Chief Talent Officer to align professional development activities with the CCSS.

Direct responsibility for implementing the new standards and assessments will fall to the Bureau of Standards, Curriculum and Instruction and the Bureau of Assessments. To increase alignment between PK–16 standards and assessments, a newly created Early Learning and Development function, led by the Chief Academic Officer, will also fall under this area.

To ensure that the CSDE provides the best support to Connecticut’s educators during the transition to the CCSS, the CSDE has been an active participant in several national and multistate collaboratives on assessment and student standards. For a full list of Connecticut’s participation in these multistate collaboratives, see [Appendix 1.4](#).

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.2)** 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?

### **Alignment with Current State Standards**

In May 2010, the CSDE conducted a thorough standards comparison study to identify alignment between the state’s existing standards and the CCSS.

**English Language Arts (ELA).** Results from the comparison study indicated that approximately 80% of the CCSS match the Connecticut ELA standards. The study identified 200 ELA standards not currently included in the Connecticut standards for grades K–12. Between 64 and 90% of the CCSS ELA standards match Connecticut standards for each grade from K to 8.

To increase the districts’ understanding of the CCSS as they compare to Connecticut standards, the CSDE provided a series of professional development sessions to district curriculum writing teams during the summer of 2011. Based on the data from the comparison study and the districts’ current curriculum documents, the districts were able to determine where best to begin their curriculum revisions. While there were a high percentage of matches between

Connecticut standards and the CCSS, the skills and competencies in the CCSS were introduced at different grade levels. For ELA, most of the matches between the CCSS and Connecticut standards occurred at the same grade level; there were few or no grade differences (e.g., grade 3 CCSS matched grade 3 in Connecticut’s old standards). However, based on the percentage of matches at the middle school level, the CSDE has advised districts to emphasize curriculum revisions at the middle school level. In addition, the CSDE has advised districts to emphasize K–2, placing importance on these foundational years of literacy development.

The matches for high school ELA standards were not indicated by grade level because the CCSS document has two grade bands, 9–10 and 11–12, whereas the Connecticut standards document has a 9–12 grade band. The results of the comparison study indicated that 92% of the Connecticut standards at grades 9–10 match the CCSS, and 93% of the Connecticut standards at grades 11–12 match the CCSS, revealing an even greater percentage of matches at the high school level.

The greater percentage of matches allows high school teachers to focus on infusing the ELA CCSS across other content areas so that students understand the importance of literacy beyond traditional ELA courses. The CCSS set requirements for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects and specify the literacy skills and understandings required for college and career readiness in multiple disciplines. This degree of match will also allow for ELL, special education, and related service professionals to focus more on the necessary supports and services to assist ELLs and students with disabilities than on entirely new standards.

**Mathematics.** Results from the comparison study indicated that, overall, approximately 92% of the CCSS for mathematics matched the Connecticut standards. In grades K to 8, 86% to 100% of the CCSS matched Connecticut standards. While there were a high percentage of overall matches between the CCSS and Connecticut standards, many involved collective matches, indicating that the CCSS content at a single grade was addressed at multiple grade levels in the Connecticut standards ([Appendix 1.5](#)).

Matches for high school mathematics standards were not indicated by grade level because the CCSS are organized into five conceptual categories across grades 9–12, as opposed to the four categories in the Connecticut standards. Content for Connecticut’s grades 9–12 standards were grouped into 9–12 Core (C) and 9–12 Extended (E). The 9–12 (C) Standards specified the content that could potentially be tested on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), as well as concepts and skills that students should know and be proficient at prior to high school graduation. Grades 9–12 (E) standards represented concepts that students could typically encounter in a variety of advanced courses beginning with Algebra II and beyond. The study found that 89% of Connecticut standards for grades 9–12 matched the CCSS, though 48% of the matches characterized as weak indicating that major aspects of the CCSS were not addressed. In addition, the comparison study identified 40 CCSS that were not included in the Connecticut standards. The results of the study have guided the CSDE’s work on the development of crosswalks and the composition of recommendations for the CCSS implementation.

States were allowed to supplement the CCSS with an additional 15% of state-specific standards. As a follow-up to the May 2010 standards comparison study, the CSDE content specialists reconvened a core group of the ELA and math comparison study team members in November 2010 to review the Connecticut standards that did not match the CCSS. The groups spent a day reviewing all unmatched standards to determine whether any should be considered for part of the additional 15% option. They decided that Connecticut would not add state-specific standards for ELA and mathematics.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.3)** 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?

**English Language Learners (ELLs).** Approximately 5% of Connecticut students are ELLs. To support ELLs in the content areas, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), bilingual, and ELA experts met in January 2011 to create crosswalk documents that show the connection between the ELL Framework and the CCSS. The goal of the project was to identify instructional links between the CCSS and ELL Framework indicators so that district professionals can have meaningful ways to help students access the CCSS, regardless of their English language proficiency. Teams of ELA practitioners and CSDE content area experts reviewed the CCSS ELA standards with English as a second language (ESL)/bilingual education practitioners and K–12 CCSS for Mathematical Practice with mathematics practitioners. The experts linked Connecticut ELL Framework indicators to the CCSS. This work is in final review and will imminently be available to districts. Ultimately, there will be a complete document for each grade level or secondary grade span in which the Connecticut ELL Framework indicators are linked to the CCSS. For a timeline of all CCSS and ELL-related activities, see [Appendix 1.6](#).

In addition to state-level work, content area experts at the CSDE are participating in an interstate collaborative focused on English language proficiency and standards, as related to the CCSS. As a part of the CSDE’s membership in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) SCASS, two content area experts have attended the ELL SCASS meetings, which focus on assessment issues related to ELLs and provide a forum for interstate collaboration.

During the October 2011 meeting, a new group composed of a subset of members of the ELL SCASS was convened. The goals of the State Collaborative on English Language Acquisition (SCELA) Standards project are to develop common ELP expectations that align with the CCSS—which have been adopted by all participating states—and to systematically examine current ELP/English language development (ELD) standards in participating states and subsequently identify commonalities and differences among them.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.4)** 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?

**Students with Disabilities.** Nearly 12% of Connecticut students require special education services. The CSDE believes that students with disabilities can and should access rigorous grade-level content, and therefore Connecticut does not have a separate set of standards for students with disabilities and has no plans to create such standards. IEPs are developed based on general education standards (i.e., for ELA and math, CCSS as of July 2010). This is also the case for the 1 to 2% of the student population with severe disabilities.

To support districts, the CSDE has identified a Special Education College to Career Ready Team that includes staff from the Bureau of Student Assessment and the Bureau of Special Education along with secondary special education district transition staff. This team has identified a series of next steps specific to special education within the CSDE and districts, including the expansion of professional development guidance documents and additional resources for districts, IHEs, and parents of students with disabilities.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.5)** 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?

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Stakeholder engagement began during the adoption process and included a statewide Stakeholder Engagement Conference in June 2010. The CSDE is cognizant of the need to provide clear, consistent messages and support to districts and its partner organizations. The CSDE is committed to working with all districts (which include charter and magnet schools), approved private special education programs (APSEPs), RESCs, and IHEs to assist them in fully implementing the CCSS. Additionally, the business community, parents, and the public at large will be actively involved in the process and are committed to the notion that by implementing the CCSS, students will be better prepared to compete on the international stage.

**Coordination across CSDE Divisions.** To efficiently and effectively serve the needs of districts and relevant stakeholders, the CSDE has developed a three-tiered approach to target four key areas of implementation, including communication and public outreach, curriculum frameworks and materials, professional development, and assessment. For a list of participants

on state leadership teams, see [Appendix 1.7](#). The three tiers are described below.

- **Tier I–Leadership** comprises 13 members, including the eight members of the national state team who serve on Connecticut’s national ICCS SCASS team and work to build capacity for implementing the CCSS, ensuring systematic dissemination of information and collaborating with other states. The leadership team meets monthly and consists of the state-level team members and other CSDE personnel representing mathematics, ELA, assessment, special education, and ELLs.
- **Tier II–Internal** has 20 members, including members of the national state and leadership teams. The internal team will meet quarterly and consists of managers and consultants of other CSDE divisions and bureaus including adult education, early childhood, certification, family engagement, information technology, and public relations.
- **Tier III–External** has 30 members, including members of the national state and leadership teams. The external team will meet quarterly and consists of members who represent IHEs, professional organizations, district administrators, teacher organizations, parent organizations, and advocacy groups.

To reach a wide range of stakeholders, the CSDE will continue to share CCSS-related information to stakeholders through online modalities, including the following:

- **Website.** In August 2010, the CSDE created a dedicated webpage to provide information about Connecticut’s work in implementing the CCSS, providing school districts with access to curriculum development materials, PowerPoint slides, national resources such as the CCSS Toolkit, and a CCSS implementation guideline. The website is regularly updated with new curriculum-related documents. From January 2011 to January 2012, the site received 224,255 hits. [Connecticut’s CCSS website](#) can be reached via the main CSDE website.
- **E-Alerts.** The CSDE sends quarterly statewide e-alerts to over 4,000 stakeholders with regular updates on the CCSS and the SBAC assessment system. Recipients of e-alerts include educators in Curriculum and Instruction (2,524), Mathematics (1,353), and Student Assessment (355).

The Chief Academic Officer (CAO) will assist in these efforts as well. The CAO is a newly created position whose primary responsibility will be: to lead the state’s efforts to build capacity at the local level for adoption of the CCSS; to align the CCSS with local ongoing formative assessment, instruction, and curriculum; and to work with the Chief Talent Officer to ensure that existing teachers and teacher preparation programs are synchronized to this vision.

Further, the CAO will lead efforts to work with SERC and our RESCs, other states, and our own districts to identify and build capacity to replicate best practices that help shift our state to a competency based system of differentiated instruction instead of a seat time based system – particularly in our lowest performing schools and with our lowest performing student groups.

The CSDE continues to seek educator input on the implementation process by providing surveys

and other feedback mechanisms during statewide and local trainings. In addition, the CSDE believes it is essential to engage parents in this work. The CSDE will do so by modifying the National PTA’s CCSS materials so the documents are more user-friendly and by working with the School-Family-Community Partnerships consultant to develop additional parent materials, as parental engagement was identified as a critical area of focus through consultation with the Committee of Practitioners.

Some of our districts have already built competency-based report cards for K-2 math that will reinforce understanding among teachers, parents, and students about progress on CCSS competencies. We believe this is a best practice and intend to encourage replication of these and other creative approaches to deepen awareness and alignment of the standards and also help point to differentiated resources that can help parents, teachers, and students at specific points in their teaching and learning progressions.

Finally, the CSDE, in collaboration with CABE, will provide professional development for SBE members, which will be similar to upcoming summer academies for principals and superintendents.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.6)** 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?

### **Supporting Current Educators**

Through professional development, Connecticut has engaged a broad and diverse group of stakeholders, making them aware of the importance and impact of the CCSS on higher-quality education. Thus far, the implementation process has been delivered at multiple levels: stakeholders, districts, and staff within the CSDE. At each level, the CSDE provided an overview of the key instructional shifts in ELA and mathematics. Over the next three years, the CSDE will continue to offer regional professional development by working with local partners and by providing technical assistance on CCSS-based curriculum. For the CSDE’s timelines of training sessions and other forms of professional development, see **Appendices 1.8 and 1.9**.

As mentioned, the CSDE is organized to target four key areas of implementation: communication and public outreach, curriculum frameworks and materials, professional development, and assessment. This approach will directly support educators in Priority School Districts and partner school districts. In addition, the CSDE will also deliver ongoing professional development and technical assistance through statewide professional ELA and mathematics organizations, SERC and RESC Alliance meetings, and Title III and special education focused technical assistance. The CSDE is particularly helping to develop local capacity by collaborating with the RESC Alliance on presentations and state-developed tools for use by RESCs with

districts. The CSDE’s CCSS leadership, internal, and external committees will coordinate and disseminate this extensive range of professional development.

**ELA-Specific Training.** The CSDE has provided ELA-specific training at regional language arts council meetings and the Connecticut Reading Association Conference. These training programs provide an understanding of the major instructional shifts outlined in the standards, guidance for the CCSS-aligned curriculum revisions, and an understanding of how the CCSS will directly affect their daily instructional practice, with an emphasis on text complexity.

**Mathematics-Specific Training.** The CSDE has provided mathematics-specific training for RESC Mathematics Council bimonthly and quarterly meetings; RESC Curriculum Council meetings, the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators in Connecticut (AMTEC) conference, the Connecticut Council of Leaders of Math meeting, the Math Leadership Academy presentation, and the Associated Teachers of Mathematics in Connecticut (ATOMIC) conference. Of particular note are the following points:

- Elementary-level instructional program user groups, e.g., Investigations and Trailblazers, are working collaboratively, with the support of the CSDE content area experts, to align their curriculum, instructional materials, and assessments with the CCSS.
- With the support of the CSDE content area experts, regional consortia and work groups are collaborating through RESCs to update the curriculum and identify resources to support instruction.
- Over 400 educators and leaders of PK–16 mathematics attended the fall 2011 ATOMIC conference, which featured presentations by the CCSS K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and high school curriculum unit design teams, facilitated and supported by the CSDE mathematics content expert. Team members reviewed the development process, answered questions about their work, discussed implications for districts, and shared implementation strategies and resources from their districts.
- In January and February 2012, the CSDE trained 30 K–8 classroom teachers and instructional coaches from Priority School Districts to participate in the nationally acclaimed 80-hour Intel® Math course designed to increase content knowledge and pedagogy required to effectively implement and instruct students in the rigorous mathematics outlined in the CCSS. Evaluation of learning is an integral part of the course; those who successfully complete the course will receive six graduate credits in mathematics education. The CSDE plans to offer this professional learning support statewide over the next three years to better equip K–8 teachers of mathematics to teach according to the new standards.

**Supporting Partner Districts.** The CSDE is working to ensure that support of Partner Districts is aligned with the CCSS. Partner Districts are districts that have been identified as “in need of improvement” for three or more years at the whole district level according to status determination under No Child Left Behind (NCLB). To meet NCLB legislation, the CSDE developed the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI). This initiative focuses on the use of data-driven decision-making and standard-based instruction to address the learning needs of each student to accelerate the closing of Connecticut’s achievement gap and to ensure

that all students achieve at high standards. In 2007, the initiative was significantly strengthened by state accountability legislation, which supported the CSDE's efforts to identify and work with underperforming schools and districts. These districts are in various stages of developing, implementing, and monitoring district improvement plans, all of which must be approved by the SBE. Districts continuously collect and analyze data to report progress to their local board of education and the SBE.

To support the districts and schools in the school improvement process, CALI provides ongoing professional development and technical assistance focused on a series of training modules and state consultation services. The CSDE, RESCs, and the SERC collaborate to provide the delivery system for this ongoing support. Four professional development modules serve as the foundation for CALI professional development and technical assistance. These four modules are Using Differentiated Instruction to Implement the CCSS, Getting Ready for the Next Generation of Assessments, School and Instructional Data Teams, and Improving School Climate to Support Student Achievement: Creating Climates of Respect.

Since the CCSS adoption, the CSDE content area and accountability and improvement experts, along with IHE faculty, RESCs, the SERC, and district staff, have worked with CALI module developers to revise professional development for Partner Districts. During the revision process, the group maintained a focus on creating content to support an understanding of both the CCSS and the new SBAC assessment system. Last year, over 1,500 educators attended statewide CALI training.

The CALI continues to be flexible, and modules are redesigned or refined based on participant feedback, the changing needs of the districts, and other state or national initiatives. The modules are offered free of charge to educators in the Partner Districts as well as in any Title I school identified as "in need of improvement."

CSDE content area experts and staff from the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement serve as members of technical assistance teams assigned to Partner Districts. As appropriate to the needs of the Partner District, consultants from other bureaus provide assistance. Meanwhile, external consultants, who are retired superintendents, provide support at the superintendent level. The CSDE, in collaboration with the AFTCT and the CEA, has been meeting over the last three years with the union leadership from each of the Partner Districts to develop union support and involvement in the school improvement efforts.

From 2009 to 2010, the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement contracted with RMC Research to evaluate the CALI. For the CALI evaluation report, see [Appendix 1.10](#). One of the challenges identified in the evaluation is the need for greater fidelity of implementation at the school and district level. To address the monitoring of professional development and technical assistance, the CSDE accountability and school improvement consultants have implemented a quality assurance plan to ensure continuous alignment of the redesigned modules. CSDE consultants representing content expertise, ELL, special education, and accountability and school improvement have observed statewide training sessions and given feedback to

presenters using the trainer evaluation form. One of the nine areas included in the trainer evaluation form assesses the presenters' demonstration of the alignment to other modules and CSDE initiatives, specifically the CCSS and SBAC assessment system. In addition, the CSDE accountability and school improvement content area experts will continue to meet on a quarterly basis with lead module developers to ensure continuous alignment of the redesigned modules.

**Supporting All Districts.** In addition to regional and subject-specific training sessions, CALI training modules are available to all districts and schools across Connecticut. A common dialogue, language, and expectations now exist for student achievement within the state.

**Supporting Priority Districts.** Each year, the CSDE provides professional development for the legislatively defined 15 Priority Districts in Connecticut (not related to Priority Schools as defined in this waiver). Traditionally, the professional development sessions were for literacy personnel. In the past two years, however, it has become common practice to have other teams from each district attend the professional development sessions as well. Teams include literacy specialists, TESOL/bilingual teachers, and special education teachers. Approximately 270 educators have participated in these sessions. The most recent Priority District training sessions have included using multiple data sets to inform instruction and making the CCSS accessible to students.

In addition to the professional development sessions, Priority Districts are supported through on-site visits by CSDE content area experts who look for evidence of best practice and provide written feedback after each visit.

**Supporting Teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs).** The CSDE provides trainings for general educators, administrators, and other district staff focused on effective instructional strategies for ELLs and will ensure that these trainings are aligned to the CCSS. Examples include Priority District training on ELLs and mathematics (October 2010 to February 2011) and the ELL literacy trainings for those districts (November 2011). For a timeline of all ELL-related trainings, see [Appendix 1.6](#).

The CSDE has worked to reach not only ESL/Bilingual education teachers but also general educators and administrators. The upcoming Data Showcase Conference, which is intended largely for general educators and administrators, will focus on the CCSS. Jo Guzman, a renowned expert of ELL strategies, will provide the lunchtime address on how to help ELLs access the CCSS. Prior to the event, she will speak at two RESCs on the same topic.

**Supporting Teachers of Students with Disabilities.** To successfully include a student with disabilities in the general education curriculum, general and special educators along with student support services professionals must collaborate in new ways to meet the demands of developing high-quality IEPs based on the CCSS. To that end, the CSDE, in collaboration with SERC, has provided a series of job-embedded workshops on assessment methods, IEP alignment, specially designed instruction, and assistive technology use. Participants in these

professional development activities were to determine whether the design of a student’s IEP yielded educational benefit; determine the types of assessments that provide present levels of performance data; monitor the progress of IEP goals and objectives; analyze the gap between the expected performance of all students and a particular student’s current level of achievement; and write standards-based, specific, and measurable objectives. In 2010 and 2011, 22 participants attended from three districts. Since January 2012, 30 participants from two additional districts have registered to attend.

Specific training for secondary transition specialists included how to identify transition-related standards and how to access the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) and labor statistics/information from the U.S. and Connecticut Departments of Labor so that transition planning is meaningful and reflected in IEPs.

During the 2011–12 school year, the CSDE’s Bureau of Special Education Bureau Chief and staff have addressed the membership of the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education administrators (ConnCASE), as well as the Council of Administrators of Private Special Education Facilities (CAPSEF), regarding the implementation of the CCSS and Next Generation assessments. These meetings have reached over 300 public and private school teachers and administrators of special education. Topics have included transition to the CCSS, including an emphasis on reading nonfiction text in the language arts standards, developmental aspects of the math standards, and the online and “smart test” design of the assessments. Discussions identified concerns from the field and future steps for professional development, policy guidance, and resource allocation. Some topics have already been identified, including aligning IEP vendors with the CCSS, providing written guidance on IEP development aligned to the CCSS and new assessments, developing Universal Design for Learning strategies, and using assistive technology. The CSDE also solicited the assistance of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Partnership staff and held discussions with staff from the CCSSO to work with the CSDE specifically on addressing issues related to the implementation of the standards for students with disabilities.

**Increasing Capacity for Training and Support.** To increase training capacity and reach more districts and educators, the CSDE plans to look to district personnel, newly retired teachers, and administrators with expertise in content subjects or grade levels and those with expertise in ESL/bilingual education and special education to help deliver sessions in the next year. The CSDE previously used this model to support the statewide Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program. Based on the model’s success, the CSDE will determine whether a similar model could be used to support the implementation of the CCSS in the districts. While the specifics of the program may need modifications, the basic design would reflect the BEST model.

A hallmark of this model is that newly retired teachers and administrators and high-quality teachers “on loan” from districts will work at the CSDE part-time. These individuals will work with CSDE content area experts to develop their knowledge of the CCSS, and in turn, provide support in coordinating implementation of the CCSS in districts. Additionally, they will assist

CSDE staff in fielding questions and providing information from direct queries from the districts. They will also serve on the CSDE CCSS internal team to address challenges and questions from the field and help facilitate a cohesive implementation structure that connects the work at the CSDE to the work in the districts. These individuals will serve a critical role in providing two-way communication and enhancing the consistent and clear messaging from the CSDE to the districts.

The CSDE CCSS leadership team will develop a realistic timeline for the model’s inception for the 2012–13 and 2013–14 school years and a monitoring structure to determine the effectiveness of the model and its related activities.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.7)** 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?

**Training for District and School Leaders.** The CSDE will work with SERC to offer two annual Common Core State Standards Summer Leadership Academies (CCSS-SLA) for principals and assistant principals, directors of special education, and directors of ESL/bilingual education in partnership with the CAS, the public school principals’ membership organization. The two-day CCSS-SLAs will provide administrators with knowledge of the major instructional shifts for both ELA and math and an overview of the new CCSS-based assessment system currently under development. The CCSS-SLAs will support administrators as they use new tools and assessments for observing classroom instruction and providing feedback to teachers on their implementation of the CCSS at all grade levels. In addition, the CCSS-SLA will provide strategies for engaging families, including families of students with disabilities and ELLs, in understanding the new standards and ways they can support students at home. The CSDE will conduct an annual evaluation of the CCSS-SLAs to determine their efficacy in meeting the ongoing needs of school leaders. The CCSS-SLAs will be offered twice each summer, once immediately after the school year closes in June and again in late August before school opens. It is anticipated that approximately 150 school leaders will attend each of the two annual summer academies. CCSS district coordinators will track enrollment to ensure that leaders are participating at both the elementary and secondary levels as well as in special education and ESL/bilingual education.

In the summer of 2012, half-day overview sessions will be offered at each of the six RESCs to district central office staff, including the superintendent and assistant superintendent, and the directors of curriculum, student assessment, ESL/bilingual education, and special education. These sessions will provide an overview of the new standards in ELA and math and the SBAC assessment system. The Commissioner of Education, along with the Chief Academic Officer, will provide the welcome and introductory remarks highlighting the importance of this work in closing Connecticut’s achievement gap.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.8)** 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?

### **Aligning Curriculum/Instructional Material**

During the winter and spring of 2011, the CSDE created foundational documents for designing rigorous CCSS-based curricula in K–12 ELA and mathematics. State-level teams of content specialists from the districts, RESCs, the SERC, and IHEs convened to develop this set of guiding documents, which consists of frameworks for units of study that comprise priority and related supporting standards and pacing calendars. The documents, for use by districts, are part of a statewide system of technical assistance to facilitate ongoing effective implementation of the standards. This set of guiding documents, together with the crosswalk documents, provides districts with tools for revising curriculum documents and for implementing the standards at the classroom level. The crosswalks, unit-planning organizers, and pacing guides are on the [CSDE CCSS website](#).

**Crosswalks.** The ELA and mathematics crosswalk documents show the correlation between the CCSS and Connecticut standards and the alignment of the CCSS to the Fourth Generation Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and the Third Generation CAPT. Districts are encouraged to use the documents to begin the curriculum revision process by first understanding the differences between the sets of standards. The crosswalks are the foundational documents for transitioning to the CCSS from the Connecticut standards.

**Unit-Planning Organizers.** The CSDE created unit-planning organizers in ELA and mathematics for each grade level. The unit-planning organizers are designed to provide a framework for organizing instruction and assessment and to be a resource for curriculum developers. The information in the unit-planning organizers can easily be placed into local curriculum models during the revision process. CSDE expects that local and/or regional curriculum development teams determine the “Big Ideas” and accompanying “Essential Questions” as they complete the units with critical vocabulary, suggested instructional strategies, activities, and resources.

The CSDE believes and emphasizes that all standards are important and are eligible for inclusion on the large-scale assessment to be administered during the 2014–15 school year. However, the CSDE identified standards as either *priority* or *supporting* based on the critical areas of focus described in the Connecticut standards, as well as the connections of the content within and across the K–12 domains and conceptual categories. In some instances, a standard identified as priority actually functions as a supporting standard in a particular unit. No stratification or omission of practice or content standards is suggested by the system of organization utilized in the units.

**Pacing Guides.** The CSDE created pacing guides to provide consistent expectations of the standards to be covered in each subject at each grade level. The pacing guides are a critical component of a high-quality curriculum to ensure that administrators and teachers plan appropriate instruction that addresses all standards in a targeted and explicit manner. The pacing guides assist in establishing curricular continuity across schools, especially within large

districts or regional districts. Educators can access ELA and mathematics pacing guides for grades 3 through 8 on the CSDE Common Core website. These guides are also intended to assist Planning and Placement Team (PPT) members in the development, implementation, and progress reporting on the goals and objectives that are aligned to the CCSS in the IEP for students with disabilities.

Connecticut is not a textbook adoption state. Therefore, the CSDE does not endorse specific products or materials. Each district purchases instructional materials through its local education budget. As previously mentioned, Achieve is working with identified states in the development of rubrics to evaluate the quality and alignment of textbooks and other instructional materials to the CCSS. In the future, the CSDE may issue rubrics to guide the districts' choices of instructional materials and will possibly develop model curricula. Connecticut has also discussed embarking on the process of developing model curricula through discussions with the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC). CSDE staff representing ELLs and students with disabilities will also participate in the discussion to ensure that the model curricula support universal design.

In addition, the state is considering working with other states to develop a platform for distribution of free and for-fee CCSS resources. The platform will be required to meet some threshold of scrutiny by state or other expert and will both expand and increase the diversity of CCSS resources that will inevitably emerge in the coming years as 44 other states work to implement the standards.

**CCSS in Other Subjects.** In addition to ELA and mathematics, the CSDE has infused the CCSS throughout science, social studies, and technical subjects. Where there are gaps, the CSDE will supplement the standards with other college- and career-ready standards.

**Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).** In keeping with its commitment to a well-rounded education for all students, and to embrace rigorous college- and career-ready standards in common with other states, Connecticut has been proactively preparing for the adoption of NGSS, slated for completion in late 2012. These new national science education standards follow logically on the heels of the CCSS ELA and mathematics. They will identify the science and engineering ideas and practices that students should be reading, writing, speaking, and using mathematics to comprehend.

Since April 2010, the CSDE has been laying the groundwork for state adoption of the NGSS. Numerous internal meetings have occurred to keep educators apprised of the NGSS development timeline and plan for transition to Next Generation science assessments. Tentative plans have been made based on the assumption that the SBE will vote in favor of adopting the NGSS. The transition plan calls for extensive professional development and curriculum development support from 2013 through 2016, with the introduction of new science assessments based on NGSS possibly in 2016. It is too early to know whether the SBAC will be funded to develop a science assessment system or whether new regional assessment consortia will take shape. The CSDE is likely to collaborate with other states to devise an improved

science assessment system that will provide more timely and specific data about student learning over time.

A state science leadership team—consisting of CSDE content area experts, state policymakers, RESC and SERC professional development specialists, higher education faculty, and STEM industry representatives—is being assembled to lead strategic planning for NGSS adoption, rollout, and effective implementation in classrooms. Ongoing activities have informed stakeholders of the vision of science education described in the National Research Council (NRC) Framework for K–12 Science Education and the changes anticipated in the NGSS (see [Appendix 1.11](#)) when they are completed in late 2012.

**Social Studies.** The Connecticut Social Studies Framework is a comprehensive document that provides a road map for teachers to understand what students should know and be able to do from prekindergarten through high school. The framework assists educators in teaching content from a variety of history and social studies disciplines at every grade level rather than teaching disciplines in isolation. Integration is a key tenet of this framework—the integration of the various social studies disciplines; the integration of content, literacy skills, and the application of knowledge; and the application of social studies to other areas. This framework is linked to the grade 6–12 ELA CCSS and technical subjects.

**Career and Technical Education Standards (CTE).** CTE and content area experts have begun the process of aligning CTE standards with the mathematics CCSS. As a result of this process, draft documents have been created that identify the concepts in the mathematics CCSS that are in the CTE standards. The CSDE will make these documents available to all mathematics and CTE teachers across the state. In addition, this analysis will assist in identifying senior-year CTE courses that provide practical application of concepts.

The CTE alignment work will be completed by March 2012. To date, the following draft documents have been developed:

- Grades 6–8 CCSS Mathematics Progressions aligned with CTE Personal Finance Performance Standards and Competencies
- Business and Finance Technology Education, Personal Finance Performance Standards and Competencies, grades 6–8 and 9–12
- Agricultural Science Education, grades 9–12
- Family and Consumer Sciences, grades 6–8 and 9–12

The CSDE is currently developing the following documents:

- Business and Finance Technology Education, Accounting and Computer Information Systems, grades 9–12
- Technology Education, grades 6–8 and 9–12
- Marketing Education, grades 9–12
- Medical Careers Education, grades 9–12

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.9)** 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?

### **Accelerated Learning Opportunities and Student Transition to Higher Education**

In recent years, the CSDE has identified the need for accelerated learning opportunities for low-income students. As a result, the majority of the CSDE’s efforts to expand accelerated learning opportunities are focused on this population. Initiatives include the following:

- **Project Opening Doors (POD).** POD is an Advanced Placement (AP) course expansion project led by the CBIA in collaboration with the CSDE. This initiative is designed to increase the number of students taking AP courses in math, science, and English and passing the AP exam. The CBIA’s POD is largely targeted at minority and underprivileged students. Funded by the National Math and Science Initiative, POD is helping to close the state’s large achievement gap between white and non-white students.
- **Bridges Program.** Through the Bridges Program, college professors work with high school teachers to promote a deeper understanding of high school and college requirements.
- **Advanced Placement Incentive Program (APIP).** Connecticut has applied for a third round of the federal APIP grant program. Funding from this program will expand access to AP courses for students in Priority Districts.
- **Dual Enrollment.** Many of Connecticut’s secondary schools participate in dual enrollment programs, which allow high school students to earn college credit at several participating IHEs. Connecticut-specific programs include College and Career Pathways and the Early College Experience in collaboration with the University of Connecticut.
  - **The College Career Pathways (CCP)** program (formally Tech Prep) of study with Connecticut’s 12 community colleges is designed to encourage and prepare Connecticut public high school students, including those enrolled in the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) administered by the CSDE, to pursue an associate or baccalaureate degree in their chosen career area. The CSDE partnered with the Departments of Labor and Economic Development, the CBIA, and the Connecticut Community College System to establish the CCP program in response to Connecticut’s labor needs. Through a planned sequence of academic and career courses, CCP prepares juniors and seniors for advanced courses required by two-year and four-year IHEs. Over the past 15 years, approximately 6,000 students participated in the program each year. The partnership resulted in the publication [\*Connecticut Career Pathways: Seasons of Change and Transition\*](#), located on the state website.
  - **University of Connecticut Early College Experience (ECE)** is a dual enrollment program that allows high school students to enroll in University of Connecticut courses at their high schools or on campus for both high school and college credit. Every course taken through the University of Connecticut ECE is equivalent to the same course at the University of Connecticut. The University of Connecticut also participates in CCP by offering its Individual and Family Development course to high school juniors and seniors through the Family and Consumer Sciences programs.

There are approximately 40 high schools within Connecticut that participate in this program. This course is required for University of Connecticut students who plan to enter teaching, nursing, or human development. Students can also use this course as a general elective at the University of Connecticut.

Furthermore, the Governor’s 2012 legislative proposal includes \$500,000 to enhance the accessibility of a college education by providing nonprofit organizations, including Volunteer Income Tax Assistance groups, the opportunity to receive grants to assist families in preparing college financial aid forms, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

### **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Academic Foundation Competencies**

The CTE competencies provide a context for the development of academic teaching and learning. The CSDE’s commitment to CTE to enhance academic achievement in high school programs and courses has led to the identification of a set of Academic Foundation Standards. The CSDE annually assesses students in their area of concentration and on academic components consistent with the CAPT. See [CTE Performance Standards and Competencies](#) for a full list of CTE areas of concentration.

According to research conducted by Georgetown University, the NASDCTEc, and the National Research Center for Career Technical Education in *Career Clusters, Forecasting Demand for High School Through College Jobs, 2008–2018*, Connecticut has the largest career cluster needs in business management and administration, information technology, health occupations, and travel and tourism. Programs of study offered in districts and IHEs are therefore designed to ensure students are prepared to meet future labor demands in the state.

The CSDE has offered statewide professional development to ensure an understanding of the role of CTE in supporting college- and career-readiness standards. See **Appendix 1.12** for the 2010–11 CTE Professional Development Timeline. In addition, the CSDE held a conference featuring Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, and Kim Green, Executive Director of the NASDCTEc, to unveil the new vision for CTE to Connecticut policy leaders in education, business and industry, and the community. A detailed description of this vision can be found at [www.careertech.org](http://www.careertech.org).

**Student Success Plans (SSP) and Capstone Projects.** *The Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform*, authorized under Public Act 10-111 and more specifically in the amendments to Public Act 11-135, will require SSPs for every student in grades 6–12. Each district is required to establish the SSP for all students by July 2012, which will support students’ academic and career goals. The [core components of the SSP](#) are located on the CSDE website. A [series of videos](#) highlighting districts’ “promising practices” for the SSP can be found on [the SERC website](#).

The SSP is focused on student engagement and relies on critical adults to help students create, monitor, and revise their plans and to guide them through their secondary and postsecondary

career to future employment. It should be noted that while students may choose to align to a career pathway or area of interest, the intent of the SSP in no way tracks or bifurcates students toward a designated postsecondary or career pursuit. Rather, the SSP is designed to allow students to explore their interests, enabling them to make better decisions for the future.

Under the student success umbrella, the Capstone Experience, scheduled to begin in 2016, is a culminating activity for students to apply key knowledge and skills by planning, completing, and presenting a project linked to one or more areas of personal interest. Capstone engages students in a project/experience that focuses on an interest, a career path, or an academic pursuit that synthesizes classroom study and real-world perspectives. The Capstone Experience may include an in-depth project, a reflective portfolio, community service, and/or an internship. As part of the experience, the student will demonstrate research, communication, and technology skills, including additional relevant 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Work on the Capstone Experience may begin as early as ninth grade; successful completion will earn the student one credit toward high school graduation.

**Vocational Agriculture and Technical Programs.** Connecticut's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Academic Foundation Competencies are augmented by vocational agriculture and technical programs. The 2012 legislative agenda proposes increased funding on these career-focused programs.

**Vocational Agriculture.** Connecticut's Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Education Centers prepare students for careers in the environmental, natural resources and agriculture fields. The program is hands-on and combines rigorous academics, occupational skill development, and a work-based component. Connecticut has 19 centers located across the state.

During the 2012 legislative session, the CSDE will propose a new formula that allows vocational agriculture schools to apply for competitive grants with the goal to improve socioeconomic and racial diversity in these centers.

**Vocational Technical.** The CTHSS provides students with academic and technical education leading to a high school diploma and specific technical skills. There are 17 technical high schools throughout the state. Connecticut has one two-year school in Bristol that has combined programs with local high schools. There are 29 technical offerings, with students selecting an area of specialization after participating in a ninth-grade technical exploratory program. Connecticut technical high school students acquire skills in the trades and technologies, preparing them to attend two- or four-year colleges or for careers. Opportunities to earn college credit during the high school years through Tech Prep programs with community colleges also are available.

Proposed plans for the CTHSS will tailor programming to the needs of employers so that students are better prepared for real-world employment when they graduate. The plan will set high standards for students as well as for schools, and will be benchmarked against national

and global models in the area of vocational and technical training. The process will be led by the CSDE, the Board of Regents (higher education), the Department of Labor, and the Department of Economic and Community Development. Governor Malloy proposes to allocate additional \$500,000 in 2012 funding to increase the training resources and supplies for students.

In addition to the new programming, the governance of the CTHSS will be transferred to an independent board of 11 appointed members, per the recommendation of a legislature-created taskforce that studied the finance, management, and enrollment structure of the regional vocational technical school system. The board will include four members who are executives of Connecticut employers, nominated by regional chambers of commerce and other business organizations and appointed by the Governor, and five members appointed by the SBE. The Commissioners of the Department of Economic and Community Development and the Department of Labor will serve in an ex-officio capacity. Governor Malloy will appoint the new board's chair, who will also serve ex-officio on the SBE. This moves the vocational technical school system to the purview of a board dedicated solely to its operations.

**Transition to College and Career for Students with Disabilities.** Connecticut districts provide additional transition services to about 25% of students who have completed graduation requirements but need additional preparation to become college or career ready. Students who are 18 to 21 years old might participate in district or private community-based transition services either at a college or university, in a business, in a community setting (e.g., library, administration building, apartment, house), or in a combination of settings. The CSDE catalogs these opportunities in the [Directory of Transition Services in College, University, and Community-Based Settings](#), which currently contains more than 30 settings. Partnerships with IHEs account for about one-fourth of the settings. Beginning in March 2012 and continuing through 2013, the CSDE will provide training and technical assistance to support districts in developing new settings or collaborations and assist college-based settings to promote the enrollment of more students with disabilities into certificate, continuing education, and degree-granting programs.

Since the reauthorization of IDEA in 1997 and 2004, districts have been required to provide IEP transition goals and objectives for all students between the ages of 16 and 21 to “facilitate the movement of students from high school to post-school activities,” such as college and/or a career path. The CSDE strongly believes that all students with disabilities should focus on academic, vocational, and related services (i.e., transition services) that can support them in exploring and selecting career paths that incorporate their interests, preferences, strengths, and needs. Furthermore, the CSDE supports the continued learning of students with disabilities beyond high school, whether through employment, a formal postsecondary education, or training programs. Specifically, the CSDE requires that at a minimum, students with an IEP have at least one postsecondary goal that addresses postsecondary education/training and one that addresses career/employment, as well as at least one annual goal and objectives that assist them in meeting their postsecondary goals. The CSDE and the SERC are providing training and support to assist districts in aligning these goals and objectives with the CCSS as they relate to college and career readiness.

Furthermore, the CSDE has convened a stakeholder group of public and private agencies, parents, consumers, advocates, and district representatives to address secondary transition needs of students with disabilities. This Special Education Transition Taskforce met in January 2012 to examine the CCSS and identify those standards most appropriate for transition planning for students with disabilities. The Transition Taskforce is also developing a crosswalk between the CSDE’s SSP (i.e., individual learning plan) and other plans that legally document the specific services and accommodations provided to students with disabilities, such as the IEP, section 504 plans, individualized healthcare plans, and the summary of performance. This crosswalk will help districts integrate students with disabilities into the general education SSP process and ensure that all students benefit from and have access to college- and career-readiness standards.

The CSDE participates in national meetings with IDEA Partnership to discuss CCSS implementation and Next Generation assessments and anticipates receiving technical assistance from IDEA Partnership Executive Director, Joanne Cashman, in February 2012. Special education staff have communicated with the CCSSO ICCS staff and National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) staff to assist these organizations in developing a national model for assistance to state special education departments on issues related to special education and CCSS. For more detailed information regarding the CCSS and special education, see the professional development timeline ([Appendix 1.9](#)).

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.10)** Does the SEA intend to work with the State’s IHEs and other teacher and principal preparation programs to better prepare incoming teachers and principals to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new college- and career-ready standards. If so, will the implementation of the plan likely improve the preparation of incoming teachers and principals?

### **Preparing New Educators**

The CSDE understands that IHEs play a critical role in providing the foundational skills necessary for producing high-quality educators. Therefore, the CSDE has worked to ensure that IHEs are integral partners at all levels.

The CSDE has been working with IHEs to incorporate the CCSS into the teacher preparation and induction process through symposiums. Specifically, activities include the following:

- CSDE content area experts presented on the CCSS and the SBAC assessment system for pre-service teachers at the University of Connecticut Mathematics Teacher Preparation Program (Fall 2010);
- CSDE content area experts presented on the CCSS and the SBAC assessment system for pre-service teachers at the Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) Mathematics Teacher Preparation Program (September 2011); and
- CSDE mathematics content area experts incorporated CCSS into the usual manipulative-based instruction training for approximately 40 middle and high school prospective

teachers trained through the Department of Higher Education’s Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) program (July 2011).

Since April 2011, the CSDE has worked to fully engage IHEs in the CCSS implementation to improve the quality of teacher and school leader preparation programs. This work began with the IHE symposium (April 2011) to share information regarding the adoption of the CCSS and the implications for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Two higher education faculty members have volunteered to collaborate with the CSDE and provide leadership in planning the CSDE’s April 2012 IHE symposium. The theme for the April 2012 symposium is “Knowledge and Skills Candidates Need to be Effective Educators and Leaders.” The symposium is designed for pre-service teachers and aspiring administrators. Presentations and discussion topics will focus on the connections between the CSDE initiatives, including the CCSS, new certification regulations, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Since the symposium, the CSDE met several times with the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education–Connecticut (AACTE-CT) to foster collaboration between the CSDE and the IHEs. These meetings will continue to occur throughout the year to promote the CCSS leadership in teacher education and educational leadership programs.

The CSDE is also working with IHEs to ensure continuity between pre-service training and the CALI. The CSDE is developing documents that will delineate the core practices embedded in the redesigned CALI modules. These documents will serve as a resource for IHE faculty members to integrate this material into their course syllabi and pre-service field experiences. IHE faculty members are invited to attend statewide CALI trainings at no cost.

Other IHE faculty members have participated in conferences and work groups to provide input into the design and implementation of professional development in differentiating instruction for students who are well below or well above grade-level expectations and in understanding the components of a balanced assessment system (interim assessments, formative assessment tools and practices, and summative assessments) in alignment with the SBAC assessment system.

Finally, the CSDE is required to report on disaggregated college-going rates and credit accumulation as part of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program (requirements (c)11 and (c)12). This will require the CSDE to collaborate with higher education to match student-level credit records with State Assigned Student Identifier (SASID) numbers.

For full timeline of engagement with IHEs, see [Appendix 1.13](#).

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.11)** 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:

(i) 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.)

(ii) 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?

(iii) 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?

### **Transition to Next Generation Assessments**

The CSDE has joined the SBAC and intends to adopt SBAC assessments in the 2014–15 school year. Until then, the CSDE has begun implementing an assessment transition plan that is piloting new assessment items designed to measure the CCSS.

During 2012, the content area experts along with the CSDE psychometricians will review the current assessments based on the CSDE’s content frameworks that were in place prior to adoption of the CCSS and identify items that do not align with the CCSS. The goal of this work will be to remove questions measuring skills that are not required under the CCSS. The CSDE believes this approach will encourage educators to focus more intensely on the CCSS. Depending on the costs, Connecticut plans to participate in the optional formative assessments, an option available to SBAC members.

The CSDE’s Bureau of Assessment content area experts work directly with contractors charged with developing assessment blueprints, item specifications, and sample items, allowing for firsthand knowledge of the new assessments. The in-depth work by the CSDE content area

experts on the content specifications for mathematics provides the necessary expertise to develop and deliver professional learning experiences for educators on item and task development, scoring, and alignment. The CSDE is uniquely positioned to critically analyze existing assessments and determine possible changes.

The CSDE intends to use the pilot data collected in 2011–12 to create items based on the CCSS that could be administered as a supplemental component of the CSDE state assessments beginning in 2012–13 and continuing in 2013–14.

The results of the supplemental component of the assessments will not be used in the formal accountability system, but the data will provide districts and schools with information regarding the extent to which their educators have successfully implemented the CCSS in classroom-based instruction.

Furthermore, Governor Malloy’s 2012 legislative proposal includes the following assessment-related initiatives:

- **Common Core and International Standards.** To improve Connecticut students’ international academic competitiveness, the 2012 legislative proposal includes \$500,000 in funding to map CCSS with international standards and to provide aligned curricular materials online. We are particularly encouraged by SBAC’s recent decision to integrate NAEP and Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) items into its test design.
- **College Readiness Assessment.** With far too many Connecticut students entering college needing to take remedial courses to catch up with what they should have learned in high school, there is a need to have an assessment to determine whether students are indeed ready for college. Governor Malloy’s proposal includes \$500,000 in funding for the development of an assessment to be administered to high school juniors to assess college readiness and assist in course-taking planning for their senior year.

**SBAC Participation.** The CSDE’s leadership in the SBAC has also informed the assessment transition plan. The CSDE has been a governing member in the SBAC since 2010, and five CSDE content area experts in the Bureau of Assessment actively participated in SBAC work groups, including two-co-chairs, which included participation in consortium-sponsored webinars, weekly meetings, and U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) public meetings. For the letter to superintendents on SBAC participation, see [Appendix 1.14](#).

*Table 1.4: Connecticut SBAC Participation*

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Participate in two SBAC “all states” meetings in New Orleans and Minneapolis.	April and August 2011
Participate in the development of SBAC RFPs.	July 2011
Attend USDOE public meeting on accessibility and accommodations.	August 2011
Participate in on-site and virtual meetings with SBAC contractors to inform the processes needed to develop an assessment system.	September 2011
Participate in a series of three SBAC technology architecture meetings in Chicago, New Hampshire, and Las Vegas.	September–October 2011
Work with the authors of SBAC’s math content specifications and authors of the CCSS for mathematics to incorporate public feedback into the second draft of SBAC mathematics content specifications for summative assessment.	October–December 2011

Attendance at these meetings has allowed the CSDE’s Bureau of Assessment content area experts to increase their understanding of key changes that will occur as the CSDE transitions from the current assessment system to a new assessment system. Some of these key changes include the use and benefits of computer adaptive testing; the current status of artificial intelligence scoring and how it will be used to deliver more timely results; the consortium’s development of policy around accessibility and accommodations; and the requirements necessary for building the delivery system for computerized assessments. Additionally, these content area experts have contributed extensively to the overall development of the assessments, allowing for information to be delivered to key stakeholders as soon as decisions are made.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (1.B.12)** 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?

In addition to joining SBAC, the CSDE has joined the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) to develop a multistate comprehensive assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This consortium applies current research-based lessons for alternate assessment based upon alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS).

The CSDE’s Bureau of Assessment content area experts work directly with consortium management through monthly conference calls and webinars. They also participate in one of the work groups to develop professional development associated with the project. Activities

have included the following:

- Creation of a NCSC Community of Practice (CoP), which includes 25 members from various districts, grade levels, and areas of expertise;
- Participation in the first CoP meeting with NCSC team leadership and Connecticut CoP members;
- Participation in the first of six CoP webinars.

The CSDE's Bureau of Student Assessment content area experts participated in the CCSSO SCASS Assessing Special Education Students (ASES) group. The work groups and discussions have focused on the implementation of the CCSS for students with special needs. One of the outcomes of these discussions was a summit for students with disabilities and Common Core college and career readiness held in December 2011. Steering committee members for both ASES and the summit included one CSDE content area expert.

Participation in these activities has provided opportunities for the CSDE's Bureau of Assessment content area experts, in conjunction with the CSDE's stakeholders, to make informed decisions and to influence the development of the new assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

**SBAC and College and Career Readiness.** While the CCSS themselves lay out a vision for college and career readiness, the CSDE's role as a governing state in the SBAC takes this vision a step further. The CSDE shares the consortium goal of using evidence collected as students progress through formal schooling to understand whether they are on track to achieve college and career readiness. The consortium has a detailed plan to define what this looks like at each grade level with respect to the overarching goals of the CCSS and content specifications. The CSDE will work with the consortium to define achievement level descriptors at each grade. These descriptors will allow the CSDE to work with educators to use multiple sources of data to inform the progress of students with respect to college and career-readiness standards at each grade and effectively implement changes based on these data.

### **Monitoring and Sustaining Progress**

It is essential to monitor the progress of the CCSS implementation across the state, and Connecticut's three-tiered system of committees will help ensure that this takes place. The leadership committee will serve as the primary structure, and communication will take place internally at the CSDE between both the leadership and internal committees and externally between the leadership, internal committees, and the external committee. The monitoring system will incorporate all tiers in an intentional, coordinated manner. In addition, the Connecticut CCSS Implementation Plan will be consulted to determine whether some monitoring is already planned and how this can be incorporated into a cohesive, comprehensive system for monitoring implementation activities at the CSDE, district, and school levels.

To reduce duplication of efforts, increase efficiency, and decrease gaps, the leadership

committee is tasked with reviewing the CSDE’s existing federal and state monitoring systems. For existing state quality assurance and monitoring plans used in the CALI, see **Appendices 1.15 and 1.16**. By fall 2012, an initial plan will be developed that will include resources, timelines, and evidence of implementation. As the internal and external committees are convened, they will be introduced to the monitoring plan, and their input will be solicited to streamline the process. This, in turn, will assist the leadership, internal, and external committees identify and replicate effective techniques and best practices for the district transition to the CCSS.

Progress will be monitored and sustained through ongoing meetings of the leadership, internal, and external committees, as well as through the range of activities planned by RESCs and the SERC. Close coordination and collaboration on the part of the teams will help to ensure clear, concise, and consistent messaging throughout the state.

The CSDE will require superintendents to attest in writing that their district has developed a timeline and process for monitoring and sustaining the CCSS, through the existing state assurance process.

**Students with Disabilities.** Every summer, approximately 1% (600) of all IEPs of students with disabilities aged 6 to 21 will be examined for alignment of goals to the CCSS. Additionally, as a component of special education focused monitoring (annually winter/spring), five to ten districts will have IEPs reviewed for alignment to the CCSS as they pertain to the area of monitoring (e.g., if secondary transition is the focus, then IEPs of students reviewed to address this topic would be reviewed for the CCSS alignment).

Over the next several years, planned training will occur on an annual basis that addresses the CCSS and special education to assist new staff (administrators and teachers) and continuing staff to be current on the CCSS and Next Generation assessment relating to IEP development, implementation, and progress monitoring.

### **Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden on Districts**

It is paramount to identify opportunities to lessen the burden and reduce duplication on districts and schools so they can more effectively focus on enhancing achievement and educational outcomes for students. While the CSDE is obligated to maintain certain reporting practices to comply with state and federal mandates, there may be areas where reporting can be streamlined.

The implementation of the CCSS will encourage districts and schools to collaborate regarding curricular development and revision. This will result in reduced duplication of efforts and a shared, and therefore reduced, financial burden across districts and schools. Collaboration is beneficial for schools and districts of all demographics; for example, in small districts, collaboration will allow professionals who may have worked individually to now work as members of a group. In larger districts that, in many cases, have been able to convene curriculum development and revision teams, the financial burden will be offset by sharing costs.

In addition, the flexibility to reallocate Title I funds would allow districts to plan and provide extended-day and school-year services to benefit at-risk students. This shift will allow for increased program continuity and communication between classroom teachers and in-district support personnel.

Additionally, the three-tiered system of the CCSS teams will ensure clear and consistent messages between the SEA and districts. This system will help to coordinate activities at both of these levels, as well as with other stakeholders, such as RESCs, the SERC, and professional organizations. This further reduces duplication and burden on the part of districts and schools by coordinating the transition, implementation, and communication related to the CCSS. The leadership team has proposed that each district designate a CCSS District Coordinator who will serve as the single point of contact between the CSDE and the district.

### **Conclusion**

Today's demands for college and career readiness are expanding, and they require students to achieve at higher levels to succeed in education and in a global economy. Far too many Connecticut students are unable to perform complex tasks, including critical thinking and problem solving, which are critical for success in today's world.

Connecticut strives to increase academic achievement for its youth and adults. These efforts resulted in the implementation of a variety of major state initiatives. The goal now is to coordinate, expand, and sustain these initiatives in support of the implementation of the CCSS.

To achieve this goal, Connecticut schools must ensure that curriculum and instruction are relevant and responsive to all students, including ELLs, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students. Curriculum and instruction must be coupled with valid and reliable measures and processes to screen, diagnose, and monitor student progress. Effective teacher and administrator pre-service and ongoing professional development programs with adequate resources must be developed to increase the capacity to support the academic achievement of all students. The CSDE must meaningfully engage families and communities as essential partners in promoting student achievement in Connecticut. These actions will be incorporated into the next stages of the CSDE's work to provide Connecticut's schools with a strong foundation upon which to continue their implementation of a CCSS-based curriculum to ensure that all students can succeed with these standards.

## 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><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input checked="" 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><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input 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><b>Option C</b></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>
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## 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 2012–2013 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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.1)** Did the SEA propose a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, and a high-quality plan to implement this system no later than the 2012–2013 school year, that is likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.2)** Does the SEA’s accountability system provide differentiated recognition, accountability, and support for all LEAs in the State and for all Title I schools in those LEAs based on (1) student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, and other subjects at the State’s discretion, for all students and all subgroups of students identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II); (2) graduation rates for all students and all subgroups; and (3) school performance and progress over time, including the performance and progress of all subgroups?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.3)** Does the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system create incentives and provide support that is likely to be effective in closing achievement gaps for all subgroups of students?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.4)** Did the SEA provide a plan that ensures that the system will be implemented in LEAs and schools no later than the 2012-2013 school year?

Connecticut’s waiver proposal aims to build accountability and differentiated intervention systems that help to: (1) transform low-performing schools to ensure that they can drive and sustain academic improvement year after year and (2) enable all other schools to uncover new ways to boost their students’ academic outcomes on a continuous basis.

Connecticut schools and districts are currently classified based on the requirements of the NCLB Act, the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This act, among other things, provides funding for professional development, instructional materials, and other educational programs. Furthermore, it emphasizes equal access to education; aims to reduce achievement gaps; and requires school accountability. While accountability systems under the NCLB Act are intended to raise expectations for students and to hold districts and schools accountable for student progress, the existing system does not

adequately recognize school progress across all bands of performance. The CSDE believes the proposed recognition, accountability, and support system outlined below is a more appropriate system for Connecticut.

The state's lower-performing subgroups lag far behind their peers, so the CSDE must address this disparity with a sense of urgency. On the NAEP, Connecticut's achievement gap is among the ten widest in the nation for every subgroup comparison and is the single largest for the majority of subgroups. Additionally, state-level data confirm large and widening gaps in academic progress, graduation rates, and other indicators between the highest-performing students and subgroups. The proposed accountability system is designed to address Connecticut's large achievement gaps by requiring higher rates of growth for historically underperforming subgroups. The CSDE also elected to reduce the minimum threshold for school-level subgroup size (*n* size) from 40 to 20 to ensure that more students are included in the accountability calculations. This standard matches the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) standard, which is the smallest threshold allowed for Connecticut and ensures the broadest viable reach of subgroup accountability. The CSDE's accountability system—including its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) and School Performance Index (SPI), which are described in the following sections—is also designed to focus on closing gaps in both performance and graduation rates.

Furthermore, Connecticut will hold the state, its districts, and its schools accountable for improving student performance with the aim of ensuring that all students and subgroups are, on average, performing at the Goal level on the state assessments. Connecticut is therefore using this waiver as an opportunity to raise the bar for its schools and districts from the minimal Proficiency standard required under NCLB to the more rigorous Goal standard, which is an indicator of college- and career-readiness.

### **Ambitious yet Achievable**

The CSDE believes that its goals must be both ambitious and achievable and acknowledges a productive tension between these values. Past performance should not dictate Connecticut's future aspirations, but – at the same time – the state owes it to our schools, educators, parents, and students to set goals within their reach.

The CSDE therefore proposes that a dual approach – one that incorporates both accountability and incentives– will best drive school improvement and increase student achievement. The CSDE will set both Accountability Performance Targets and Aspirational Performance Targets for all schools and subgroups in the state.

If schools fail to meet their Accountability Performance Targets over a three-year period, the school will be classified in a lower category, triggering greater state and district oversight as well as more intensive interventions. The accountability goals are aligned so that schools that meet their performance targets are on track to meet the state's ultimate goals, but the CSDE

will ensure that these targets are reasonable by using the past performance of our high progress schools as a guide for achievability.

Aspirational Performance Targets better reflect our true ambitions. With the reforms laid out in this waiver application and in the Governor’s proposed legislative package, we aim for our schools to achieve at ever higher levels – enabling our students to defy current expectations. We believe this is possible, and we are looking to our schools to pave the way forward. To this end, the CSDE is offering significant incentives to schools in order to encourage unprecedented growth and performance. The CSDE stands ready to recognize and reward this achievement and to ensure that the practices that enable it are shared throughout the state. Our plan for recognizing, rewarding, and replicating these achievements through “Schools of Distinction” is explained in more detail in Section 2.C.

### **Setting Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)**

At the center of the proposed accountability system are three components: a new set of measures for school performance and growth, a new classification system for all Connecticut schools, and an accompanying intervention strategy. Rather than focusing exclusively on math and reading, the new system will hold schools accountable for mathematics, reading, writing, and science.

The primary metric within the new accountability system is the SPI, which measures the status of student achievement in a school. The new accountability system also includes measures of change in student achievement, student growth, and college and career readiness, and it is sensitive to subgroup performance with regard to college and career readiness.

The SPI is calculated by assigning a weight to the five categories of performance on Connecticut’s assessments. For each subject tested on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)—mathematics, reading, writing, and science—Connecticut reports performance for five achievement levels: Below Basic (BB), Basic (B), Proficient (P), Goal (G), and Advanced (A). These achievement levels are well understood throughout the state.

The current measure of student achievement—the percentage of students who score Proficient or higher—is limited because it fails to acknowledge performance at all levels. Even more importantly, it only recognizes improvement when schools move students from the Below Basic level to the Proficient level. The CSDE believes that schools should increase the performance of all students—including those scoring at the lowest and highest levels. The CSDE believes that its proposed metric—the SPI—better captures the performance and increase in performance of all students.

The SPI is calculated for each subject tested, and then the subject-specific SPIs are averaged. The SPI is calculated for each district, school, and subgroup based on all tested students. Districts, schools, and subgroups are credited in the following way:

- Students who score Below Basic (BB) = 0.0 points;
- Students who score Basic (B) = 0.25 points;
- Students who score Proficient (P) = 0.5 points;
- Students who score Goal (G) = 0.75 points; and
- Students who score Advanced (A) = 1.0 point.

The result is an index score ranging from 0 to 100, where 0 indicates that all students scored at the Below Basic level and 100 indicates that all students scored at the Advanced level. The SPI is further explained in section 2.B.

The CSDE is using this waiver application as an opportunity to raise the bar for students throughout the state. Its primary goal is for all students and subgroups to achieve an SPI of 75, indicating that, on average, students are achieving at Goal on the state standardized tests. This higher level of performance, unlike the Proficient standard, shows that students are prepared for college and career. The CSDE's short-term target is to reduce the state's performance deficit by half by 2018. To meet this goal, most schools and subgroups in the state will need to make enough progress each year so that, in six years, they are halfway to achieving an SPI of 75. The state's lowest performing schools will be required to increase their performance by more than 2 points on the SPI each year, which requires the greatest gains for the students and subgroups that are the farthest behind. The CSDE believes that these targets are ambitious yet achievable. Section 2.B outlines in greater detail the CSDE's other goals in the areas of individual student growth and graduation rates.

### **Reward Schools**

The CSDE will recognize as "Schools of Distinction" schools that defy expectations in one of three ways:

1. By achieving the highest levels of performance with traditionally underperforming subgroups of students;
2. By increasing the performance of students – especially the students who are most behind – by substantially more than the accountability system requires; or
3. By driving the growth of their low-performing students at rates that put them on a trajectory to move two performance bands within six years.

The CSDE will further recognize schools that sustain their high performance, change in performance, or growth for a three-year period by awarding monetary grants coupled with the responsibility to share best practices with lower-performing schools.

## **Priority Schools**

The ESEA Flexibility Request defines “Priority Schools” as among the lowest-performing schools in the state based on the achievement of all students. Therefore, the CSDE will identify Title I or Title I-eligible schools with the lowest SPIs for all students as Priority Schools. Additionally, any Title I or Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate lower than 60% will automatically be included as a Priority School. Finally, the CSDE will include any school that is presently a School Improvement Grant (SIG) Tier I or Tier II school. The total number of Priority Schools in the state will equal at least 5% of its Title I schools.

In previous legislation, Connecticut identified the state’s highest poverty and lowest performing districts “Priority School Districts.” In order to prevent confusion between the “Priority School Districts” and “Priority Schools,” the CSDE has elected to refer to Priority Schools as “Turnaround Schools.”

Connecticut will launch the Commissioner’s Network—a system of state supports and interventions—to improve chronically low-performing schools including Turnaround Schools. The Network will serve as a vehicle for innovative initiatives, a platform for sharing effective practices, and a model for other schools and districts throughout the state.

## **Focus Schools**

The ESEA Flexibility Request defines “Focus Schools” as Title I schools that are contributing the most to the achievement gap in the state. The total number of Focus Schools in a state must equal at least 10% of the Title I schools in the state.

The CSDE has elected to define Focus Schools as schools with the lowest performance for subgroups. To identify Focus Schools, the CSDE has created a high-needs subgroup that includes ELLs, students with disabilities, and students eligible for free and reduced lunch. The CSDE created this high-needs subgroup for Focus School identification purposes to avoid the unwieldy process of treating each subgroup individually. More than 80% of the state’s African-American and Hispanic students fall into the high-needs subgroup because they are either ELLs, students eligible for free in reduced lunch, or students with disabilities. This subgroup therefore captures most students in the two historically underperforming racial and ethnic subgroups. However, the CSDE wants to ensure that this race-neutral high-needs subgroup does not mask racial and ethnic achievement gaps. The CSDE will therefore reexamine all schools in the state to determine whether there are any schools with Hispanic or African-American subgroups with performance as low as the identified high-needs subgroup in identified Focus Schools. Any schools with Hispanic or African-American students that are low-performing in the way described will also be identified as Focus Schools.

The CSDE will ensure that districts have the information, resources, and capacity to design and implement effective, targeted interventions in Focus Schools.

### **Supporting Connecticut’s Other Schools**

The CSDE will classify all schools into five levels—Excelling, Progressing, Transition, Review, and Turnaround. The CSDE’s Turnaround and Performance Teams will partner with districts to ensure that schools in each of these categories receive appropriate levels of support. The lower-performing schools will receive more support from the state, their home districts, and RESCs and will be required to engage in a process of diagnosis, planning, intervention, and monitoring. The higher-performing schools, however, will be given the information they need to drive their own improvement. All schools will be given school performance reports that provide detailed information about student performance across numerous metrics and provide comparisons not only to accountability targets but also to regional and demographic peers across the state.

### **Building State, District, and School Capacity**

The CSDE will help build district and school capacity by increasing financial resources to the districts that need it most, partnering with districts as they plan for school intervention, and removing barriers and duplication. In legislation pending in the current legislative session, the state plans to provide additional funding to its lowest-performing districts, conditional on district plans for reform in key areas defined by the state. The state’s new Turnaround Team will act as a resource to districts as they plan for and monitor interventions in their struggling schools. Finally, the state is working to reduce barriers for districts by reforming the certification process and reducing unnecessary reporting requirements.

### **Accountability and Support in the Realigned CSDE**

Connecticut’s Chief Performance Officer will lead efforts to provide the CSDE and districts with actionable information about student learning. The Chief Performance Officer will complete and leverage Connecticut’s data infrastructure, providing ongoing research and data analysis that will help inform more precisely where problems and opportunities lie in Connecticut’s schools at the school, student, and even the standard level. We intend to identify opportunities for improvement not just in broad percentages or score categories but to speak explicitly about the numbers of children needing improvement to remind all audiences that we are reporting about children’s lives rather than just statistics. Identification of effective practices for narrowing the achievement gap—and improving student performance overall—will be an important function of this research office.

The Chief Performance Officer will work with the Commissioner and the SBE to develop clear metrics for status, progress, and goals for every school, district, and student group in the state as required by the ESEA waiver process. The CSDE’s accountability system will also help inform the CSDE’s interventions in low-performing schools and will provide districts with the information they need to more effectively intervene in their low-performing schools. In this role, the Chief Performance Officer will provide a central pipeline of information to the Chief Academic Officer, the Chief Talent Officer, and the Chief Turnaround Officer functions.

The Chief Turnaround Officer will work to turn around schools with records of persistent underperformance by providing supports, guidance, interventions, and new strategies. This office will analyze low-performing schools and identify the nuanced leadership, assessment, curriculum, professional development, technology, or other changes necessary to improve educational outcomes. This office will seek out effective practices from the state and nation, identifying partners that work successfully with public schools to create the conditions for change.

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

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 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.</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must:</p> <p>a. provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and</p> <p>b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.</p>
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**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.5)** Did the SEA include student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.6)** Did the SEA provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each additional assessment for all grades assessed?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.A.7)** Does the SEA’s weighting of the included assessments result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve the State’s college- and career-ready standards?

The CSDE proposes incorporating the results of writing and science assessments into the accountability framework along with results from reading and mathematics. When the CSDE developed its accountability system to comply with the requirements of the NCLB Act, it was not required to assess writing, but it continued to do so at considerable expense because of the importance it assigns to writing. The CSDE is in full agreement with the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), which asserts that writing is a “tool for thinking” (2004). The 2007 results of the NAEP Writing Assessment suggest that the continuous efforts that Connecticut educators have directed toward writing instruction have benefited students. The NAEP 2007 results showed that Connecticut’s eighth-grade students had claimed the nation’s top spot in writing performance.

The new accountability model will hold schools and districts accountable for student performance in writing through the SPI, as explained in section 2.B. While a vertical scale to measure student growth in reading and mathematics is in place, individual student growth data is not available for the writing assessment. Therefore, writing will be included in the status and change measures but cannot be included as an individual growth measure.

Connecticut’s new system also will hold schools accountable for science, which is tested in the fifth, eighth, and tenth grades. This is an important shift that raises expectations for Connecticut students. The CSDE recognizes the strong relationship between mathematics and science and the potential through strong STEM programs to nurture students’ abilities to reason analytically and to apply knowledge to solve complex problems of all types. The CSDE is in full agreement with the Board on Science Education within the National Academy of Sciences that “science, engineering, and technology permeate every aspect of modern life . . . and some knowledge of science and engineering is required to understand and participate in many major public policy issues of today, as well as to make informed everyday decisions.”<sup>1</sup>

In future years, the CSDE will look to improve the current science assessments by adding end-of-grade and end-of-standard benchmark assessments. These assessments would measure fewer topics and skills and provide teachers and parents with more specific data about what students have learned. These new assessments will hold districts accountable for teaching the standards assigned to each grade by the Next Generation National Science Education Standards and will yield more actionable detail about what students know and can do year-by-year.

Table 2.1 provides the percentage of all students who performed at the Proficient level on Connecticut’s most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed. In the future, Connecticut will replace proficiency as measure of achievement with the SPI, described in greater detail below.

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<sup>1</sup> Board on Science Education (2011). *A framework for K-12 science education: Practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas*. Retrieved from [http://www7.nationalacademies.org/bose/Frameworks\\_Report\\_Brief.pdf](http://www7.nationalacademies.org/bose/Frameworks_Report_Brief.pdf)

*Table 2.1 CMT and CAPT Percent Proficient for Writing and Science*

	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>	<b>Grade 6</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>	<b>Grade 10</b>
<b>2010–11 CMT/CAPT Writing Percentage at/above Proficient</b>	81.1	85.4	88.0	86.1	79.8	81.6	88.6
<b>2010–11 CMT/CAPT Science Percentage at/above Proficient</b>	N/A	N/A	82.4	N/A	N/A	75.9	81.7

## 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.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 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 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–2020 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p><b>Option C</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p> <p>ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below.</p> <p>iii. Provide a link to the State’s report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)</p>
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**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.1)** Did the SEA describe the method it 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 through one of the three options?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.2)** *Option C* – Did the SEA describe another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.3)** Did the SEA provide the new AMOs and the method used to set these AMOs?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.4)** Did the SEA provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.5)** If the SEA set AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, do the AMOs require LEAs, schools, and subgroups that are further behind to make greater rates of annual progress?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.6)** Did the SEA attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups? (Attachment 8)

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.7)** Are these AMOs similarly ambitious to the AMOs that would result from using Option A or B above?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.8)** Are these AMOs ambitious but achievable given the State’s existing proficiency rates and any other relevant circumstances in the State?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.B.9)** Will these AMOs result in a significant number of children being on track to be college- and career-ready?

### **Connecticut’s Goals**

To ensure that all Connecticut students are prepared for college and career, the CSDE has set its goals high: students should perform, on average, at the Goal level on standardized exams, and at least 96% of students should graduate from high school (94% within four years). The CSDE believes all Connecticut students—including members of historically underperforming subgroups—can and must meet these targets. By 2018, schools, districts, and the state as a whole will achieve increases in student performance and graduation rates such that they are halfway to achieving these state targets.

The CSDE will measure student achievement using an SPI, which will provide schools with a score between 0 and 100 that captures student performance at all levels on state standardized tests. The CSDE will measure graduation rates using both a cohort graduation rate (which measures the percentage of students who graduate within four years) and an extended graduation rate (which will give high schools credit for all students who graduate even if they

require more years of instruction; it is calculated using 1 – dropout rate). These measures are described in more detail in this section.

**Connecticut Performance Targets.** To meet statewide goals, Connecticut must make significant annual progress. Meeting the statewide annual targets shown in Table 2.2 will put the CSDE on track to meet its 2018 goals:

*Table 2.2 Statewide Annual Targets, 2012–18*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Target
<b>CMT SPI</b>	65.8	66.6	67.3	68.1	68.9	69.7	70.4	75
<b>CAPT SPI</b>	62.5	63.5	64.6	65.6	66.7	68.7	68.8	75
<b>Four-Year Graduation Rate</b>	81.8%	82.8%	83.8%	84.8%	85.8%	86.8%	87.9%	94.0%
<b>1 – Dropout Rate</b>	88.3%	89.0%	89.6%	90.3%	90.9%	91.6%	92.2%	96.0%

**School Performance Targets.** All Connecticut schools will be expected to meet AMOs, or performance targets, that are aligned with the state targets and with the criteria in the proposed system of school classification. Schools that meet all of their performance targets are helping to ensure that Connecticut meets its state goals; are on track to increase by a level in the school classification system; and, most importantly, are making significant progress toward ensuring that all students are prepared for college and career.

By 2018, all schools with an SPI below 75 will reduce by half the gap between their 2011 SPIs and an SPI of 75 for all students and all subgroups. When Connecticut achieves this target, the state will have made significant progress towards ensuring that its students are not merely Proficient, but are performing at Goal – a level indicative of college and career readiness. Additionally, at the high school level, schools will reduce by half the gap between their 2011 cohort and extended graduation rates of 94% and 96%, respectively.

Every Connecticut school will receive an annual performance report that provides information about whether the school has met its performance targets and how the school’s performance compares to other district schools, other schools across the state, and peer schools that serve similar populations of students. Schools will be assessed based on whether they met each of these performance targets for the “all students” group and for each of the following historically underperforming subgroups: ELLs, students with disabilities, black students, Hispanic students, and students eligible for free or reduced lunch.

### **Accountability Measures: Now and in the Future**

The CSDE’s proposed accountability system includes measures of the following:

- *Student achievement*, measured by performance on Connecticut’s state tests in reading, mathematics, writing, and science;

- *Change in student achievement*, measured by the change in performance on Connecticut’s state tests in reading, mathematics, writing, and science;
- *Student growth*, measured by the vertical scale growth of individual students on Connecticut’s state tests in reading and math;
- *College and career readiness*, measured by graduation rates; and
- *Subgroup performance and college and career readiness*, measured by subgroup achievement, change in achievement, and growth on Connecticut’s state tests and subgroup graduation rates for high schools.

The CSDE believes that the state has a responsibility to educate the whole student—not just in academics, but also in civics, arts, and fitness. The CSDE also believes that school quality cannot be fully captured by test scores. Therefore, the Performance Team will consider incorporating additional metrics in categories such as civics, arts, fitness, college and career readiness, and school climate into the accountability system at a later date.

The CSDE is also proposing that the legislature appropriate funding for a Personalized Assessment Pilot. Connecticut superintendents, through their representative organization CAPSS, have recommended that the state explore the possibility of using assessments that are more personalized in order to be more effective, more dynamic, and better able to meet the needs of today’s learners. A personalized learning system would base instruction, pacing, and assessment plans on the student’s learning needs; incorporate learning styles of the learner into the learning plan; and integrate the student’s interests into the learning plan. We plan to use the pilot as a way to explore alternatives to the traditional instruction and assessment model, which is based on the accumulation of Carnegie units and passing standardized summative assessments administered for all students of all skill levels at the same time. Outcomes of the pilot may inform future revisions of the accountability system, either through district-by-district exceptions or through a broader evolution of our approach in future years.

The office of the Chief Performance Officer will be responsible for exploring ways to add measures to the accountability system that will provide a fuller, more accurate picture of school performance. The CSDE is committed to continuous improvement of its AMOs both through rigorous evaluation of the usefulness of the metrics it has selected as well as engaging with stakeholders as the system is implemented. Additionally, the Performance Team will add other measures to its school performance reports that will help schools and districts drive the process of improvement but will not be part of the CSDE’s system of accountability.

Table 2.3 Proposed and Future Accountability Measures

	<b>Proposed Accountability Measures for Immediate Incorporation</b>	<b>Measures the CSDE Will Consider Incorporating in Future Years</b>
<b>Student Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecticut’s state tests in reading, mathematics, writing, and science and subgroup achievement for grades 3–8 and 10</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliable measures of literacy and numeracy for grades K–3</li> <li>Proficiency or access measures for civics, arts, and fitness</li> <li>End-of-course exams</li> </ul>
<b>Change in Student Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in performance on Connecticut’s state tests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliable measures of literacy and numeracy for grades K–3</li> <li>Proficiency or access measures for civics, arts, and fitness</li> <li>End-of-course exams</li> </ul>
<b>Student Growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of students who meet individual growth targets on the vertical scale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT growth</li> <li>PSAT/SAT growth</li> </ul>
<b>College and Career Readiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduation rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College enrollment and completion</li> <li>AP and IB: participation and success rates</li> <li>SAT/ACT: participation and success rates</li> <li>Industry certification and exam pass rates</li> <li>Postsecondary remediation rate in CT</li> </ul>
<b>Subgroup Performance and College and Career Readiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement, change in achievement, and growth of subgroups on Connecticut’s state tests; subgroup graduation rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See all measures above</li> </ul>
<b>School Climate</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent, staff, and student surveys</li> <li>Teacher and staff attendance</li> <li>Staff turnover</li> <li>Disciplinary measures, including suspension rates</li> </ul>

In the initial year of implementing the new accountability system, the CSDE has elected to use measures and data for which it is most confident in using and that the CSDE has the most experience collecting and reporting. This will help to ensure that districts, schools, and parents can easily understand how schools will be measured and classified.

Table 2.4 Accountability Measures and Metrics

	<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<b>Metrics</b>
<b>Student Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State tests in ELA, mathematics, writing, and science, and subgroup achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPI</li> </ul>
<b>Change in Student Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in performance on state tests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in the SPI</li> </ul>
<b>Student Growth (Elementary and Middle)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vertical scale growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of students who meet individual targets on vertical scales</li> </ul>
<b>College and Career Readiness (High School)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduation rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohort high school graduation rate</li> <li>Extended high school graduation rate</li> </ul>
<b>Subgroup Performance, Growth, and College and Career Readiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement, change in achievement, and vertical scale growth on state tests; graduation rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The SPI for each subgroup</li> <li>Change in the SPI for each subgroup</li> <li>Percentage of students in each subgroup who meet individual targets on vertical scales</li> <li>Cohort high school graduation rate for each subgroup</li> <li>Extended high school graduation rate for each subgroup</li> </ul>

Connecticut will classify schools on the basis of their performance across six components. These six components of our accountability system reflect the CSDE's beliefs, and each captures a different element of school performance. First, the CSDE believes that schools should ensure that all their students are prepared for college and career. The proposed system will therefore measure and classify schools based on their students' absolute achievement, with the expectation that students are performing, on average, at Goal (an SPI of 75). As described in more detail in Section 2.B, performing at Goal in an indicator of college and career readiness. Second, the CSDE believes that schools should value increasing the achievement of students across any of the performance thresholds, rather than only when students increase from, for example, Below Basic to Proficient. Therefore, the proposed system credits schools for increases in achievement across any of the four performance thresholds on the state exams (as measured by change in SPI). Third, we recognize that schools may make substantial and important progress with students within bands of performance rather than between them, and

we believe that such growth should be recognized as well. Thus, the proposed system captures individual student growth within bands of performance (as measured by the vertical scale). Fourth, the CSDE believes that high schools have the responsibility not only to set high standards but also to create paths for all students to meet them. Consequently, the proposed system requires that schools decrease their dropout rates and increase their four-year graduation rates. Fifth, the CSDE believes that all students can and must achieve at high levels. Therefore, the proposed classification system requires schools to meet performance targets for subgroups that have historically underperformed in Connecticut: ELLs, students with disabilities, black students, Hispanic students, and students eligible for free or reduced lunch. Finally, the CSDE believes that full information about students is necessary for setting goals and driving improvement. Therefore, our proposed system continues to emphasize the importance of high testing participation rates.

The components, how they are computed, and how they are used to classify schools are described below.

**1. The SPI: Measuring Student Achievement at All Levels.** The SPI will be used as the baseline measure for every school and subgroup in the state and will be a key component in measuring progress over time.

As mentioned in section 2.A, the CSDE believes that the SPI is a better measure of student performance than the percentage of students who score Proficient because it more accurately captures the distribution of performance of all students.

For each subject tested on the CMT and CAPT—mathematics, reading, writing, and science—Connecticut reports performance for five achievement levels: Below Basic (BB), Basic (B), Proficient (P), Goal (G), and Advanced (A). These achievement levels are well understood throughout the state.

The SPI is calculated for each subject tested, and then the subject-specific SPIs are averaged. The SPI is calculated for each district, school, and subgroup based on all tested students. Districts, schools, and subgroups are credited in the following way:

- Students who score Below Basic (BB) = 0.0 points;
- Students who score Basic (B) = 0.25 points;
- Students who score Proficient (P) = 0.5 points;
- Students who score Goal (G) = 0.75 points; and
- Students who score Advanced (A) = 1.0 points.

The result is an index score ranging from 0 to 100, where 0 would indicate that all students scored in the Below Basic level and 100 would indicate that all students scored at the Advanced level.

Table 2.5 Calculating the SPI

	Level	Calculation
<b>Step 1</b>	Subject-specific SPI	$SPI_{\text{Subject}} = (\%BB * 0.0) + (\%B * 0.25) + (\%P * 0.50) + (\%G * 0.75) + (\%A * 1.00)$
<b>Step 2</b>	Aggregate SPI	<p>High schools:  <math>SPI = (SPI_{\text{Mathematics}} + SPI_{\text{Reading}} + SPI_{\text{Writing}} + SPI_{\text{Science}}) / 4</math></p> <p>Elementary/middle schools with grades in which science is tested:  <math>SPI = (SPI_{\text{Mathematics}} * 0.3) + (SPI_{\text{Reading}} * 0.3) + (SPI_{\text{Writing}} * 0.3) + (SPI_{\text{Science}} * 0.1)</math></p> <p>Elementary/middle schools with grades in which science is NOT tested:  <math>SPI = (SPI_{\text{Mathematics}} + SPI_{\text{Reading}} + SPI_{\text{Writing}}) / 3</math></p>

Note the two different calculations for elementary and middle schools. In grades 3 through 8, mathematics, reading, and writing are tested in all six grades, while science is tested in only two grades (grades 5 and 8). As a result, if science is tested in the school, mathematics, reading, and writing are each weighted at 0.3 and science is weighted at 0.1. The weighting is based on the relative number of grades in which each subject is tested, so there is a 3:1 ratio in the number of students tested in mathematics, reading, and writing compared to science. A relatively small number of schools—109 schools out of 798—do not have grade spans that include grades 5 or 8 where science is tested. For these schools, the school SPI is the average of the subject-specific SPIs for mathematics, reading, and writing.

Connecticut is committed to an accountability system that considers the performance of all students, including students with disabilities who take Connecticut’s modified and alternate assessments. To be evaluated on the state assessments, students with disabilities must have IEPs that specify that these modified or alternate assessments are appropriate. Students who score at the Proficient level or above on the modified or alternate assessment will be considered Proficient for purposes of the SPI, and the performance of students who score below Proficient will be considered Basic in the calculations.

The SPI will be calculated annually to provide a status measure of performance for schools and subgroups. The CSDE will use the SPI to compare changes in performance over time by calculating the difference in SPI values between consecutive years or over a period of several years.

The table below (Table 2.6) shows the average subgroup SPI in the 2010-2011 school year for Connecticut’s five traditionally underperforming subgroups and the “all students” group across schools with a sufficient number of students to meet the subgroup *n*-size requirement of 20. The student achievement data reveals clear differences in SPIs by subgroup. SPIs for black (52.7; 47.0), Hispanic (55.4; 50.0), and students eligible for free or reduced price lunch are

lower than those for the “all students” group (62.8; 58.2). The gap in achievement is even wider for students with disabilities and English language learners, who perform almost 30 SPI points lower than the “all students” group.

*Table 2.6 Connecticut 2010-2011 School Performance Indices by Subgroup*

	<b>Average School Performance Indices for Each Subgroup</b>			
	<b>CMT SPI</b>	<b>2010 # of students</b>	<b>CAPT SPI</b>	<b>2010 # of students</b>
<b>All Students</b>	62.8	250,599	58.2	42,821
<b>Black</b>	52.7	32,847	47.0	5,686
<b>Hispanic</b>	55.4	46,198	50.0	7,016
<b>Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch</b>	53.3	89,970	48.1	13,167
<b>English Language Learners</b>	35.9	13,053	32.3	1,770
<b>Students With Disabilities</b>	33.9	31,211	32.9	5,075

The CSDE’s goal is that all schools and subgroups will achieve an SPI of 75. By choosing an SPI of 75 as the target, Connecticut creates an accountability system that sets student achievement targets at Goal on state assessments. **This target represents a shift toward higher expectations: the NCLB system set student achievement targets at Proficient, which is a lower target on the state assessments.** If the CSDE set its target so that, on average, students were Proficient, then the goal SPI would equal 50.

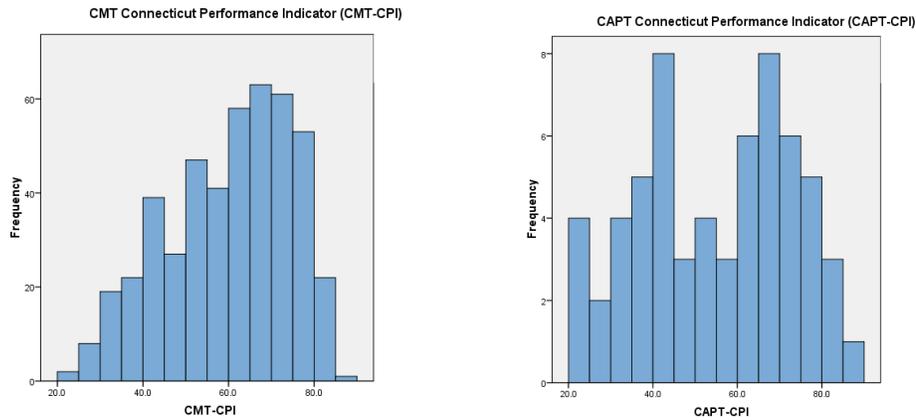
Scoring at or above Goal is a challenging yet reasonable expectation for Connecticut students. In 2010–11, 16% of high schools and 18% of elementary and middle schools achieved at or above this SPI level. Goal requires students to demonstrate extensive knowledge of grade-level content. In mathematics, for example, elementary and middle school students that take the CMT demonstrate well-developed conceptual understanding, computational skills, and problem-solving skills, as well as an ability to solve complex and abstract mathematical problems. For reading, these students scoring at Goal are likely to demonstrate the consistent ability to read and respond to grade-appropriate literary and informational texts with minimal assistance. Students at this level will also consistently use effective strategies before, during, and after reading to understand, interpret, and evaluate grade-appropriate text.

Furthermore, an independent study of Connecticut’s assessments confirms that students who score Goal on high school state tests (CAPT) are more likely to be college and career ready, as measured by SAT performance, remedial course-taking patterns in college, college GPA, and postsecondary degree attainment. A second study found that a student’s performance on the grade 8 state test (CMT) in each discipline highly correlates with grade 10 CAPT performance.

Setting the target at Goal standard at all grade levels represents an ambitious and appropriate target for Connecticut’s students.<sup>2</sup>

For the 2010–11 school year, the SPI was 65.8 for the CMT and 62.5 for the CAPT. The histograms below in figure 2.7 summarize the statewide SPI distribution in 2010–11.

Figure 2.7 Distribution of School SPI Performance in 2010–11



**2. Change in the SPI: Measuring Change in Performance at All Levels.** While the SPI is used to measure a school’s current level of student achievement, the change in SPI can be used to compare changes in performance over time by calculating the difference in SPI values between consecutive years or over a period of several years. The state will use a school’s average SPI score from the previous three years (ending in 2011–12) to establish the baseline, and will expect schools with SPIs lower than 75 to increase their SPIs over time. **The change in SPI measure gives schools credit for moving students across any of four thresholds: from Below Basic to Basic, from Basic to Proficient, from Proficient to Goal, or from Goal to Advanced.** Statewide, an increase of one point on the SPI between two consecutive school years represents a net gain of approximately 2,400 students increasing their performance by one level across the four performance bands.

The change in SPI measure allows the CSDE to see a more complete picture of how a school has moved its students across any of the four performance thresholds. Moreover, the SPI change measure avoids creating the inappropriate incentive to focus only on students who are on the cusp of proficiency and creates the more appropriate incentive to focus on students at all levels as schools work to increase the performance of all students to the ambitious Goal standard.

<sup>2</sup> Coelen, S., & Wilson, B. (2006, January 11). *First steps: An evaluation of the success of Connecticut students beyond high school*. Paper presented to the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Governors of Connecticut Department of Higher Education, Hartford, CT. Retrieved from [http://centerforeducationstrategies.org/site/pdf/CT\\_FirstStep.pdf](http://centerforeducationstrategies.org/site/pdf/CT_FirstStep.pdf); Coelen, S., Rende, S., & Fulton, D. (2008, April). *Next steps: Preparing a quality workforce*. Storrs, CT: Department of Economics and Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis, University of Connecticut. Retrieved from [http://ctmirror.org/sites/default/files/documents/08apr\\_NextSteps.pdf](http://ctmirror.org/sites/default/files/documents/08apr_NextSteps.pdf)

**Connecticut Student Achievement Goals.** By 2018, each school and district will achieve the following goals:

1. If the baseline SPI (average score from the previous three years ending in 2010–11) is below 75, it will reduce—by half—the gap between its baseline SPI and an SPI of 75 for all students and all subgroups.
2. If the baseline SPI is above 75, it will maintain an SPI above 75.
3. If the baseline SPI is less than 50, it will improve SPI growth by two points each year (ambitious, but achievable growth); this two-point goal is explained in detail below.

The CSDE will calculate the required annual change in the SPI by finding the difference between the baseline SPI and the goal SPI of 75, requiring enough growth each year so that if the school makes adequate progress, it will increase its SPI halfway to 75 by 2018.

However, the CSDE will modify its goal for the lowest-performing schools. An analysis of historical school growth shows that only 20% of all schools from the previous three years achieved average annual growth greater than two points per year on the SPI. Therefore, to make the state’s growth goals achievable for all schools, the CSDE has set the required growth at two points on the SPI for schools with an SPI below 50. This rule applies to schools with SPIs below 50 because to close their performance gaps by half, they would need to increase their SPIs by more than two points per year. The two-point SPI performance target is intended to provide a realistic, achievable annual goal for principals and teachers.

For example, school calculation scenarios include:

- If a school’s current SPI is 75, then it has already reached the target, so it receives full credit for change in the SPI as long as it maintains an SPI over 75.
- If a school’s current SPI for “all students” is 63, then the ultimate goal is to increase that number to 75. By 2018, the school’s goal is to move halfway to that target. This school will need to be on track to reach an SPI of 69 (a six-point increase) by 2018. Over six years, this means the school’s “all students” group must show a change of approximately one point on the SPI each year to receive full credit for this category.
- If a school’s current SPI for “all students” is 45, then the ultimate goal is to increase that number to 75. By 2018, the school’s goal is to move halfway to that target. This school will need to be on track to reach an SPI of 60 (a 15-point increase) by 2018. Over six years, this means the school’s “all students” group would need to show a change of 2.5 points on the SPI each year. The CSDE will require this school to increase performance by at least 2 SPI points per year, which it believes is a challenging but reasonable performance target.

For the 2010–11 school year, the SPI was 65.8 for the CMT and 62.5 for the CAPT. To make adequate growth—to reach halfway to 75 in six years—the SPI would have to grow each year by an average of 1.15 points on the CMT and 1.35 points on the CAPT. The CSDE believes that this target is achievable and that reaching it will indicate that the state is preparing more students for college and careers and closing its achievement gaps.

### Monitoring the Impact of the SPI to Ensure Focus on Low-Performing Students

In adopting the SPI and change in SPI measures as the foundation of the accountability system, the CSDE seeks to value increases in performance at all levels, but to encourage schools to focus most on the students who are the farthest behind. The CSDE recognizes, however, that a potential unintended consequence of the proposed weighting system (with equal 0.25 differences between each performance level) could be that it will encourage schools to focus on improving the achievement of the students who are the most responsive to intervention. In some instances, this may be the school's higher performing students. The CSDE will therefore conduct an impact study to evaluate how schools respond to the new accountability system. If the CSDE finds that schools are electing to focus resources on mid- or high- level students at the expense of the lowest performing, the Performance Team will consider making modifications to the SPI-based system of accountability. Specifically, the Performance Team will consider two modifications:

1. Changing the weighting of the levels of performance within the SPI calculation:

*Table 2.8 SPI Weighting – Proposed and Potential Future Modification*

	<b>Proposed Weighting</b>	<b>Potential Future Modification</b>
<b>Advanced</b>	1.0	1.0
<b>Goal</b>	0.75	0.80
<b>Proficient</b>	0.50	0.60
<b>Basic</b>	0.25	0.30
<b>Below Basic</b>	0	0

If the CSDE elects to change the weighting as shown in the table above, schools will get more credit for increasing the performance of low-performing students: moving a student from Below Basic to Basic or from Basic to Proficient will give the school 0.3 points of credit, whereas moving a student from Proficient to Goal or Goal to Advanced would give the school only 0.2 points of credit. As is described in Section 2.C, the CSDE will incorporate this approach for identifying “Schools of Distinction.”

2. Adding a performance target to supplement change in SPI that requires schools to reduce the percentage of students scoring at Below Basic and Basic each year.

This would provide a check to prevent schools from using high performing students to increase their overall SPIs at the expense of their lower performing students.

**3. Vertical Scale Growth: Measuring Individual Student Growth.** In focus groups with principals, superintendents, teachers, and organizations that represent students with disabilities, the CSDE was asked whether it is possible to use measures in the system of accountability that recognize students who make significant progress but fall short of moving from one testing level to another. They also asked for a measure that would compare an individual student's performance to the same student's performance in the previous year,

rather than measuring a school's performance in one year against the entire school's performance in the previous year.

Like these stakeholders, the CSDE wants its accountability system to recognize students who make significant growth regardless of whether they are able to cross a threshold into the next level. The CSDE will therefore use the vertical scale at the elementary and middle school levels to measure the progress schools have made in ensuring that students experience sufficient growth to put them on track to move up performance level within three years.

The CSDE's vertical scales were developed to measure changes in student performance across grades. A vertical scale can also be used to interpret growth for individual students, schools, or districts and for various subgroups (e.g., ethnicity, lunch status, special education). The vertical scales were developed through a linking study in 2007 and are available for the CMT mathematics and reading tests for grades 3 through 8.<sup>3</sup>

Each school will be assigned a School Success Rate, which combines the percentage of students who (1) score Below Basic but experience sufficient growth such that they are on track to achieve Basic within three years; (2) score Basic and experience sufficient growth such that they are on track to achieve Proficient within three years; (3) score Proficient and experience sufficient growth such that they are on track to achieve Goal within three years; and (4) score Goal or Advanced.

School calculation scenarios include:

- A school of 100 students, with all 100 students scoring at Goal or Advanced, would automatically receive a School Success Rate of 100%.
- A school of 100 students with 30 students scoring Goal or Advanced, 20 students who score Proficient, and 30 students at Basic, and 20 students who score Below Basic would have its School Success Rate measured in the following way:
  - Full credit for the 30 students scoring at Goal or Advanced.
  - Credit for any of the 20 students scoring at Below Basic who made enough vertical scale growth to meet their individualized target (which means— at the current growth trajectory—the student is on track to score at Basic within three years). Specifically, if all of the 20 students in this group met their individual growth targets, then the school would get credit for these 20 students.
  - Credit for any of the 30 students scoring at Basic who made enough vertical scale growth to meet their individualized target (which means— at the current growth trajectory—the student is on track to score at Proficient within three years). Specifically, if 20 of the 30 students in this group met their individual growth targets, then the school would get credit for these 20 students.

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<sup>3</sup> Sinclair, N., & Dirir, M. (2011, Feb.). *Research bulletin: The development of Connecticut's vertical scale and growth model*. Retrieved from [http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/assessment/cmt/resources/misc\\_cmt/VSR-ResearchBulletin-Feb2011.pdf](http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/assessment/cmt/resources/misc_cmt/VSR-ResearchBulletin-Feb2011.pdf)

- Credit for any of the 20 students scoring at Proficient who made enough vertical scale growth to meet their individualized target (i.e., at the current growth trajectory the student is on track to score at Goal within three years). Specifically, if 10 of the 20 students scoring at Proficient met their individual growth targets, then the school would get credit for each of these 10 students.
- In this example, the school received credit for its 30 students who scored Goal or Advanced, 20 students who scored Below Basic and met their individual growth targets, 20 students who scored Basic and met their individual growth targets, and 10 students who scored Proficient and met their individual growth targets. Because this school met its growth goal for 80 of its 100 students, its School Success Rate is 80%.

Growth for individual students from one year to another year is defined as [Vertical Scale Score Year 2] – [Vertical Scale Score Year 1]. Growth for groups of students from one year to another year is defined as [Mean Vertical Scale Score Year 2] – [Mean Vertical Scale Score Year 1]. The CSDE has not identified expected growth on the vertical scale. Vertical scales are not available for the CAPT because it is a single grade-level test. Additionally, no vertical scale relates CMT performance to CAPT performance.

The CSDE expects all schools to achieve School Success Rates of 80% or higher.

**4. Graduation and Dropout Rates.** Starting with the graduating class of 2010, the CSDE has used student-level data from the state’s public school information system to track an individual cohort of students from their initial entrance into ninth grade until they exited public schools or graduated from high school. This new methodology is based on the NCLB/ESEA four-year cohort graduation rate calculation rules. This methodology is more accurate than previous methods used for calculating the school, district, and state graduation rates and provides a uniform system across states for tracking and comparing student graduation rates.

The data indicates that for the 2010 cohort, 81.8% graduated in four years, 6.1% are still enrolled in high school, and 0.4% are non-completers who have received a certificate of attendance. Additionally, 11.7% of the 2010 cohort did not graduate, were not still enrolled, or did not receive a certificate of attendance. This group of students represents the state’s dropout population.

The graduation data reveals clear differences in subgroup four-year graduation rates (Table 2.9). Graduation rates for black (68.7%) and Hispanic (64.0%) students are far lower than those for white (88.7%) and Asian (88.8%) students. Economically disadvantaged students (62.7%) graduate at substantially lower rates than their more advantaged counterparts (88.4%). Similar patterns hold when ELLs (60.1%) are compared to students whose primary language is English (82.7%) and students with disabilities (62.5%) to their non-disabled peers (84.3%).

Table 2.9 Connecticut 2010 Cohort Graduation Rates by Subgroup

Category	2010 Cohort #	Graduates	Non-Graduates		
		Four-Year Graduation Rate	Still Enrolled	Non-Completers (Certificate of Attendance)	Dropout
<b>All Students</b>	44,461	81.8	6.1	0.4	11.7
<b>Hispanic</b>	6,917	64.0	11.4	0.5	24.1
<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	37,544	85.2	5.1	0.4	9.3
<b>Indian</b>	146	72.9	6.9	0.0	20.2
<b>Asian</b>	1,562	88.8	3.3	0.1	7.8
<b>Black</b>	6,431	68.7	10.5	1.2	19.6
<b>White</b>	29,405	88.7	4.0	0.2	7.1
<b>ELL</b>	1,938	60.1	11.0	0.0	28.9
<b>Non-ELL</b>	42,523	82.7	5.8	0.4	11.1
<b>Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch</b>	11,368	62.7	12.0	1.3	24.0
<b>Not Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch</b>	33,093	88.4	4.0	0.1	7.5
<b>Special Education</b>	5,091	62.5	21.3	0.8	15.4
<b>Non-Special Education</b>	39,370	84.3	4.0	0.4	11.3

Connecticut proposes to use the 2011 graduation rate as one of its indicators for initially classifying its lowest-performing high schools, which have rates at or below 60%. The CSDE will use two indicators for subsequent AMOs. For all students and subgroups, the CSDE will use the simple cohort graduation rate as well as the 1 – dropout rate. The CSDE proposes using the 1 – dropout rate calculation, which it calls the extended graduation rate, as an additional indicator of school performance because it believes that schools should be rewarded—not penalized—for giving students the opportunity to graduate after being enrolled for more than four years.

The CSDE’s goal is to increase the state’s extended graduation rate to 96% and cohort graduation rate to 94%. This accounts for the students who do not graduate in four years but remain enrolled in school.

**Connecticut Graduation Goals.** By 2018, each high school and district will achieve the following goals:

Four-year cohort graduation rates:

- 1) If the cohort graduation rate in 2011 is below 94%, it will reduce—by half—the gap between its 2011 cohort graduation rate and a cohort graduation rate of 94% for all students and all subgroups.
- 2) If the cohort graduation rate in 2011 is above 94%, it will maintain its cohort graduation rate above 94%.

Extended graduation rates:

- 1) If the extended graduation rate in 2011 is below 96%, it will reduce—by half—the gap between its 2011 cohort graduation rate and a cohort graduation rate of 96% for all students and all subgroups.
- 2) If the cohort graduation rate in 2011 is above 96%, it will maintain its cohort graduation rate above 96%.

In 2011, about 25% of Connecticut high schools achieved each of these ambitious graduation rates.

**5. Subgroup Performance.** The CSDE has chosen to focus on all the NCLB subgroups that have historically underperformed as compared to the “all students” group: African-American, Hispanic, ELLs, students eligible for free and reduced lunch, and students with disabilities. The CSDE will continue to monitor the performance of other subgroups and will incorporate them into the subgroup performance section if they begin to underperform.

The CSDE has elected to reduce the minimum threshold for school-level subgroup size ( $n$  size) included in accountability calculations from 40 under the NCLB Act to 20. This standard matches the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) standard and is the smallest threshold allowed in Connecticut; furthermore, it ensures the broadest viable reach of subgroup accountability. More specifically, this change in  $n$  size has substantially increased the number of schools that are accountable for subgroups. The number of schools accountable for black subgroups increased from 280 to 414, Hispanic from 356 to 548, students with disabilities from 276 to 683, ELLs from 97 to 209, and students eligible for free and reduced lunch from 757 to 928.

School subgroup performance targets will use the same major components of aggregate targets: the SPI, change in the SPI, vertical scale growth in elementary and middle schools, and cohort and extended graduation rates for high schools. Annual targets for each subgroup will be calculated in the same way as whole-school targets (described in the previous sections).

For example, to calculate the change in the SPI that will enable the subgroup to reduce its performance gap by half:

- If subgroup A had an SPI of 63 in 2011, subgroup performance would need to grow roughly one point annually to reach its target of 69 SPI by 2018.
- If subgroup B had an SPI of 50 in 2011, then the maximum required growth of two points per year would govern, and the subgroup performance would need to grow an average of two points annually to reach its target of 62 SPI by 2018.

A single school, then, will likely have different change in SPI targets for different subgroups—meeting subgroup AMOs will require that the school make the most progress for the subgroups with the lowest performance.

**English Language Learners (ELLs).** Currently, Connecticut schools are accountable for ELLs' scores on the CMT and CAPT after students have been enrolled for one year. However, research shows that ELLs take, on average, five to seven years to achieve language proficiency. For this reason, the CSDE believes that expecting students who have only been enrolled in English language classes for one year to achieve the Goal level on state tests is unreasonable. State organizations that represent ELLs have recommended that the CSDE alter its system of accountability for the ELL subgroup so that the targets are both ambitious and achievable. The CSDE is currently exploring options, including creating a system that weights student scores more heavily the more years they have been enrolled—giving ELL students full weight only in their fifth year and beyond, and for two years after they exit ELL status. The CSDE is aware that the U.S. Department of Education has approved a similar weighting system for language acquisition exams for ELLs under Title III accountability.

**Students with Disabilities.** In Connecticut, approximately 22% of all students with disabilities, ages 18 through 21, remain enrolled in public education even though they have completed the outlined course of study for receipt of a regular high school diploma within four years. These students continue their public school enrollment based on their IEP team's decision that the students should receive the transitional services necessary to assist them in moving on to college or the workforce. Using the four-year graduation rate for this subgroup would penalize schools that are appropriately providing educational programming for students who need more time to prepare for their postsecondary life. In focus group meetings with organizations that represent students with disabilities, these stakeholders emphasized that the four-year graduation rate would create incentives for schools to make unsound educational decisions about students with disabilities by encouraging schools to graduate students in fewer years than optimal. The CSDE agrees with these stakeholders that exclusively using the extended graduation rate for the students with disabilities subgroup will give schools the right incentives—students with disabilities should complete high school, but should not be forced to do so in less time. These students should have the option to take the full time that is appropriate for their individualized needs.

In addition, the CSDE will closely monitor the impact of the proposed system on students with disabilities. The CSDE is interested in exploring a refactoring of the primary SPI status level to match the group's empirically lower performance. Alternately, the CSDE might explore creating different targets for students with disabilities at the lowest level of proficiency; empirically,

these students face much greater difficulty in achieving proficiency. Finally, the CSDE might explore changing the required performance targets for this subgroup across the different classification categories. The CSDE is committed to continuously striving to build a system—with input from educators and other stakeholders—that sets realistic demands on schools without creating unattainable or imprudent goals.

**6. Participation Rate.** The CSDE expects schools to test at least 95% of their student population. In the past school year, 98% of Connecticut schools met this standard. Schools that do not meet this standard are expected to meet the standard the subsequent year. Missing this target will also result in a lower classification (see the following section for more detail).

### **School Classification System**

The CSDE will classify Connecticut schools into five categories based on their performance on the five accountability indicators. See table 2.10 on the next page for more details. Each category of schools will receive a different level of intervention and support. See section 2.F for more details about the differentiated monitoring, support, and intervention.

Table 2.10 CSDE School Classification System

Category	Description	Degree of Intervention
★★★★★	<b>Excelling</b> Schools that have achieved state targets for achievement (SPI), growth (vertical scale), and graduation rates for all students; these schools do not have significant gaps in performance for the majority of their subgroups	Self-assessment tool and information available as resources to enable schools to drive own improvement
★★★★	<b>Progressing</b> Schools that achieved the state target for achievement (SPI) for all students but (1) missed their targets for growth (vertical scale) or graduation rates or (2) have significant gaps in performance for the majority of subgroups AND Schools that are approaching the state target for achievement (SPI) for all students and also met targets for change in the SPI, growth (vertical scale), and graduation rates for all students and that do not have significant gaps in performance for the majority of their subgroups	Self-assessment required; no School Improvement Plan (SIP) necessary
★★★	<b>Transition</b> Schools that are approaching the state target for achievement (SPI) but miss one or more of the following targets: change in the SPI, growth (vertical scale), graduation rate, or have significant gaps in performance for the majority of their subgroups	Self-assessment required; used to create SIP, which must be approved by district
★★	<b>Review (including Focus Schools)</b> Schools with low aggregate achievement (SPI below 50) AND Schools identified as Focus Schools AND Schools with a participation rate under 95%	District must conduct a school needs assessment; district, and school develop SIP; must be approved by local school board and state Turnaround Team
★	<b>Turnaround</b> Schools with among the 5% lowest achievement (SPI) in the state and high schools with graduation rates below 60%	Districts and Turnaround Team implement aggressive turnaround interventions

Table 2.11 summarizes the criteria for each category of schools. See the description that follows for more information.

*Table 2.11 CSDE School Classification Criteria*

	<b>Excelling</b>	<b>Progressing</b>		<b>Transitioning</b>		<b>Review*</b>	<b>Turnaround*</b>
<b>Participation</b>	95% or above	95% or above		95% or above		Below 95%	N/A
<b>Focus Status</b>	Not Focus	Not Focus		Not Focus		Focus	
<b>SPI</b>	75 or above	75 or above	50–75	50–75		Below 50	Lowest 5%
<b>SPI Change</b>	N/A	N/A	Meets target	Meets target	Misses target	N/A	N/A
<b>Growth</b>	80% or above	Misses one or more of the Excelling criteria	80% or above	Misses one or more of the Progressing criteria	N/A		
<b>Four Year Graduation Rate</b>	94% or above		90% or above				Under 60%
<b>Extended Rate</b>	96% or above		93% or above			N/A	
<b>Subgroup Performance</b>	Gaps between majority of subgroups and aggregate do not exceed 25	Gaps between majority of subgroups and aggregate do not exceed 25					

*\*For these categories of schools, schools that meet any of the criteria are automatically classified in the category.*

**Excelling Schools.** This classification is reserved for schools that exhibit high performance across several categories. Based on data from the 2010–11 school year, 85 schools would be classified as Excelling.

**Participation Rate for State Assessments.** Excelling elementary, middle (CMT), and high schools (CAPT) must meet a 95% participation rate. The NCLB Act requires at least 95% student participation for every school. The new classification system carries forward the importance of participation in determining the extent of a school’s success. This standard provides an ambitious goal of near-universal test participation rates and is consistently achieved by the majority of Connecticut schools.

**Focus Status.** Schools identified as Focus Schools for the low performance of their subgroups (see section 2.E for more details) cannot be classified as Excelling Schools. Schools identified as Focus Schools will automatically be classified as Review Schools.

**The SPI.** Excelling Schools must maintain an SPI of at least 75. This is ambitious in that it indicates that an Excelling School’s students, when aggregated, have achieved at Goal or higher. In 2010–11, 16% of high schools and 18% of elementary and middle schools achieved at or above this SPI level.

**SPI Change.** Because Excelling Schools have already reached the state target, which indicates college and career readiness, they are not required to meet any SPI change requirements as long as they maintain an SPI above 75. The CSDE encourages these schools to allocate their resources to set and meet other goals for their students. It wants these Excelling Schools to have the autonomy to focus on improving other indicators of school success, which—though they currently fall outside the accountability system—are nonetheless important for ensuring all students are college and career ready. These indicators include success in Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, performance on the ACT and SAT, and enrollment in college level courses. By freeing these schools from SPI change, AMOs, and comparing Excelling Schools to each other—their peer schools—for each of these indicators, the CSDE will give these schools the information and autonomy they need to drive their own improvement. We will continue to explore accountability mechanisms that will create incentives for continuous improvement in our highest performing schools so that they aspire for higher student achievement.

**Individual Growth Targets (Elementary and Middle Schools).** The CSDE expects an Excelling School to meet 80% of its individual growth targets for elementary and middle school students. The 80% growth target is ambitious because it requires most of the student population to perform at or above Goal or to be on track to achieve Proficient or Goal within three years. It is achievable because a significant percentage—39% in the past school year—of Connecticut schools met or exceeded this growth target.

**Graduation Rates (High Schools).** The CSDE finds value in considering both the four-year cohort rate (referred to as “cohort” throughout this section) and the 1 – dropout rate (referred to as “extended” throughout this section). The cohort rate determines whether a student graduated with the cohort of students who entered ninth grade at the same time. As previously discussed, the CSDE now tracks an individual cohort of students from their initial entrance into ninth grade until they exit public schools or graduate from high school, using student-level data from the state’s public school information system. The CSDE requires that Excelling high schools graduate 94% of students under the cohort calculation and 96% under the extended calculation. These targets ambitiously require near-universal graduation rates. In 2011, approximately 25% of schools achieved each of these ambitious graduation rates.

**Subgroup Criteria (All Schools).** To achieve Excelling status, schools must ensure that their aggregate performance extends to a majority of groups of students, including ELLs, students with disabilities, Hispanic students, black students, and students eligible for free and reduced lunch.

Therefore, schools with large within-school gaps for subgroups are excluded from the Excelling category. If the difference in the SPI between the “all students” group and a majority of these historically underperforming subgroups exceeds 25 points, then the school is excluded from the Excelling category. A gap size of 25 would indicate that the gap between the subgroup and the “all students” group is greater than the size of a testing level on the CMT or CAPT. In 2011, 127 of the 212 schools with an SPI above 75 would be excluded because of their large within-school performance gaps.

The CSDE may deny Excelling categorization to schools that exhibit chronic underperformance for a single subgroup, even if the school’s gaps are smaller than 25 points for the majority of subgroups. If a school’s performance for students within a particular subgroup is chronically low performing as compared to the aggregate, the CSDE will conduct a more detailed inquiry. Mitigating circumstances may explain lower performance and lack of growth in isolated cases, but the CSDE may elect to reclassify schools as Progressing if they fail to make gains within their low-performing subgroups.

The CSDE will also examine the impact of the subgroup accountability criteria on school performance; the CSDE’s intent is to gradually raise the bar on subgroup performance at the Excelling level based on data-driven examinations of the impact of the new system.

**Progressing Schools.** Connecticut awards Progressing classification to two broad subcategories of schools: those with (1) SPIs above 75 (referred to as “Excelling SPI” in this section) that fail to meet other Excelling criteria or (2) SPIs between 50 and 75 (referred to as “Progressing SPI” in this section) that achieve all other Progressing criteria outcomes. Progressing Schools have not achieved the top-level classification but do not require the aggressive interventions necessary for Review and Turnaround Schools.

**Participation Rate for State Assessments.** Like Excelling Schools, Progressing elementary, middle (CMT), and high schools (CAPT) must meet a 95% participation rate. The NCLB Act requires at least 95% student participation for every school.

**Focus Status.** Schools identified as Focus Schools cannot be classified as Progressing Schools. Schools identified as Focus Schools will automatically be classified as Review Schools.

**The SPI.** Progressing Schools must maintain an SPI of at least 50. This SPI indicates that students, on average, score at the Proficient level. It is a provisional step that indicates that, in the aggregate, schools are expected to be Proficient even as they work toward Excelling status.

**SPI Change.** Progressing Schools are required to meet individualized SPI change requirements. The requirement is for an annual increment that will result in halving the deficit between the school's baseline and the 75 SPI goal in six years. For example, a school with a baseline SPI of 50 (the lowest possible SPI for Progressing and Transition Schools) would need to increase its SPI by two points each year. If an Progressing SPI School fails to meet this target, it is automatically designated a Transition School.

**Individual Growth Targets (Elementary and Middle Schools).** The CSDE expects an Progressing School to meet 80% of its individual growth targets for elementary and middle school students in accordance with the reasoning laid out in the Excelling section above. If an Progressing SPI School fails to meet this target, it is automatically designated a Transition School.

**Graduation Rates (High Schools).** The CSDE requires that Progressing high schools graduate 93% of students under the extended calculation and 90% under the cohort calculation. These cutoffs are the respective medians for Connecticut high schools; an Progressing SPI School that does not have graduation rates above these standards is automatically designated a Transition School.

**Subgroup Criteria (All Schools).** For a school to be classified as Progressing, a majority of its subgroups (recall that subgroups have a minimum  $n$  size of 20) cannot have significant within-school gaps when compared to the "all students" group. If the difference in the SPI between the "all students" group and a majority of these historically underperforming subgroups exceeds 25 points, then the school is excluded from the Progressing category and will be designated a Transition School. The CSDE may deny Progressing categorization to schools that exhibit chronic underperformance for a particular subgroup, even if the gaps for the majority of subgroups are not significant. The CSDE's intent is to gradually raise the bar on subgroup performance based on a data-driven examination of the impact of the new system.

**Transition Schools.** Connecticut awards Transition classification to schools that meet the Progressing SPI criteria but fail to meet one of the Progressing sub-criteria (SPI change, individual growth targets, graduation rates, or subgroup performance) described in the Progressing Schools section.

**Participation Rate for State Assessments.** Transitioning elementary, middle (CMT), and high schools (CAPT) must meet a 95% participation rate.

**Focus Status.** Schools identified as Focus Schools cannot be classified as Transition schools. Schools identified as Focus Schools will automatically be classified as Review Schools.

**Review Schools.** Any school with a participation rate under 95%, an SPI below 50, or that has been identified as a Focus Schools will be classified as a Review School.

**Turnaround Schools.** Schools with the lowest SPIs are designated as Turnaround Schools. In addition, any high school with a graduation rate under 60% is designated as a Turnaround School. Finally, all Tier II and III SIG schools are Turnaround Schools.

### **School Classification and Performance Targets**

Connecticut's proposed accountability system speaks to schools and students at all levels of performance. While we believe that these accountability goals must be ambitious, we are equally committed to ensuring that the performance targets we set for schools and districts are achievable. For this reason, whenever possible, we have set our performance targets for each category of schools at a level that about 20-25% of schools in that category have achieved historically.

*Table 2.12 School Performance Targets by CSDE Classification*

<b>School Type</b>	<b>Performance Targets</b>
Excelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an SPI above 75</li> <li>• 80% School Success Rate</li> <li>• Maintain cohort graduation rate of 94% or higher</li> <li>• Maintain extended graduation rates of 96% or higher</li> </ul>
Progressing/ Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the SPI by an annual increment such that the difference between the current SPI and an SPI of 75 is reduced by half by 2018</li> <li>• 80% School Success Rate</li> <li>• Increase cohort graduation rate by annual increment such that the difference between current cohort graduation rate and a graduation rate of 94% is reduced by half by 2018</li> <li>• Increase extended graduation rate by annual increments such that the difference between current extended graduation rate and an extended graduation rate of 96% is reduced by half by 2018</li> </ul>
Review/ Turnaround	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the SPI by two points</li> <li>• 80% School Success Rate</li> <li>• Increase cohort graduation rate by annual increment such that the difference between current cohort graduation rate and a cohort graduation rate of 94% is cut in half by 2018</li> <li>• Increase extended graduation rate by annual increment such that the difference between current extended graduation rate and an extended graduation rate of 96% is cut in half by 2018</li> </ul>

### **School Performance Reports**

The CSDE believes that schools and districts need a wide array of information to begin the process of improvement. The Performance Team will facilitate the examination of data by presenting schools with clear information about key aspects of their performance. The CSDE is committed to developing data-rich school- and district-level performance reports and analytical tools that support all participants in the public school system as they work towards improving student outcomes.

Connecticut schools will receive annual performance reports that provide information about its performance targets, and the school's performance relative to other district schools, schools across the state, and "peer" schools that serve similar populations of students. These performance reports may be incorporated in the state's current strategic school profiles.

These reports will include the core performance metrics used for accountability (the SPI, change in the SPI, vertical scale growth, and graduation rates), but they will also include other indicators of school performance, including college and career readiness along with school climate that paint a more robust picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

While these reports have not yet been developed, the CSDE will ensure that they include a broad spectrum of indicators, potentially including student and teacher attendance, disciplinary actions, AP and end-of-course exam scores, and college entrance and completion rates—all reported in the aggregate and disaggregated by subgroup.

CSDE is also interested in assessing the viability of other types of data in its accountability reporting system to better leverage our student-level longitudinal data system. Additional forms of data that are of interest to the CSDE include Early Warning metrics, College and Career tools, and customized recommendations for teacher or parent action.

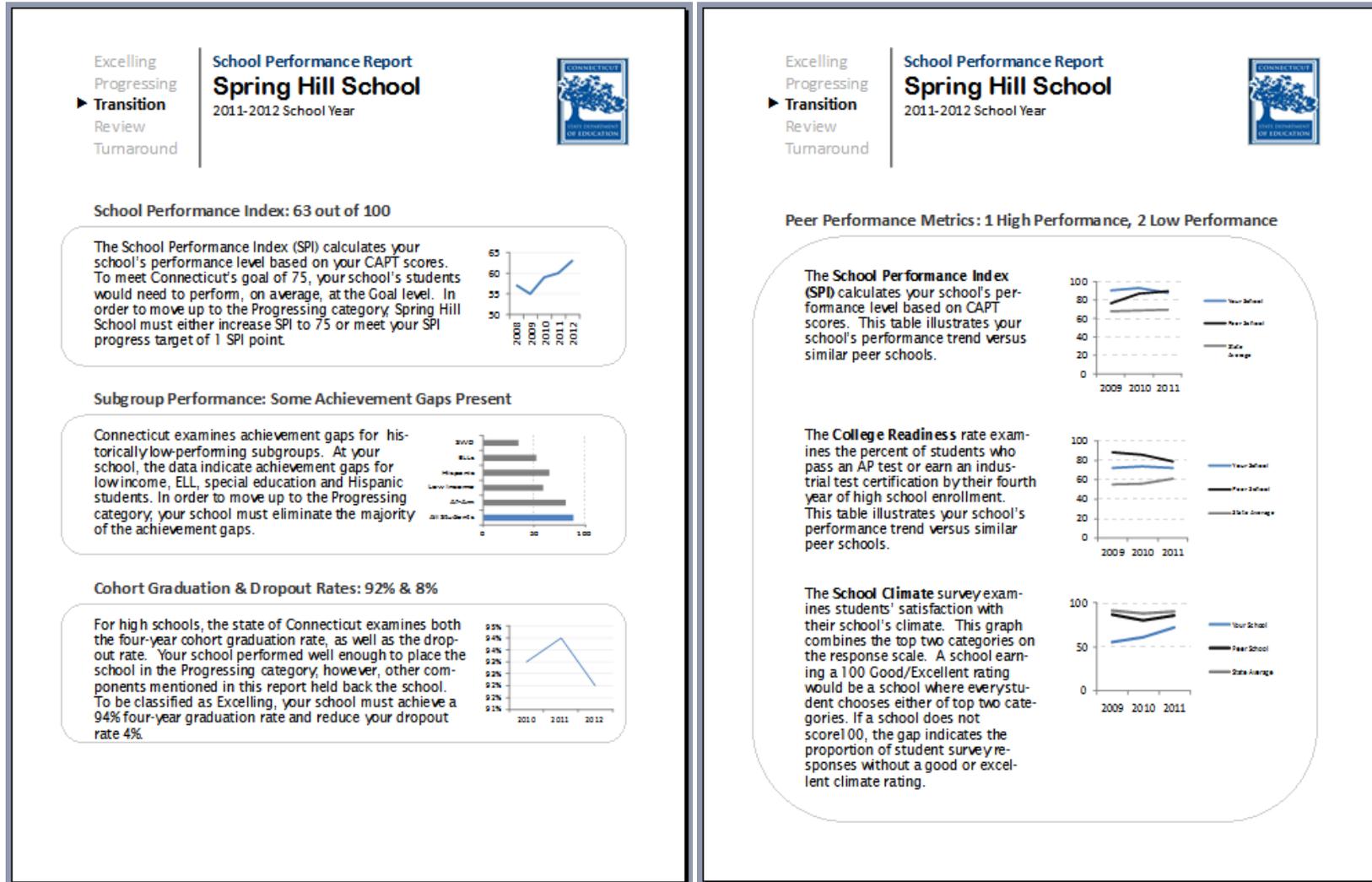
Below is a sample report that provides this data with a combination of explanatory narratives and data visualizations to provide a concrete example of the CSDE's principles as it refreshes its report designs and reporting tools. The first page focuses on AMOs, while the second page includes a peer comparison based on some of the additional metrics under consideration. Core principles driving the CSDE's examination of its reporting tools are:

- 1) Providing a single, high profile website through which educators, policymakers, and parents can engage, but that provides a customized experience;
- 2) Providing meaningful information that inspires action;
- 3) Recognizing the different information needs of the diverse stakeholders, from principals to parents.
- 4) Incorporating established best practices in information architecture, visualization, and interface design

As the CSDE re-examines its reporting designs and tools, it will focus on making the nuances of the accountability and intervention systems more clear and coherent for users of the reporting

system. The CSDE will aim to incrementally transform its existing reporting system into a model system based on the best practices learned from other states across the nation (e.g. Colorado’s SchoolView, Massachusetts) as well as standout district systems (Maryland’s Montgomery and Prince George’s County), along with leading expertise from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) (e.g., the Dell Foundation). As the CSDE develops its reports, it will seek feedback from educators, parents, principals, superintendents, and other key stakeholders. For Connecticut’s 2010-2011 NCLB State Report Card and an example of a current school AYP report, see **Appendices 2.1 and 2.2.**

Figure 2.13 CSDE Performance Report Prototype



## **District Goals and Accountability**

The district goals and measures of success will be aligned with the school goals and measures of success. A District Performance Index (DPI) will be calculated in the same way as the SPI.

The CMT DPI is calculated in the same manner as the SPI, but the DPI accounts for students with disabilities who attend outplacement facilities. The CSDE has already used this CMT DPI to calculate the lowest-performing 30 districts and to identify them as Alliance Districts. These Alliance Districts are the subject of proposed legislation described in more detail in later sections.

Like the SPI, the DPI uses the current state tests and achievement levels that are well understood throughout the state to credit districts for their students' movement over time to higher levels of achievement.

The DPI is calculated as shown in Table 2.14.

*Table 2.14 Calculating the DPI*

	<b>Level</b>	<b>Calculation</b>
<b>Step 1</b>	Subject-specific DPI	$DPI_{\text{Subject}} = (\%BB * 0.0) + (\%B * 0.25) + (\%P * 0.50) + (\%G * 0.75) + (\%A * 1.00)$
<b>Step 2</b>	Aggregate DPI	<p>Elementary and middle schools:  <math>DPI = (0.3 * DPI_{\text{Mathematics}}) + (0.3 * DPI_{\text{Reading}}) + (0.3 * DPI_{\text{Writing}}) + (0.1 * DPI_{\text{Science}})</math></p> <p>High schools:  <math>DPI = (DPI_{\text{Mathematics}} + DPI_{\text{Reading}} + DPI_{\text{Writing}} + DPI_{\text{Science}}) / 4</math></p>

The district accountability system moves Connecticut forward by considering more subjects and holding districts accountable for all students for which they are responsible, including out-placed students with disabilities.

## **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.

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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.C.1)** Did the SEA describe its 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 is instead, *e.g.*, based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA 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?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.C.2)** Did the SEA’s request identify both highest-performing and high-progress schools as part of its first set of identified reward schools? (Table 2)

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.C.3)** Are the recognition and, if applicable rewards proposed by the SEA for its highest-performing and high-progress schools likely to be considered meaningful by the schools?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.C.4)** Has the SEA consulted with LEAs and schools in designing its recognition and, where applicable, rewards?

### **Schools of Distinction**

As described above, the proposed Accountability Performance Targets encourage schools to improve the performance of all students and are set at levels that past performance suggests are reasonable. However, the CSDE believes that we should go beyond these achievable accountability targets in order to signal and drive the level of transformation Connecticut students – especially the lowest-performing—deserve.

The CSDE will reserve “School of Distinction” recognition for schools that do more than meet challenging targets; these schools challenge notions of what we currently believe to be possible. The CSDE will therefore recognize as “Schools of Distinction” schools that defy expectations in one of three ways:

1. By achieving the highest levels of performance with traditionally underperforming subgroups of students;
2. By increasing the performance of students – especially the students who are most behind – by substantially more than the accountability system requires; or
3. By driving the growth of their low-performing students at rates that put them on a trajectory to move two performance bands within six years.

#### ***1. Highest Performing Subgroups***

The CSDE will recognize as “High Subgroup Performance Schools of Distinction” Title I or Title I-eligible schools with the highest subgroup performance. As indicated previously, 20 students is

the minimum threshold for school-level subgroup size ( $n$  size) to be included in subgroup calculations.

Specifically, the CSDE will recognize Title I or Title I-eligible schools that meet **one** the following five criteria:

- Highest SPIs in the state for the subgroup of students with disabilities
- Highest SPIs in the state for the subgroup of English language
- Highest SPIs in the state for the subgroup of Black students
- Highest SPIs in the state for the subgroup of Hispanic students
- Highest SPIs in the state for the subgroup of students eligible for free and reduced lunch

### 2. *Highest Progress*

The CSDE will recognize as “Highest Progress Schools of Distinction” any Title I or Title I-eligible schools that meet **all** of the following three criteria:

- Increase in the SPI that is among the top 10% and is greater than 2 SPI points; and
- Historically underperforming subgroups – ELLs, special education, free and reduced lunch, African-American, and Hispanic –have an SPI that is no more than 25 points lower than the “all students” group

Because the CSDE wants to encourage schools to focus most on the students who are farthest behind, we will adjust the weighting system for the Schools of Distinction SPI, so that increases for the lowest performers are valued more.

Specifically, the CSDE will use the following methodology:

*Table 2.15 SPI Weighting for Accountability and Schools of Distinction*

	<b><i>Effective Weighting under NCLB</i></b>	<b><i>Weighting under Accountability SPI</i></b>	<b><i>Weighting under Schools of Distinction SPI</i></b>
<b>Advanced</b>	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Goal</b>	1.0	0.75	0.8
<b>Proficient</b>	1.0	0.50	0.6
<b>Below Basic</b>	0	0.25	0.3
<b>Basic</b>	0	0	0.0

This adjusted “Schools of Distinction” SPI is meant to place greater value on increasing the achievement of students who are the lowest performing.

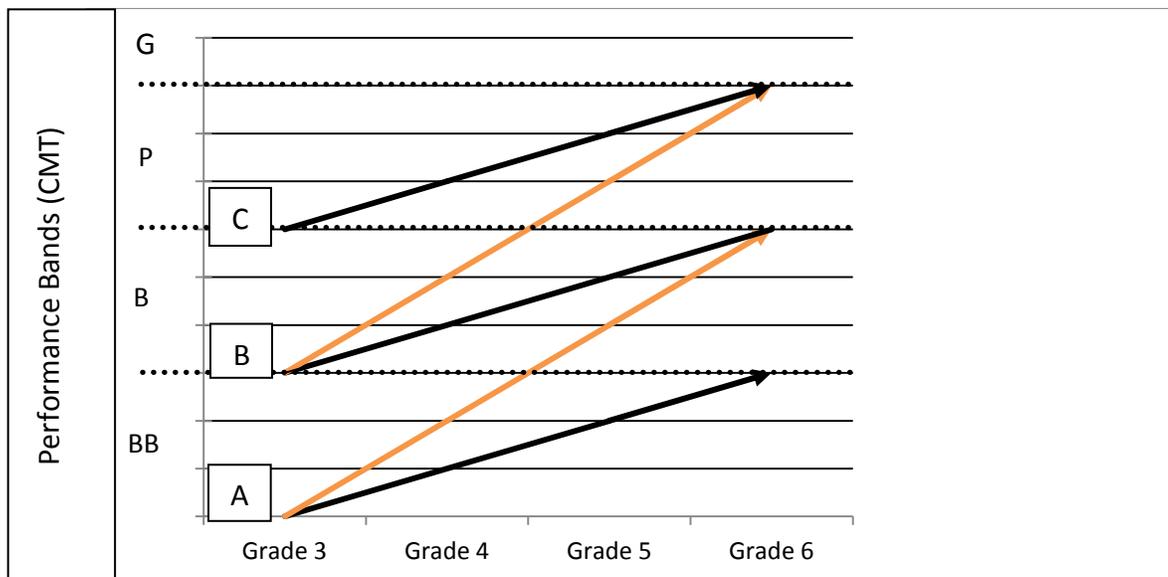
### 3. *Highest Growth*

The CSDE will recognize as “Highest Growth Schools of Distinction” the Title I or Title I-eligible schools that have the highest Aspirational School Success Rates for students. The Accountability School Success Rate measures the percentage of students who have already achieved Goal or Advanced or who are on track to move up one performance band within three years. This School Success Rate captures the performance and growth of all students and requires that

they meet reasonable targets. The Aspirational School Success Rate, in contrast, only recognizes schools that make dramatic gains with their lowest performing students.

The graph below shows three students – A, B, and C – as they progress from third to sixth grade. Under the accountability system (see black lines), students A, B, and C are expected to grow enough each year to put them on track to increase by one performance level within three years: student A must be on track to reach Basic, student B must be on track to reach Proficient, and student C must be on track to reach Goal. However, the aspirational targets for students A and B (see orange lines) are far more ambitious. To reach their aspirational targets, students A and B must grow enough each year to put them on track to increase by two performance levels within three years: student A must be on track to reach Proficient and student B must be on track to reach Goal.

*Table 2.16: School Success on the Vertical Scale: Accountability and Aspirational Targets*



We will recognize schools with the highest Aspirational Student Success Rates as “Radical Growth Schools of Distinction.”

**Annual Recognition.** The CSDE will recognize the highest performers in each category annually. Specifically, the CSDE will work with RESCs will provide a platform for highlighting Reward Schools in publications and online resources and will give Reward Schools the opportunity to share best practices by coordinating staff development opportunities with other schools throughout the state.

**Distinction for Sustained Progress.** In addition to annually recognizing Reward Schools, the CSDE will award grants to schools that demonstrate the greatest sustained performance, progress, and growth over a period of three years. Specifically, the CSDE will award these schools with grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$250,000. These awards may be funded with repurposed state funds or with a portion of the state’s increase in federal Title I, Part A funds (authorized by ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A)). The CSDE may decide to increase the frequency of the grants if funding resources permit.

Schools can elect to use these grants for programs or strategies aimed toward increasing student achievement or enrichment opportunities for students. The grants will be coupled with the responsibility to participate in a partnership with low-performing schools to share and promote effective practices. RESCs will work with grant awardees to arrange partnerships with low-performing schools within their respective RESC regions.

Additionally, teachers and principals at each of these schools will have the option to nominate a teacher or administrator who has made a substantial contribution to the school’s progress for a yearlong sabbatical. During this year, the chosen educator would be deployed by the state Turnaround Team to share effective practices with other schools in the Commissioner’s Network (described in later sections).

The CSDE has consulted with stakeholders to determine the most meaningful recognition and rewards for schools, and this feedback helped with the design of the program. Originally, the CSDE had anticipated providing a conference to highlight effective practices in these schools, but feedback the CSDE received led to the creation of the partnership between Reward, Focus, and Turnaround Schools. Other feedback indicated that groups believed that money given to the Reward Schools should be used at the discretion of the schools and not for a specific state-required initiative.

## 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.

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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.1)** Did the SEA describe its 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 is instead, *e.g.*, based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA 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?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.2)** Does the SEA’s request include a list of its priority schools?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.3)** Did the SEA identify a number of priority schools equal to at least five percent of its Title I schools?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.4)** Did the SEA’s methodology result in the identification of priority schools that are —

- (i) among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the achievement of the “all students” group in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, combined, and have demonstrated a lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the “all students” group;
- (ii) Title I-participating or Title I-eligible high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years; or
- (iii) Tier I or Tier II schools under the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program that are using SIG funds to fully implement a school intervention model?

### **Identifying Turnaround Schools**

The Title I or Title I-eligible schools with the lowest SPIs for “all students” will be identified as Turnaround Schools. Additionally, any Title I or Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate lower than 60% will automatically be included as a Turnaround School. Finally, any school that is presently a SIG Tier I or Tier II school will be identified as a Turnaround School.

### **The Commissioner’s Network**

The CSDE will ensure that Turnaround Schools receive necessary interventions or supports in one of three ways:

1. Continued SIG interventions;
2. District-administered Commissioner’s Network interventions; and
3. Network-administered Commissioner’s Network interventions.

To address the challenges faced by Connecticut’s chronically low-performing schools and districts, the CSDE, in partnership with the Governor’s office and the General Assembly, plans to create the Commissioner’s Network—a system of state supports and interventions designed to

improve chronically low-performing schools. Pending legislative approval, anticipated May 2012, the Network will represent the combined efforts of the state and the community to focus on enhancing teacher supports while reducing bureaucratic obstacles. The Network will serve as a vehicle for innovative initiatives, a platform for the sharing of effective practices, and a model for other schools and districts throughout the state.

Schools will be selected for the Network based on low student achievement and lack of progress. However, schools with mitigating circumstances—including schools designed to serve special student populations and schools currently in the midst of intensive interventions—will be given special consideration before being selected for the Network. Because the state is currently overseeing intensive interventions in SIG schools, the state will refrain from mandating additional interventions in these schools until the turnaround phase is complete. At that point, the SIG schools will be reevaluated. Any SIG school that still falls below the Turnaround Schools' report card threshold will then become eligible for the Network.

The CSDE's Turnaround Team, led by our newly-created office of the Chief Turnaround Officer (CTO), will lead the design and administration of intervention and support strategies in the Commissioner's Network. This office will seek out effective practices from within the state and across the country and will work to promote high-quality school models in the Network.

If the proposed legislation is successful, approximately \$24.8 million in new turnaround funding provided by legislative appropriation will support the Commissioner's Network. The additional funding will provide each school with one-time start-up costs and will provide the schools' educators with additional training, resources, and increased compensation. Up to 25 schools will join the Network in the next two years. A subset of these schools will join the Network this fall; additional schools will join as the Turnaround Team builds its capacity to intervene in more schools in later years.

The Commissioner's Network provides the capacity for two levels of state intervention: state-administered Network Schools and district-administered Network Schools. The governing body of the Network Schools—either local or state—will control the school budget, including all federal, state, and local funds.

The CSDE will consider several factors when determining how struggling schools should be governed during their turnaround phase, including home districts' overall capacity, track record of improvement, and the number of low-performing schools in the district. In some cases, home districts will lead the turnaround efforts in partnership with the state's Turnaround Team. These schools may retain district governance, with the CSDE providing resources, flexibility, and support for turnaround strategies spelled out in agreements with the local district. For schools whose home districts are experiencing lagging performance or lower capacity, among other factors, the CSDE may exercise the authority to serve as a temporary trustee and administer turnaround strategies directly. The goal will be to lift the performance of these schools and return them to local district governance within a few years.

Network school operators may include universities, SERC, RESCs, nonprofits, charter management organizations, CommPACT (Community, Parents, Administrators Children, and Teachers, a Connecticut school model that emphasizes collective effort and autonomy), and other providers or partners with proven track records of success. All operators will enter into management agreements with the School Turnaround Office that, among other features, specify student achievement and retention goals and terms and may phase in the turnaround’s implementation over time. In some cases, the Network may phase in interventions in Turnaround Schools, beginning with a single or a few grade levels and expanding over time to transform the entire school.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.5)** Are the interventions that the SEA described aligned with the turnaround principles and are they likely to result in dramatic, systemic change in priority schools?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.6)** Do the SEA’s interventions include all of the following?

(i) 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;

(ii) 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;

(iii) redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;

(iv) 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;

(v) using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;

(vi) 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

(vii) providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.7)** Are the identified interventions to be implemented in priority schools likely to —

- (i) increase the quality of instruction in priority schools;
- (ii) improve the effectiveness of the leadership and the teaching in these schools; and
- (iii) improve student achievement and, where applicable, graduation rates for all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest-achieving students?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.8)** Has the SEA indicated that it will ensure that each of its priority schools implements the selected intervention for at least three years?

### **Interventions in School Improvement Grant (SIG) Schools**

The 19 schools currently identified as SIG schools are automatically classified as Turnaround Schools, and the Turnaround Office will continue implementing and monitoring these interventions, which are consistent with the turnaround principles outlined in the flexibility guidance.

A CSDE staff member works closely with SIG school staff to address implementation issues, support data teams, conduct walk-throughs, and engage in problem solving with leaders. The CSDE has developed a monitoring procedure with separate monitoring guides for restart, turnaround, and transformation models. The CSDE staff uses this tool to identify needs and leverage resources to help schools. During the on-site monthly monitoring meetings, the CSDE staff ensures that SIG schools have embedded professional development, common planning time for collaboration, use of data to drive decision making, instructional practices that are effective, and a sense of urgency.

Furthermore, the CSDE’s technical assistance to SIG schools includes district involvement. The CSDE staff plays a critical role in acting as an intermediary between schools and districts. Districts are required to give SIG schools authority for budgeting and staffing. SIG schools often experience the greatest challenges in making prioritized, strategic choices and in sustaining reform efforts. The CSDE addresses these challenges through the monthly monitoring and meetings of the SIG External Advisory Council, which bring together districts, schools, and consultants to solve problems and share effective practices.

### **Interventions in Commissioner’s Network Schools**

Lessons learned from SIG schools will, in part, guide the CSDE’s planning and work with the Turnaround Schools in the Commissioner’s Network. The CTO and team will lead the turnaround effort in the Commissioner’s Network Schools, including both district-administered schools and state-administered schools. This will require the reform efforts described below.

**1. Diagnosis.** The CSDE, using data provided by the Chief Performance Officer’s research team and the comprehensive assessment tool adopted by the Turnaround Team, will conduct a needs assessment at the school to determine areas of strength and challenge. After consulting

with stakeholders, including parents and members of the community, the CSDE will customize an intervention design. The goal of the needs analysis and intervention design is to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to school reform and instead provide differentiated support based on school needs and grade level. This stage will include data analysis using detailed reports generated by the state’s Performance Team and an on-site assessment conducted by the Turnaround Team that examines the following key elements of school success: student achievement; quality of instruction (including teaching, professional development, and curriculum alignment to standards); assessment and the use of data; school climate; leadership and management; and partnerships with parents and the community.

**2. Strong Leadership.** The Turnaround Team will then evaluate the current school leadership and take such steps as may be necessary, including leadership coaching and management training, transitioning out, and separation from service. The turnaround principal will have sufficient operational flexibility—including staffing, school calendar, budgeting, and general operations—to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates. The CSDE will also screen and assist in the selection of providers and partners for select schools. A critical component of their work will be to recruit and develop turnaround leaders.

**3. Effective Teachers.** A key component of the Commissioner’s Network will be a platform of transformative talent policies. Network Schools will innovate in the area of compensation to attract, retain, support, and advance the most talented teachers and leaders—professionals who can help create a new achievement-focused culture in their schools. These schools will offer increased compensation to attract talented professionals. Proposed legislation contemplates employment mechanisms such as mutual consent and election to work procedures. Teachers who are currently employed at these schools may apply for their position in the school; otherwise, they may request a new assignment in the district based on their qualifications, skills, and expertise. Priority will be given to teachers who work within the school’s home district.

Network Schools will evaluate teachers and leaders using the new state evaluation guidelines, which include indicators of student achievement. The Commissioner’s Network Schools will also pilot a teacher career ladder linked to the new evaluation framework with the hope that it can be a model for other schools and districts throughout the state. The new system will have more opportunities for promotion and career growth and more flexible work conditions that are designed to recruit, place, and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of the students in the turnaround school. After ample opportunities have been provided for teachers and leaders to improve their professional practice, the schools may identify and separate from service teachers and leaders who have not improved their performance sufficiently.

**4. Additional Time for Student Learning and Teacher Collaboration.** The CSDE believes that all students must be held to high standards. The CSDE recognizes that some students will need more learning time to achieve this level of achievement. The traditional 180-day school

calendar limits opportunities for the students who are farthest behind. Network Schools may extend the school day and year to provide more time for learning. The CSDE will ensure that this additional time leads to improvements in student achievement by providing more time for core academic pursuits with opportunities for individualized support, teacher collaboration to strengthen instruction, and high-quality enrichment.

Turnaround Schools may incorporate any of the following effective practices, each of which will be focused on shifting from a seat-time based approach towards a competency-based approach to teaching and learning:

- Extend the school day to allocate more time to core academic classes and to allow teachers to provide differentiated instruction based on student needs;
- Implement alternative schedules that have been proven effective and/or reallocate existing time at all grade levels;
- Extend the school year for students to provide added opportunities to explore subject matter in more depth, to engage in project-based learning activities, or to offer a broader range of instructional programs and enrichment activities;
- Implement a plan to monitor and address absenteeism to ensure that all students are attending school and have opportunities to access learning;
- Provide after-school, online tutoring or coursework, hybrid learning tools, Saturday-school, vacation, and summer programs that offer students an opportunity to extend traditional, school-based learning beyond the school day (or week or year) and to explore new, less traditional areas of learning in conjunction with 21st Century Community Learning Center programs or independently;
- Allocate time for teacher planning, professional development, and collaboration; and

**5. Strengthening the School's Instructional Program.** After diagnosing school needs, ensuring that the most effective teachers and leaders are in place and supported at the school, and ensuring optimal conditions for the school day, the CSDE will then examine the school's instructional program to confirm that it is rigorous, is based on current research, addresses student needs, and is aligned to the CCSS. Furthermore, select Commissioner's Network Schools may pilot personalized, technology-based or technology-linked student learning systems that enable teachers to supplement, reinforce, and customize learning. Staff at Network Schools will receive ongoing, high-quality job-embedded professional development that is aligned with the school's comprehensive instructional program and the CCSS.

During the current legislative session, the Governor, in partnership with the CSDE, has proposed revisions to the current professional development system, including replacing current professional development requirements with evaluation-based professional development and support, requiring training for evaluators, and authorizing the SBE to withhold state funds from districts that fail to provide professional development and support. Furthermore, if the legislation is successful, each local and regional board of education will be required to provide, at no cost to its certified employees, at least 18 hours of professional development; no more than six hours may be provided in large group settings.

The proposed revision defines professional development as a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement that fosters collective responsibility for improved student performance. Professional development must consist of professional learning that (1) is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards, (2) is conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by principals, coaches, mentors, master teachers, or other lead teachers, and (3) occurs frequently on an individual basis or among groups of teachers in a job-embedded process of continuous improvement. Professional development opportunities must provide meaningful support and opportunities for improved practice based on general findings from teacher evaluations. The CSDE will review the professional development and support programs provided by local boards of education to ensure they are high quality and meet these demanding standards.

**6. Using Data to Inform Instruction and for Continuous Improvement.** A critical goal of the Commissioner's Network is to embed a culture of data within all schools—to use data to identify and implement an instructional program that is research-based, vertically aligned between grades, and aligned with the CCSS. Leaders and teachers will be responsible for promoting the continuous use of student data—including formative, interim, and summative assessments—to inform and differentiate instruction to meet the academic needs of individual students. The reconfigured school day will provide time for teachers to collaborate to make data-driven instructional decisions.

**7. School Climate.** The CSDE knows student learning cannot take place absent a safe school environment. Commissioner's Network Schools will establish school environments that improve school safety and discipline and address other non-academic factors that affect student achievement. The Connecticut legislature recently recognized the importance of a safe school climate when it passed PA 11-232. This act requires that all Connecticut schools create a safe school climate plan, appoint a safe school climate specialist, and administer a biannual school climate survey. In compliance with these statutory requirements, Network Schools will use these tools and student survey tools to build and maintain a positive and safe school culture. Additionally, the CSDE will provide or link through referrals to appropriate social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students in identified schools.

**8. Ongoing Mechanisms for Family and Community Engagement.** The Commissioner's Network is grounded in an understanding that schools cannot succeed without the full support of families and the community. The CSDE believes that a unified focus on academics, services, supports, and opportunities leads to improved student learning, behavior, and attendance; family involvement; and community engagement with public schools. The Network will work with families and the community to effect systemwide change to ensure that low performance is no longer tolerated. Family and school community survey tools will also help guide our understanding of each school community's needs.

Identified Network Schools will help coordinate or strengthen wraparound services for students, with the goal of providing community school services, including health and social services as well as referrals to such services from the school site. For a summary of community school models see [Appendix 2.3](#). To accomplish this goal, Network Schools will employ a “lead agency” approach. The Network will employ community partnership coordinators who are responsible for identifying service needs and gaps within and across the schools, developing plans for meeting those needs, making connections between the schools and community partners to provide needed services, and communicating internally and externally to ensure effective implementation. These coordinators will also work with community partners to ensure the long-term sustainability of the services through resource development and by collecting and analyzing data for continuous program improvement.

The coordinators will leverage community involvement to provide students with a wide range of supports and opportunities, including family engagement, parent leadership, and adult education; extended learning opportunities and youth development; physical, dental, and mental health programs and social services; and early childhood development. For a summary of school-parent compacts, welcoming schools, and school governance councils, see [Appendix 2.4](#).

Connecticut remains committed to creating welcoming schools as school invitingness has been shown to be the most consistent predictor of parent involvement. Network Schools will also continue to incorporate the body of knowledge gleaned from school governance councils and school-parent compacts.

- 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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.9)** Does the SEA’s proposed timeline ensure that LEAs that have one or more priority schools will implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.10)** Does the SEA’s proposed timeline distribute priority schools’ implementation of meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in a balanced way, such that there is not a concentration of these schools in the later years of the timeline?

### **Timeline for Interventions in Turnaround Schools (Subject to Change)**

Identification of and interventions in Turnaround Schools will begin in spring 2012 and continue through the end of school year 2014–15.

*Table 2.17 Intervention Timeline for Turnaround Schools*

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CSDE will publish an initial list of Turnaround Schools.</li> <li>• The CSDE will establish Turnaround and Performance Offices.</li> <li>• The Turnaround Team will determine which Turnaround Schools will be governed by the district and which will be governed by the state.</li> </ul>	June 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Turnaround Team and districts will conduct needs assessments in Turnaround Schools.</li> <li>• The Turnaround Team and districts will plan for the implementation of turnaround models.</li> <li>• The Turnaround Team and districts will consult with stakeholders.</li> <li>• The Turnaround Team and districts will select turnaround models and partners.</li> <li>• The Turnaround Team and districts will begin taking steps regarding staffing (professional development; staffing changes and structures).</li> </ul>	July 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Turnaround Team and districts will train staff members in Turnaround Schools.</li> </ul>	August 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turnaround Schools will implement turnaround strategies.</li> </ul>	September 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cycle will begin again for the second group of Turnaround Schools.</li> </ul>	January 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Turnaround Team and districts will engage in continuous evaluation and improvement.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Turnaround Team will reevaluate the inclusion of the initial group of schools in the Commissioner’s Network to determine which schools are eligible for exit.</li> </ul>	June 2015

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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.11)** Did the SEA provide criteria to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.12)** Do the SEA’s criteria ensure that schools that exit priority status have made significant progress in improving student achievement?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.D.13)** Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit priority status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?

## **Exit Criteria for Turnaround Schools**

Both SIG and Commissioner’s Network Schools exit Turnaround status if they demonstrate sustained improvement, which will include consideration of factors including making their SPI, individual growth, and graduation rate targets for three consecutive years.

The CSDE will evaluate SIG schools at the end of their three years based on the implementation of the reform model and the progress made in increasing student achievement. Schools that fail to make sufficient progress after the three years will undergo additional interventions and may be added to the Network.

Once Network Schools achieve exit status, steps will be taken to return their full governance to the host district; however, schools may elect to retain some of their Network characteristics even after their return to home district governance.

## **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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.1)** Did the SEA describe its 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 is instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), did the SEA 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?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.2)** In identifying focus schools, was the SEA’s methodology based on the achievement and lack of progress over a number of years of one or more subgroups of students identified under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or, at the high school level, graduation rates for one or more subgroups?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.3)** Is the SEA’s methodology for identifying focus schools educationally sound and likely to ensure that schools are accountable for the performance of subgroups of students?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.4)** Did the SEA include a list of its focus schools? (Table 2)

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.5)** Did the SEA identify a number of focus schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State’s Title I schools?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.6)** Did the SEA’s methodology result in the identification of focus schools that have —

- (i) the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup or subgroups and the lowest-achieving subgroup or subgroups or, at the high school level, the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate; or
- (ii) a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.7)** Did the SEA identify as focus schools all Title I-participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a number of years that are not identified as priority schools?

### **Identifying Focus Schools**

Connecticut’s commitment to closing the state achievement gap is not limited to the very lowest-performing schools. Rather, the CSDE will remain within the spirit of the NCLB Act by continuing to identify and support interventions in all schools that are contributing to the state’s wide achievement gaps.

Title I school or Title I-eligible schools that are not identified as Turnaround Schools are considered for placement into the Focus School selection pool. To undertake the Focus School pool identification, the CSDE generated a “high needs” subgroup, which includes ELLs, students with disabilities, and students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The schools with the lowest 10% of SPI scores for the high-needs subgroup will be placed into the Focus Schools selection pool. Additionally, schools with either the African-American or Hispanic subgroup exhibiting an SPI below that of the highest high-needs subgroup pool member will also be added into the selection pool. The CSDE will then choose the schools from the selection pool with the lowest SPIs for these subgroups. The number of Focus Schools will equal at least 10% of the state’s Title I schools.

As indicated above, the CSDE selected 20 students as the minimum threshold for school-level subgroup size ( $n$  size) to be included in the accountability calculations.

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 its LEAs that have one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the SEA’s focus schools and their students and 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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.8)** Does the SEA’s process and timeline ensure that each LEA will identify the needs of its focus schools and their students and implement interventions in focus schools at the start of the 2012–2013 school year? Did the SEA provide examples of and justifications for the interventions the SEA will require its focus schools to implement? Are those interventions based on the needs of students and likely to improve the performance of low-performing students and reduce achievement gaps among subgroups, including English Learners and students with disabilities?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.9)** Has the SEA demonstrated that the interventions it has identified are effective at increasing student achievement in schools with similar characteristics, needs, and challenges as the schools the SEA has identified as focus schools?

### **District-Led Intervention**

As part of the proposed legislative package, the Governor and the CSDE have identified the state’s lowest-performing thirty districts as Alliance Districts, which are eligible for increased funding. All of Connecticut’s Focus Schools are located in these thirty districts. As a condition of receiving their additional funding, the CSDE will require that these districts take appropriate intervention measures to improve student performance in Focus Schools and in the larger category of Review Schools, which includes both Focus Schools and other low-performing schools. The proposed legislation includes a condition that Alliance Districts must engage in tiering of schools according to need and must implement support and interventions as appropriate. Even if the legislation enabling conditional funding for Alliance Districts is not successful, the CSDE currently has the statutory authority to require districts to intervene in their low-achieving schools. See section 2.G for further detail about the CSDE’s authority to require districts to intervene in and to support low-performing schools.

To provide support and to hold districts accountable, the CSDE is establishing State Turnaround and Performance Offices whose mandates include ensuring that districts have the information, capacity, and resources they need to intervene effectively in the Focus Schools within their jurisdictions.

The Turnaround Team will work closely with the Performance Team to provide schools and districts with school performance data that delineate schools’ areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. This increased transparency will provide districts with the information they will need to target interventions and support to meet the particular needs of their Focus Schools.

Connecticut’s districts will work with their Focus Schools to increase student achievement by engaging in a process of strategic planning, including diagnosis, targeted intervention, and monitoring. While the precise interventions may vary by school and district, each Focus School’s SIP must include the elements that follow.

**1. Data Examination.** Focus Schools will vary widely in their needs because they will have different low-performing subgroups: students with disabilities, ELLs, low-income students, or

racial or ethnic subgroups. By analyzing data provided by the state’s Performance Team, the school will work with its district and RESC to identify which subgroup or subgroups are the lowest performing and which areas of performance warrant the most immediate attention. Additionally, the Performance Team will help schools and districts make sense of the data by identifying the most critical areas for attention and by clearly stating the quantitative improvements (performance targets) necessary to address these problems.

**2. Root Cause Analysis/Diagnosis.** The CSDE has experience monitoring schools to determine the root causes of low performance. It has used different assessments in the past (including ones it and Cambridge Assessments have developed) to diagnose the underlying problems in SIG schools and in other low-performing schools in the Partner Districts (Connecticut’s 18 lowest-performing districts).

The Turnaround Team will build on this experience, adopting an assessment tool that examines the following key elements of school success:

- Quality of Instruction (including teaching, professional development, and curriculum alignment to standards);
- Assessment and the use of data;
- School climate;
- Leadership and management; and
- Partnerships with parents and the community.

This will be available as a resource to all schools and districts in the state, but they will be used differently based on the school’s classification. See section 2.F for more detail about how each type of school will use this tool. In Focus Schools, the district will be responsible for conducting the assessment of the school and will use its RESCs for support as needed. Districts will be required to assess all their Review Schools, including Focus Schools, every three years to inform their planning process, assess their progress, and diagnose needs for the next cycle of planning.

**3. Goal Setting.** Another component of each SIP will be measurable goals for improvement. These goals will be aligned with the exit criteria for Focus Schools (defined below) and based on the specific low-performing subgroups that led to the school’s classification as a Focus School.

For example, if the school currently has an SPI of 27 for its students with disabilities subgroup, the school would set the goal of increasing that SPI such that it meets its AMO target for the year, which would be to increase the SPI of its students with disabilities by two points. This school would likely also set other goals related to the performance of the students with disabilities subgroup. The school might also set goals for its students with disabilities around increasing attendance, meeting individual growth targets, and decreasing disciplinary incidents.

**4. Intervention Selection.** Each Focus School will work with its home district and RESC to select appropriate interventions that are designed to address the needs of the lowest-performing subgroups and to build capacity in the school’s weakest areas that the school identified as the

root causes of low achievement. The SIP will also delineate how the school will use its increased funding—from flexibility of Title I funds or increased state funding—to implement the selected interventions effectively. See section 2.G for more information about increased funding for schools and districts.

The Turnaround Team will provide a list of recommended interventions that have demonstrated success in raising achievement. Alternatively, if the school and district believe that another intervention will better drive student achievement, they are free to select a different intervention and to include it in their School Improvement Plans (SIPs). These alternate interventions are subject to review and approval by the local school board and the CSDE Turnaround Team. See the following sections for examples of specific interventions that may be appropriate for meeting the needs of particular age groups and student subgroups.

The Turnaround Team and RESCs will coordinate to ensure that the professional development offered by RESCs is aligned to the Turnaround Team’s recommended interventions. The CSDE’s goal is to provide schools and districts with the resources they need to select effective interventions that address their specific needs and to train their staff to effectively implement the interventions.

As an example, if a school has particularly low performance for ELLs, the Turnaround Team may recommend a particular instructional strategy for general education teachers to increase ELL access to grade-level material. Because this school chose an intervention recommended by the Turnaround Team, then the school can rely on its RESC to provide its teachers with the training they will need to incorporate the strategy into their instruction.

**5. Planning for Implementation.** After identifying its critical areas in need of improvement, diagnosing root causes of those problems, setting measurable goals, and selecting appropriate interventions, the school must develop a plan for implementation of the intervention. Each implementation plan will include a timeline for implementation, a list of the external partners that the school will use (including its home district and RESC), and a description of how staff members will be trained to effectively implement the intervention.

**6. Monitoring.** Finally, the SIP must describe the process by which the school and the district will monitor the school’s progress toward its goals and its fidelity to the implementation plan. Districts with schools identified as Focus Schools will be required to submit their SIPs to the Turnaround Team, which will review, provide feedback on, and approve the plans.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.10)** Has the SEA identified interventions that are appropriate for different levels of schools (elementary, middle, high) and that address different types of school needs (e.g., all-students, targeted at the lowest-achieving students)?

### **Differentiated Interventions by Subgroups**

To ensure that district interventions meet the needs of the low-performing subgroups in Focus Schools, the CSDE will ensure that districts use data disaggregated by subgroup to tailor interventions in these schools. Because Focus Schools will likely vary significantly in their aggregate performance, these differentiated interventions are crucial.

Districts will be required to tailor their proposed interventions to meet the needs of Focus Schools and to implement effective practices with proven track records in addressing the identified problems. These specific interventions, which are aimed at particular subgroups, will be included on the Turnaround Team’s recommended menu of interventions and supported by aligned professional development provided by RESCs.

Examples of targeted interventions may include requiring that schools support struggling subgroups by partnering with external organizations, implementing a differentiated literacy program with opportunities for remediation, working with executive coaches who have experience leading schools with similar subgroups, utilizing the services of data team facilitators who can work with school and grade-level teams to improve their use of student data in decision making, participating in focus monitoring by the CSDE, or receiving technical assistance from the Office of Special Education at the CSDE.

Additionally, the SIP may specify that the school staff receive professional development targeted to address a deficit in the school that contributes to the low performance of a particular subgroup. Currently, as part of the CALI, RESCs provide professional development modules targeted to address the needs of particular subgroups:

Workshop that targets ELLs:

- *Effective Tier I Instruction for ELLs*: Two-day workshop designed for teams of general education teachers, ESL specialists, and school administrators that reviews how to use data to enhance ELL instruction and effective practices for instructing ELL students. Participants also learn how to train other teachers using the ELL CALI module.

Workshops that target students with disabilities:

- *Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI)*: Two-day training module in which school and district teams understand the components of the SRBI framework, examine their practices, establish priorities, and set goals for the implementation of SRBI in their district or school.
- *Using Differentiated Instruction to Implement the Common Core State Standards*: Two-day training module in which participants make connections between SRBI and a differentiated curriculum, analyze a definition of differentiated instruction, and understand that high-quality differentiation is a proactive, decision-making process.

Workshop that targets racial and ethnic subgroups:

- *Culturally Responsive Education*: Participants reexamine both the content of what they teach and how they teach it and learn culturally responsive teaching strategies, better enabling them to work with diverse students.

### **Differentiated Interventions Appropriate for Elementary, Middle, and High Schools**

Recognizing the need to differentiate interventions by grade level, the Turnaround Team will also ensure that district strategic plans include interventions that are age-appropriate and likely to succeed with the target population. To do this, the CSDE will build on its experience working with SIG schools. The CSDE has found that effective interventions at the high school level include smaller learning communities, school climate specialists, remedial reading interventions, extended learning time, dropout prevention and credit recovery, and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) training. Effective interventions at the elementary and middle school level include extended learning time, tiered intervention, and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS).

Districts may choose to require Focus Schools to implement similar age-appropriate and effective interventions if their performance reports demonstrate particular needs in these areas. Rather than prescribing a particular one-size-fits-all intervention, the Turnaround Team will instead work to ensure districts are planning for and measuring the success of interventions that are rooted in the particular needs of the school.

### **State Support and Funding for Focus Schools**

Districts will be required to use up to 20% of Title I funds to intervene in and support the Focus Schools; the amount set aside will depend on the number of Focus Schools in their district and the level of intervention required. Federal SIG, Part A funds will also be used to support these schools if necessary. Additionally, all Focus Schools are located in one of the state's 30 lowest-performing districts. If pending legislation is successful, each of these districts will have additional resources to invest in low-performing schools, including Focus Schools.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.11)** Did the SEA provide criteria to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status?

### **Timeline for Interventions (Subject to Change)**

Interventions in Focus Schools will begin in fall 2013 and continue through the end of school year 2014–15.

*Table 2.18 Intervention Timeline for Focus Schools*

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>
The CSDE publishes a list of Focus Schools.	June 2012
The CSDE establishes the Turnaround and Performance Offices.	August 2012
The Turnaround Team develops criteria for district strategic plans and SIPs.	August 2012
The Performance Team provides all schools with report cards and performance reports.	August 2012
Districts conduct needs assessments/root cause analyses in all Review Schools, including Focus Schools.	September 2012–December 2012
Focus Schools and districts develop SIPs for all Review Schools, including Focus Schools, and receive local school board approval.	January–March 2013
The Turnaround Team reviews district strategic plans and SIPs.	April–May 2013
Districts begin to implement interventions in Focus Schools.	August 2013
The Turnaround Team monitors districts to ensure fidelity to plans.	Ongoing

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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.12)** Do the SEA’s criteria ensure that schools that exit focus status have made significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.E.13)** Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit focus status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?

### **Exit Criteria for Focus Schools**

Schools will exit Focus status when they have met their AMOs over a three-year period for the particular low-performing subgroup or subgroups that were the reason for their identification. Elementary schools must meet their three-year change in SPI target for the particular subgroup(s) and ensure that the target percentage of students in the subgroup(s) meet their individualized growth targets. High schools must meet their three-year change in SPI target for the particular subgroup(s) and meet their three-year targets for increasing subgroup graduation rates.

**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.

**TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS**

	LEA Name	School Name	Type	ID #	Reward	Priority	Focus
1	<i>Removed</i>	<i>Removed</i>	CMT			E	
2			CMT			E	
3			CMT			E	
4			CMT			E	
5			CMT			E	
6			CMT			E	
7			CMT			E	
8			CMT			E	
9			CMT			E	
10			CMT			E	
11			CMT			E	
12			CAPT			E	
13			CAPT			E	
14			CAPT			E	
15			CAPT			E	
16			CAPT			E	
17			CAPT			E	
18			CAPT			E	
19			CAPT			E	
20			CMT			C	
21			CMT			C	
22			CMT			C	

23			<b>CMT</b>			<b>C</b>	
24			<b>CMT</b>			<b>C</b>	
25			<b>CMT</b>			<b>C</b>	
26			<b>CMT</b>			<b>C</b>	
27			<b>CMT</b>			<b>C</b>	
1			<b>CAPT</b>				<b>H</b>
2			<b>CAPT</b>				<b>H</b>
3			<b>CAPT</b>				<b>H</b>
4			<b>CAPT</b>				<b>H</b>
5			<b>HN-CMT</b>				<b>G</b>
6			<b>HN-CMT</b>				<b>G</b>
7			<b>HN-CMT</b>				<b>G</b>
8			<b>HN-CMT</b>				<b>G</b>
9			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
10			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
11			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
12			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
13			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
14			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
15			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
16			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
17			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
18			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
19			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
20			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
21			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
22			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
23			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G

24			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
25			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
26			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
27			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
28			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
29			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
30			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
31			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
32			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
33			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
34			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
35			<i>HN-CMT</i>				G
36			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
37			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
38			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
39			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
40			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
41			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
42			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
43			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
44			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
45			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
46			<i>BI-CMT</i>				G
47			<i>His-CMT</i>				G
48			<i>His-CMT</i>				G
49			<i>His-CMT</i>				G
50			<i>His-CMT</i>				G
51			<i>His-CMT</i>				G

52			HN-CAPT				G
53			HN-CAPT				G
1					B		
2					B		
3					B		
4					B		
5					B		
6					B		
7					B		
8					B		
9					B		
10					B		
<b>TOTAL # of Schools:</b>					<b>10</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>53</b>

Total # of Title I schools in the State: 530

Total # of Title I-participating high schools in the State with graduation rates less than 60%: 9

Key	
<p><b>Reward School Criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Highest-performing school</li> <li>B. High-progress school</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority School Criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>C. Among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the proficiency and lack of progress of the “all students” group</li> <li>D-1. Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years</li> <li>D-2. Title I-eligible high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years</li> <li>E. Tier I or Tier II SIG school implementing a school intervention model</li> </ul>	<p><b>Focus School Criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>F. Has the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup(s) and the lowest-achieving subgroup(s) or, at the high school level, has the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate</li> <li>G. Has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate</li> <li>H. A Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years that is not identified as a priority school</li> </ul>

## 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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.F.1)** Does the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system provide incentives and supports for 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?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.F.2)** Are those incentives and supports likely to improve student achievement, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for all students, including English Learners and students with disabilities?

### **Differentiated Accountability and Support**

The CSDE will classify each Connecticut school—regardless of Title I status—into one of five categories: Excelling, Progressing, Transition, Review, or Turnaround. The CSDE will report on school performance annually, but schools will be classified only once every three years. This three-year time frame will increase the reliability of the data by reducing the noise created by annual fluctuations and will encourage schools to implement interventions with sustained positive results. Connecticut’s proposed system differentiates support and interventions based on these classifications. The state Performance and Turnaround Teams will encourage higher levels of achievement in Excelling and Progressing Schools by providing them with the information they need to engage in the process of self-improvement, by building district capacity to support and intervene in Transition and Review Schools, and by intervening directly and aggressively in Turnaround Schools.

The CSDE believes that all schools benefit from the cycle of strategic planning that includes data examination, root cause analysis, goal setting, intervention selection, planning for implementation, and monitoring progress. See Section 2.F for a more detailed description of this cycle. The CSDE further believes that all schools would benefit from engaging in set of best practices in the areas instruction, assessment and the use of data, school climate, leadership and management, and partnerships with parents and the community. However, the CSDE acknowledges that schools need varying levels of support to effectively engage in the process of strategic planning and in assessing their current set of practices and selecting new practices that will drive achievement.

The CSDE will therefore provide schools with the quantitative data and qualitative assessment tool needed to engage in the process of continuous improvement, but will differentiate the level of support for and monitoring of schools based on their performance.

Specifically, Table 2.19 summarizes the varying levels of intervention for the five categories of schools:

*Table 2.19 Degrees of CSDE Intervention by School Category*

Category		Degree of Intervention
★★★★★	Excelling	Self-assessment tool and information available as resources to enable schools to drive own improvement
★★★★	Progressing	Self-assessment required; no SIP necessary
★★★	Transition	Self-assessment required; used to create SIP, which must be approved by district
★★	Review (including Focus Schools)	The district must conduct a school needs assessment; district, RESC and school collaborate to develop SIP; must be approved by local school board and state Turnaround Team
★	Turnaround	Districts and Turnaround Team implement aggressive turnaround interventions

**Excelling Schools.** With high performance for all students and subgroups, these schools are poised to drive their own continuous improvement. The Performance Team will ensure that it facilitates increased performance for all schools—including these highest-performing schools—through transparent reporting that compares schools serving similar populations against each other. Many of these schools, though they perform well when compared to the state as a whole, have much to learn from other Excelling Schools that likely outperform them in particular areas or with particular subgroups.

The students who attend these schools are performing at sufficiently high levels on state standardized tests such that the CSDE believes they would benefit most if the schools set goals outside the state’s current accountability system. For example, these schools may choose to focus on increasing students’ access to civics, arts, and fitness or on innovating by aligning their curriculum to international standards or by introducing personalized learning programs. See the description of these pilots in Principle 1 for more detail.

**Progressing Schools.** Schools with high performance or substantially increasing performance rarely need intensive intervention. However, the CSDE believes that even these relatively high-performing and high-progress schools have room for significant improvement. The CSDE will require these schools to evaluate themselves using a state-developed comprehensive assessment tool designed to diagnose their strength and weakness in the following core areas: student achievement; quality of instruction (including teaching, professional development, and curriculum alignment to standards); the assessment and use of data; school climate; leadership

and management; and partnerships with parents and the community. See section 2.E for more detail.

**Transition Schools.** Though they are not among the state’s lowest-performing schools, these schools still fall far short of preparing all students for college and career. Districts will be responsible for driving improvement in these schools by requiring that they conduct their own self-assessment and requiring that the schools submit a strategic SIP based on the assessment and the data provided in their performance report. These plans will often require schools to implement narrow, surgical interventions meant to address specific problems in particular programs or the low performance of particular groups of students. Districts will monitor these SIPs and work with RESCs to support schools through the planning process. The list of recommended interventions provided by the Turnaround Team will also be a resource for these schools.

**Review Schools.** These schools—all of which are located in the state’s Alliance Districts—are among Connecticut’s lowest performing. This category also includes Focus Schools, which are identified because of their extremely low performance for particular subgroups. Through the proposed conditional funding mechanism for Alliance Districts or through the CSDE’s current statutory authority (described in further detail in section 2.G), the CSDE will hold districts responsible for directing interventions in these schools. Instead of allowing these schools to conduct self-assessments, the districts will assess these schools to diagnose them and identify the root causes of their low performance. Districts with Review Schools will be required to work with these schools to develop SIPs, which must be approved by the local board and the state Turnaround Team. (See description of interventions in Focus Schools in section 2.E for more detail—Focus and Review Schools are treated identically because Focus Schools are a subset of Review Schools).

**Turnaround Schools.** The state’s chronically lowest-performing schools are in need of immediate and dramatic improvement. Through the Commissioner’s Network, the state plans to transform up to 25 schools over the next two years. A subset of the Turnaround schools will join the Commissioner’s Network in the fall of 2012–13, as the CSDE’s Turnaround Team builds its capacity to intervene in more schools in later years.

While the Turnaround Office will act as a resource for all districts in Connecticut, it will provide the closest monitoring and greatest-touch support for the state’s Alliance Districts—the 30 lowest-performing districts. All of Connecticut’s Turnaround and Focus Schools, and the majority of its Review Schools, are located in these 30 districts. Under new legislation proposed by the Governor, each of these districts would be required to submit strategic plans to the state that delineate a tiered and differentiated system of support for their schools. If an Alliance District governs one or more Focus or Review School, then its strategic plan will also include these schools’ SIPs.

## 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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.1)** Is 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, likely to succeed in improving such capacity?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.2)** Is the SEA’s process for ensuring timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools likely to result in successful implementation of these interventions and in progress on leading indicators and student outcomes in these schools?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.3)** Did the SEA describe a process for the rigorous review and approval of any external providers used by the SEA and its LEAs to support the implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools that is likely to result in the identification of high-quality partners with experience and expertise applicable to the needs of the school, including specific subgroup needs?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.4)** Is the SEA’s process for ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools 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) likely to result in successful implementation of such interventions and improved student achievement?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (2.G.5)** Is the SEA’s process for holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools, likely to improve LEA capacity to support school improvement?

**Reorganization of the CSDE: Building State Capacity**

The CSDE is currently in the midst of significant organizational change designed to pivot the department into a more proactive stance. The reorganization, which has been approved by the SBE, will shift the organization’s focus from monitoring for compliance and accountability to driving performance and continuous improvement.

The reorganized CSDE will include the following teams: Academic, Talent, Performance, and Turnaround. The Chief Operating Officer will be charged with improving the effectiveness, responsiveness, and efficiency of the CSDE’s programs and services, including the removal of unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy that can impede student learning.

The Academic Team will align efforts around preparing students for college and career by working with school leaders to fully align the instruction, ongoing assessment, curriculum, and the CCSS.

The Talent Team will develop and attract a first-rate, diverse corps of educators to Connecticut’s classrooms, principals’ offices, and district offices by improving the entire professional experience and human resource system for teachers and leaders. This would include working collaboratively around the state to develop and expand robust and meaningful professional development to prepare teachers for Common Core standards and the 21st century classroom. This team will also engage the state’s education stakeholders to produce a fair system of educator evaluation.

The Performance Team will ensure that, across multiple indicators, Connecticut’s school districts receive actionable and timely information on student performance. This team will create a robust data infrastructure to help identify trends, problems, and opportunities in Connecticut’s schools; it will develop metrics for status, progress, and goals for every school, district, and student group in the state.

The Turnaround Team will lead the design and administration of intervention and support strategies in low-performing schools and districts. This office will seek out effective practices from the state and the country and work to promote high-quality school models.

This reorganization will lay the essential groundwork for realizing reform. Establishing the four interrelated, strategically oriented teams—Academic, Talent, Performance, and Turnaround—will significantly increase the CSDE’s capacity to drive school improvement throughout the state.

### **Building Regional Capacity: RESCs**

The CSDE recognizes that many Connecticut districts do not currently have the capacity to support and intervene in schools effectively, but the CSDE believes that Connecticut is well positioned to build on existing structures to increase district capacity. Connecticut has a SERC and a network of RESCs with a long history of providing information, professional development, and technical assistance to schools and districts.

RESCs promote cooperation and collaboration with local school districts to improve the quality of public education. Connecticut is host to six RESCs, representing 169 school districts throughout the state. RESCs were established under Connecticut General Statute 10-66 a-n, which permits local boards of education to establish a RESC as a “public educational authority” for the purpose of “cooperative action to furnish programs and services.” RESCs act as intermediary units, in that they are smaller than state departments of education, yet larger than local school districts, and are used to deliver services in approximately 40 states.

While these organizations have been critical for supporting districts, the CSDE has not taken full advantage of their capacity. One function of the Turnaround Team will be to leverage the state’s RESCs and SERC to drive school and district improvement. The Turnaround Team will ensure that SERC and RESCs’ work with districts is aligned to the CSDE’s key initiatives. These regional organizations will serve as the implementation arm of the state—operationalizing state policy by ensuring that districts have the technical assistance and information they need. Rather than all RESCs providing identical or overlapping services we will incent and fund each RESC with different resources and goals to tackle targeted aspects of our intervention and overall reform strategies.

### **Building District Capacity**

While districts will drive the interventions in Focus and Review Schools, ultimately it is the CSDE’s responsibility to ensure that these schools receive the support they need. Most of these high-need schools (all the Turnaround and Focus Schools and most of its Review Schools) are concentrated in the 30 lowest-performing Alliance Districts.

The Governor and the CSDE have proposed that state funding to these 30 Alliance Districts increase by \$39.5 million, conditioned on clear plans for reform and efficiency gains developed with key stakeholders. This alliance of districts will partner with the state to undertake reforms, including strengthening their foundational reading programs to ensure reading mastery in kindergarten through grade 3; providing extended learning opportunities; developing recruitment, career ladder, and compensation strategies for teachers and school leaders; and coordinating community health, social, and wraparound services.

Another of the key reforms required for Alliance Districts is the development of a tiered approach to intervening in and supporting schools based on their performance. These districts' strategic plans will describe their approach to supporting each category of schools in their district and must be approved by the Turnaround Team. Districts can use a portion of the new funding they receive through the Alliance District initiative to support their interventions in low-performing schools.

Additionally, the Governor and the CSDE have proposed that the state establish a \$4.5 million competitive fund to be awarded to districts with the most innovative and promising plans to make dramatic improvements to student outcomes. If this legislation is passed, the CSDE will give preference to Alliance Districts, but any district may apply for these funds.

Upon approval of the waiver request, many districts will also be able to reallocate the 20% of their Title I funds that are currently set aside for transportation related to NCLB school choice and Supplemental Educational Services (SES). Under the current system, students must meet the low-income requirement to be eligible for SES. Districts are required to provide SES to the extent that the funds allow. In 2011–12, the range in per-pupil allocations for these services is between \$450 and \$2,900. Districts are required to contract with CSDE-approved external providers for these tutorial services, which are provided outside the school day. It is the responsibility of the parent, working with the provider, to schedule these services.

Under flexibility from the ESEA waiver, the CSDE will continue to require that Alliance Districts and other districts with Review Schools set aside up to 20% of their Title I funds, but these funds can be used to directly support the school reform efforts as outlined in the strategic plans developed by the school and district and approved by the Turnaround Team. The interventions identified by the school and district will no longer be limited to off-site tutoring. The district or school may alternatively elect to use those funds for a variety of interventions, including those meant to address the needs of particular underperforming subgroups, extended-day activities, increased in-class tutoring, after-school or Saturday academies, core reading programs, or evidence-based school designs. The objective of this provision is to differentiate the interventions based upon an assessment of specific school needs. Incorporating these interventions into the district and school strategic plans and requiring the approval of the Turnaround Team will make the intervention stronger, will hold the district and school more accountable, and will ensure the intervention is directly aligned to the strategic plan.

### **Continuing Support for Districts: Professional Development**

Connecticut currently delivers statewide professional development through the CALI. The CALI focuses on sustainable district-level reform to foster accountability for student learning and ultimately accelerate the closing of Connecticut's achievement gap. Through the CALI, the CSDE provides district support and technical assistance in key areas to create a results-based district accountability system. The work focuses on training in the areas of instructional and school

data teams, differentiated instruction, assessment, and climate. As facilitators and co-developers for CALI modules, RESCs have also provided a continuum of services that support the CALI training areas from the knowledge level to school and district capacity building. The consistency of CALI language, processes, and interconnectedness are then embedded through other professional development opportunities provided by the RESC staff.

The CSDE has created CALI training modules specifically with struggling schools and districts in mind, but all districts and schools across Connecticut can and should access CALI modules. The CSDE offers CALI training modules free of charge to educators in the state’s 18 Partner Districts, which have been identified as supporting the lowest-performing schools and are in various stages of developing, implementing, and monitoring district improvement plans. Training modules are also free of charge to any Title I school identified as “in need of improvement.” Districts that do not qualify for this fee waiver are eligible to attend these trainings for a nominal fee.

CALI modules provide a common dialogue, language, and expectations for student achievement within the state. The CSDE has met frequently over the last three years with the leaders of teachers’ unions from each of the Partner Districts to develop SIPs collaboratively. In addition, the CSDE and the CAS facilitate an ongoing Principals Leadership Series that focuses on strategies for turnaround leaders. For a summary of an evaluation report confirming CALI’s designation as an appropriate and well-designed system of statewide supports, see [Appendix 2.5](#).

### **Removing Barriers and Duplication for Districts**

The CSDE believes the state’s school districts should focus on raising student achievement and preparing students for success in college and career, and the state should be a partner in that effort. But where state mandates, regulations, circular letters, and other requirements create unnecessary and overly burdensome barriers to districts’ work, the state will examine its practices—and find ways to get out of the way. In a recent survey of the state’s superintendents, two-thirds reported that the CSDE issues too many regulations. Over half of the superintendents identified state policies as a barrier to effectively recognize and promote staff.

Under the proposed legislation, the CSDE aims to simplify processes related to certification and professional development, as well as to empower districts to make these processes more meaningful. Specifically, the CSDE will:

- Consolidate the number of available certificates prior to the “professional” level certificate, from three to one “initial” level certificate;
- Maintain the “professional” certificate on the basis of strong performance as supported by high-quality professional development, not seat-time-based continuing education units;

- Establish a new “master” educator certificate for the state’s most accomplished teachers, attained on the basis of exemplary performance; and
- Increase districts’ discretion to hire teachers from other states by removing barriers to reciprocity.

Additionally, under the legislative proposal, the CSDE will make teacher certification and data reporting less onerous on schools and districts by eliminating unnecessary barriers in teacher certification:

- Eliminate the continuing education requirement and the master’s degree requirement for attaining “professional” certification;
- Enhance the district’s ability to seek Commissioner-approved waivers from superintendent certification requirements;
- Expand reciprocity with educators certified in out-of-state IHEs and alternative route programs through the Commissioner’s waiver.

While many of the CSDE data requests have origins in state or federal law, the CSDE has implemented some requests in ways that create unnecessary burden and expense for district central offices and schools. From now on, the CSDE will:

- Consolidate the forms it issues to request data from districts;
- Inform districts of these interim streamlined data collection procedures by March 31, 2012; and;
- Begin to convene periodic meetings with a focus group of superintendents and district business administrators to foster ongoing dialogue about streamlining data practices.

Connecticut will also convene a Red Tape Review Taskforce to examine additional and comprehensive solutions to unnecessarily burdensome state regulations and mandates. The CSDE will convene the taskforce as a component of this education reform proposal. The taskforce will meet over the next year to solicit input from superintendents, members of local boards of education, district and school business officials, subject area experts, and others on ways to streamline state regulations. Additionally, it will engage the General Assembly’s members and staff to discuss ways to provide the legislature with more accurate estimates of the costs borne by school districts from proposed statutes and regulations.

Because the state’s Turnaround Schools are chronically the lowest performing in the state, the CSDE believes they need dramatic and immediate intervention. As described in more detail in section 2.D, the Turnaround Team will invest significant time and resources to turn around these schools. The Governor’s proposed legislative package includes \$24.8 million to be used for start-up costs during the initial year of the turnaround and for increased compensation for teachers and leaders within these schools. Only districts that are able to demonstrate a sufficient level of capacity will receive increased funds for interventions and additional school staff compensation.

## **Screening External School Operators**

The CSDE’s Turnaround Team will conduct the required rigorous review process to select external providers including universities, RESCs, nonprofits, charter management organizations (CMOs), CommPACT, or other providers with proven track records. As a result of this review, the CSDE will establish a list of approved external providers that will be available to districts and schools to assist with specific areas of concern or to partner in turnaround efforts via contract or other mechanism with the state Turnaround Team, districts, and schools. This approved list, which will be updated, reviewed, and expanded over time, will provide a resource to districts for school turnaround. For current evaluation template of external providers, see [Appendix 2.6](#).

## **State-Recommended Interventions**

As described previously, the Turnaround Team, relying on data generated by the Performance Team, will also develop a menu of research-based interventions with strong track records of success in meeting particular school needs inside and outside of Connecticut. This menu of options will provide guidance to districts as they support schools through the processes of diagnosis and the selection of appropriate school interventions. Specifically, the menu will include interventions that have been successful with specific subgroups of students including ELLs and students with disabilities. Districts and schools will retain the freedom to select or design their own interventions if they believe they will better address their particular weaknesses. The CSDE will also ensure that professional development and support—in part delivered by SERC and the RESCs—is aligned with these recommended interventions.

## **District Accountability**

Through the Turnaround and Performance Teams, the CSDE will partner with RESCs and districts to improve low-performing schools collaboratively. If necessary, however, the state is prepared to use its authority to ensure that districts implement the needed reforms to drive student achievement.

**1. State Conditional Funding.** As described in more detail above, if the CSDE’s proposed legislation is successful, Connecticut’s 30 lowest-performing Alliance Districts will receive an additional \$39.5 million in annual funding, if and only if they agree to enact a series of meaningful reforms. To receive its allotted increase, each Alliance District must submit a strategic plan that includes a description of how the district will implement a system of tiered interventions for schools based on school-level student performance. These Alliance Districts will be responsible for diagnosing, supporting, and—if necessary—intervening in the Focus and Review Schools within their jurisdictions.

**2. Title I Funding.** Some districts contain Focus and Review Schools but are not among the lowest 30 districts in the state. These districts will be able to use up to 20% of their Title I

funding to intervene in these schools, but if they choose not to, they will no longer be eligible to receive their Title I funds.

**3. Statutory Authority.** If a district that is not an Alliance District and that does not receive Title I funds contains a Review School, the state can exercise its statutory power to ensure that the district complies with the state policy requiring it to diagnose the needs of the school, assist the school in developing an improvement plan, submit that plan to the state for approval, and monitor the implementation of interventions.

Under Section 10-223e of the Connecticut General Statutes, the state may intervene to provide intensified supervision and direction in low-achieving school districts and school districts that contain low-achieving schools. This category of low-achieving schools includes the schools referred to in this request as Review and Turnaround Schools. The state has extensive statutory authority to direct such school districts to take specific actions to improve student achievement at the school district or school level, as appropriate. Among other statutorily authorized actions, the state may direct that a study be undertaken to identify obstacles to improved student achievement and that a plan to eliminate any such obstacles be developed and implemented. Section 10-223e authorizes the state to drive improvements in student achievement by granting the state the authority to direct numerous actions at the local level, including but limited to the authority to “require the local or regional board of education for such . . . district to use state and federal funds for critical needs, as directed by the State Board of Education . . . require additional training and technical assistance for . . . teachers, principals, and central office staff members hired by the district; . . . develop and implement a plan addressing deficits in achievement and in the learning environment as recommended in the instructional audit; . . . establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for the school or district to meet as it progresses toward removal from the list of low-achieving schools or districts . . . or any combination of the actions described in this subdivision or similar, closely related actions.”

With these three mechanisms for accountability, the CSDE has much of the authority necessary to ensure that districts take key steps to improve their own low-performing Review schools. The Governor’s proposed reforms will provide additional authority and financial support to enable the CSDE to fulfill the vision outlined in this flexibility application.

## 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.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the SEA’s plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year;</li> <li>ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and</li> <li>iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a copy of the guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students;</li> <li>ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and</li> <li>iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.</li> </ul>
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**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.A.1) Option A** – If the SEA has not already developed and adopted guidelines consistent with Principle 3, is the SEA’s plan for developing and adopting guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems likely to result in successful adoption of those guidelines by the end of the 2011–2012 school year?

#### **Overview**

Connecticut recognizes that teacher and principal evaluation and support systems are a critical part of its comprehensive plan to build an environment that ensures equal opportunity and excellence in education for all Connecticut students. Over the past year, the CSDE has engaged the leadership and expertise of a legislatively enacted council of educators, policymakers, and advocates—PEAC—in the undertaking of a major reform effort to develop new guidelines for the evaluation of teachers and administrators across the state.

In January 2012, after two years of discussions, PEAC took a major step toward creating a meaningful evaluation system when they unanimously agreed on a new framework that places a strong emphasis on student achievement. The new evaluation system for teachers includes the following components:

- 1) Multiple student learning indicators: 45%, half of which are based on the state test for those teaching tested grades and subjects or another standardized assessment for those grades and subjects for which there is no state test;
- 2) Teacher observation and professional practice: 40%;
- 3) Feedback from peers and parents including surveys: 10%; and
- 4) Schoolwide student learning indicators or student feedback: 5%.

The agreement was an historic achievement. As Connecticut Governor Malloy noted in his [press release](#), “Connecticut has taken a major step toward a meaningful teacher evaluation system. Today’s consensus proposal has real potential to increase teacher effectiveness—and as a result, to elevate student achievement. This is a milestone in what I expect will continue to be a momentous year for education reform in Connecticut.”

On February 6, PEAC agreed on the following design for the state model for administrator evaluation:

- 1) Multiple student learning measures: 45%, half of which are based on the state test and the other half to be locally determined, with parameters set by the state;
- 2) Observations of principal performance and practice: 40%, based on the six performance expectations in the Connecticut Leadership Standards; it includes a focus on all practices involving teacher quality and teacher evaluation;
- 3) Staff, community, and/or student feedback including surveys: 10%, based on all or some of the six performance expectations in the Connecticut Leadership Standards; and
- 4) Teacher performance growth and effectiveness outcomes: 5%, based on teacher effectiveness measures such as a) increasing the percentage of teachers making adequate growth in student achievement or b) differing strategies for teachers at differing levels of effectiveness.

On February 10, 2012, the SBE approved the guidelines for the new system. Allan Taylor, chairman of the SBE, said that PEAC’s unanimous agreement was “quite an impressive testament on their ability to come together on an important and controversial question.”

See the *Hartford Courant* for coverage of the [PEAC agreement](#) and the [SBE approval](#).

Since this achievement, the CSDE has begun taking important steps to plan for and ensure that the evaluation systems are implemented in a timely manner and effectively by local school districts. The CSDE’s overarching mission is to ensure Connecticut’s new evaluation and support system serves as an effective tool for educators and administrators to measure their performance, identify where members need support, and provide appropriate professional development strategies. Evaluation is a tool for continuous improvement, which is only possible through identifying meaningful areas of strength and need. This is the work that the state’s

proposed system aims to accomplish. In the event that struggling educators do not respond to targeted support and development, the CSDE’s new evaluation system will provide the basis for fair and timely separations from service, especially if key proposed reforms are enacted.

The state sees its role as providing the technical expertise, guidance, and resources and setting the standards for the systems. But the CSDE also strongly encourages districts to innovate and take ownership of their systems—within clear and rigorous state guidelines—incorporating what is working well and taking evaluation and support systems to the next level.

To date, significant milestones in the CSDE and PEAC process include:

- Adoption of a set of principles to guide the districts in the development of their evaluation systems ([Appendix 3.1](#)).
- Agreement on the design approach for how local school districts may choose to develop their evaluation systems: districts can design and propose for state approval their own evaluation and support systems based on core requirements issued by the state or adopt the state model if they are unwilling or are unable to design their own within the timeline established by the state.
- Agreement on the required evaluation framework of the state model for the evaluation of teachers and administrators.
- Agreement on the required evaluation framework for the district-developed models.
- Approval of the PEAC-recommended state and local model core requirements by the SBE on February 10, 2012.

The CSDE plans to submit the additional guidelines and specific requirements, including the state model, to the SBE for approval and to implement them by July 2012.

In addition, the CSDE has a timeline for the implementation of the new evaluation and support systems, which includes a pilot planned for the 2012–13 school year, followed by a full rollout in the following year, 2013–14. The CSDE will also explore technology platforms that can efficiently and effectively integrate the complex data and modeling features of this evaluation framework. This will ease the burden on individual principals and superintendents, who would otherwise need to repetitively and inefficiently build or buy these tools on their own.

### **Background on Evaluation System Development**

Teachers and administrators in Connecticut are currently evaluated based on the Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development, which the SBE issued in 1999. In July 2010, in an effort to kick-start the reform of a decade-old system that many teachers and administrators have critiqued, the Connecticut legislature enacted [Public Act No. 10-111](#). This important piece of legislation put in place a policy framework and a process to enact Connecticut’s vision of creating a new evaluation system and support system that would enable the CSDE to provide the best professional development opportunities to teachers and administrators. As the CSDE adopts the CCSS of teaching and learning, it is critical that it also aligns the objectives and modalities of evaluation systems with student learning goals as

identified under CCSS. It is equally important that the CSDE has well-trained evaluators, regular data reporting and analyses, and a clear process for teachers and administrators to receive feedback and be given the opportunities they deserve to continue to grow. Connecticut’s education reform statute clearly states the following:

- The SBE’s new guidelines must provide guidance on the use of multiple indicators of student academic growth in teacher evaluations, consider control factors tracked by the statewide public school information system that may influence teacher performance ratings, and establish minimum requirements for teacher evaluation instruments and procedures.
- Local and regional boards of education must develop and implement teacher evaluation programs consistent with guidelines established by the SBE.
- An evaluation of teachers and administrators should include, but need not be limited to, strengths, areas needing improvement, strategies for improvement, and multiple indicators of student academic growth.

To ensure effective execution of the reform mandate, the statutes included the establishment of PEAC and charged it with assisting the SBE in the development of new evaluation guidelines and a data collection and evaluation support system. The statute also specifies that PEAC members must meet at least once every three months and must consist of the state Commissioners of Education and Higher Education or their designees, representatives from the CABE, the CAPSS, the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, the CEA, the AFTCT, and others selected by the Commissioner of Education, including representatives from higher education and performance evaluation experts. Showing their commitment to education reform, in July 2011, Connecticut’s legislature enacted [Public Act 11-135](#) requiring that PEAC expedite the process so that new guidelines become effective by July 1, 2012—a year sooner than originally planned. For a list of PEAC members and PEAC meeting schedule, see [Appendices 3.2 and 3.3](#).

Connecticut moved to embark on this important reform initiative on the heels of the CSDE’s Race to the Top (RTTT) application not being approved for federal education reform funding in March 2010. At the time of the RTTT application, the CSDE had a strong commitment to pursue reform, and it submitted a good plan with what it considered the most achievable goals at the time. Since then, the CSDE has taken major steps forward in revamping its system. PEAC consists of leading educators and policymakers in the state, strongly committed to fulfilling their statutory mandate to reform the teacher and administrator evaluation system. PEAC’s rigorous working schedule, its experienced leadership, strategic course of action, and concrete goals reflect not only the same level of commitment but also the clear strategy and strong capacity necessary to make this undertaking a great success. As the CSDE wrote this request, its policy advisors, education experts, and stakeholders were already well on their way to finalizing the guidelines, evaluation frameworks and implementation plans. Information about PEAC’s working schedule, presentations and other related materials can be found on the [CSDE website](#).

As outlined in Governor Malloy’s recent education reform proposal and as adopted by the SBE, districts will be allowed to develop local evaluation and support systems consistent with state

guidelines or adopt state-developed models. If a district does not develop a local evaluation and support system or fails to win approval by the state for its proposed models, the district will be required to use the state model. Under the evaluation framework adopted by the SBE, multiple indicators of student learning account for a substantial portion of an educator's evaluation, giving student achievement the priority it deserves. This approach will ensure that across the state, districts have common and high expectations, and educators are evaluated in a fair and consistent way.

Districts will also be required to provide effective and job-embedded professional development. This professional development must focus on strengths and needs identified through the CSDE's evaluation system. Under the new system, districts will have greater flexibility to design and deliver customized professional development based upon evaluation data and focused on each teacher's needs. Educators will benefit from a system of continuous feedback and professional improvement delivered by coaches, mentors, and peers in teams and small groups. In exchange for that flexibility, districts will be held accountable for providing effective professional development, especially to the teachers who have the greatest need for support.

The Governor's proposal also seeks to reform tenure laws in a way that reflects the importance of student performance-centered evaluation. The CSDE proposes that tenure be earned on the basis of solid practice, rather than time on the job, so that tenure is a mark of distinction within the profession. The proposal defines ineffectiveness, not only incompetence, as a cause for termination, while also creating an accelerated tenure process for exemplary teachers. When dismissals must occur, proposed reforms streamline the time and reduce the cost required to uphold the CSDE's commitment to due process.

With the proposed new requirements, the CSDE is aware of potentially overburdening districts, especially smaller ones with limited resources. The state has therefore included in this plan a measure of mandate relief by providing ready-to-use state model for those districts that want to adopt them while letting other districts develop and submit their own models for state review and approval. This process enables districts that have already reformed their evaluation systems to continue using them, provided they meet state standards.

### **Connecticut's Plan of Action**

Over the past year, the CSDE has been executing a plan to develop the new evaluation systems. The plan is guided by a set of seven goals and extends beyond the development of the guidelines alone. To date, the CSDE is near completion of goal 1 and has done a substantial amount of work under goals 2 and 3.

**Goal 1. Involve Districts in Baseline Assessment of Evaluation Systems.** The CSDE began the guidelines development process in January 2011 with a stakeholder engagement effort involving the local education authorities. The CSDE sent out a survey to all districts across the state, including approximately 200 districts, private schools, and charter schools, seeking their

input on a number of issues related to teacher and administrator evaluation systems. The CSDE called those districts and schools that did not respond and encouraged submission as soon as possible. The CSDE tabulated and analyzed the feedback and posted a [summary of the survey](#) on the state website to share with the public and stakeholders.

**Goal 2. Develop Guidelines Document for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation.** In February 2012, PEAC and the SBE took significant action toward the completion of this goal with the adoption of the required evaluation framework. PEAC has made a number of important decisions concerning the guidelines, including the principles guiding CSDE policies, lessons learned from state best practices, and most importantly, the Connecticut design approach, which is discussed in more detail later in this document. The CSDE is implementing the following three major activities over the next three months:

- 1) Reviewing the Common Core of Leading, Common Core of Teaching (CCT), Connecticut Standards for School Leaders (SSL), and the 1999 Guidelines for Teacher and School Leader Evaluation and Professional Development to develop the guiding framework;
- 2) Reviewing current research and literature on teacher and administrator evaluation issues; and
- 3) Researching and deliberating on key issues, such as student achievement measures and the fairness, reliability, and validity of these measures.

The CSDE expects to complete the work under this goal by April 2012.

**Goal 3. Build Out Guiding Frameworks for Model Teacher Evaluation Program.** In February 2012, PEAC and the SBE took significant action toward the completion of this goal with the adoption of the required evaluation framework. This framework specifies:

- 1) A new model for evaluating educators that includes, but is not limited to, multiple indicators of student academic growth using summative, formative, interim, and benchmark assessment results that would establish a body of evidence. To consider indicators of student learning, the following assessment tools are being considered: CMT Vertical Scales (grades 3 to 8), the Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System, district student growth measures, grades K–2 interim assessments (math, science, and reading), the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Other examples of student learning indicators include teacher-developed assessments, portfolios of student work, and student learning objectives. Student learning objectives are used to determine student progress based on outcomes and objectives determined by the teacher, often in conjunction with the principal or other school administrator. The CSDE will also consider indicators for both individually attributed growth to evaluate a teacher’s contribution to their assigned students’ academic progress and collectively attributed growth to evaluate the contribution a group of educators makes to its students’ academic progress. PEAC’s working group will provide guidance on the development of the above, and the SBE will build out its approved and required framework with these elements explained and/or included.

- 2) To further develop the guiding frameworks, the CSDE is reviewing:
  - a) How the new statewide system of teacher evaluation and professional development relates to evaluation based on the CCT (2010);
  - b) Methods of measuring teacher effectiveness that the CSDE can monitor and report on quantitatively on an annual basis;
  - c) A statewide data reporting system to collect annual teacher evaluation data based on the methods and performance criteria established; and
  - d) Professional development and training for administrators and principals targeted at both supporting the development of teachers and evaluating their effectiveness.

**Goal 4. Build Out Guiding Frameworks for Model Administrator Evaluation Program.** Most of the activities under this goal will take place between March and July 2012 and will be based on the evaluation framework adopted by the SBE in February 2012. The CSDE's charge here is to develop guiding frameworks for the following:

- 1) A new statewide system of administrator and principal evaluation and professional development as it relates to administrative evaluation based on the new Connecticut SSL and the Connecticut Common Core of Leading (2009);
- 2) Methods of measuring administrator and principal effectiveness based on the criteria above that the CSDE can monitor and report on quantitatively on an annual basis;
- 3) A statewide data reporting system to collect annual administrator and principal evaluation data based on the methods and performance criteria established; and
- 4) Training for district superintendents and administrators targeted to supporting and evaluating school-based administrators and principals.

**Goal 5. Advisory Teacher Evaluation Work Group to Develop Performance Criteria and Rubrics.** A teacher evaluation work group will be established to advise on the development and implementation of the teacher evaluation system. The CSDE anticipates that members will start meeting in March 2012 and perform their tasks through July 2012. The charge for the teacher work group is to assist in the development of performance criteria, rubrics, and other tools based upon the CCT standards and aligned with PEAC measures of effectiveness with a range for guiding evaluation decisions about teacher effectiveness. Frameworks for evaluations of teachers for ELLs and students with disabilities will be part of the teacher work group's agenda.

**Goal 6. Advisory Administrator Evaluation Work Group to Develop Performance Criteria and Rubrics.** The administrators' working group will be established to advise the CSDE on the development and implementation of the administrator evaluation system. The CSDE anticipates that members will start meeting in March 2012 and perform their tasks through June 2012. The charge for the administrator work group is to develop performance criteria, rubrics, and other tools based upon administrator standards and aligned with PEAC measures of effectiveness with a range for guiding evaluation decisions about administrator and principal effectiveness, using student academic growth measure(s) as criteria.

**Goal 7. Advisory Pupil Services and Implementation Work Groups.** The advisory pupil services work group will develop recommendations for the evaluation and support system for support

staff. The CSDE will also convene an implementation work group to assist the SBE in the development of rollout procedures and timelines. Members will start meeting in March 2012 and perform their tasks through June 2012.

### **Development Plan and Timeline**

The table below provides a high-level summary of the Connecticut plan for the development of evaluation and support systems across the state:

*Table 3.1: Development of Guidelines and Implementation of New Evaluation and Support Systems*

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Accountable Party</b>	<b>Completed By</b>
PEAC determines guidelines, design approach, and core requirements for state and local evaluation systems.	PEAC members	January 2012
The SBE adopts core guidelines for district evaluation systems.	The CSDE and the SBE	February 2012
Work groups convene and finalize state model and implementation plans.	PEAC members	March–June 2012
Districts apply for voluntary pilot program.	District and the CSDE	April 2012
The CSDE reviews draft state model, finalizes guidelines, and plans for a pilot in 2012–13 school year.	CSDE leadership and staff	June 2012
The CSDE seeks educators’ feedback on the state model.	CSDE staff	June 2012
The CSDE submits the state model and guidelines for the SBE to review and approve.	CSDE leadership	July 2012
The SBE adopts and issues new guidelines for teacher and administrator evaluations.	SBE members	July 2012
CSDE and district staff trained for pilot district implementation of new evaluation systems.	CSDE and district leadership	July–August 2012
Connecticut launches voluntary pilot district implementation of new evaluation systems.	CSDE and districts	Fall 2012
All districts not participating in the pilot develop a new teacher and administrator evaluation system that meets state standards and requirements.	District leadership	Fall 2012–Winter 2012–13
Training takes place for evaluators on how to use the new teacher and administrator evaluation systems.	CSDE and district leadership	Summer 2013

Activities	Accountable Party	Completed By
All districts must have in place an evaluation system that includes processes to report, review, and use evaluation data to support teachers and administrators in professional development with a goal to improve the quality of instruction and ultimately student learning.	CSDE and district leadership	Fall 2013

### PEAC Achievements

Prior to the historic agreement on evaluation guidelines, PEAC completed the following tasks:

**1. Principles for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Systems.** PEAC took the important step of adopting the principles that will guide the development of the evaluation systems at local district levels and inform policy decisions. Below are the ten principles PEAC adopted:

- 1) The primary purpose of evaluation is to strengthen individual and collective practices to improve student learning.
- 2) Evaluation systems should include multiple indicators of student academic growth and development while taking into account measurable student characteristics.
- 3) Evaluation systems should be standards-based using the CCT, state-adopted leadership standards, etc.
- 4) When weaknesses are identified, the educator should seek resources and support, including peer assistance and resource opportunities and support provided by the district.
- 5) Local district evaluation plans should be developed collaboratively by educators and administrators.
- 6) Professional learning plans should reflect the needs of individuals and groups of educators identified through the evaluation process.
- 7) Evaluation systems should include opportunities for formative assessments, summative assessments, and self-evaluation.
- 8) Districts should provide regular and ongoing professional learning opportunities and allocate time for educators and evaluators to collaborate to promote effective implementation of the evaluation plan.
- 9) Evaluation plans should include a process for resolving disputes in cases in which the educator and evaluator disagree on goal setting, formative or summative evaluation, and/or the improvement plan.
- 10) Districts should review and revise their evaluation plans at least every five years, using current research and best practice.

**2. Design Approach for Evaluation and Support Systems.** To select the design approach, PEAC closely considered various approaches for how districts may develop their teacher and administrator evaluation system using the guidelines the CSDE provides. The CSDE looked at approaches that other states commonly use, such as the following:

- 1) A *prescriptive approach* uses specific percentages for multiple measures of student growth, teacher observation, and other components;
- 2) A *moderate approach* with minimum requirements provides approved components for evaluation and minimum percentages for some components;
- 3) A *state “default” approach with local development option*, which offers well-developed state model with an opt-out approval process for district-designed systems that meet core requirements.

In December 2011, PEAC reached consensus that the third option was the best approach for Connecticut. In February 2012, the SBE adopted a required evaluation framework to guide the development of the state and local evaluation and support systems. The CSDE will return to the board with a recommendation on fully specified state model for use by districts that do not choose to create their own evaluation system or whose proposals do not meet the state’s core requirements.

**3. State Model Evaluation Systems for Teachers and Administrators.** While deliberating on the teacher evaluation components that will be required of all local evaluation models and the state model, PEAC members looked at the components commonly used by state and local education authorities across the country in evaluating teachers: 1) observations of teacher practice, 2) indicators of professional responsibility, 3) peer feedback, 4) student feedback, 5) parent feedback, and 6) multiple indicators of student learning.

With the understanding that observations are a near-universal component of teacher evaluation systems, much of the discussion on observations focused on the frequency and length of observation, on who conducts them, and on how to ensure evaluators have proper training. PEAC members recognized that teachers are likely to improve their performance with appropriate and quality feedback and that observations can be a good way to provide that feedback. Most of the CSDE’s advisors agreed that observations should be conducted multiple times each year and by more than just the school principal. The CSDE’s next step is to look at available research to understand the purpose of observations and to determine what good instruction looks like. These materials will go into observation rubrics and training materials for evaluators.

On peer feedback, the sentiment among the CSDE’s advisors was that teachers particularly appreciate hearing from their colleagues, and many do a great deal of learning among their peers. Student and parent feedback was also seen as an important element of learning for teachers and administrators, provided they are collected regularly and systematically.

Student learning is considered one of the more important components of teacher evaluation, and the question remains what indicators to use. The CSDE’s research on effective practices shows that it is important to include multiple indicators of student learning as they capture a range of teaching behaviors and ensure more effective evaluations for a broader range of teachers, not just those in select subjects and grades. The CSDE believes effective evaluation

systems use indicators that are fair, valid, reliable, and useful. Those will be the qualities the CSDE looks for in selecting indicators.

In January and February 2012, PEAC reached an agreement on the components and weighting for teacher and principal evaluation systems, as described in prior sections.

PEAC is currently working out the details of the observation rubrics, including their frequency and length as well as the survey tools that districts and schools may use to collect data on student, parent, and peer feedback. One of the issues PEAC members are addressing is how to measure student achievement for non-tested grades and subjects. The CSDE is researching and learning from states that have addressed this issue before as it determines the appropriate approach.

**4. Core Requirements for District-Developed Evaluation and Support Systems.** PEAC has also done considerable work on the core requirements that districts must meet when developing their own evaluation and support systems. The requirements include issues such as what process districts take to develop evaluation systems and their implementation plan, what constitutes high-quality observations, what are the appropriate sources of student learning indicators, what is appropriate training for evaluators, and what are appropriate professional development strategies. Below is a summary of the core requirements adopted by the SBE:

- 1) Four-level rating system: Teachers and administrators will be rated at four levels: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, and Below Standard.
- 2) High-quality observations of performance and practice:
  - a) District guidelines will require that i) observations are rated against a standards-based rubric, ii) observations result in useful feedback, and iii) evaluators receive training in observation and scoring and how to provide high-quality feedback.
  - b) The state model will provide i) the number and duration of formal vs. informal observations, ii) pre- and post-conference specifics, and iii) detailed observation rubrics tied to the Connecticut teaching and leadership standards.
  - c) Annual reviews will be required, but the number of observations per year should ultimately be adjusted based on new performance ratings.
- 3) Multiple student learning indicators:
  - a) District guidelines will require i) multiple indicators that are fair, valid, reliable, and useful; ii) a minimum number of indicators for all educators; iii) safeguards for student characteristics, attendance, and mobility; and iv) an explanation of how these indicators will be selected and assessed throughout the school year.
  - b) District guidelines will provide examples of acceptable student learning indicators while the state model will provide specific multiple student learning indicators that can be used for teachers of different grades and subjects.
- 4) Other evaluation components:
  - a) District guidelines will require that student, parent, peer, community, or staff surveys used are fair, valid, reliable, and useful.
  - b) The state model will provide specific surveys that districts can adopt if they so choose.

- c) Training for evaluators: Training will be provided for all evaluators in summer 2012; the CSDE will train district staff, but will also build the capacity of local partners, especially RESCs, to provide training.
- 5) Evaluation-based professional development:
  - a) District guidelines will require that high-quality professional development accompany the evaluation system so educators receive useful feedback and improvement opportunities.
  - b) State model will provide specific examples of effective evaluation-based professional development for educators.
- 6) State review of evaluation and support systems developed by districts.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.A.2)** Does the SEA’s plan include sufficient involvement of teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines?

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

To engage their involvement in the process, the CSDE included educators and administrators in PEAC. Through this advisory council, educators and administrators or their representatives are not only voicing their needs, concerns, and opinions on all matters, but they are also actively participating in the development of the guidelines, designing the evaluation models, and planning the implementation of the new systems. As discussed above, PEAC is currently executing on its action plan with a goal to introduce the guidelines by July 2012. As PEAC works on various components of the guidelines, members spend a large amount of time reviewing research, listening to state and national experts on teacher evaluation, and discussing the issues and challenges they currently face at the local level. Once the decisions regarding components and indicators have been discussed with the members, the CSDE intends to convene separate workgroups representing teachers, administrators, and pupil service staff to develop performance criteria, rubrics, and other tools based upon the CCT, Connecticut’s teacher standards, and the Common Core of Learning, Connecticut’s leader standards.

Connecticut has sought, and will continue to seek, the involvement of teachers, administrators, and district personnel. The CSDE conducted a superintendent survey last fall, which was issued to better understand the agency’s strengths and weaknesses.

In addition, the CSDE has consulted with and engaged the involvement of teachers’ unions to seek feedback for incorporation into policy decisions at every stage of guideline development thus far, through representation on PEAC and individual meetings with representatives.

Outside of PEAC, the CSDE is engaging a broader network of stakeholder groups for input. The Consultation section includes a complete list of groups and activities the CSDE has done or will be doing to seek comments and feedback from its stakeholders. The stakeholder groups the CSDE is continuing to consult with in the next six months are parents, community-based organizations, students, advocates for ELLs, advocates for students with disabilities, business

organizations, the general public, the Connecticut Committee of Practitioners, civil rights groups, and legislators.

At the public comment sessions held in early February at the CSDE’s regional facility in Middletown, the CSDE presented PEAC’s plan and latest progress to an audience consisting of teachers, superintendents, parents, and representatives of the community and of research organizations. The feedback the CSDE received mainly concerned three issues: 1) how to evaluate non-classroom teachers, 2) how student learning is measured, and 3) how to ensure that the process is not burdensome to teachers. PEAC is convening three evaluation workgroups to develop separate models for administrators, teachers, and support staff. The CSDE anticipates that the evaluation for non-classroom teachers will be addressed by either the teacher or support staff group. As for measuring student learning growth, the state requirements, which have just been approved by the SBE, will also specify that of the 45% that these account for in a teacher’s performance, half (or 22.5%) must be based on the state test or a standardized test in grades and subjects for which no state test exists while the other half must include other reliable and valid qualitative measures. Finally, to address the concern that the system will be burdensome for teachers, the CSDE clarified that it plans to provide additional resources to support the implementation of the new evaluation system and associated professional development. Specifically, if approved, the legislative package will include \$2.5 million for technical assistance for districts as they develop their own evaluation systems and \$5 million for professional development support before the implementation of the evaluation system.

### 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.

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.1)** Is the SEA’s process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA’s adopted guidelines likely to lead to high-quality local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.2)** Does the SEA have a process for reviewing and approving an LEA’s teacher and principal evaluation and support systems to ensure that they are consistent with the SEA’s guidelines and will result in the successful implementation of such systems?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.3)** Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that an LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems with the involvement of teachers and principals?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.4)** Did the SEA describe the process it will use to ensure that all

measures used in an LEA’s evaluation and support systems are valid, meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA (i.e., process for ensuring inter-rater reliability)?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.5)** Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that teachers working with special populations of students, such as students with disabilities and English Learners, are included in the LEA’s teacher and principal evaluation and support systems?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.6)** Is the SEA’s plan likely to be successful in ensuring that LEAs meet the timeline requirements by either (1) piloting evaluation and support systems no later than the 2013–2014 school year and implementing evaluation and support systems consistent with the requirements described above no later than the 2014–2015 school year; or (2) implementing these systems no later than the 2013–2014 school year?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.7)** Do timelines reflect a clear understanding of what steps will be necessary and reflect a logical sequencing and spacing of the key steps necessary to implement evaluation and support systems consistent with the required timelines?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.8)** Is the SEA plan for providing adequate guidance and other technical assistance to LEAs in developing and implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems likely to lead to successful implementation?

**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (3.B.9)** Is the pilot broad enough to gain sufficient feedback from a variety of types of educators, schools, and classrooms to inform full implementation of the LEA’s evaluation and support systems?

The shared vision and collective effort of Connecticut’s educators, administrators, and policymakers, coupled with the support of the CSDE’s stakeholders, including teachers, principals, and superintendents, are driving this reform forward. However, the CSDE must acknowledge the importance of execution and the need for a thoughtful process in place to ensure the implementation achieves the same level of rigor and success. As the CSDE considers its plans for successful implementation, its approach is to support districts with tools, information, training, and support while holding local leaders accountable with clear timelines, processes, and requirements. The CSDE believes local ownership is critical to statewide success; to encourage that ownership, Connecticut has to offer the right balance between support and accountability.

PEAC is establishing a working group specifically charged with advising the state on the implementation of the pilot and rollout of the new evaluation systems. PEAC is also finishing its main charge concerning the development of the state model and the core requirements for the new system. The CSDE expects that by July 2012, Connecticut will have:

- 1) Adopted and issued new guidelines for teacher and administrative evaluations;
- 2) Made state model evaluation systems available to districts for the evaluation of teachers, principals, and other support personnel, and for districts that choose not to

adopt the state model, made available the core requirements that govern the content, process, and standards for all evaluation systems developed by districts;

- 3) Collected feedback from teachers and principals on the state model and core requirements through a series of forums on the subject; and
- 4) Developed and begun to execute on an implementation plan for Connecticut’s rollout of new evaluation systems that includes a timeline, a pilot, training plans, a procedure for capturing educators’ feedback, and a state review and approval process.

### **Implementation Plan**

The finalization of the rollout plan will be enabled through the assistance of a PEAC working group. Direct responsibility for rolling out the new evaluation systems falls to the Bureau of Certification and Evaluation—also known as the Talent Office—a new unit created through the CSDE reorganization process and headed by the Chief Talent Officer. The CSDE anticipates that the plan will consist of the following key components:

**1. State Review and Approval Process.** The CSDE review of district evaluation systems is critical to ensuring that Connecticut’s evaluation systems allow for local development but are fair and consistent across the state. While the CSDE will provide clear guidance, a set of core requirements, and specific instructions regarding the process, a review and approval process will ensure that the district evaluation systems meet the state standards and that the systems were developed with the involvement of teachers and principals as well as input from other stakeholders. Criteria for approval and guidance for reviewers to assess the local models will be based on the guidelines, the core requirements, and the implementation guide.

The CSDE will focus its review of the local systems on the following aspects:

- 1) Whether the key components of the evaluation system comply with the core requirements and state standards (e.g., percentage accounted for by student learning growth vs. percentage accounted for by observations);
- 2) Whether indicators of teacher and principal performance, including multiple indicators of student learning, are valid, fair, reliable, and useful;
- 3) Whether the district involves teachers, principals, and other stakeholders in the development process; and
- 4) Whether the systems are designed with a level of consistency that enables the CSDE to compare evaluation results across jurisdictions.

The CSDE expects that the state review and approval process will not take more than six to eight weeks, and districts will have an opportunity to submit a revised system based on the feedback if their first submission is not approved. Reviews will be done by either the CSDE Talent Office or a panel of state and local experts.

**2. Timeline for Districts to Develop and Adopt New Evaluation Systems.** Connecticut’s Public Act 10-111 (Sec. 4 Section 10-151b) mandates that all districts develop and implement teacher

evaluation programs consistent with the guidelines established by the SBE. It stopped short of imposing a deadline for districts.

At the state level, the CSDE is working with the following implementation timeline:

- March 2012: Planning completed for implementation of pilot and rollout
- April 2012: Districts submit application for pilot participation
- July 2012: SBE adopts new guidelines for teacher and administrator evaluations
- July–August 2012: Training for piloting districts and first group of evaluators
- Fall 2012: Pilot implementation starts in 10 to 20 districts
- July–September 2013: Training for remaining evaluators and district personnel
- September 2013: Full rollout of new evaluation systems across the state; districts adopt state model or develop their own
- September 2014: All districts have in place a high-quality evaluation system that meets state requirements and proves to be effective for teachers and administrators.

To ensure that all districts have an appropriate evaluation system in place or piloted by the 2013–14 school year, the CSDE Talent Office plans to issue a separate timeline for districts with specific milestones and deadlines. The CSDE will anticipate and address issues typically causing delays—such as human resource constraints, unforeseen political obstacles, and underestimation of the workload—as well as identify the risks and dependencies to address them as they arise.

A timeline for the district process will include the following steps:

- 1) Development of effectiveness criteria;
- 2) Development of indicators for effectiveness criteria;
- 3) Development of populations and groupings to be evaluated with effectiveness criteria;
- 4) Development of a training and implementation plan;
- 5) Development of a communication plan;
- 6) Assembly and production of all data for effectiveness criteria;
- 7) Development of observation processes and data collection methods;
- 8) Implementation of the system; and
- 9) A milestone by which a percentage of total evaluated teachers and principals will receive a rating.

### **3. Technical Assistance for Districts.**

**1) A Strong and Effective Communication Strategy.** The CSDE anticipates much of the communication about the implementation of new evaluation systems will begin before the actual activities take place. This is necessary to facilitate successful implementation and effective change management. A communication plan will be developed to articulate the reform vision to local leadership and stakeholders, keep them abreast of the implementation plan and timeline, and set goals and targets for achievements. It will outline the process for the pilot implementation, training plans, and the process for developing a district evaluation

system. Another important aspect of the communication plan is to create a knowledge transfer process whereby district leadership and stakeholders have access to the information and lessons that members of PEAC and the CSDE learned throughout the development and implementation planning process. Finally, there is a component of statewide education that the CSDE aims to achieve with this communication plan. The introduction of the new evaluation systems is not simply a change on paper, but a transformative change that affects how teachers and administrators work and how they align their work to students' learning goals. This is an important message the CSDE wants to get across to teachers, principals, and support personnel who will be managed under the new evaluation frameworks.

On a more practical level, the communication plan will also allow the CSDE to address questions and concerns early in the process to ensure seamless coordination and execution of activities throughout implementation.

Means of communication that the CSDE believes are effective include the following:

- Direct e-mails from state and CSDE leadership;
- Telephone access to a designated helpline at the Bureau of Certification and Evaluation;
- Online communication channels, including a dedicated e-mail address (e.g., [evaluation.help@ct.gov](mailto:evaluation.help@ct.gov)) and an online inquiry form;
- A section of the CSDE website will be dedicated solely to the launch of the new guidelines and implementation, including features such as FAQs and an Ask Your Peers forum, to encourage horizontal experience sharing and cross-learning; and
- Regular updates sent out to local levels by e-mail or website announcements.

The CSDE's goal is to make sure its communication tools meet the following requirements:

- Have enough channels to reach target audiences (such as e-mail, online forms, or helpline telephone numbers).
- Have a means for timely, effective delivery of information up, down, and across levels (e.g., teachers must have a way to communicate directly with the SBE and the CSDE without having to go through their internal chain of communication).
- Have a means to alert responsible parties, track status of inquiries, and collect and store information communicated for analysis and feedback.

The CSDE will look at publishing communication materials both in print and online as well as in different formats such as PowerPoint presentations, FAQs, instructional videos, and toolkits.

**2) Training and Implementation Support for Districts.** The CSDE's training program is expected to leverage both direct training of evaluators and district personnel by the state (in conjunction with external partners) and a train-the-trainer component to generate district-based training capacity for future support needs. The CSDE will start a training program as soon as summer of 2012 with evaluators, using the state model and state recommended observation rubrics. Training will also be provided this summer to superintendents, administrators, and principals of districts participating in the pilot on how to apply the new guidelines and frameworks to

develop local evaluation systems. The remainder of the training will take place in the summer of 2013 and will be informed by the lessons learned from the training in pilot districts. The CSDE will explore partnering with its regional partners, SERC and RESCs, to train evaluators. This partnership will enable the CSDE to benefit from SERC and the RESCs experience with providing professional development to schools and districts.

The indicators that the CSDE will track to measure the success of its training efforts may include the following:

- 1) The percentage of teachers and administrators at the district level who receive training;
- 2) The percentage of district-level staff who are attending training; and
- 3) Survey data to gauge whether attendees know what they need to know to implement the new evaluation system after the training takes place.

In addition to training, the CSDE will establish a team of implementation support personnel (outside consultants or district personnel involved in the pilots) to assist districts on an ongoing basis. Often, the real learning takes place long after the training sessions end, when participants begin applying the knowledge to the tasks back at their work. They will no doubt have questions and concerns and continue to require support. This helpline is critical to ensure a successful rollout. Modalities of helpline support may include a regular question-and-answer session with CSDE personnel held by conference call or webinar that is open to all district and school personnel.

**3) *Materials to Accompany Training and for Districts to Use.*** Under the Connecticut approach, districts can choose to develop their own evaluation systems or use the state model. Depending on which option the districts choose, the CSDE anticipates that they will need different kinds of support. For those that use the state model, they will need help conducting the evaluations and incorporating the task into regular activities. Those who choose to develop their own, however, will need technical support with both the development and implementation processes.

The CSDE will provide written instructions to guide the districts through the process of developing and implementing a new teacher and administrator evaluation system. In addition, to ensure that districts proceed successfully, the CSDE will provide content and process-related materials in a ready-to-use format for district and school leaders. These will include:

- A state model for teacher evaluation, principal evaluation, and evaluation of support personnel that include validated indicators;
- An implementation guide, including examples of acceptable performance indicators and effective evaluation-based professional development;
- PowerPoint presentations or FAQs that district and school leaders use for training and communication purposes. The availability of these materials will help to ensure the key information and messages are delivered accurately to teachers, educators, and administrators at local levels. They also save local leaders time from recreating what the state has done;
- Various forms and worksheets that may be helpful to the process of developing and implementing the new evaluation system; and

- Guidance for how districts can pass the state review and approval process if they choose to develop their own evaluation system.

**4) Ensuring Meaningful Measures and a Strong Data System.** By establishing the state review and approval process and providing districts with technical support and materials to use in the development of local systems, the CSDE builds into its process mechanisms to ensure the performance measures are valid and meaningful in improving teachers’ and administrators’ quality as well as student learning.

The insight on how effective the system is and whether performance measures provide meaningful feedback also depends on how data are collected, processed, and used by the school and district leaders and managers. The CSDE believes this important and often-overlooked step in the reform process requires thinking and careful execution.

Currently, the CSDE manages all education-related data it collects on student performance through tests and from school districts in a new data warehouse, formally known as the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Connecticut legislation (Public Act 10-111) specifically mandated that by July 1, 2013, the CSDE must expand the current statewide public school information systems to “track and report data relating to student, teacher and school and district performance growth and make such information available to local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating educational performance and growth of teachers and students.”

In August 2010, the CSDE launched a website called Connecticut Education Data and Research ([CEDaR](#)) to provide the public with access to the data. The CSDE keeps the SLDS database current by enabling direct feeds of student-related data from various sources. Teachers’ data, which are reported at the individual level and include data regarding years of experience, degree earned, and assignment, are maintained in a different source called the Certified Staff File. The CSDE uses this file to make determinations about whether a teacher is highly qualified pursuant to the NCLB Act, but it also uploads the data from this file into the warehouse described above.

The CSDE is currently updating the data warehouse to link teachers’ information with the students they teach and to make available student transcript data, including courses taken and grades earned. Access to performance data will be disparate depending on the role of users. The CSDE plans to make the same data tools available to all users, but data accessibility should be customized for different user types as follows:

- CSDE personnel responsible for teacher and principal evaluations can access all data;
- District directors can see all observation data in their district and statewide benchmarks;
- Principals can see the observation forms for all teachers in their schoolwide and districtwide benchmarks;
- Evaluators can see only the observations forms for which they are responsible; and
- Teachers can see only their own observation data and districtwide benchmarks.

Once the students and teachers' and administrators' performance data are linked, the next step is to define how the system should serve performance management activities. The CSDE's goals are to:

- Provide responsible personnel at state, district, and school levels with reports to use in monitoring completion status and results associated with evaluations;
- Enable school principals to access teacher evaluation data by individual teacher or by group for professional development purposes;
- Enable teachers to view their own evaluation data, including observation forms, scores, and effectiveness rating; and
- Provide overall scores based on observation data that evaluators submit and data on student learning and other indicators.

**5) Change Management and Performance Management Support.** As Connecticut rolls out a new evaluation system, the CSDE anticipates the need for change management and performance management support at the district level. Even with the stakeholder engagement the CSDE has conducted, the introduction of new evaluation frameworks is likely to require a shift in thinking and practice at various levels. For some districts, the change represents modifications to mission and strategy. For some, the new evaluation models require operational changes, such as new technology, new processes, or new skills. And for others, the new systems may signify a shift in values and philosophies. Across the board, they will affect how teachers, administrators, and support staff work with each other, how they manage their own work, and how they define their success or failure in helping students improve learning.

The change management will be done partly through communication, for which a strategy is outlined in the beginning of this section. In addition, the CSDE Talent Office will explore using a combination of tools, techniques, and support to local leaders in data-driven performance management, that is, how to incorporate the use of data into their work and in showing benefits to productivity and student achievement. Though teacher evaluations are not new to Connecticut educators, the use of student learning and feedback data may pose a challenge to some in understanding what narratives and analyses they can draw from the data, how they can use the data for understanding individual educator effectiveness, and how they can begin to incorporate additional measures to drive their school-based implementation. The CSDE believes that educators may need some time to learn and understand what the growth and observation data is telling them about their students and their teachers and leaders. The CSDE needs a process and time for learning to take place as well as feedback and adjustment to occur.

The CSDE Talent Office may design a training program to accommodate this learning in the later stage of system implementation. The CSDE also anticipates the need to develop knowledge and skills at the state and district level that can lead a statewide effort in building a data-driven performance culture. The CSDE is engaging the expertise of organizations that are leaders in this field to further develop approaches in this area.

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**ESEA Flexibility Guidance Question (7)** Is the pilot broad enough to gain sufficient feedback from a variety of types of educators, schools, and classrooms to inform full implementation of the LEA’s evaluation and support systems?

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### **Pilot Implementation in Academic Year 2012–13**

The CSDE will conduct a pilot in 10 to 20 districts with two primary goals: 1) to test the components and requirements of the new evaluation systems (both the state model and local development of new systems); and 2) to identify districts’ needs for technical assistance and ongoing support, regardless of whether they choose the state model or design their own systems. The CSDE will also use the pilot to gain insight into whether the implementation plan for the full rollout in 2013–14 is appropriately designed.

Districts will be invited to apply for participation in the pilot in May 2012. Selected districts will go through training in the summer, with a goal to start developing a new evaluation system in September 2012. The CSDE will partner with industry-leading organizations that have successfully assisted other states to research best practices, design processes, and plan for the pilot.

Below are some features of the pilot implementation:

- **Pilot participation:** Districts are invited and selected based on the level of interest and readiness to ensure success. The CSDE will consider size, geography, performance, and capacity and to accommodate as broad a group as possible.
- **Communication:** Materials about the pilot will clearly state the goals, benefits, and responsibilities of participating districts. Throughout the process the CSDE will create reporting and communication channels to keep track of progress, address questions and concerns, and share lessons learned across piloting districts.
- **Data collection:** To achieve the goals mentioned above, data collection is critical. The Office of Talent will set up processes and tools to monitor and document aspects of the implementation process for learning and improving in the rollout. More importantly, the CSDE will work with pilot schools to collect the assessment data for the production of growth measures and the piloting of the student roster validation process. This will let the CSDE test assumptions about how different teaching structures (e.g., co-teaching, group teaching, looping) will or will not be allowed in the new evaluation system as well as for which subjects and grades will be counted and how.
- **Support:** Piloting sites will get regular on-site visits and check-ins by Office of Talent personnel.
- **Non-consequential outcome:** If the evaluation identifies underperforming teachers or administrators, these individuals will be reevaluated using the current system before any actions are taken. The CSDE wants to make sure everyone involved in the process, from evaluators to those being evaluated, understands the system first before it holds anyone accountable for the outcome.

**Conclusion**

It is well documented that the best predictor of student learning, achievement, and success is the quality of the teachers in the classroom, and that principals are uniquely pivotal players in ensuring schools' success. Without strong educators, Connecticut cannot reach its goals of preparing students for success in college and careers and achieving better results for all students, including ambitious levels of growth for the CSDE's lowest performers. The CSDE's adoption of evaluation guidelines and robust road map for implementation, as well as its commitment to continuously improving it with the input of educators, leaves Connecticut well positioned to provide educators with the meaningful evaluation and support system they deserve.

TO: Superintendents of Schools  
Charter School Leaders  
Magnet School Leaders

FROM: Stefan Pryor  
Commissioner of Education

DATE: January 3, 2012

SUBJECT: ESEA Waiver Flexibility

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) is inviting each State Educational Agency (SEA) to request flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, 2001(NCLB) on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity will provide Connecticut with flexibility related to Section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and the specific requirements of NCLB in exchange for a state-developed, rigorous and comprehensive plan designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity and improve the quality of instruction. Information about ESEA Flexibility can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/eSEA/flexibility>.

Connecticut will be applying to receive this ESEA flexibility waiver and must submit the request by February 21, 2012. This flexibility waiver is intended to build on and support the significant state and local reform efforts already under way in critical areas (discussed in further detail below) such as (1) transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; (2) developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and (3) evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness; and (4) reducing duplication and unnecessary burden. If granted this request, the USDE will waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for Connecticut through the 2013–2014 school year. Further details about Connecticut’s waiver application will be shared shortly through collaboration with CAPSS.

### **I. Waiver Flexibility**

Connecticut will apply for the following ESEA waivers:

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 CSDE will be requesting this waiver to develop new AMOs in order to provide schools and districts with 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 CSDE will be requesting 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 CSDE will be requesting 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 CSDE will be requesting 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 CSDE will be requesting this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions in its priority and focus schools that are based on the needs of students and designed to enhance the entire educational program, 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 CSDE will be requesting this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve priority and focus schools.***

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 CSDE will be requesting this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c) (2)(A) for any of the State's reward schools.***

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 CSDE will be requesting 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 CSDE will be requesting 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.***

10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g) (4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements.

***The CSDE will be requesting this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State's priority schools.***

11. 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 CSDE will be requesting 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.***

Prior to applying for waivers, the CSDE must have a notice and comment period for all interested parties and must submit all comments it receives to the USDE in its application for waivers. A required notice and comment period for all interested parties regarding the ESEA waiver will take place until February 15, 2012. Districts are invited to submit comments to [title1waivers@ct.gov](mailto:title1waivers@ct.gov).

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Michelle Rosado, Education Consultant, at [michellerosado@ct.gov](mailto:michellerosado@ct.gov) or 860-713-6748.

SP:mr

**Note: This notice to the public was posted on the CSDE website on January 12, 2012.**

## Connecticut ESEA Waiver Application Overview

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) is inviting each State Educational Agency (SEA) to request flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, 2001(NCLB) on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity will provide Connecticut with flexibility related to Section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and the specific requirements of NCLB in exchange for a state-developed, rigorous and comprehensive plan designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity and improve the quality of instruction. Information about ESEA Flexibility can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility>.

Connecticut will be applying to receive this ESEA flexibility waiver and must submit the request by February 21, 2012. This flexibility waiver is intended to build on and support the significant state and local reform efforts already under way in critical areas (discussed in further detail below) such as (1) transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; (2) developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and (3) evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness; and (4) reducing duplication and unnecessary burden. If granted this request, the USDE will waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for Connecticut through the 2013–2014 school year.

### **I. Waiver Flexibility**

Connecticut will apply for the following ESEA waivers:

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 CSDE will be requesting this waiver to develop new AMOs in order to provide schools and districts with 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.

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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 CSDE will be requesting 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)

January 12, 2012

programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116.

***The CSDE will be requesting 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 CSDE will be requesting this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions in its priority and focus schools that are based on the needs of students and designed to enhance the entire educational program, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.***

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***The CSDE will be requesting this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve priority and focus schools.***

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***The CSDE will be requesting this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c) (2)(A) for any of the State's reward schools.***

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 CSDE will be requesting 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 CSDE will be requesting 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.***

10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g) (4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements.

***The CSDE will be requesting this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State's priority schools.***

11. 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 CSDE will be requesting 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.***

## **II. Waiver Application Content**

In order to satisfy the three major elements of the waiver, the SDE is in the process of developing policy in the following areas:

(1) *Transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments:*

- Formally adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- Transition to CCSS through professional development and the creation and dissemination of instructional materials including curriculum crosswalks, unit planning templates, and pacing guides
- Governing member of SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (group working to create next-generation assessments aligned to CCSS); plan to adopt these assessments when available (projected: 2014-2015)

(2) *Developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support:*

- New goal to replace the NCLB goal of 100% proficiency by 2014; emphasis on student growth and narrowing the gap in achievement between subgroups
- State intervention in “Priority schools” (the lowest performing 5% of Title I schools in the state) to ensure they experience dramatic and sustained improvement
- State support for “Focus schools” (Title I schools that contribute the most to the state’s achievement gap) targeted to improve the performance of specific underperforming subgroups
- Recognition for “Reward schools” (high performing and high progress Title I schools that could be a model for other schools)

(3) *Evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness:*

- Guidelines promulgated by SDE developed with the assistance of the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (as required under SB 1160)
- LEA flexibility to develop system of evaluation consistent with state guidelines
- State model evaluation and support system as default
- Evaluation system based on multiple indicators of professional practice and student learning and is accompanied by opportunities for professional development and support
- Training for evaluators

(4) *Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden*

- Analysis of existing SBOE regulations to identify “red tape”
- Plans for removal of duplicative and burdensome reporting requirements with little or no impact on student outcomes.

## **III. ESEA Waiver Timeline:**

- *Early December:* Formal consultations begin with stakeholder groups regarding waiver content (e.g., transforming low performing schools and districts; teacher and administrator evaluation and support)
- *Mid-December:* SDE convenes internal working group for waiver
- *Late December:* UPD engaged to assist with drafting of waiver
- *Mid-January:* Preliminary draft
- *January 9th - February 15th:* Broad stakeholder engagement and input
- *Early February:* Revised draft
- *February 21:* Submission of final application

January 12, 2012

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education  
FROM: Mark K. McQuillan, Commissioner of Education  
SUBJECT: Common Core State Standards  
DATE: July 7, 2010

*Executive Summary*

**Background of Common Core Standards Development**

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a significant, historic opportunity for states to collectively develop and adopt a core set of academic standards in mathematics and English language arts. Forty-eight states, the District of Columbia and two United States territories committed to participate in the Common Core initiative to address the uneven quality of state standards across the nation, a high degree of student mobility across states, the increasing pressures of global competition and a need for students to obtain the skills needed to be successful in the 21st century workplace.

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were designed to meet specific criteria. Standards were designed to consist of fewer, clearer and high-level standards; to be aligned with college and work expectations; to include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher order thinking skills; to build upon the strengths and lessons of current state standards; to be internationally benchmarked so that all students will be prepared to succeed in our global economy; and to be based on evidence and research.

The standards were developed through an intensive process of national review and feedback at multiple levels. The initial college and career readiness standards were developed during the summer of 2009. After completion of these standards, a series of K-12 learning progressions occurred, including multiple rounds of feedback from states, teachers and validation committees. Multiple drafts of the CCSS were provided to states and the general public for feedback. Suggested improvements were processed by the developers and were incorporated into the final CCSS publication issued on June 2, 2010.

The English language arts standards require that students systematically develop knowledge of literature and in other disciplines through reading, writing, speaking and listening across the content areas. The standards progress across the K-12 continuum. Students are expected to develop reading comprehension skills and to apply them to increasingly complex texts. The K-12 standards require reading in literature and discipline-specific content areas. There are specific reading recommendations, including classic myths, stories from around the world, America's founding documents and foundational American literature.

The mathematics standards are designed to focus on developing students' understanding of mathematical concepts and acquisition of fundamental reasoning habits, in addition to fluency with skills. In grades K-5, students gain a foundation in whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions

and decimals. In the middle grades, students build upon this foundation through hands-on learning in geometry, algebra, probability and statistics. The high school standards require students to apply mathematical ways of thinking to real-world issues and challenges and emphasize the use of mathematical modeling.

The CCSS do not include standards for pre-kindergarten. Many leading early childhood experts and organizations believe that the inclusion of standards prior to kindergarten are necessary and fundamental to ensure that there is a strong transition between early childhood and public education. To that end, Connecticut is making plans to include pre-kindergarten standards into the final draft of its PreK-12 standards, which will be presented to the Board this fall.

### **Where We Stand to Date**

Connecticut is now poised to adopt and implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and mathematics as developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Governors Association and 48 participating states.

States competing for Race to the Top funding from the U.S. Department of Education are expected to adopt the CCSS by August 2, 2010, to receive maximum points on Assurance 1 of the application. Connecticut's Race to the Top Phase 2 application submitted on June 1, 2010, describes an inclusive adoption and implementation plan and indicates that adoption of the Common Core State Standards will be considered at the July 7, 2010, meeting of the State Board of Education. A state is considered to have adopted the standards when the standards-authorizing body within the state, in our case, the State Board of Education, has taken formal action to adopt the CCSS in its entirety, while leaving room for each state to add up to 15% of the total standards for each subject area. This supplementary work, which will continue over the summer and into the fall, will not be included in the vote to adopt on July 7, 2010.

How closely aligned are Connecticut's standards to the Common Core? An in-depth comparison of current Connecticut standards to the new Common Core Standards, summarized by the Power Point slides that accompany this memorandum, indicates a high degree of similarity between the two sets of standards. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has generated lists of CCSS that would be new to Connecticut, as well as lists of Connecticut standards that are not mirrored in the CCSS. In the coming months, decisions must be made about whether any Connecticut standards need to be added to the CCSS, beyond those already anticipated for inclusion for 3- and 4-year old students.

State adoption of the CCSS will result in positive changes to what is currently taught, when it is taught and how it is taught. Much work lies ahead in terms of teacher preparation, curriculum writing, professional development and upgrades to instructional materials. In preparation for these impending changes, the CSDE has already begun to engage Connecticut education stakeholders in examining the new CCSS and in planning a well-supported transition to their implementation. Actions to date have included (i) providing feedback to CCSS developers on two drafts; (ii) collaborating with the Alliance of Regional Educational Service Centers (RESA Alliance) to establish a long-term plan for CCSS rollout and implementation; (iii) collaborating with Achieve to conduct a comparison study of CCSS to Connecticut standards in English language arts and mathematics; and (iv) convening a Stakeholder Engagement Conference to raise awareness of the CCSS and elicit stakeholder input on the standards' quality and recommended transition supports. As the CSDE moves into the transition and implementation phase, we will continue to work closely with higher education, business and industry, and with family, community and social advocacy organizations to assure that the Common Core Standards are actualized in a way that improves student learning.

## Pre-Adoption Steps to Date

In the months leading up to the adoption recommendation to the Board, the CSDE has conducted a thorough Standards Comparison Study and a Stakeholder Engagement Conference to inform and engage the PK-20 education community, elicit their input and promote buy-in to the new standards.

- Comparison Study Description: In February 2010, the CSDE was invited to be one of several state education agencies to field test a web-based program being developed by Achieve, an independent, nonprofit education reform organization that is a partner in the Common Core Standards Initiative. A team of CSDE curriculum consultants met with representatives of Achieve on April 23, 2010, to learn to use the Common Core Comparison Tool (CCCT) and to suggest improvements for its further development. The tool analyzes matches made by state standards experts and generates reports summarizing the percentage of matches, the strength of each match and where there are grade-level differences.

On May 28, 2010, CSDE content specialists and representatives from Achieve brought together over 50 experts in Connecticut's English language arts and mathematics standards to use the tool to conduct the standards comparison study. Standards reviewers were recruited from RESCs and from school districts based on their deep knowledge of Connecticut standards and their ability to commit to two days' work. (See attached list of participants.)

Reviewers were divided into English language arts and math teams to look at standards for a grade span. They received training in the use of the online tool which displays each Common Core Standard, along with a list of all Connecticut standards and grade-level expectations (GLEs). Reviewers were asked to find matches and to rate the strength of those matches. First, pairs of reviewers worked together to identify a Connecticut standard or standards that were similar in their "essence" to each Common Core Standard. For each Common Core Standard, one of three possible judgments was made: an "Exact match," a "Collective match" or "No match." An exact match meant that the essence and the grade level were the same. A collective match meant that parts of two or more Connecticut standards, when taken together, would be similar to the Common Core Standard. "No match" meant that no Connecticut standard was judged to be essentially the same as the Common Core Standard. Second, the strength of each match was rated as either an "Excellent match," a "Good match" or a "Weak match." In short, the essence of each standard determines a match and the strength rating accounts for differences in verbiage or specificity.

- Comparison Study Results: Approximately 80 percent of the Common Core Standards match the Connecticut English language arts standards and 92 percent of the Common Core Standards match the Connecticut mathematics standards. Two hundred (200) CCSS in English language arts and 40 CCSS in mathematics are not currently included in Connecticut's current standards. Once adopted, the 240 standards will be new for Connecticut. Of the matched English language arts and mathematics standards, 68 percent were rated as "Excellent" or "Good" matches. Additional analyses of grade-level similarities and differences between CCSS and Connecticut standards were conducted. Results of these analyses will be used to inform the development of curriculum resources and teacher training.

Stakeholder Engagement Conference Description: On June 17, 2010, a CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference was held to share the results of the Comparison Study and to provide an opportunity for educators and other stakeholders from business and communities to provide their general impressions of the new CCSS and to recommend resources and support systems that will be needed for their effective implementation. An invitation was e-mailed to 180 stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, education organizations, higher education faculty, business leaders and community advocacy groups. Invitees were provided with a link to the CCSS and were asked to review either English language arts or

mathematics standards. The invitation included 10 prompts to guide the stakeholders' review and prepare them for group discussion at the conference. Those who attended responded to a set of individual stakeholder prompts at the conference; those who were unable to attend were provided with an opportunity to respond to the prompts electronically. Respondents indicated their level of agreement with the following statements:

#### INDIVIDUAL STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK PROMPTS

1)	Students meeting these core standards will be well prepared for success in college.
2)	The CCSS format is easy to follow.
3)	The CCSS are as rigorous as Connecticut standards in terms of higher order thinking skills.
4)	The CCSS represent a coherent progression of learning from grade-to-grade.
5)	The CCSS are as rigorous as Connecticut standards in terms of application of knowledge.
6)	The CCSS represent learning standards that are important for all students.
7)	Students meeting these core standards will be well prepared for post-high school success in the workplace.
8)	The CCSS embed 21st Century skills (i.e., communicating, collaborating, using technologies and solving problems creatively).
9)	The CCSS language is clear.
10)	The CCSS are developmentally appropriate for each grade.

The Stakeholder Engagement Conference was attended by 107 individuals. Of these, 64.4 percent represented school districts, 26.7 percent were from educational organizations and 8.9 percent represented higher education institutions. Of respondents representing a school district, 71.4 percent identified themselves as administrators and 28.7 percent identified themselves as teachers.

The agenda consisted of three parts: information from the CSDE regarding the importance of the Common Core Standards Initiative and its implications for Connecticut; group discussion of general impressions about the quality and rigor of the CCSS and the validity of the CCSS that will be new for Connecticut.

#### INDIVIDUAL STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK RESULTS:

The vast majority of respondents provided positive feedback regarding the CCSS. Respondents were most positive regarding the ability of the standards to prepare students for success in college, the ease of use of the CCSS format and the rigor of the CCSS in terms of higher order thinking skills. Over 95 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements relating to each of these topics.

#### GROUP CONSENSUS PROMPTS AND RESULTS:

- 1) Overall, the CCSS in [English language arts] or [Mathematics] that would be new for Connecticut are essential for college and career readiness.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS RESPONSES: 100 percent agree

MATHEMATICS RESPONSES: 100 percent agree

- 2) Overall, the CCSS in [English language arts] or [Mathematics] that would be new for Connecticut are reasonable expectations for the corresponding grade level.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS RESPONSES: 78 percent agree; 22 percent not sure

MATHEMATICS RESPONSES: 60 percent agree; 40 percent not sure

- 3) What information, resources or support systems will be needed for effective transition to, and implementation of, the CCSS?

Group responses to this question identified needs around professional development for higher education faculty, administrators and teachers, the importance of curriculum alignment at the district level and alignment with the other CSDE frameworks and existing resources. The importance of content-focused professional development was emphasized, especially for mathematics. Also requested were crosswalks between old and new standards, and a phase-in timeline. Respondents emphasized the importance of collaboration between K-12 teachers, administrators and faculty from higher educational institutions throughout the state in the implementation of CCSS.

4) What additional questions do you have concerning the adoption and transition to CCSS?

Responses called for information regarding linkages between the CCSS and the current GLEs, timeline for implementation and available funding to support the initiative. Decisions will have to be made regarding what will happen to current Connecticut pre-K standards, the current K-8 model mathematics curriculum and the GLEs not included in the CCSS. Respondents also asked for the involvement of higher education in the implementation of the standards and how to work with standards currently in the Connecticut standards but not in the CCSS.

### Recommendation and Justification

Results of the Standards Comparison Study indicate that there is a close alignment between the CCSS and Connecticut's current standards. Data collected from Connecticut education stakeholders shows strong support for the adoption of the CCSS and a belief that Connecticut students will benefit from these new standards. Most educators agree that the Common Core Standards are at least as rigorous as Connecticut's current standards and that the CCSS will prepare all students for college and careers. Based upon this data, I recommend that the State Board of Education adopt the Common Core State Standards in their entirety. Your approval of the CCSS will enhance Connecticut's chances of receiving a favorable score on our Race to the Top Phase 2 application, while establishing the foundation upon which we will collaborate further with LEAs and IHEs to build Connecticut's final list of core standards.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Buttner  
Elizabeth Buttner, Education Consultant  
Bureau of Teaching and Learning

Reviewed by: Harriet Feldlaufer  
Harriet Feldlaufer, Chief  
Bureau of Teaching and Learning

Approved by: Dr. Marion H. Martinez  
Dr. Marion H. Martinez, Associate/Commissioner  
Division of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Leadership

6/28/2010

# COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Recommendations to the  
State Board of Education

July 7, 2010

Connecticut State Department of Education

1

## Common Core Standards and Connecticut's Education Reform Agenda

- ▶ What are Common Core Standards?
- ▶ How were they developed?
- ▶ Why are they important for Connecticut?

2

6/28/2010

## Pre-Adoption Steps

- ▶ May 2009: Memorandum of Agreement with CCSSO and NGA signed by Gov. Rell and Commissioner McQuillan.
- ▶ November 2009: SDE consultants provide feedback to first draft of Common Core State Standards
- ▶ February 2010: SDE consultants provide feedback to second draft of Common Core State Standards
- ▶ March 2010: State Board presentation outlining pre-adoption strategic plan
- ▶ May-June 2010: Final Common Core State Standards published. Comparison Study conducted identifying degree of similarity between Common Core State Standards and CT standards
- ▶ June 2010: Race to the Top Phase 2 Application describes CT's intention to adopt and implement Common Core State Standards
- ▶ June 2010: Stakeholder Engagement Conference to raise awareness of Common Core State Standards, elicit judgments and recommendations, and promote buy-in
- ▶ July 2010: State Board Adoption recommendation

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## Achieve's Standards Matching Process

- ▶ Standards with similar "essence" were matched
- ▶ Professional judgments were made by 50 CT standards experts
- ▶ Started with a Common Core standard; looked for similar CT standards
- ▶ 3 possible judgments were made:
  1. Exact match
  2. Collective match
  3. No match

4

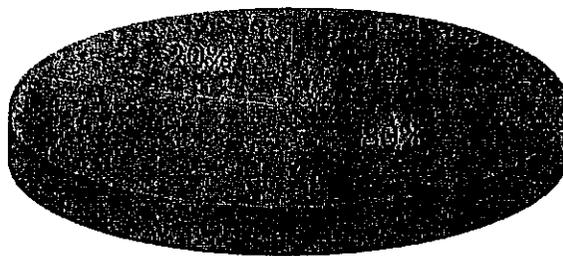
6/28/2010

## Achieve's Match Rating Process:

- ▶ Strength of each match is rated:
  - 3 – Excellent match
  - 2 – Good match
  - 1 – Weak match
- ▶ “Essence” of the standard triggers decision to “match”;
- ▶ Strength rating accounts for differences in wording, specificity, or performance expectation

5

## Common Core ELA standards matched to CT's ELA Standards



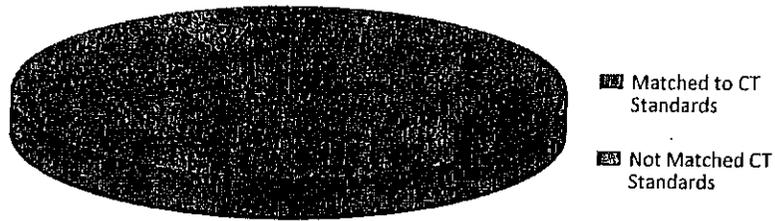
■ Matched to CT Standards

■ Not Matched to CT Standards

6

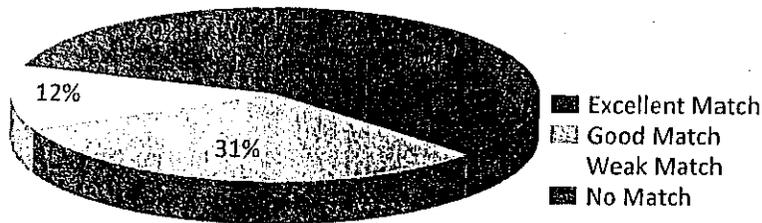
6/28/2010

### Common Core Math standards matched to CT's Math Standards



7

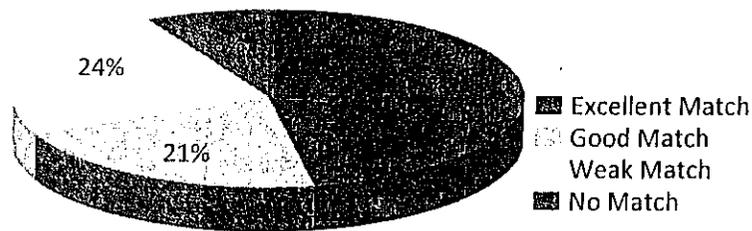
### Strength of Matches Between the Common Core Standards and CT's ELA Standards



8

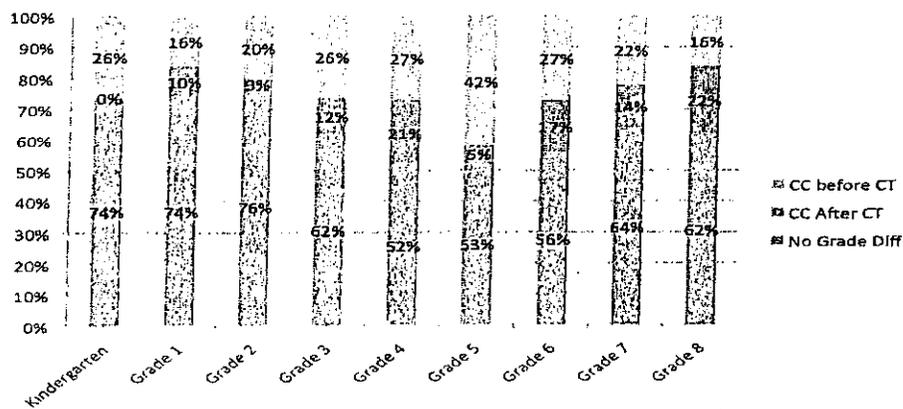
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### Strength of Matches Between the Common Core Standards and CT's Math Standards



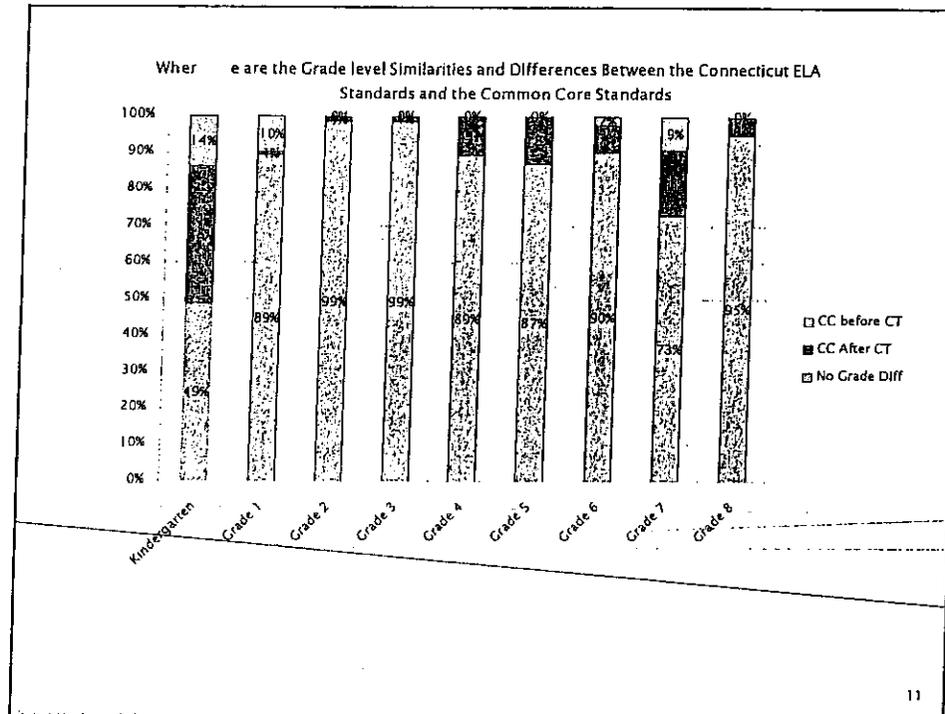
9

### Where are the Grade level Similarities and Differences Between the Connecticut Math Standards and the Common Core Standards



10

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## Stakeholder Impressions of CCSS Quality

Percentage of individuals who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree":

- › Students meeting these core standards will be well prepared for success in college = 100%
- › The CCSS are as rigorous as CT standards in terms of higher order thinking skills = 97%
- › The CCSS represent a coherent progression of learning from grade-to-grade = 95%
- › The CCSS are as rigorous as CT standards in terms of application of knowledge = 91%
- › The CCSS represent learning standards that are important for all students = 90%
- › Students meeting these core standards will be well prepared for post-high school success in the workplace = 89%
- › The CCSS embed 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills (i.e. communicating, collaborating, using technologies and solving problems creatively) = 87%
- › The CCSS are developmentally appropriate for each grade = 82%

Sample size = 90 respondents

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## Stakeholder Judgments of CCSS Standards “New” for CT –

1. The CCSS that would be new for Connecticut are *essential for college and career readiness*.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: 100% agree

MATHEMATICS: 100% agree

2. The CCSS that would be new for Connecticut are *reasonable expectations for the corresponding grade level*.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: 78% agree; 22% not sure

MATHEMATICS: 60% agree; 40% not sure

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## Stakeholder Needs

- ▶ Pre-K standards aligned with CCSS
- ▶ Support aligning district curriculum to CCSS
- ▶ Professional development with content-focus
- ▶ Higher Ed teacher preparation on-board
- ▶ Standards phase-in timeline
- ▶ Advance notice of changes to state assessments

14

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## CSDE's Leadership in the Work

Timely information and on-going support:

- Transition guidelines and timeline
- Standards crosswalk documents
- Standards awareness and interpretation workshops and webinars
- Curriculum alignment workshops
- Assessment development updates

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Connecticut State Department of Education  
Division of Assessment, Research and Technology  
State Office Building  
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 361  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Telephone: 860-713-6800  
Fax: 860-713-7026

MEMORANDUM



**TO:** Carol Whang, WestEd  
**FROM:** Barbara Q. Beaudin, <sup>*BQB*</sup> Associate Commissioner  
**DATE:** June 7, 2010  
**SUBJECT:** Connecticut's Signed SMARTER BALANCED Assessment Consortium Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Enclosed you will find Connecticut's MOU to join the SMARTER BALANCED Assessment Consortium. Page 16 contains the signatures of the Governor, Commissioner of Education and Chair of the State Board of Education. Page 17 contains the signature of the state's Director of Procurement. The final pages contain letters of intent for the state's Community College System, the Connecticut State University System and the University of Connecticut, along with the signatures of the Commissioner of Higher Education and the heads of each system.

If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact me at 860-713-6801.

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
**SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium**  
**Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment**  
**Systems Grant Application**  
 CFDA Number: 84.395B

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered as of **June 10, 2010**, by and between the **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium** (the “Consortium”) and the **State of Connecticut** which has elected to participate in the Consortium as (check one)

An **Advisory State** (description in section e),

**OR**

A **Governing State** (description in section e),

pursuant to the Notice Inviting Applications for the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program for the Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application (Category A), henceforth referred to as the “Program,” as published in the Federal Register on April 9, 2010 (75 FR 18171-18185).

The purpose of this MOU is to

- (a) Describe the Consortium vision and principles,
- (b) Detail the responsibilities of States in the Consortium,
- (c) Detail the responsibilities of the Consortium,
- (d) Describe the management of Consortium funds,
- (e) Describe the governance structure and activities of States in the Consortium,
- (f) Describe State entrance, exit, and status change,
- (g) Describe a plan for identifying existing State barriers, and
- (h) Bind each State in the Consortium to every statement and assurance made in the application through the following signature blocks:
  - (i)(A) Advisory State Assurance
  - OR**
  - (i)(B) Governing State Assurance
  - AND**
  - (ii) State Procurement Officer

## **(a) Consortium Vision and Principles**

The Consortium's priorities for a new generation assessment system are rooted in a concern for the valid, reliable, and fair assessment of the deep disciplinary understanding and higher-order thinking skills that are increasingly demanded by a knowledge-based economy. These priorities are also rooted in a belief that assessment must support ongoing improvements in instruction and learning, and must be useful for all members of the educational enterprise: students, parents, teachers, school administrators, members of the public, and policymakers.

The Consortium intends to build a flexible system of assessment based upon the Common Core Standards in English language arts and mathematics with the intent that all students across this Consortium of States will know their progress toward college and career readiness.

The Consortium recognizes the need for a system of formative, interim, and summative assessments—organized around the Common Core Standards—that support high-quality learning, the demands of accountability, and that balance concerns for innovative assessment with the need for a fiscally sustainable system that is feasible to implement. The efforts of the Consortium will be organized to accomplish these goals.

The comprehensive assessment system developed by the Consortium will include the following key elements and principles:

1. A Comprehensive Assessment System that will be grounded in a thoughtfully integrated learning system of standards, curriculum, assessment, instruction and teacher development that will inform decision-making by including formative strategies, interim assessments, and summative assessments.
2. The assessment system will measure the full range of the Common Core Standards including those that measure higher-order skills and will inform progress toward and acquisition of readiness for higher education and multiple work domains. The system will emphasize deep knowledge of core concepts within and across the disciplines, problem solving, analysis, synthesis, and critical thinking.
3. Teachers will be involved in the design, development, and scoring of assessment items and tasks. Teachers will participate in the alignment of the Common Core Standards and the identification of the standards in the local curriculum.
4. Technology will be used to enable adaptive technologies to better measure student abilities across the full spectrum of student performance and evaluate growth in learning; to support online simulation tasks that test higher-order abilities; to score the results; and to deliver the responses to trained scorers/teachers to access from an

## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

electronic platform. Technology applications will be designed to maximize interoperability across user platforms, and will utilize open-source development to the greatest extent possible.

5. A sophisticated design will yield scores to support evaluations of student growth, as well as school, teacher, and principal effectiveness in an efficient manner.
6. On-demand and curriculum-embedded assessments will be incorporated over time to allow teachers to see where students are on multiple dimensions of learning and to strategically support their progress.
7. All components of the system will incorporate principles of Universal Design that seek to remove construct-irrelevant aspects of tasks that could increase barriers for non-native English speakers and students with other specific learning needs.
8. Optional components will allow States flexibility to meet their individual needs.

### **(b) Responsibilities of States in the Consortium**

Each State agrees to the following element of the Consortium's Assessment System:

- Adopt the Common Core Standards, which are college- and career-ready standards, and to which the Consortium's assessment system will be aligned, no later than December 31, 2011.

Each State that is a member of the Consortium in 2014–2015 also agrees to the following:

- Adopt common achievement standards no later than the 2014–2015 school year,
- Fully implement statewide the Consortium summative assessment in grades 3-8 and high school for both mathematics and English language arts no later than the 2014–2015 school year,
- Adhere to the governance as outlined in this document,
- Agree to support the decisions of the Consortium,
- Agree to follow agreed-upon timelines,
- Be willing to participate in the decision-making process and, if a Governing State, final decision, and
- Identify and implement a plan to address barriers in State law, statute, regulation, or policy to implementing the proposed assessment system and to addressing any such barriers prior to full implementation of the summative assessment components of the system.

## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

**(c) Responsibilities of the Consortium**

The Consortium will provide the following by the 2014-15 school year:

1. A comprehensively designed assessment system that includes a strategic use of a variety of item types and performance assessments of modest scope to assess the full range of the Common Core Standards with an emphasis on problem solving, analysis, synthesis, and critical thinking.
2. An assessment system that incorporates a required summative assessment with optional formative/benchmark components which provides accurate assessment of all students (as defined in the Federal notice) including students with disabilities, English learners, and low- and high-performing students.
3. Except as described above, a summative assessment that will be administered as a computer adaptive assessment and include a minimum of 1–2 performance assessments of modest scope.
4. Psychometrically sound scaling and equating procedures based on a combination of objectively scored items, constructed-response items, and a modest number of performance tasks of limited scope (e.g., no more than a few days to complete).
5. Reliable, valid, and fair scores for students and groups that can be used to evaluate student achievement and year-to-year growth; determine school/district/state effectiveness for Title I ESEA; and better understand the effectiveness and professional development needs of teachers and principals.
6. Achievement standards and achievement level descriptors that are internationally benchmarked.
7. Access for the State or its authorized delegate to a secure item and task bank that includes psychometric attributes required to score the assessment in a comparable manner with other State members, and access to other applications determined to be essential to the implementation of the system.
8. Online administration with limited support for paper-and-pencil administration through the end of the 2016–17 school year. States using the paper-and-pencil option will be responsible for any unique costs associated with the development and administration of the paper-and-pencil assessments.

## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

9. Formative assessment tools and supports that are developed to support curricular goals, which include learning progressions, and that link evidence of student competencies to the summative system.
10. Professional development focused on curriculum and lesson development as well as scoring and examination of student work.
11. A representative governance structure that ensures a strong voice for State administrators, policymakers, school practitioners, and technical advisors to ensure an optimum balance of assessment quality, efficiency, costs, and time. The governance body will be responsible for implementing plans that are consistent with this MOU, but may make changes as necessary through a formal adoption process.
12. Through at least the 2013–14 school year, a Project Management Partner (PMP) that will manage the logistics and planning on behalf of the Consortium and that will monitor for the U.S. Department of Education the progress of deliverables of the proposal. The proposed PMP will be identified no later than August 4, 2010.
13. By September 1, 2014, a financial plan will be approved by the Governing States that will ensure the Consortium is efficient, effective, and sustainable. The plan will include as revenue at a minimum, State contributions, federal grants, and private donations and fees to non-State members as allowable by the U.S. Department of Education.
14. A consolidated data reporting system that enhances parent, student, teacher, principal, district, and State understanding of student progress toward college- and career-readiness.
15. Throughout the 2013–14 school year, access to an online test administration application, student constructed-response scoring application and secure test administration browsers that can be used by the Total State Membership to administer the assessment. The Consortium will procure resources necessary to develop and field test the system. However, States will be responsible for any hardware and vendor services necessary to implement the operational assessment. Based on a review of options and the finance plan, the Consortium may elect to jointly procure these services on behalf of the Total State Membership.

**(d) Management of Consortium Funds**

All financial activities will be governed by the laws and rules of the State of Washington, acting in the role of Lead Procurement State/Lead State, and in accordance with 34 CFR 80.36. Additionally, Washington is prepared to follow the guidelines for grant management associated with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and will be legally responsible for the use of grant funds and for ensuring that the project is carried out by the Consortium in accordance with Federal requirements. Washington has already established an ARRA Quarterly reporting system (also referred to as *1512 Reporting*).

Per Washington statute, the basis of how funding management actually transpires is dictated by the method of grant dollar allocation, whether upfront distribution or pay-out linked to actual reimbursables. Washington functions under the latter format, generating claims against grant funds based on qualifying reimbursables submitted on behalf of staff or clients, physical purchases, or contracted services. Washington's role as Lead Procurement State/Lead State for the Consortium is not viewed any differently, as monetary exchanges will be executed against appropriate and qualifying reimbursables aligned to expenditure arrangements (i.e., contracts) made with vendors or contractors operating under "personal service contracts," whether individuals, private companies, government agencies, or educational institutions.

Washington, like most States, is audited regularly by the federal government for the accountability of federal grant funds, and has for the past five years been without an audit finding. Even with the additional potential for review and scrutiny associated with ARRA funding, Washington has its fiscal monitoring and control systems in place to manage the Consortium needs.

- As part of a comprehensive system of fiscal management, Washington's accounting practices are stipulated in the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) managed by the State's Office of Financial Management. The SAAM provides details and administrative procedures required of all Washington State agencies for the procurement of goods and services. As such, the State's educational agency is required to follow the SAAM; actions taken to manage the fiscal activities of the Consortium will, likewise, adhere to policies and procedures outlined in the SAAM.
- For information on the associated contracting rules that Washington will adhere to while serving as fiscal agent on behalf of the Consortium, refer to the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 39.29 "Personal Service Contracts." Regulations and policies authorized by this RCW are established by the State's Office of Financial Management, and can be found in the SAAM.

## **(e) Governance Structure and Activities of States in the Consortium**

As shown in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium governance structure, the Total State Membership of the Consortium includes Governing and Advisory States, with Washington serving in the role of Lead Procurement State/Lead State on behalf of the Consortium.

A **Governing State** is a State that:

- Has fully committed to this Consortium only and met the qualifications specified in this document,
- Is a member of only one Consortium applying for a grant in the Program,
- Has an active role in policy decision-making for the Consortium,
- Provides a representative to serve on the Steering Committee,
- Provides a representative(s) to serve on one or more Work Groups,
- Approves the Steering Committee Members and the Executive Committee Members,
- Participates in the final decision-making of the following:
  - Changes in Governance and other official documents,
  - Specific Design elements, and
  - Other issues that may arise.

An **Advisory State** is a State that:

- Has not fully committed to any Consortium but supports the work of this Consortium,
- Participates in all Consortium activities but does not have a vote unless the Steering Committee deems it beneficial to gather input on decisions or chooses to have the Total Membership vote on an issue,
- May contribute to policy, logistical, and implementation discussions that are necessary to fully operationalize the SMARTER Balanced Assessment System, and
- Is encouraged to participate in the Work Groups.

### **Organizational Structure**

#### **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee is comprised of one representative from each Governing State in the Consortium. Committee members may be a chief or his/her designee. Steering Committee Members must meet the following criteria:

- Be from a Governing State,
- Have prior experience in either the design or implementation of curriculum and/or assessment systems at the policy or implementation level, and
- Must have willingness to serve as the liaison between the Total State Membership and Working Groups.

#### **Steering Committee Responsibilities**

- Determine the broad picture of what the assessment system will look like,

## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

- Receive regular reports from the Project Management Partner, the Policy Coordinator, and the Content Advisor,
- Determine the issues to be presented to the Governing and/or Advisory States,
- Oversee the expenditure of funds in collaboration with the Lead Procurement State/Lead State,
- Operationalize the plan to transition from the proposal governance to implementation governance, and
- Evaluate and recommend successful contract proposals for approval by the Lead Procurement State/Lead State.

**Executive Committee**

- The Executive Committee is made up of the Co-Chairs of the Executive Committee, a representative from the Lead Procurement State/Lead State, a representative from higher education and one representative each from four Governing States. The four Governing State representatives will be selected by the Steering Committee. The Higher Education representative will be selected by the Higher Education Advisory Group, as defined in the Consortium Governance document.
- For the first year, the Steering Committee will vote on four representatives, one each from four Governing States. The two representatives with the most votes will serve for three years and the two representatives with the second highest votes will serve for two years. This process will allow for the rotation of two new representatives each year. If an individual is unable to complete the full term of office, then the above process will occur to choose an individual to serve for the remainder of the term of office.

**Executive Committee Responsibilities**

- Oversee development of SMARTER Balanced Comprehensive Assessment System,
- Provide oversight of the Project Management Partner,
- Provide oversight of the Policy Coordinator,
- Provide oversight of the Lead Procurement State/Lead State,
- Work with project staff to develop agendas,
- Resolve issues,
- Determine what issues/decisions are presented to the Steering Committee, Advisory and/or Governing States for decisions/votes,
- Oversee the expenditure of funds, in collaboration with the Lead Procurement State/Lead State, and
- Receive and act on special and regular reports from the Project Management Partner, the Policy Coordinator, the Content Advisor, and the Lead Procurement State/Lead State.

## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

**Executive Committee Co-Chairs**

- Two Co-chairs will be selected from the Steering Committee States. The two Co-chairs must be from two different states. Co-chairs will work closely with the Project Management Partner. Steering Committee members wishing to serve as Executive Committee Co-chairs will submit in writing to the Project Management Partner their willingness to serve. They will need to provide a document signed by their State Chief indicating State support for this role. The Project Management Partner will then prepare a ballot of interested individuals. Each Steering Committee member will vote on the two individuals they wish to serve as Co-chair. The individual with the most votes will serve as the new Co-chair.
- Each Co-chair will serve for two years on a rotating basis. For the first year, the Steering committee will vote on two individuals and the one individual with the most votes will serve a three-year term and the individual with the second highest number of votes will serve a two-year term.
- If an individual is unable to complete the full term of office, then the above process will occur to choose an individual to serve for the remainder of the term of office.

**Executive Committee Co-Chair Responsibilities**

- Set the Steering Committee agendas,
- Set the Executive Committee agenda,
- Lead the Executive Committee meetings,
- Lead the Steering Committee meetings,
- Oversee the work of the Executive Committee,
- Oversee the work of the Steering Committee,
- Coordinate with the Project Management Partner,
- Coordinate with Content Advisor,
- Coordinate with Policy coordinator,
- Coordinate with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and
- Coordinate with Executive Committee to provide oversight to the Consortium.

**Decision-making**

Consensus will be the goal of all decisions. Major decisions that do not reach consensus will go to a simple majority vote. The Steering Committee will determine what issues will be referred to the Total State Membership. Each member of each group (Advisory/Governing States, Steering Committee, Executive Committee) will have one vote when votes are conducted within each group. If there is only a one to three vote difference, the issue will be re-examined to seek greater consensus. The Steering Committee will be responsible for preparing additional information as to the pros and cons of the issue to assist voting States in developing consensus and reaching a final decision. The Steering Committee may delegate this responsibility to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will decide which decisions or issues are votes to

be taken to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee makes the decision to take issues to the full Membership for a vote.

The Steering Committee and the Governance/Finance work group will collaborate with each Work Group to determine the hierarchy of the decision-making by each group in the organizational structure.

### **Work Groups**

The Work Groups are comprised of chiefs, assessment directors, assessment staff, curriculum specialists, professional development specialists, technical advisors and other specialists as needed from States. Participation on a workgroup will require varying amounts of time depending on the task. Individuals interested in participating on a Work Group should submit their request in writing to the Project Management Partner indicating their preferred subgroup. All Governing States are asked to commit to one or more Work Groups based on skills, expertise, and interest within the State to maximize contributions and distribute expertise and responsibilities efficiently and effectively. The Consortium has established the following Work Groups:

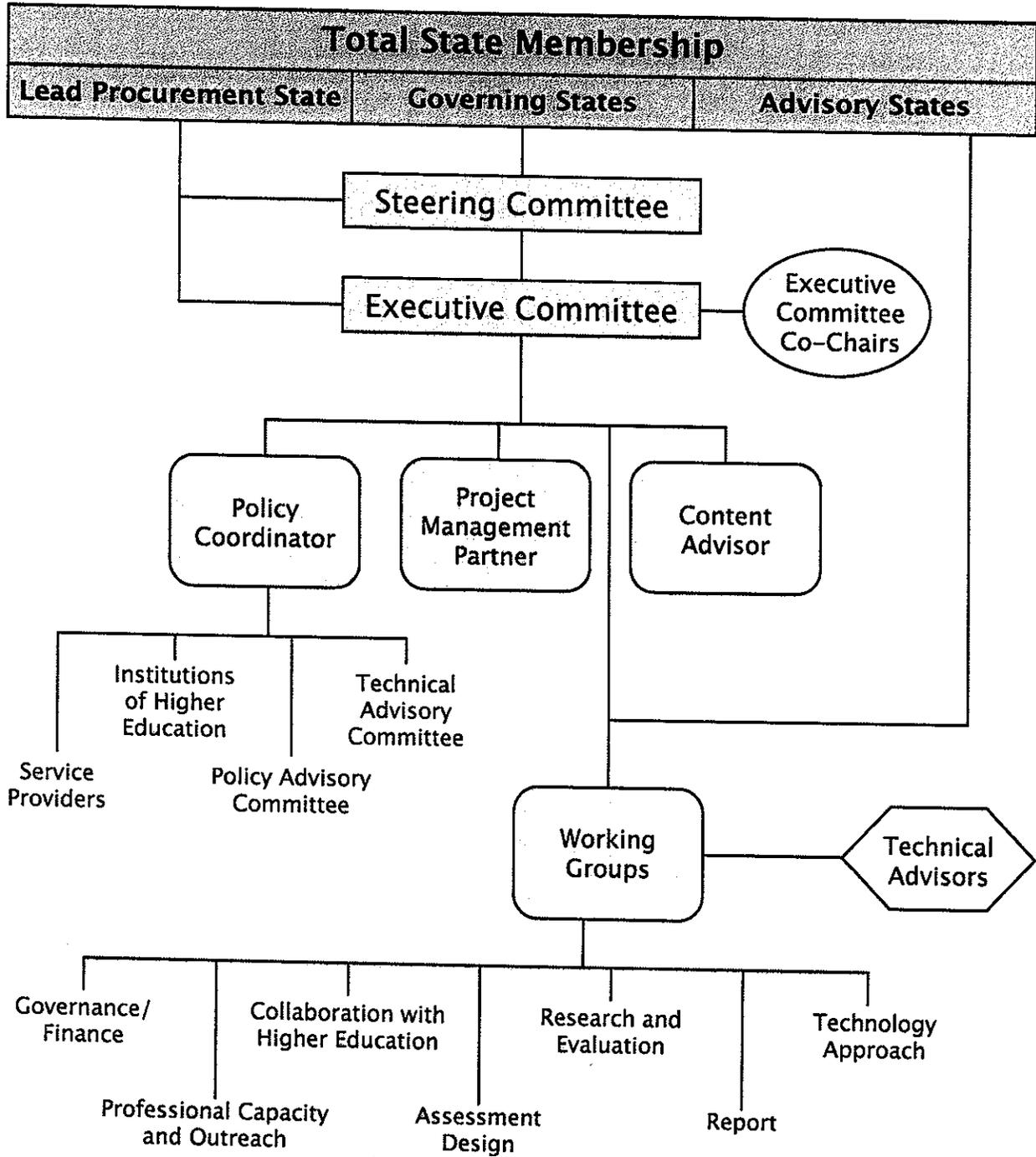
- Governance/Finance,
- Assessment Design,
- Research and Evaluation,
- Report,
- Technology Approach,
- Professional Capacity and Outreach, and
- Collaboration with Higher Education.

The Consortium will also support the work of the Work Groups through a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Policy Coordinator in collaboration with the Steering Committee will create various groups as needed to advise the Steering Committee and the Total State Membership. Initial groups will include

- Institutions of Higher Education,
- Technical Advisory Committee,
- Policy Advisory Committee, and
- Service Providers.

An organizational chart showing the groups described above is provided on the next page.

# SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Organizational Structure



## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

**(f) State Entrance, Exit, and Status Change**

This MOU shall become effective as of the date first written above upon signature by both the Consortium and the Lead Procurement State/Lead State (Washington) and remain in force until the conclusion of the Program, unless terminated earlier in writing by the Consortium as set forth below.

**Entrance into Consortium**

Entrance into the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is assured when:

- The level of membership is declared and signatures are secured on the MOU from the State's Commissioner, State Superintendent, or Chief; Governor; and President/Chair of the State Board of Education (if the State has one);
- The signed MOU is submitted to the Consortium Grant Project Manager (until June 23) and then the Project Management Partner after August 4, 2010;
- The Advisory and Governing States agree to and adhere to the requirements of the governance;
- The State's Chief Procurement Officer has reviewed its applicable procurement rules and provided assurance that it may participate in and make procurements through the Consortium;
- The State is committed to implement a plan to identify any existing barriers in State law, statute, regulation, or policy to implementing the proposed assessment system and to addressing any such barriers prior to full implementation of the summative assessment components of the system; and
- The State agrees to support all decisions made prior to the State joining the Consortium.

After receipt of the grant award, any request for entrance into the Consortium must be approved by the Executive Committee. Upon approval, the Project Management Partner will then submit a change of membership to the USED for approval. A State may begin participating in the decision-making process after receipt of the MOU.

**Exit from Consortium**

Any State may leave the Consortium without cause, but must comply with the following exit process:

- A State requesting an exit from the Consortium must submit in writing their request and reasons for the exit request,
- The written explanation must include the statutory or policy reasons for the exit,
- The written request must be submitted to the Project Management Partner with the same signatures as required for the MOU,
- The Executive Committee will act upon the request within a week of the request, and
- Upon approval of the request, the Project Management Partner will then submit a change of membership to the USED for approval.

## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

**Changing Roles in the Consortium**

A State desiring to change from an Advisory State to a Governing State or from a Governing State to an Advisory State may do so under the following conditions:

- A State requesting a role change in the Consortium must submit in writing their request and reasons for the request,
- The written request must be submitted to the Project Management Partner with the same signatures as required for the MOU, and
- The Executive Committee will act upon the request within a week of the request and submit to the USED for approval.

**(g) Plan for Identifying Existing State Barriers**

Each State agrees to identify existing barriers in State laws, statutes, regulations, or policies by noting the barrier and the plan to remove the barrier. Each State agrees to use the table below as a planning tool for identifying existing barriers. States may choose to include any known barriers in the table below at the time of signing this MOU.

Barrier	Issue/Risk of Issue (if known)	Statute, Regulation, or Policy	Governing Body with Authority to Remove Barrier	Approximate Date to Initiate Action	Target Date for Removal of Barrier	Comments
State Budget to Support 2014-15 Administration of New Assessments	Risk: Projected State budget deficits over the next several years	Statute: Biennial budget adopted by Connecticut General Assembly (CGA)	Authority to Remove: CGA	Date of Action: Yearly budget discussions with CGA	Target Date: Yearly budget discussions with CGA	
Alignment of Testing Components to Connecticut Needs	Risk: Connecticut Standards May Span Beyond the Consortium	Statute: Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-14n	Authority to Remove: CGA	Date of Action: Yearly review	Target Date: Yearly discussions with Connecticut State Board of Education and CGA	

## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

Ability of and Burden on LEA to Participate if State Funding Declines	Risk: Capacity of district technology and burden on LEA for administering online assessments and related duties	Statute: None (unfunded mandate)	Authority to Remove: LEA commitment	Date of Action: Ongoing yearly	Target Date: Yearly discussions for participation	
Alignment of State Educational Reforms at Elementary and Secondary Level	Risk: Overall Elementary and Secondary Reforms	Statute: Public Act 10-111, An Act Concerning Educational Reform in Connecticut	Authority to Remove: CGA	Date of Action: Yearly review	Target Date: Yearly discussions	
Scoring of Open-Ended Items by Teachers	Risk: Subject of Collective Bargaining (negotiations over impact)	Statute: Section 10-153d et seq	Authority to Remove: Product of collective bargaining	Date of Action: When requested by one of the parties of collective bargaining	Target Date: As necessary	

## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

<p>State Supreme Court Decision in Conn. Coalition for Justice in Funding v. Governor Rell (March 30, 2010) Addressing <i>Adequacy of Education in Connecticut.</i></p>	<p>Risk: Supreme Court held that the Connecticut Constitution guarantees students educational standards and resources suitable for advancement in society, <i>employment and higher education.</i> Case remanded to the Superior Court to better define equal opportunity to adequate education. The action by the Superior Court may require the State to provide more economic resources to meet adequacy which has now read into State Constitution as a right.</p>	<p>Statute: Article 8<sup>th</sup> of the State Constitution</p>	<p>Authority to Remove: State Constitutional Convention</p>	<p>Date of Action: Unclear</p>	<p>Target Date: Unclear</p>	
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## SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

**(h)(i)(B) GOVERNING STATE SIGNATURE BLOCK** for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application Assurances

*(Required from all "Governing States" in the Consortium.)*

As a Governing State in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, I have read and understand the roles and responsibilities of Governing States, and agree to be bound by the statements and assurances made in the application.

I further certify that as a Governing State I am fully committed to the application and will support its implementation.

State Name: Connecticut

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): M. Jodi Rell

Telephone:  
860-566-4840



Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:

Date:



6/2/10

Chief State School Officer (Printed Name):  
Mark K. McQuillan

Telephone:  
860-713-6500

Signature of the Chief State School Officer:

Date:



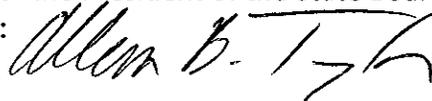
6/1/10

President of the State Board of Education, if applicable (Printed Name):  
Allan B. Taylor

Telephone:  
860-275-0225

Signature of the President of the State Board of Education, if applicable:

Date:



6/2/10

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

**(h)(ii) STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICER SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application Assurances.**

*(Required from all States in the Consortium.)*

I certify that I have reviewed the applicable procurement rules for my State and have determined that it may participate in and make procurements through the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium.

State Name: Connecticut

State's chief procurement official (or designee), (Printed Name):  
Carol Wilson

Telephone:  
860-713-5093

Signature of State's chief procurement official (or designee),:

*Carol J. Wilson, Director of Procurement, DAS*

Date:

*6/7/10*

## **Letter of Intent for Institutes of Higher Education**

### **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium**

#### **Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application**

CFDA Number: 84.395B

The purpose of this Letter of Intent is to

- (a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system,
- (b) Identify the total number of direct matriculation students in the partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 school year, and
- (c) Commit the State’s higher education executive officer (if the State has one) and the president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system through signature blocks.

#### **(a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system**

Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:

1. Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium’s final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
2. Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.

**(b) Total Number of Direct Matriculation Students (as defined in the NIA) in the Partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 School Year**

Note: NIA defines direct matriculation student as a student who entered college as a freshman within two years of graduating from high school

State	Name of Participating IHEs	Number of Direct Matriculation Students in IHE in 2008-2009	Total Direct Matriculation Students in State in 2008-2009
	Connecticut Community Colleges	7,780	

**(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks**

IHE or IHE system SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.

Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:

- (a) Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium's final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
- (b) Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented, that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.

State Name:

Connecticut

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name):

*Michael P. Meotti*

Telephone:

860/947-1801

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

Michael P. Meotti

Date:

6/7/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name): Marc Herzog, Chancellor, CT. Community Colleges  
(Paul Susen, Chief Academic Officer, CT. Community Colleges)

Telephone:

860-244-7601

860-244-7612

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

*Paul A Susen for Marc Herzog*

Date:

6-7-10.



# Connecticut State University System

39 Woodland Street ■ Hartford, CT 06105-2337 ■ (860) 493-0013 ■ www.ctstateu.edu

*Office of the Chancellor*

## **Letter of Intent for Institutes of Higher Education**

### **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium**

#### **Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application**

CFDA Number: 84.395B

The purpose of this Letter of Intent is to

- (a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system,
- (b) Identify the total number of direct matriculation students in the partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 school year, and
- (c) Commit the State’s higher education executive officer (if the State has one) and the president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system through signature blocks.

#### **(a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system**

The Connecticut State University System commits to the following agreements:

1. Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium’s final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
2. Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.



# Connecticut State University System

39 Woodland Street ■ Hartford, CT 06105-2337 ■ (860) 493-0013 ■ www.ctstateu.edu

*Office of the Chancellor*

## **(b) Total Number of Direct Matriculation Students (as defined in the NIA) in the Partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 School Year**

Note: NIA defines direct matriculation student as a student who entered college as a freshman within two years of graduating from high school

State	Name of Participating IHEs	Number of Direct Matriculation Students in IHE in 2008-2009	Total Direct Matriculation Students in State in 2008-2009
Connecticut	Central Connecticut State University	1874	
	Eastern Connecticut State University	1120	
	Southern Connecticut State University	2083	
	Western Connecticut State University	1085	
	<b>TOTAL SYSTEM WIDE</b>	<b>6162</b>	

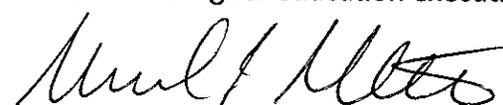


# Connecticut State University System

39 Woodland Street ■ Hartford, CT 06105-2337 ■ (860) 493-0013 ■ www.ctstateu.edu

*Office of the Chancellor*

## (c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

<p>IHE or IHE system SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.</p> <p>Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:</p> <p>(a) Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium's final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and</p> <p>(b) Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented, that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.</p>	
<p>State Name: <b>Connecticut</b></p>	
<p>State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): <b>Michael Meotti, Commissioner</b> <b>Connecticut Department of Higher Education</b></p>	<p>Telephone: <b>(860) 947-1801</b></p>
<p>Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one: </p>	<p>Date: 6/7/10</p>
<p>President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name): <b>David G. Carter, Ph.D.</b> <b>Chancellor, Connecticut State University System</b></p>	<p>Telephone: <b>(860)493-0011</b></p>
<p>Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system: </p>	<p>Date: <b>June 4, 2010</b></p>

**Letter of Intent for Institutes of Higher Education**  
**SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium**  
**Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment**  
**Systems Grant Application**  
CFDA Number: 84.395B

The purpose of this Letter of Intent is to

- (a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system,
- (b) Identify the total number of direct matriculation students in the partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 school year, and
- (c) Commit the State’s higher education executive officer (if the State has one) and the president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system through signature blocks.

**(a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system**

Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:

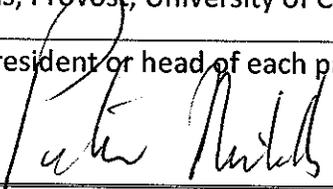
1. Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium’s final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
2. Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.

**(b) Total Number of Direct Matriculation Students (as defined in the NIA) in the Partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 School Year**

Note: NIA defines direct matriculation student as a student who entered college as a freshman within two years of graduating from high school

State	Name of Participating IHEs	Number of Direct Matriculation Students in IHE in 2008-2009	Total Direct Matriculation Students in State in 2008-2009
CT	University of Connecticut	4,858- 4,362	

**(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks**

<p>IHE or IHE system SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.</p> <p>Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:</p> <p>(a) Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium's final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and</p> <p>(b) Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented, that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.</p>	
<p>State Name: Connecticut</p>	
<p>State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): Michael P. Meotti</p>	<p>Telephone: 860/947-1801</p>
<p>Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one: </p>	<p>Date: 6/7/10</p>
<p>President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name): Peter J. Nicholls, Provost, University of Connecticut</p>	<p>Telephone: 860.486.4037</p>
<p>Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system: </p>	<p>Date: 6/4/10</p>

## Attachment 8

*2011 statewide proficiency for all students and subgroups*

<b>Statewide Percent Proficient Based on the 2011 CMT and CAPT</b>			
		<b>CMT</b>	
	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>2010 Cohort #</b>
State Average	84.6	78.3	250,599
American Indian or Alaska Native	80.1	71.5	857
Asian	94.6	87.2	11,073
Black or African American	66.8	59.8	32,847
Hispanic/Latino	69	58.1	46,198
White	92.2	87.5	155,485
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	76.3	74.3	140
More than one Race	84	76.7	3,999
English Language Learners	58	38	13,053
Students with Disabilities	59.2	51.2	31,211
Economically Disadvantaged	69.2	59.4	89,970
		<b>CAPT</b>	
	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>2010 Cohort #</b>
State Average	75.5	77.8	42,821
American Indian or Alaska Native	60.4	62.4	199
Asian	85.7	85	1,723
Black or African American	46.5	54.1	5,686
Hispanic/Latino	52	57.6	7,016
White	87	87.5	27,725
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	46.2	53.8	52
More than one Race	74	77.8	420
English Language Learners	26.4	27	1,770
Students with Disabilities	37.1	45.4	5,075
Economically Disadvantaged	50.6	55.5	13,167

Commissioner's Listening Tour Schedule

- Windham - School tour at Windham Middle School on October 18, 2011.
- Meriden – A roundtable discussion with superintendent, principals and teachers followed by a tour of the Thomas Hooker School on November 14, 2011.
- New Haven – Meetings with the New Haven AFT Leadership, Achievement First Groundbreaking, CT Council for Education Reform Board and a roundtable discussion with superintendents at the CT Center for School Change on November 16, 2011.
- Fairfield – Meeting with superintendents and members of the Board of Education on November 22, 2011.
- New Britain – Meeting with public school teachers and university professors at Central CT State University on November 28, 2011.
- Stamford - A roundtable discussion with the superintendent, principals and teachers roundtable followed by a tour of Rogers International School, Trailblazers Academy and William Pitt Learning Center on November 29, 2011.
- West Hartford – A roundtable discussion with the superintendent, principals and teachers followed by a tour of Conard High School on December 8, 2011.
- Norwalk – Meeting with representatives of Norwalk Board of Education and Norwalk Community College on December 12, 2011.
- Bridgeport – Touring Harding and Bassick High Schools on December 15, 2011.
- New London – A roundtable discussion with the South Eastern CT Association of School Superintendents on December 19, 2011.
- Colchester – A roundtable discussion with the superintendent, principals and Teachers followed by a tour of William Johnston Middle School on December 19, 2011.
- Berlin - A roundtable discussion with the superintendent, principals and Teachers followed by a tour of Emma Hart Willard School on January 9, 2012.
- Meeting with CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE) and CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) at State Board of Education on December 7, 2011.
- Meeting with representatives of CAPSS and NEAG School of Education at CAPSS office on December 13, 2011.
- Meeting with CT Association of Urban Superintendents (CAUS) at State Board of Education on December 14, 2011.

The purpose of this spreadsheet is to log each separate email received. The contact information (phone #, address, email) is presumed to live in a separate location. Each contact must be entered on an individual row in the spreadsheet. You may copy and paste rows and simply modify information in cells.

Column B: Select the Stakeholder Category from the drop down box; Column C: indicate the group being contacted; Column D the person sending the email Column E: To which Principle Area are they responding? Column F: Within the principle, what is their specific area of concern? Column G: What is the nature of their feedback?

Entry number	Stakeholder Category	Position or Organization	Date	Modality	Area Addressed	Summary of Feedback
1	Parents	Parent Teacher Council, Stamford	1/26/2012	Email	<b>Removed</b>	<b>Removed</b>
2	Boards of Education	Board of Education, Stamford	1/27/2012	Email		
3	IHEs	Central Connecticut State University	1/28/2012	Email		
4	General Public	N/A	1/28/2012	Email		
5	General Public	N/A	1/28/2012	Email		
6	General Public	N/A	1/29/2012	Email		
7	General Public	N/A	1/29/2012	Email		
8	General Public	N/A	1/29/2012	Email		
9	IHEs	Central Connecticut State University	1/29/2012	Email		
10	Parents	Stamford Public School Parent	1/30/2012	Email		
11	Administrators	Associate Superintendent of Schools	1/30/2012	Email		
12	Teachers	Middle School Teacher, Stamford	1/30/2012	Email		
13	General Public	Stamford Resident	1/30/2012	Email		
14	General Public	Stamford Resident	1/30/2012	Email		
15	General Public	N/A	1/31/2012	Email		
16	Parents	Stamford Public School Parent	1/31/2012	Email		
17	Parents	Stamford Public School Parent	1/31/2012	Email		
18	Teachers	Elementary School Teacher, Stamford	1/31/2012	Email		
19	Parents	Stamford Public School Parent	2/1/2012	Email		
20	Teachers	Elementary School Literacy Support Specialist, Stamford	2/1/2012	Email		
21	General Public	N/A	2/1/2012	Email		
22	Parents	Stamford Public School Parent	2/1/2012	Email		
23	Parents	Stamford Public School Parent	2/1/2012	Email		
24	General Public	Stamford Resident	2/1/2012	Email		
25	General Public	Stamford	2/3/2012	Email		
26	IHEs	Central Connecticut State University	2/3/2012	Email		
27	Teachers	Middle School Science Teacher, Milford	2/5/2012	Email		
28	IHEs	Central Connecticut State University	2/6/2012	Email		
29	Teachers	Middle School Teacher, New Milford	2/6/2012	Email		
30	Teachers	Math and Science Coordinator, Vernon Public Schools	2/7/2012	Email		
31	IHEs	Physics Coordinator, University of New Haven	2/7/2012	Email		
32	Teachers	Middle School Science Teacher, New Haven	2/7/2012	Email		
33	Teachers	Science Teacher, New Haven	2/7/2012	Email		
34	Teachers	Elementary School Teacher, Stamford	2/7/2012	Email		
35	Teachers	Director of Science, Hartford	2/7/2012	Email		
36	Community-Based Orgs	Central Connecticut State Literacy Center	2/8/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
37	Business Orgs	Educator and Businessman	2/8/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
38	Parents	Danbury School Governance Council at Danbury High School	2/8/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
39	Teachers Unions	Stamford Education Association	2/8/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
40	Administrators	Windham Public Schools	2/8/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
41	IHEs	Central Connecticut State University	2/8/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
42	Community-Based Orgs	Connecticut Afterschool Network	2/8/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
43	Teachers	Former STEM Curriculum Resource Teacher, Wallingford Public Schools	2/9/2012	Email		
44	Teachers	Project Oceanology	2/9/2012	Email		
45	General Public	N/A	2/9/2012	Email		
46	General Public	N/A	2/9/2012	Email		
47	General Public	N/A	2/9/2012	Email		
48	Community-Based Orgs	Connecticut After School Network	2/9/2012	Email		
49	IHEs	Central Connecticut State University	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
50	Parents	Stamford Public School Parent	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
51	Business Orgs	Stamford Board of Education	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
52	Boards of Education	Salem Board of Education	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
53	Boards of Education	Stamford Board of Education	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
54	Boards of Education	Stamford Board of Education	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
55	Teachers	Stamford Public Schools Teacher	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
56	Teachers (non-Union orgs)	Connecticut Association of School Librarians	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
57	Teachers	Retired Teacher	2/9/2012	SERC Stakeholder Mtg		
58	Boards of Education	New Britain Board of Education	2/11/2012	Email		
59	Teachers	Orange Elementary Schools	2/11/2012	Email		

Entry number	Stakeholder Category	Position or Organization	Date	Modality	Area Addressed	Summary of Feedback
60	General Public	N/A	2/12/2012	Email	<b>Removed</b>	<b>Removed</b>
61	General Public	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/12/2012	Email		
62	Teachers	High School Teacher, Old Saybrook	2/13/2012	Email		
63	IHEs	Physics Professor, Southern Connecticut State University	2/13/2012	Email		
64	General Public	N/A	2/13/2012	Email		
65	SWD Advocates	Connecticut Branch International Dyslexia Association (Conn BIDA)	2/13/2012	Email		
66	Teachers	Elementary School Teacher, Middletown	2/13/2012	Email		
67	teachers	Elementary School Teacher, Middletown	2/13/2012	Email		
68	Teachers	ESOL Teacher, Berlin Public Schools	2/13/2012	Email		
69	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
70	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
71	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
72	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
73	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
74	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
75	Community-Based Orgs	Earn and Learn CT	2/13/2012	Email		
76	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
77	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
78	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
79	General Public	Middletown Resident	2/13/2012	Email		
80	Community-Based Orgs	Connecticut Science Center	2/13/2012	Email		
81	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
82	General Public	Middletown Resident	2/13/2012	Email		
83	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/13/2012	Email		
84	General Public	Middletown Resident	2/13/2012	Email		
85	General Public	Middletown Resident	2/13/2012	Email		
86	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/14/2012	Email		
87	Principals	Middle School Principal, Meriden	2/14/2012	Email		
88	Teachers	Colchester Public Schools	2/14/2012	Email		
89	Superintendents	Shelton Public Schools	2/14/2012	Email		
90	Teachers	High School Teacher, New Haven	2/14/2012	Email		
91	Community-Based Orgs	Connecticut Federation of Catholic School Parents	2/14/2012	Email		
92	ELL Advocates	Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners	2/14/2012	Email		
93	General Public	Middletown Resident	2/14/2012	Email		
94	General Public	Fairfield Public Schools	2/14/2012	Email		
95	Civil Rights Groups	African-American Affairs Commission	2/14/2012	Email		
96	Community-Based Orgs	Capitol Region Education Council	2/14/2012	Email		
97	IHEs	STEM Education Programs	2/14/2012	Email		
98	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools Teacher	2/14/2012	Email		
99	Business Orgs	Why Science	2/14/2012	Email		
100	Community-Based Orgs	Center for 21st Century Skills @ EDUCATION CONNECTION	2/15/2012	Email		
101	Administrators	New Canaan Public Schools	2/15/2012	Email		
102	Teachers	Middletown Public Schools	2/16/2012	Email		
103	Administrators	Assistant Superintendent, Town of Wolcott	2/17/2012	Email		
104	Parents	Parent of Special Education student	2/17/2012	Email		
105	CSDE	Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation	2/17/2012	Email		
106	IHEs	School of Education, Sacred Heart University	2/17/2012	Email		
107	CSDE	Education Consultant, Bureau of Special Education	2/17/2012	Email		

*We are applying for a waiver from the requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.*

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) intends to apply for a waiver from the requirements of NCLB by Tuesday, February 21, 2012. If our request is successful, the waiver will give our state the flexibility to design a new and improved system of accountability for schools and districts and to target our Title I funds so they better meet the needs of our students. We believe the waiver will enable us to better focus on improving student learning.

To meet the requirements of the waiver, we will build on the significant state and local reform efforts already under way to develop and implement a rigorous and comprehensive plan to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction.

Specifically, the waiver requires action in four critical areas:

- (1) transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments;
- (2) developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support;
- (3) evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness; and
- (4) reducing duplication and unnecessary burden.

*We want to hear from you.*

In order to achieve our goal of ensuring that all students are prepared for college and career, your input is essential. The CSDE is currently developing proposals in each of the four areas identified above, and we are writing to request input and feedback from your organization and its members.

We will post drafts of the waiver application on the CSDE Web site as they are developed. We anticipate that drafts will be available on our Web site on the following dates:

February 1	Sections 1 and 3 (College and Career Readiness; Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support)
February 6	Section 2 (Differentiated Recognition, Support, and Accountability)
February 22	Full Submitted Application

We look forward to hearing your perspective. Please send us your suggestions in one of the following ways:

- Attend an information session to ask questions and/or make suggestions in person (details below).
- Log on to our Web site (<http://www.sde.ct.gov>) to read our proposed drafts as we post them and e-mail written feedback ([title1waivers@ct.gov](mailto:title1waivers@ct.gov)) by **Tuesday, February 14, at 5:00 p.m.**

We will seek additional public feedback as we receive questions and responses from the U.S. Department of Education on our waiver application.

*Join us for the Information and Public Comment Session on the Waiver Application:*

Dates and Times:	<b>Wednesday, February 8, 2012</b> –10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. OR 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.; OR <b>Thursday, February 9, 2012</b> –10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Location:	<b>State Education Resource Center (SERC),</b> Library Community Room, Middletown, CT

Pre-registration is required. Seating can accommodate 2-3 representatives from each participating organization.

Please register at <http://eseasessions.eventbrite.com> by **Tuesday, February 7, 2012.**

If you have questions about registration, please contact  
Signe Lambertsen, SERC, at (860) 632-1485 x272, or at [lambertsen@ctserc.org](mailto:lambertsen@ctserc.org).

<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Organizations Invited to ESEA Waiver Informational Sessions</b>	<b>Names and Email Addresses Removed</b>
Boards of Education	CABE	
Civil Right Group	Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO)	
Civil Right Group	Urban League of Greater Hartford	
Civil Right Group	Muslim Coalition	
Civil Right Group	Pro-Immigration Reform Coalition of Hartford	
Civil Right Group	American Civil Liberties Union of CT	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Norwalk	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Meriden/Wallingford	
Civil Right Group	Greater Hartford Inter Faith Coalition for Equity and Justice	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Bridgeport Branch	
Civil Right Group	Greater New England Alliance of Black School Educators	
Civil Right Group	CT Civil Rights Council	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-New London	
Civil Right Group	CT Indian Affairs Commission	
Civil Right Group	The Institute of American Indian Studies	
Civil Right Group	African American Affairs Commission	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Ansonia Branch	
Civil Right Group	State of Black Connecticut Alliance	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Stamford	
Civil Right Group	Office of Protection and Advocacy	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Greater New Haven	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Bristol	
Civil Right Group	African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities (AFCAMP)	
Civil Right Group	Developmental Disabilities Council	
Civil Right Group	Council on American-Islamic relations of CT	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Greater Hartford	
Civil Right Group	Human Rights Institute-UCONN	
Civil Right Group	CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-New Britain Branch	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Middlesex	
Civil Right Group	Region I Office for Civil Rights	
Civil Right Group	People First of CT	
Civil Right Group	Permanent Commission on the Status of Women	
Civil Right Group	NAACP-Waterbury	
Civil Right Group	Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission	
Civil Right Group	CT Association of Latins in Higher Education	
Civil Right Group	NAACP - CT State Conference	
Civil Right Group	NAACP - CT State Conference	
Civil Right Group	NAACP - CT State Conference	
Civil Right Group	NAACP - CT State Conference	
Civil Right Group	NAACP - Danbury Branch	
Civil Right Group	NAACP - Greenwich Branch	
Civil Right Group	NAACP - Norwich Branch	
Civil Right Group	NAACP - Youth and College Division	
Civil Rights Group	NAACP-New Britain	
Civil Rights Group	NAACP-New London	
Civil Rights Group	NAACP-Norwalk	
Civil Rights Group	NAACP-Norwich	
Civil Rights Group	NAACP-Stamford	
Civil Rights Group	NAACP-Waterbury	
Civil Rights Group	NAACP-Youth and College Division	
Community Groups	Connecticut Afterschool Advisory Network	
ELL	CAPELL	
Family	Bridgeport After-School Network	
Family	The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport	
Family	Favor in CT	
Family	Connecticut Business and Industry Association	
Family	Nami CT	
Family	Autism Society of CT	
Family	The Bridgeport Regional Business Council	
Family	The Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition	
Family	Mental Health Association	
Family	CT Association of Non-Profits	
Family	Family Farms	
Family	CT FEAT	
Family	Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut	
Parent	UCONN Child Development Laboratories	
Parent	Natchaug FRC	
Parent	CAUSA Inc.	
Parent	UCONN Center on Disability	
Parent	Meriden Family Resource Center	
Parent	CT Commission on Children	
Parent	Charter Oak Family Resource Center	
Parent	Family Resource Center	
Parent	Child and Youth with Special Needs	
Parent	Connecticut Commission on Children	
Parent	Jefferson Family Resource Center	
Parent	COMPASS Youth Collaborative, Inc.	
Parent	Family Resource Center	
Parent	JP Vincent Family Resource Center	

<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Organizations Invited to ESEA Waiver Informational Sessions</b>	<b>Names and Email Addresses Removed</b>
Parent	Child & Family Agency, Groton	
Parent	CASA/GAL	
Parent	Connecticut Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC)	
Parent	Educational Resources for Children	
Parent	CT Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	
Parent	MLK Family Resource Center	
Parent	Connecticut Children's Medical Center	
Parent	New Britain FRC	
Parent	Center for Community Engagement	
Parent	Katherine Brennan Family Resource Center	
Parent	Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center	
Parent	Bridge Family Center	
Parent	Burns School, Family Resource Center	
Parent	Burns School, Family Resource Center	
Parent	CT Parent Power	
Parent	Branford Resource Center	
Parent	Connecticut Parent, Teacher, Student Association CT PTSA	
Parent	Welcome Center-Family Services-Hartford	
Parent	The Child and Family Guidance Center, Bridgeport	
Parent	The Child and Family Guidance Center, Bridgeport	
Parent	CT Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, Inc.	
Parent	Family Resource Center	
Parent	Family Resource Center	
Parent	Family and Children's Agency	
Parent	Boys and Girls Club & Family Center	
Parent	Hartford Parent Organization Council	
Parent	CT Council on Developmental Disabilities, Hartford	
Parent	Connecticut Association for Human Services	
Parent	Disability Resource Center	
Parent	CT Parent as Teachers	
Parent	CT Parent Power	
Parent	Literacy Volunteers of Central Connecticut	
Parent	MI CASA FRC at Maria Sanchez	
Parent	Connecticut Education Association (CEA)	
Parent	Child Guidance Center, NFN, Bridgeport	
Parent	Family Resource Center	
Parent	Clover Street School-Family Resource Center	
Parent	Families in Crisis	
Parent	CCCC, NFN, New Haven	
Parent	FRC at Hockanum School	
Parent	CT B-3 System	
Parent	Farm Hill School FRC	
Parent	Community Renewal Team, Hartford	
Parent	We Care	
Parent	The Naramake Family Resource Center	
Parent	CT Autism Spectrum Resource Center	
Parent	The Village for Family and Children	
Parent	Killingly Family Resource Center	
Parent	CT After School Network- Branford	
Parent	Family Learning Programs	
Parent	United Way of CT/2-11	
Principals	Schools Implementing Federal School Improvement Grants	
Principals	CAS	
Special Education	Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (ConnCASE)	
Special Education	CSPD Council	
Special Education	State Advisory Council	
Special Education	State Education Resource Center	
Special Education	CT Coalition of Inclusive Education	
Special Education/ Parent	Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center	
Teachers Unions	CEA	
Teachers Unions	AFT	

**ESEA Information/Public Comment/Targeted Discussion Sessions Outreach**

**State Education Resource Center**

**Public ESEA Information/Public Comment Sessions, February 8 & 9**

<b>Modality of Contact</b>	<b>Number of Organizations / Individuals Contacted</b>	<b>Date</b>
E-Mail invitations	115 organizations	January 31, 2012
Follow-up "elevated importance" e-mails	89 organizations that had not registered	February 3, 2012
E-Mail invitations	1,395 Principals and Special Education Directors	February 6, 2012
Follow-up phone calls	70 organizations that had not registered for Info Session or Targeted Discussion	February 6, 2012
Follow-up phone calls	56 organizations that had not registered	February 7, 2012
Follow-up phone calls	56 organizations that had not registered	February 8, 2012

**Parent/Family Organization Targeted Discussion Session, February 8**

<b>Modality of Contact</b>	<b>Number of Organizations / Individuals Contacted</b>	<b>Date</b>
E-Mail invitations	76 representatives from multiple parent/family organizations	February 3, 2012

**Social Justice/Civil Rights/Advocacy Organization Targeted Discussion Session, February 9**

<b>Modality of Contact</b>	<b>Number of Organizations / Individuals Contacted</b>	<b>Date</b>
E-Mail invitations	45 representatives from multiple Social Justice/Civil Rights/Advocacy Organizations	February 6, 2012
Follow-up phone calls	27 Social Justice/Civil Rights organizations that were not on the original email list	February 9, 2012

**Title I Committee of Practitioners**  
**January 17, 2012**

- **In general:**
  - More clarity about the SDE's role? Speak in a language everyone can understand.
- **Principle #2:**
  - Accountability system should recognize growth and avoid binary labels like "failing"
  - Work that the state has done in partnering with districts has been great thus far (New Haven)
- **Principle #3:**
  - We feel its important that there is professional development around parent engagement (teachers should be taught how to engage parents) – needs to be part of the evaluation and support system
  - Should incorporate portfolio systems to measure student growth
  - From a teachers' point of view (I work with a group of highly motivated teachers), all of this is right and what we should be doing. But how are we making this manageable for teachers?
  - Should be a parent component of teacher evaluation:
    - Two parent teacher conferences are not sufficient to give parents the information they need.
    - Requirement for parent progress reports each week?
  - Very important that the message is not to get rid of teachers and administrators – instead the point is support and improvement.
  - Important that teacher and principal evaluation are closely aligned – for buy-in.
  - Tough to come up with a fair evaluation (bring in 3rd party validators)

**Connecticut Administrators of Boards of Education (CABE)**  
**January 31, 2012**

**Input/Feedback on Principle 1:**

- Plug for no limitation. If a district decides to put the funds together to extend their school day, I think they should have no limitations. Charlene explained that this is why we're explaining the waiver.
- Building capacity – who will pay for it? SDE?
- how to determine who's qualified
- Concerned about the burden on districts – were told that it was maybe a 5% change – How much need to districts have?
- Assessments
- Curriculum Council – teachers are overwhelmed; how to get teachers to change their entire thought process
  - SDE training of district personnel is the best way to do this
  - Crosswalks to help with the transition would be useful – helps people realize
  - Need to build RESC capacity and money for the implementation
- Fairfield has a curriculum coordinator at every level; Branford does not – how can they create teacher leaders to help fill this gap

- Should be some training for board members – need to be better informed in order to be good advocates
- Need for a public information campaign – what does it mean to be an education leader? How to be proactive.... Joint venture between school boards and SDE (collaboration) – CCER
- Suffer from the growth model – continue to assess and evaluate progress
- How can we take all the angst out of that period of time (especially SWD)
- Cal - Make sure the assessment also have written components – don't dumb them down
- Shouldn't surrender our rigorous CAPT and CMT stan

#### **Input/Feedback on Principle 2:**

- They like the focus on growth at all levels
- Reward schools
- How do you make the priority and focus schools the place where new teachers want to go
- Not sure we should create a single disadvantaged subgroup – don't want to mask gaps
- Missouri is an example of a state where there is a direct correlation between high quality arts and positive student outcomes – this could be a great way to differentiate – incentivize attendance and doing well in school
- I'm not hearing about how we identify learners/thinkers – instead I'm hearing about how to create test-takers
- Want a focus on arts and athletics
- Control over destiny, feeling competent – important for teachers
- Enabling high-performing schools to have greater autonomy; would be helpful
- More flexibility/creativity/higher order thinking skills – gifted and talented – for higher performing students
- High performing schools have an obligation to help other schools improve
- Students should also be part of the core of teaching, etc. – get to share your best practices with other people

#### **Input/Feedback on Principle 3:**

- What do we do about the teachers and school staff members without state tests?
- Motivations is such an important piece
- Where does parent engagement fit with all of this?
- Graustein working to help parents understand all the benchmarks of child development – shouldn't that be part of the process?
- The workplace needs to have provisions for an appropriate place for teachers to skype with parents so they can engage with teachers – will promote parent involvement

#### **Input/Feedback on Principle 4:**

- As a state, can tell where priorities lie by looking at the budget.
- Where does our education budget compare? How can we shift the thinking?
- How can we make sure that the funding will be recurring? What happens when the year is over?

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**Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL)  
February 3, 2012**

**Principle 2: Differentiated System of Recognition, Accountability and Support**

***Do you have any advice for the SDE as we set annual goals for schools and districts? What positive features of AYP/accountability under NCLB should we maintain? What needs to change?***

- Maintain rigorous levels of accountability in math/reading/writing; Change to individual growth model rather than benchmark
- Disaggregate data - weighted value considering time in ELL program
- Include SES and Special Education status of ELLs when measuring ELL growth
- Measure results by DRG - compared/reported within DRG
- Consider educational history – e.g., SIFE (Students with Interrupted Formal Education), type and quality of education prior to U.S. schooling
- Have different sets of growth targets/benchmarks based on time in U.S. schools
- Consider descriptive data when interpreting hard data - such as language acquisition history, educational history (SIFE, time in US school, program type, education prior to US schooling)

***How can the SDE build district capacity to support low-performing schools and schools that fail to make progress with subgroups of students?***

- State should require all educational certification programs to include a minimum of 6 credit-hours dedicated to English Language Learners. This would include classroom teachers, administrators, counselors, special education teachers, specialists, SLP, etc.
- Assist districts in PD for support staff.
- Mandate that PD for districts not making AYP should include ELL PD.
- Mandate PD for teachers and administrators in districts which are not meeting ELL AMAO progress for 2 years.
- Provide PD at no cost to districts for administrators (including principals and coordinators) with follow-up, coaching, and observations of implementation.
- Require continuing education (e.g. CEUs) in a new category of Language and Culture, or Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.
- Fund before/after school programs for ELLs.
- Provide incentives for highly-trained, multi-lingual professionals.

***How can the SDE best support or intervene in the lowest performing schools and districts? What school-level changes would have the biggest positive impact?***

- See above.
- Hold teachers accountable for best practices for instruction of ELLs as laid out in the CCT.
- Schools must provide time for team/cohort collaboration for teachers once they are trained.
- Fund mandatory extended-year program for students not meeting standards.
- ELL specialists should integrate support for all teachers through a team model.
- Schools need to demonstrate that they are meeting the needs of their individual students.
- Every teacher is a language teacher, so all teachers should be required to receive training (CEUs?) in ELL strategies and Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.
- Districts should make genuine attempts at parental involvement that is culturally and linguistically relevant, and culturally and linguistically sensitive.

**Title I Committee of Practitioners  
February 6, 2012**

Principle 1

- Stronger connections to people on the ground- parents need to understand the new standards. It is important to parents with students with disability to have standards based IEPs.
- All parents and the general public need to be made aware of the new standards. PTSA parent brochures already produced and could be used statewide. PIRC branded these through CTPTSA for use in English and Spanish. These would be good for teachers as well.
- Positive- Students with disabilities piece is evident in the document.
- When districts are sharing information with staff, share with parents too. Districts are at different levels in terms of CCSS. Maybe a video would be good to post and share geared for parents.
- Curriculum guides for parents by grade would be a good way to share. It is important that there is an awareness that parents are interested in this and want to be involved.
- Model curriculum is important to districts with low resources and capacity. Districts are at different levels in terms of capacity.
- Math support is lacking in some districts. INTEL training was good.
- “Student Achievement Partners” is a good group to learn about. New Haven, Stamford and Norwalk were in attendance at a recent workshop with David Coleman. State should be involved with SA partners.
- The document does not address the shifts in the math and reading.
- Sharing district resources is the best way for others to learn.
- Private schools are not adopting CCSS.
- Higher education needs to be part of the rollout. Students in higher ed studying to be teachers have not heard of CCSS.
- Not just about the standards, it is how to get them to that standard.
- Differentiated PD is important especially how to change instructional practice.
- Some districts are not doing any developing on CCSS. This should be acknowledged in the application. Not everyone is where they need to be. What are we really going to do to being people along?
- How are we informing boards of education? Need to incorporate this into the plan.
- Consistency across the state, with the work so if a student moves they are getting the same curriculum.
- Communication and knowledge about CCSS in the media will work move it along. We need to send the message ourselves.
- Concerned about special education students achieving the standards under CCSS and reflecting this on standards based report cards.

### Principle 3

- Districts with evaluation models in place already, would they get to keep these? How will we evaluate district plans?
- Training for teachers and principals about the system is crucial. Rubrics need to be used consistently.
- It is important to have external validators for evaluation system.

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### Connecticut Association of Schools Student Group

**February 7, 2012**

- Students had awareness of NCLB. The group is working on a position statement for the board. We may want to get a draft of this for incorporation into the document.
- Process writing is being forgotten- need focus on practical areas.

- Teacher evaluation- student engagement has been focused on by instructor- should focus on a way to make classes more interesting without compromising rigor
- Take focus off preparation for tests- emphasize learning
- Teacher evaluations should not be based on seniority, tenure can pose problem
- Technology education should be included in the equation of school evaluation
- Communicating with students so they can understand that test results impact teacher evaluations
- Feedback form- make sure students are involved in the process

## Connecticut Associations of Schools (Principals)

February 13, 2012

### Principle 1:

- I think the direction is great. One concern I have is the accountability in conjunction with the common core standards. We're teaching to one set of standards that might not be aligned to the assessments.
  - When would the supplemental piece happen?
- Group came together to discuss adoption of common core (Larry – group disbanded; couldn't come to agreement for grades K-1)?
- Way more communication to Priority School Districts but not for non-Priority School Districts – what about the rest of the state?
- How will state ensure equal access to technology when the assessments are made available?
  - Is it true that there is an "option" of graphing calculators – different access to wealth?
- How can we make sure we're able to gear with project-based learning and different types of instruction?
- Struggling in New Britain with rolling out the common core. Taking vertical teams within buildings – have to build the assessment first (SBAC model) – building assessments for over a year. Started with 12th grade and moved down.
- There needs to be a method for districts to share districts. Some people have created units but haven't been posted to website
- State technology readiness tool – checking district readiness. But then what? Need a plan for this.
- Also, what about district's bandwidth to be able to test during the same window. Have been problems in the past. Will be a moving window in the past
- ELL and SWD: Testing accommodations in the early grades – have to be able to take them within 10 months. Dictionary is not an appropriate accommodation.
  - For ELL, we need more than a crosswalk. We need PD – constant coaching, going into classrooms and helping teachers. One day is not enough.
  - All Districts need this even ones with low ratios of ELL
- What about partnerships with community colleges? These partnerships are crucial.
- Assessment transition – what does the waiver really do in terms of being held accountable for CMT/CAPT
- CMT grades 3 and 4 (common core is radically different in these areas) – this is a real tension

- What do we do with the 3-month window? Doesn't seem fair that different schools get different amounts of instructional time? How do we accurately measure growth?

**Principle 2:**

- End-of-course of exams
- Okay to reduce "n" size if the model is "compensatory" like the index
- Hope that the SAM will provide an opportunity for schools with similar populations to learn from each other
- Report card should distinguish between selective schools and traditional public schools
- On the disability test (MAS), the "independent" level should be equivalent to "Goal" and should receive a 0.75
- "N" size should be determined by percent of the school population
- If we raise the SPI to 80, should increase the time for the goal
- Like that we keep the goal achievable by "maxing out" growth at "2"
- Whether we use a checklist or an index, want to be able to "see" all the parts so can celebrate the achievements
- Should use a 5-year graduation rate – students learn at different paces and shouldn't push them out before they are ready
- How does 4-year graduation rate factor in mobility? How long do they need to be at your school before you're responsible for graduating them in 4 years?
- Should hold schools accountable for both a drop-out rate and a graduation rate
- Evaluation system for schools should be based on multiple indicators, not just test scores
- What will the report card look like for schools that are only K-2?
- How will student and teacher attendance be measured? Will schools be penalized for extended missed time due to serious health problems?
- Attendance rates unfairly penalize schools in poverty
- Should think about adding suspension rates
- Like that there is a 3-year period before classification



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



February 21, 2012

The Honorable Arne Duncan  
Secretary of Education  
LBJ Education Building, 7W311  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

I am writing on behalf of the Connecticut State Board of Education to express its full support of Connecticut's application for a waiver of certain requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The development of Connecticut's application was an open, inclusive, engaging, and transparent process—providing numerous groups and individuals representing several and varied interests the opportunity to provide input on the application. Connecticut's application represents a thoughtful plan to (1) support the state's college- and career-ready expectations; (2) provide a differentiated system of recognition, accountability and support; and (3) support effective instruction and leadership. It sets ambitious—yet achievable—goals for Connecticut's students.

Be assured that the State Board of Education is committed to provide strong leadership and exercise its authority to set policy and propose legislative and budgetary initiatives that enhance the ability of local school districts and the state to ensure that all of our students are well educated and prepared for their future pursuits.

Enclosed please find a resolution adopted unanimously by the Connecticut State Board of Education at its February 10, 2012, meeting, in which we express our support for Connecticut's waiver application. We look forward to a favorable response.

Sincerely,

Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson

ABT/pvb  
Enclosure

**X.B.**

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**TO BE PROPOSED:**

February 10, 2012

**Whereas,** The State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") commends the State Department of Education for its thoughtful approach to developing Connecticut's request for a flexibility waiver of certain requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), for submission to the United States Department of Education;

**Whereas,** The Board acknowledges the Department's efforts to educate and solicit input from numerous individuals and groups, such as teachers and their representatives, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Language Learners, and other diverse communities;

**Whereas,** The Board believes that the requested waivers will result in significant improvements to the quality of teaching and learning for all Connecticut students; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved,** That the Board enthusiastically endorses Connecticut's application for a flexibility waiver of certain ESEA requirements, pledges its support to provide leadership and take action on areas for which it has responsibility, and directs the Chairperson to take the necessary action to express such support.

Approved by a vote of 10:0 this tenth day of February, Two Thousand Twelve.

Signed:   
Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson



Category Name and Task	Year 1 - 2010-2011												Year 2 - 2011-2012												Year 3-2013-2014 / Year 4-2014-2015																				
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug									
(Keys to Success) State Literacy Plan Advisory Committee (Striving Readers fund this)										Yellow	Yellow	Yellow									Yellow	Yellow																							
Guidance documents on Accom/mod in IEP develop to CCSS use.										Green	Green	Green																																	
Explanations & Examples (AZ-style) CCSS Resources needed										Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green																						
Curricular materials being developed will need to include guidance for working with SWD										Blue	Blue	Blue																																	
Special Education or diverse learner guidance on curriculum writing groups										Yellow	Yellow	Yellow																																	
<b>Assessment</b>																																													
CT active participant as a governing state in SBAC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green																																		
Alignment documents created to show the correlation between current strands/standards & CCSS	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green																																		
Item/task writing for RCD unit assessments -MC items delivered via CBAS										Yellow	Yellow	Yellow																																	
Information gathering and small scale pilot testing of current capacity for computer-based testing (CBT)													Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown																						
Decision about transitioning current CMT/CAPT to better reflect the content in the CCSS + subsequent communication to stakeholders													Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown																						
Summer assessment planning meeting with Measurement Inc.													Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown																						
Establish advisory groups with our external constituents on implementation issues related to online testing													Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown																						
District test coordinator fall letter with calendar of 2011-2012 activities for pilot and operational testing in March 2012													Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown																						
Select vendors for item and PT development (SBAC)													Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown																						
Description of how assessments are changing to inform field, families													Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown																						
<b>Professional Development</b>																																													
Rigorous Curriculum Design Institute (design teams) for English/ Language Arts & Math	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue																																		
Professional Development (PD) for Special Education personnel - initial planning session										Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue																																	
<u>Train</u> Coaches on Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Mathematics and English Language Arts										Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue																																	
Department planning to revise existing initiatives by bureau (e.g., Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) to align to new standards and assessments										Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue																																	

Category Name and Task	Year 1 - 2010-2011													Year 2 - 2011-2012										Year 3-2013-2014 / Year 4-2014-2015													
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	
Develop annotated Web-based tools and related resources for use by the State Education Resource Center (SERC), the Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs), and district personnel including curriculum specialists, assistant superintendents, principals and teacher leaders Tools would utilize Vision and Captivate and Archived Web sites																																					
General Education/Special Education/Bilingual, ELL, TESOL training on writing standards-based individualized education programs (IEPs)																																					
Provide training in new assessment system as it relates to various personnel needs																																					
Involvement of District Special Education, Bilingual/TESOL and ELL staff and collaboration with General Education staff in district-level professional development																																					
Pilot assessment items for the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) Full field test																																					
Provide training and technical assistance around standards-based (CCSS) curriculum guidance documents to teachers See "Curriculum Framework & Materials" plan for types of materials																																					
Professional Development aligned to new generation of state mastery tests 3-8 and high school																																					
Training for Special Education, Bilingual/TESOL and ELL staff on CCSS and changes in assessments																																					
CSDE/RESC & SERC Professional Development IHE Symposium																																					
<b>Communications</b>																																					
Products and Web Site Link from Common Core Icon																																					
CCSS Web page updated with automatic notice and link to CCSSO site																																					
Press Release																																					
Superintendent letter																																					
Review and revise CCSSO messaging materials																																					
Check on agency list-serve and update for fall																																					
Voice over PowerPoint																																					
BTLL and BSE e-alerts																																					
Calendar for the development of CCSS with links to programs and presentations																																					
<b>External Education Group Leadership</b>																																					
Connecticut Education Association																																					
Connecticut Assessment Forum																																					
Commissioner's Back-to-School																																					
Regional Education Service Center Curriculum, mathematics and English Language Arts Council																																					
ConnCase, Special Education Advisory Council, State Performance Plan #3 Stakeholder Group and Focused Monitoring Steering Committee																																					
CAPELL																																					

Category Name and Task	Year 1 - 2010-2011													Year 2 - 2011-2012												Year 3-2013-2014 / Year 4-2014-2015											
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	
SIG Advisory Group																																					
CAUS																																					
P-20 Council																																					
Early Childhood Cabinet																																					
Assistant Superintendent																																					
CAS, Data Team Trainers and SRBI Trainers																																					
ASCD																																					
Deans of Education (Mitch Sakoff)																																					
CABE/CAPSS Fall Conference/newsletter																																					
CT Reading Association																																					
ATOMIC																																					
Other professional organization																																					
Legislators and governor's office																																					
SIG Advisory Group																																					
Administrator's Union																																					
<b>Internal Communication</b>																																					
Division of Family and Student Support Services and SERC																																					
Administrative Council Presentation with bureau-level follow-up about where they fit into the work																																					
Brown bag lunch presentation and updates																																					

**COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS  
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT CONFERENCE ATTENDEES  
June 17, 2010**

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>
<i>Removed</i>		Education Specialist	Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES)
		Executive Dean	Capital Community College
		CAPT ELA Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Math Coordinator	Norwich Public Schools
		Math Chair	Brookfield Public Schools
		6-8 Math Teacher	New Canaan Public Schools
		Dir. Professional Development Services	Cooperative Educational Services (C.E.S.)
		Dean of Academic & Student Affairs	Northwestern Connecticut Community College
		Dean of Student Services	Three Rivers Community College
		Early Childhood Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Assistant Superintendent	Glastonbury Public Schools
		Assoc. Dir. of T & L Equity	Manchester Public Schools
		Standards Team Leader	CT State Department of Education
		Mathematics Instructor	Gateway Community College
		Reg. 14 Language Arts Coordinator	Woodbury Middle School
		Grants and Contracts Manager	CT Dept of Labor - WIA Unit
		Family Partnerships Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Director of Instruction & Prof Dev	Monroe Public Schools
		President	CT Academy for Education
		CAPT Math Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Deputy Commissioner	CT State Department of Education
		PD Director	Education Connection
		Administrator for Program Development	East Lyme Public Schools
		K-12 Math Curriculum Resource	Wallingford Public Schools

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>
<i>Removed</i>		Director of Teaching & Learning	Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
		Math Coordinator	Monroe Public Schools
		External Consultant	SERC – State Education Resource Center
		K-8 District Math Consultant	Naugatuck Public Schools
		HS Math Teacher	Newington Public Schools
		Math Coordinator	Suffield Public Schools
		Curriculum Specialist	EASTCONN
		Reading First and Literacy Coordinator	Cooperative Educational Services (C.E.S.)
		Assistant Superintendent/CASCD rep	Region #4 Public Schools
		Dir. Of Reading & Literacy Grades 3-8	Bridgeport Public Schools
		Curriculum Director	Tolland Public Schools
		Bureau Chief	CT State Department of Education
		ELA Staff Developer	Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
		Bureau Chief	CT State Department of Education
		Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Asst. Supt. for Curriculum & Instruction	East Haven Public Schools
		LA Consultant	Tolland Public Schools
		Science Coordinator	Groton Public Schools
		Language Arts Coordinator	Region #10 Public Schools
		Associate Professor	UCONN
		Professor	Manchester Community College
		Curriculum Director	Colchester Public Schools
		District Literacy Coach	Bristol Public Schools
		Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Superintendent; Past President CASCD	East Hampton Public Schools
		Assistant Superintendent	Stonington Public Schools
		Asst. Dir. for Program Dev. & LEA Services	SERC – State Education Resource Center
		Director of Mathematics	Hartford Public Schools
		Acting Dean of Academic Affairs	Naugatuck Valley Community College

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>
<i>Removed</i>		Assistant Superintendent	West Hartford Public Schools
		Teacher-Univ. of Hartford Magnet School	Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
		Literacy Trainer	Manchester Public Schools
		Assistant Superintendent	East Hartford Public Schools
		Central Office Math	Norwalk Public Schools
		Senior Consultant	Department of Higher Education
		Senior Research Associate	Connecticut Community Colleges
		Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Director of Literacy, Grades 6-12	Hartford Public Schools
		Program Coordinator	LEARN
		Data Processing Executive	Cheshire Public Schools/CEA/CT Academy for Education
		Early Childhood Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Instructor of Chemistry	Quinnebaug Valley Community College
		Curriculum Director	Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
		Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Math Coordinator	Groton Public Schools
		Asst. Supt for Curriculum & Instruction	Easton, Redding and Region#9 Public School Districts
		Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Education Consultant	SERC – State Education Resource Center
		Assistant Superintendent	New Milford Public Schools
		World Languages & Literatures Dept.	Southern CT State University
		Language Arts Coordinator	Ledyard Public Schools
		Program Coordinator LA	Greenwich Public Schools
		Mathematics Consultant	Mansfield Public Schools
		Assistant Superintendent of Schools	Newington Public Schools
		Special Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Mathematics Consultant	National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics
		English Language Arts Teacher	Hamden Public Schools
		ESOL/Bilingual Coordinator (CAPELL)	Norwich Public Schools

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>
<i>Removed</i>		CMT Math Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Language Arts Coordinator	Montville Public Schools
		Literacy Specialist	Farmington Public Schools
		Assistant Superintendent	Waterford Public Schools
		Assistant Professor	Univ of Bdgpt School of Ed & Human Resources
		ELA Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Language Arts Coordinator	Bethel Public Schools
		Dean of Academic Affairs	Tunxis Community College
		Academic Dean	Housatonic Community College
		Assistant Professor	Eastern CT State University
		Math Chair	New Fairfield Public Schools
		ELL Teacher Coach	Hartford Public Schools
		Assistant Superintendent	Madison Public Schools
		K-2 Literacy Coordinator	Brookfield Public Schools
		Supervisor of Reading and Curriculum	Milford Public Schools
		Math/Science Department	Gateway Community College
		K-4 Math Specialist	Pomfret Community School
		Project Manager, P-20 Council	Department of Higher Education
		Assistant Professor	Manchester Community College
		K-12 Math Program Administrator	Greenwich Public Schools
		K-12 Language Arts Coordinator	Suffield Public Schools
		Business/Computer Dist Dir	Connecticut Technical High School System
		Chief Academic & Student Affairs Officer	Connecticut Community College
		Dir. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment	Old Saybrook Public Schools
		Independent Consultant	CT Reading Assn. Board of Directors
		Assistant Superintendent	Cromwell Public Schools
		Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Professional Learning Specialist	EDUCATION CONNECTION

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization
<i>Removed</i>		Director of Professional & Career Services	LEARN
		Supervisor of Bilingual & Compensatory Programs	Meriden Public Schools
		Mathematics Teacher	Old Saybrook Public Schools
		Math Coordinator	Region #14 Public Schools
		Math Teacher Leader	LEARN
		Mathematics Curriculum Director	Glastonbury Public Schools
		Supervisor of Mathematics	Meriden Public Schools
		Education Consultant	CT State Department of Education
		Lecturer in English	Tunxis Community College
		Academic Strategies Department Chair	Tunxis Community College
		Education Consultant	SERC – State Education Resource Center
		Curriculum Specialist	EASTCONN



# Common Core State Standards State Adoption Process Evaluation Report

Developed for:

**The Connecticut State Department of Education**

By

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## Common Core State Standards State Adoption Process Evaluation

### Introduction

The Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) is poised to adopt and implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and mathematics published on June 2, 2010. Jointly developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Governors Association and 48 participating states, the CCSS standards establish learning expectations intended to prepare all students to pursue higher education or to enter the work force.

States competing for Race to the Top funding from the U.S. Department of Education are expected to adopt the CCSS by August 2, 2010. Adoption is defined as occurring when the standards-authorizing body within the state (in this case, the CSBE) has taken formal action to adopt the CCSS in its entirety. Connecticut's Race to the Top Phase 2 application, submitted June 1, 2010, is committed to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards.

State adoption of the CCSS will result in changes to what is taught, when it is taught and how it is taught. In preparation for these impending changes, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has developed a comprehensive plan to engage education stakeholders in reviewing CCSS standards and contributing to planning for a confident transition to implementing the new standards. Actions to date have included (i) providing feedback to CCSS developers on two drafts; (ii) collaborating with the Alliance of Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC Alliance) to establish a comprehensive plan for CCSS rollout and implementation; (iii) collaborating with Achieve to conduct a comparison study of CCSS to Connecticut standards in English language arts and mathematics; and (iv) convening a Stakeholder Engagement Conference to raise awareness of the CCSS and elicit stakeholder input on the standards' quality and recommended transition supports.

To document CSDE's CCSS adoption process, Dr. Mhora Newsom-Stewart, Director of the Center for Collaborative Evaluation and Strategic Change (CEESC) at EDUCATION CONNECTION, was contracted to analyze data related to the adoption process and to prepare this report for submission to the CSDE. The adoption process was designed to inform education stakeholders regarding the degree of alignment between Connecticut's current standards and the new Common Core standards and to obtain feedback about their appropriateness and their potential implications for Connecticut schools.

### Background of Common Core Standards Development

The Common Core State Standards initiative focuses on the development of state led common core standards for K-12 in English/Language Arts and Mathematics and incorporates a focus on learning expectations for students. The initiative is designed to address a variety of challenges faced nationwide in education including the existence of disparate educational standards across the states, a high degree of student mobility between and within states, the increasing pressures of global competition and a need for students to obtain the twenty first century skills needed to be successful in a twenty first century workplace. The development of Common Core State Standards is intended to prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and work, to ensure consistent student expectations throughout the United States and to provide parents, students and educators with clear and focused goals for achievement. As of March, 2010, 48 states, the District of Columbia and two United States territories had committed to participation in the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

The Common Core State Standards were designed to meet specific criteria. Standards were designed to consist of fewer, clearer and high level standards; to be aligned with college and work expectations; to include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher order thinking skills; to build upon the strengths and lessons of current state standards; to be internationally benchmarked so that all students will be prepared to succeed in our global economy; and to be based on evidence and research.

The standards were developed through an intensive process of national review and feedback at multiple levels. The initial college and career readiness standards were developed during the summer of 2009. After completion of

these standards, a series of K-12 learning progressions occurred including multiple rounds of feedback from states, teachers and feedback group and validation committees. Groups of individuals representing English language learners and students with disabilities were instrumental in developing the ELL and students with disabilities statements in the introduction to the standards. The draft standards were provided to each state for review on February 8, 2010. Consultants in the CSDE reviewed this draft version of the Common Core standards in its entirety for their respective content areas and provided a number of recommendations for improvement. In mid-March, the final draft of the Common Core Standards was released for public comment. That period ended on April 2, 2010.

In each of the two primary focus areas, English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, a number of advances were incorporated into the Common Core State Standards. Specifically, the ELA standards devote attention both to what students read as to how students read. As students progress over time, they are expected to develop reading comprehension skills and to apply them to increasingly complex texts. The standards progress across the K-12 continuum. The progression is based on evidence and anchored in the college and career readiness (CCR) standards. The CCR standards define broad competencies while the K-12 standards increase specificity and define a developmentally appropriate progression of skills and understandings. The K-12 standards require reading in literature and discipline-specific content areas. There are, across the standards, specific content that all students must read including classic myths, stories from around the world, America's founding documents and foundational American literature. The ELA standards require that students systematically develop knowledge of literature and in other disciplines through reading, writing, speaking and listening across the content areas.

Advances in Mathematics standards were designed to focus on core conceptual understandings and procedures in the early grades. In grades K-5, students gain a foundation in whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions and decimals. In the middle grades, students build upon this foundation through hands on learning in geometry, algebra, probability and statistics. The high school standards require students to apply mathematical ways of thinking to real world issues and challenges and emphasize the use of mathematical modeling.

## **Connecticut Adoption Process**

The CSDE conducted a multi-step process to inform and engage education stakeholders. Each step of the process will be discussed separately. Objectives of the adoption process were to:

- 1) Through an inclusive process, obtain stakeholder feedback regarding the alignment, rigor and quality of the CCSS
- 2) Broaden acceptance and understanding of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in advance of implementation
- 3) Inform recommendations of the State of Connecticut Board of Education
- 4) Assist the CSDE in planning for rollout, transition support, new resources and systems.
- 5) Inform the educational community and ensure transparency of all CSDE activities related to the adoption of the CCSS.

### **Step 1-Planning**

On April 15, 2010, as the first step of the process designed to facilitate the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, consultants from the CSDE met with representatives of the Alliance of Regional Education Service Centers (RESA Alliance) to discuss and co-plan activities related to the adoption process. Attendees included CSDE staff and representatives of six Connecticut Regional Education Service Centers. CSDE and RESA Alliance staff discussed upcoming activities and began to plan for co-hosting a CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference. The purpose of the conference was to inform education stakeholders regarding the degree of alignment between Connecticut's current standards and the new Common Core standards and to obtain feedback about the quality of the new standards and their appropriateness for Connecticut students.

## **Step 2-Common Core Comparison Tool**

In February 2010, CSDE was invited to be one of several state education agencies to field test a Web-based program being developed by Achieve, an independent, non-profit education reform organization that is a partner in the Common Core Standards Initiative. A team of CSDE curriculum consultants met with representatives of Achieve on April 23, 2010, to learn to use the Common Core Comparison Tool (CCCT) and to suggest improvements for its further development. The tool analyzes matching judgments made by state standards experts and generates reports summarizing the percentage of match between Common Core and state standards, as well as the strength of those matches and where there are grade level differences.

## **Step 3-Common Core Comparison Study**

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010, CSDE standards experts and representatives from Achieve brought together over 50 experts in Connecticut's English language arts and mathematics standards to conduct the comparison study. Participants were recruited from RESCs and from school districts based on their deep knowledge of Connecticut standards and their ability to commit to two days' work.

The standards reviewers were divided into teams to look at standards for a gradespan: K-2, 3-5, 6-8 or 9-12. Each team consisted of 7 to 10 individuals. They received training in the use of the on-line tool which displays a Common Core standard and a list of all Connecticut standards and grade-level expectations. Standards reviewers enter the Connecticut standard or standards that are similar in their "essence" to each Common Core standard. For each Common Core standard, one of three possible judgments were made: an "Exact match", a "Collective match" or "No match". An exact match meant that the essence and the grade-level were the same. A collective match meant that parts of two or more Connecticut standards, when taken together would be similar to the Common Core standard. The closeness of each match was rated either an "Excellent match", a "Good match" or a "Weak match." The combined process allows the essence of the standard to trigger a match with a strength rating accounting for differences in verbiage, specificity or bulk conducted by Connecticut standard experts.

Results indicated that approximately 80% of the Common Core standards match the Connecticut ELA standards and 92% of the Common Core standards match the Connecticut mathematics standards. There were 200 CCSS in ELA and 40 CCSS in mathematics identified that are not currently included in the Connecticut standards.

Of the ELA standards, 37% of standards had an "Excellent" match, 31% had a "Good" match, 12% had a "Weak" match and 20% had "No match" to the Connecticut standards. Of the mathematics standards, 47% had an "Excellent" match, 21% had a "Good" match, 24% had a "Weak" match and 8% had "No match" to the Connecticut standards

A grade-by-grade comparison of standards indicates that, for the mathematic standards, between 86-100% of standards in the CCSS match to the Connecticut Standards for each of grades K-12. For ELA, between 64% and 90% of standards are matched in grades K-8.

## **Step 4-CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference**

The CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference was designed to share the results of the standard-to-standard comparison and to provide an opportunity for educational and other experts to provide feedback about the quality of the new standards. The event was planned for Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, from 9 am until 12 noon.

One hundred and eighty one individuals were invited to attend the CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference. These individuals represented a broad sample of education stakeholders and included administrators, teachers and specialists from Regional Educational Service Centers and enrichment organizations. The pool of invitees was balanced among 60% certified educators and 40% representatives from parent, community, social advocacy or community-based organizations. During the conference, activities planned include the review of the gap analysis results and the completion of two feedback surveys.

An on-line invitation was sent to all invitees and included information summarizing background information regarding the Common Core Standards Initiative and an on-line individual feedback form to be completed by individuals who are not able to attend the conference.

The CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference included introductory remarks by Mr. Mark McQuillan, Commissioner of Education for the State of Connecticut followed by an overview of the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a description of the adoption process and implications, and results of the comparison study. Upon completion of the overview, stakeholder discussions were held and structured feedback was provided regarding the quality and rigor of the Common Core State Standards and the appropriateness of the Common Core State Standards for Connecticut students.

Group discussions were facilitated by table leaders. Stakeholders were asked to preview the CCSS in either ELA or mathematics prior to the conference and were given an Individual Feedback form with 10 prompts to guide their review. During the conference, 2 hours were provided for group discussion and feedback. Each table was asked to discuss the general impressions of the CCSS as a group. Upon completion of this discussion, each individual completed the Individual Stakeholder Feedback form and provided the completed form to their Table Leader to entry into the online Survey Monkey survey.

The second half of the group discussion consisted of the validation of the CCSS that were new to Connecticut. Each stakeholder was asked to review 20-30 standards for a grade level in either ELA or Math and to respond to two questions about each standard. Response forms were customized by grade and color-coded. Each individual reviewed the standards listed on their worksheet and entered the responses to the two prompts for each standard. A facilitated group discussion was then held regarding the appropriateness of the standards new for Connecticut. A single group consensus response to the four questions on the on-line version of the Stakeholder Group Consensus Form for ELA and math was developed and responses were entered by the Table Leader directly on line.

### **Instrument Development**

The instrument development process was designed to encourage participation of CSDE and Regional Education Service Center (RESC) staff through each stage in the process. The process included the initial development of draft individual and group feedback forms on May 15 by CSDE and RESC Alliance representatives. After completion of the draft, the survey was provided to Dr. Mhora Newsom-Stewart, Director of the Center for Collaborative Evaluation and Strategic Change (CCESC) at EDUCATION CONNECTION for feedback and review. Dr. Newsom-Stewart provided feedback and guidance on survey questions and format to Ms. Liz Buttner, CSDE Consultant. Ms. Buttner in turn provided the feedback to additional CSDE consultants and RESC Alliance staff until agreement was reached on both questions and format. Two survey forms were developed as follows:

- *Individual Stakeholder Feedback Form*: Designed to provide individuals an opportunity to inform the CSDE and RESC Alliance of their impressions of the Common Core State Standards.
- *Group Stakeholder Consensus Feedback Forms in ELA and Mathematics*: Designed to provide small groups of individuals the opportunity to provide consensus feedback related to Common Core State Standards that do not have a match in Connecticut standards and Connecticut standards that do not have a match in the CCSS.

Survey validity is maximized when the survey addresses all key concepts related to the issue being addressed and when the conceptual framework is reviewed by a panel of experts to ensure that no key concept was missed. Validity was maximized in this activity by the development of questions linked to Common Core and Connecticut Standards and by the review of all survey categories and questions by CSDE and RESC Alliance staff. Survey validity is expected to be sufficient.

Reliability is generally maximized by the development of questions following nationally accepted standards and developed at a literacy level in line with the literacy level of the target population. Survey questions were developed using these guidelines and were reviewed by CCESC, CSDE and RESC Alliance staff prior to survey administration.

Surveys were administered online using Survey Monkey by the CSDE. The Individual Stakeholder Feedback Form was administered to all invitees. Individuals who were not attending the conference were asked to complete this form online prior to the conference. Individuals who were attending the conference, were asked to complete the survey at the conference. The Group Stakeholder Consensus Feedback Form was administered to each group attending the conference. One form was completed on hard copy per group. Data was provided to the CSDE staff and entered into the online survey by the end of the day.

A detailed description of the content and format of each data collection instrument is included below.

A. Individual Stakeholder Feedback Form:

Information collected included:

- Background Information
  - Primary Affiliation
  - Content Area Interest
- Impressions of the Common Core State Standards
  - Rigor
  - Inclusion of 21st Century Skills
  - Clarity and ease of following
  - Progression of learning from grade to grade
  - Developmental appropriateness
  - Linkage of standards to success in college
  - Linkage of standards to success in workplace

A 4-point, forced choice, Likert-type scale was developed with 1=Strongly Disagree to 4=Strongly Agree. Individuals were also able to select “Don’t Know/Need more Information” for any item. The survey provided individuals an opportunity to comment on each item.

B. Group Stakeholder Consensus Feedback Form:

Information collected included:

- Perceptions of ELA CCSS standards that are new to Connecticut
  - Degree to which standards are essential for college/career readiness
  - Degree to which standards provide reasonable expectations for the corresponding grade level
  - Resources, information and support systems needed for effective implementation
  - Additional questions
- Perceptions of mathematics CCSS standards that are new to Connecticut
  - Degree to which standards are essential for college/career readiness
  - Degree to which standards provide reasonable expectations for the corresponding grade level
  - Resources, information and support systems needed for effective implementation
  - Additional questions

For the first two questions in each area, a 3-point, scale was developed with 1= Disagree, 2=Not Sure and 3=Agree for each item. Questions for the last two bullets in each area were open-ended.

### Data Analysis

Conceptual analysis of open-ended responses was used to analyze qualitative feedback results. Analysis of quantitative data occurred using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Cross-tabulations assessed

differences in responses on the individual perceptions of Common Core Standards by stakeholder group using the Pearson's Chi-Square test. Differences were compared between individuals with a primary interest in ELA or mathematics, between teachers and administrators and between individuals representing school districts, other educational organizations or "other" organizations. All statistical tests were conducted using an alpha level of  $p < .05$ .

## Results

### **Individual Feedback Form**

A total of 107 individuals attended the conference and 90 individuals completed the individual feedback form. Of these, 64.4% held a primary affiliation within a school district, 26.7% had a primary affiliation with another educational organization and 8.9% stated that they had "other" primary affiliation. Over half (55.6%) of respondents stated that their primary content interest was English/Language Arts. The remaining 44.4% had a primary content interest in mathematics.

Of respondents representing a school district, 71.4% identified themselves as administrators (71.4%) and 28.7% identified themselves as teachers.

Results from the individual feedback forms are summarized in Table 1. Items are listed in decreasing order of the percentage of individuals who "Agree or Strongly Agree" with each item.

Statistical analysis using cross-tabulations and the Pearson's Chi-Square test identified only one statistically significant difference between groups. Individuals from "other" organizations were more likely to disagree that "*The CCSS embed 21st Century skills*" than individuals representing educational organizations. There were no statistically significant differences in perception between individuals with primary interests in ELA or mathematics or between administrators or teachers. It is expected that the lack of variation between groups results from the overall lack of variation in response. The high percentage of individuals who "Agree or Strongly Agree" with each item show consistency in response across all groups.

**Table 1: Individual Perceptions of Common Core State Standards  
Percent Response**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree or Strongly Agree
1) Students meeting these core standards will be well prepared for success in college.	0%	0%	<b>0%</b>	60.6%	39.4%	<b>100.0%</b>
2) The CCSS format is easy to follow.	0	2.4	<b>2.4</b>	63.9	33.7	<b>97.6</b>
3) The CCSS are as rigorous as CT standards in terms of higher order thinking skills.	2.5	0	<b>2.5</b>	60.0	37.5	<b>97.5</b>
4) The CCSS represent a coherent progression of learning from grade-to-grade.	1.3	3.9	<b>5.2</b>	62.3	32.5	<b>94.8</b>
5) The CCSS are as rigorous as CT standards in terms of application of knowledge.	5.1	3.8	<b>8.9</b>	50.6	40.5	<b>91.1</b>
6) The CCSS represent learning standards that are important for all students.	3.6	6.0	<b>9.5</b>	54.8	35.7	<b>90.5</b>
7) Students meeting these core standards will be well prepared for post-high school success in the workplace.	0	10.9	<b>10.9</b>	57.8	31.3	<b>89.1</b>
8) The CCSS embed 21rst Century skills (i.e. communicating, collaborating, using technologies and solving problems creatively).	5.2	7.8	<b>13.0</b>	50.6	36.4	<b>87.0</b>
9) The CCSS language is clear.	1.2	13.1	<b>14.3</b>	64.3	21.4	<b>85.7</b>
10) The CCSS are developmentally appropriate for each grade.	0	18.1	<b>18.1</b>	65.3	16.7	<b>81.9</b>

The vast majority of respondents provided positive feedback regarding the CCSS standards. Respondents were most positive regarding the ability of the standards to prepare students for success in college, the ease of use of the CCSS format and the rigor of the CCSS in terms of higher order thinking skills. Over 95% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements relating to each of these topics.

Respondents provided less positive feedback regarding the ability of the standards to prepare students for post-high school success in the workplace, the degree to which 21rst Century skills are embedded in the CCSS, the clarity of the CCSS language and the developmental appropriateness of the CCSS for each grade. Although lower, the percentage of individuals who agreed or strongly agreed with these items was still high and ranged from 80 to 90% of respondents.

Respondents provided comments relating to each item. A brief summary of comments related to each item are provided below.

- Item 1: Students meeting these core standards will be well prepared for success in college. Comments related to this item generally addressed the critical role of higher education in assessing the ability of these standards to prepare students for college. A few individuals commented on specific areas that they perceived to be either lacking or very strong in the standards. One individual expressed concern about the degree to which technology literacy is embedded in the CCSS standards at the elementary and middle school levels. A number of individuals expressed enthusiasm regarding the inclusion of both life and academic skills in the standards.
- Item 2: The CCSS format is easy to follow. The majority of comments provided expressed satisfaction with the degree to which the CCSS format is easy to follow. A few individuals provided recommendations

for improvement including clarification of enactment of the state and district levels, a need to strengthen connection to the 21st century skills, and a need for more “fine tuning” and “details.”

- Item 3: The CCSS are as rigorous as CT standards in terms of higher order thinking skills. Comments provided by respondents regarding this item were limited and generally identified a need to understand the CT standards more clearly in order to address the question. A number of respondents stated that the CCSS standards were broad as compared to the CT standards. A few respondents described the CCSS standards as expanding listening and speaking, providing appropriate evolution from grade to grade, providing greater production and performance levels, and providing a positive contribution to history, integration across curricular areas and progression from grade to grade. Challenges were described as requiring evidence of learning, engagement across subjects and a need to incorporate interpretation of poetry.
- Item 4: The CCSS represent a coherent progression of learning from grade-to-grade. The majority of comments in this area were positive with the progression described as “Great”, “Easy to follow” and “Clearly articulated”. A few areas of concern were identified and included grades 9-12, ELL and SPED areas, a need for greater detail and a lack of description of required foundational skills for each area.
- Item 5: The CCSS are as rigorous as CT standards in terms of application of knowledge. The majority of comments provided expressed satisfaction with the CCSS with these standards being described as more rigorous, performance-based and applied than Connecticut standards. A few individuals stated that Connecticut standards were more rigorous, in particular in the areas of ELL, interpretation of poetry and Standard 9 for writing.
- Item 6: The CCSS represent learning standards that are important for all students. The majority of comments were positive with a number of individuals identifying a need to ensure that the learning requirements of ELL and SPED students were met. Additionally, a few respondents questioned the need to teach high level mathematics concepts to all students.
- Item 7: Students meeting these core standards will be well prepared for post-high school success in the workplace. The majority of individuals provided positive feedback regarding the ability of the standards to meet the academic needs of students in the workplace. Concerns were identified in the areas of cross-cultural and international communication and collaboration, team work, interpersonal skills, problem solving, technology and interpersonal skills.
- Item 8: The CCSS embed 21st Century skills (i.e. communicating, collaborating, using technologies and solving problems creatively). Respondents expressed satisfaction regarding the inclusion of 21st Century skills in the CCSS. However, concerns described by respondents included a need to strengthen the areas of collaboration, technology, teamwork, communication, mathematic practice, and creativity in the CCSS standards and to, in general, to be more specific regarding what is expected in each area.
- Item 9: The CCSS language is clear. Participants generally expressed satisfaction with the clarity and specificity of the CCSS standards. However, some respondents emphasized that the appropriateness of the clarity was dependent on the audience to whom the standards were being presented. A number of individuals stated that the clarity needed to be improved for teachers in elementary grades and for teachers that do not have a rigorous background in the subject area addressed.
- Item 10: The CCSS are developmentally appropriate for each grade. Respondents described the appropriateness of the CCSS standards as dependent on grade level with a number of individuals stating that they did not believe they could assess the appropriateness in the time allotted or based on their own experience. Individuals also stated that the “appropriateness” of the standards would depend on the implementation of the standards within the classroom setting and, to be implemented successfully, would require appropriate instructional practice within the classroom.

## **Stakeholders Group Consensus Form**

### **I. Group Consensus - English/Language Arts:**

Nine group leaders completed the group feedback form for English and Language Arts.

Of these nine group leaders, all respondents agreed that the CCSS in the area of English and Language Arts that would be new for Connecticut were essential for college and career readiness. Almost four fifths (77.8%) of respondents agreed that overall, the CCSS in ELA that would be new for Connecticut were reasonable expectations for the corresponding grade level. The remaining individuals were “not sure”.

Due to the small number of respondents, all comments provided by respondents are listed below for each item. Comments were edited for spelling errors only.

#### **Item 1: Overall, the CCSS in ELA that would be new for Connecticut are essential for college and career readiness—Comments:**

- As State has evolved we have enhanced our grade levels expectations – initially this will be a stretch, but the assessment made people stretch (CMTs) until we have the assessments, we won't stretch for these Alignment with 21st century skills.
- Grades 11-12: Syntax, "artful sentences" unclear; some of the writing was a little above grade 12: "verify data with corroborating or challenging conclusions" might be too sophisticated--unsure...Is it necessary for every student, every career?
- The preponderance of the new items are essential and are already being done
- There was some discussion about college and career readiness NOT being the same. Industry may be pushing this agenda.
- We love the focus on inter-personal skills.

#### **Item 2: Overall, the CSS in ELA that would be new for Connecticut are reasonable expectations for the corresponding grade level-Comments:**

- EC: For K, children in pre-k come in with wide range of experiences since there is no universal pre-k or full K. Expectations are high given various experiences and knowledge upon entering K. Variability of developmental readiness is also a factor.
- Except for some exceptions for example, grade 9-10 first page – samples for analysis – content is more appropriate for a higher grade, expectations are reasonable for corresponding grade levels. State requirements of content by grade level may conflict.
- For some grade levels the concern is level of scaffolding accepted – are we introducing, how do you determine level of mastery expectations? Rather than using HOT talk about the levels of sophistication of text – Access to content vs. reading level
- More consensus at K-8 level; much less consensus at HS level. Not all standards were perceived as appropriate for all students, much more for higher achieving students.
- The group felt that some of the standards needed more clarification. Wasn't a consensus on what it meant.
- While the group liked the focus on rigor and student independence, some standards seem to be inappropriate for grade levels. In particular, craft and structure in reading standards for literacy in science and technical subjects seems inappropriate since
- Yes, overall. SPED and ELL are concerns. Also, some shifting of when certain skills are introduced may be necessary.

A summary of responses to open-ended questions 3 and 4 is provided below.

### **Item 3: What information, resources or support systems will be needed for effective transition to, and implementation of, the CCSS?**

Group responses to this question identified a number of resources respondents perceived to be needed for a successful transition to and implementation of the CCSS. Necessary resources identified by respondents included:

Professional Development: Respondents identified the provision of professional development for faculty and administrators as critical to allow a bridge between standards and classroom practice to be developed. Groups emphasized a need to provide professional development on topics including the link to SRBI, the needs of Tier I students, strategies to provide alignment to Tiers II and III, differentiation, the importance of and specifics of the CCSS and how the CCSS link to Connecticut standards, strategies for scaffolding from grade to grade, integration of literacy in the content areas, developmentally appropriate practice to meet standards, and the use of technology in instruction. Stakeholders requested a variety of types of professional development including the use of on-line learning, webinars, implementation of a train-the-trainers model and the development of model lessons.

Curriculum Alignment: Respondents emphasized the importance of curriculum alignment at the district level and alignment with the ELL frameworks. A number of respondents expressed an interest in working with Achieve to conduct alignment of CSSS with curriculum at a district level.

Development of Planning, Communication and Education Tools for Standards: A range of planning, communication and education tools were identified by participants as critical for success. These tools included the development of clear expectations for districts by the CSDE including expectations for student performance, curriculum alignment and integration, student assessment, implementation timelines, integration of technology, required materials, expected resources and assessments; the development of user-friendly definitions of CSS terminology; the development and sharing of models of assessments and lesson plans; and the development and sharing of crosswalks between old and new standards. Additionally, stakeholders emphasized the importance of summarizing and communicating to districts the national and international educational context impacting the adoption of the CCSS.

Collaboration: Respondents emphasized the importance of collaboration between K-12 teachers, administrators and faculty from higher educational institutions throughout the state in the evaluation and implementation of CCSS standards.

### **Item 4: What additional questions do you have concerning the adoption and transition to CCSS?**

Questions provided by participants were generally specific and included requests for information regarding linkages between the CCSS and the GLEs, strategies to emphasize global expectations and address the CT achievement gap, timeline and available funding to support the initiative, linkage to disciplines other than ELA and mathematics, types of assessments and existence or development of a pre-K component.

## **II. Group Consensus - Mathematics**

Five group leaders completed the group feedback form for Mathematics. All respondents agreed that the CCSS in mathematics that would be new for Connecticut are essential for college and career readiness. Three fifths (60%) of respondents agreed that overall, the CCSS in mathematics that would be new for Connecticut are reasonable expectations for the corresponding grade level. The remaining individuals were “not sure”.

All comments provided by respondents are listed below for each item. Comments have been edited for spelling errors only.

### **Item 1: Overall, the CCSS in Mathematics that would be new for Connecticut are essential for college and career readiness—Comments:**

- There was some discussion of college and career readiness not being the same.
- Seems to up the level, appear rigorous, 9-12 especially rigorous
- K-8 The entire group felt all the NEW standards were essential. 9-12 – Disagreement about the first two being essential # CC.9-12 NCN 6+ How can we answer reasonable for grade level when the descriptor is 9-12. The CCSS should prioritize some of the standards – e.g., the simple equations are critical where complex numbers is not essential for college and career readiness.
- Yes - we like them
- There was general agreement that they were essential especially K-8, but there was some unease with the term "essential" at the 9-12 levels. Do ALL kids really need ALL of these? There was a hesitance to go all in with essential. How can we find the time to do all of them....

**Item 2: Overall, the CSS in Mathematics that would be new for Connecticut are reasonable expectations for the corresponding grade level-Comments:**

- More consensus at K-8 level; much less at HS. Not all was indicated as appropriate for all students.
- Concern if students can't meet the standards, our population especially at the low and high ends are not engaged Need to plan and have PD so teachers can meet the needs of these students
- K-8 Specificity in the elementary is confusing – teachers and districts will need to know more details regarding topics like fractions. A district cannot build an assessment based on their interpretation. 9-12 Reasonable for grade level is difficult. Just looking today, you have to discuss the standard before deciding it is reasonable or essential. These should be identified by course (Algebra, Geometry and other?) Many of these from the CCSS are common to high school courses – our CT Standards so broad. Page 57 in the CCSS – the plus means advanced courses. Many of these should be in the common courses at the core level. See specific papers.
- We had 7 or 8 standards that we feel need to be at a different grade level within the k-8 set of standards for math
- Seemed generally OK - pushing so much - there is still going to have to be picking and choosing - it will be tough to do it all. Out of context, there is nothing to prohibit it developmentally, the larger concern is how can it all be done or can all of it be done well enough for mastery in the realm of a well rounded curriculum.

A summary of responses to open-ended questions 3 and 4 are provided below.

**Item 3: What information, resources or support systems will be needed for effective transition to, and implementation of, the CCSS?**

Group responses to this question identified resources respondents perceived to be needed for a successful transition to and implementation of the CCSS. Resources identified by respondents included:

Professional Development: Respondents again emphasized the importance of professional development for faculty and administrators to allow a bridge between standards and classroom practice to be developed. Groups emphasized a need for content-driven professional development for math teachers, at all levels, by grade to review the new standards, match what the district resources are, and educate teachers on appropriate instructional techniques to assist students to meet standards. Professional development was highlighted as particularly important for early grade math teachers.

Curriculum Alignment: Respondents again emphasized the importance of curriculum alignment at the district level and identified a need to specify details for each grade level and integrate probability into the standards.

Development of Planning, Communication and Education Tools for Standards: A range of planning, communication and education tools were again identified to be critical for success. Ideas provided by stakeholders include incorporation of a mandatory 4 years of mathematics in the high school curriculum, the development of resources for students with special needs including gifted students and students in Tiers I, II and Common Core State Standards State Adoption Process Evaluation

III, development of a strategy to work with districts to develop an action plan to implement CCSS, development of a clear direction from the CSDE regarding implementation timelines, integration of technology, materials and resources and assessments for each grade level; the development of user-friendly definitions of CSS terminology—in particular for teachers at the early grade levels and the development and sharing of models of lesson plans.

Additional Resources: Additional resources mentioned by respondents included financial resources, encouragement provided to schools and districts to upgrade text books and supplies, the use of Achieve’s comparison tool for completion of district alignment studies, and the provision of adequate technology to schools and districts to facilitate instruction necessary to implement the standards.

#### **Item 4: What additional questions do you have concerning the adoption and transition to CCSS?**

Questions provided by participants focused on the appropriate timeline and materials necessary to implement the CCSS and the relationship between the CT standards, the current model mathematics curriculum, the GLEs not included in the CCSS, and strategies to adapt the current curricula to meet the new standards. Respondents also asked for information regarding the involvement of higher education in the implementation of the standards and how to work with standards currently in the CT standards but not on the CCSS. Clarification was also requested regarding the level of skill or mastery needed at each level.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **Conclusions**

Data indicate that the Common Core State Standards Stakeholder Engagement Conference was successful in achieving desired goals and objectives. Specifically:

- Objective 1: Through an inclusive process, obtain stakeholder feedback regarding the alignment, rigor and quality of the CCSS.

90 individuals attended the Engagement conference with approximately two out of three individuals representing school districts, and the remaining participants representing other educational organizations. Representatives included teachers and administrators and content area experts in ELA and mathematics in relatively equal numbers. A wide range of feed back was received regarding alignment, rigor and quality of the CCSS. Feedback from both individual and group data collection processes was clear and informative and provides excellent data regarding stakeholder perceptions of the CCSS.

- Objective 2: Broaden acceptance and understanding of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in advance of implementation

Individual and group feedback indicates awareness and acceptance of the Common Core State Standards by the majority of stakeholders. Individual feedback forms completed by participants indicate that over 80% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with ten positive items related to clarity, ease of use, rigor, appropriateness, progression of the CCSS standards and the ability of standards to successfully prepare students for college and career. Data indicate that group feedback and related feedback forms were successful in providing opportunities for stakeholders to thoroughly review standards and provide descriptive and in-depth feedback to the CSDE.

- Objective 3: Inform recommendations of the State of Connecticut Board of Education

Participants provided a range of feedback to the CSDE related to rigor and appropriateness of the CCSS, concerns related to the use of the standards, and recommendations for successful implementation of the standards within Connecticut school districts. These recommendations will be useful to inform future recommendations provided by the CSDE.

- Objective 4: Assist the CSDE in planning for rollout, transition support, new resources and systems.

Ideas and suggestions provided by respondents should be invaluable to the CSDE while planning for rollout, transition support, new resources and systems. Additionally, data indicate that the adoption process was highly successful at informing and educating stakeholders regarding the CCSS and should provide the CSDE with a core group of informed individuals to serve as a basis for rollout and transition support.

- **Objective 5:** Inform the educational community and ensure transparency of all CSDE activities related to the adoption of the CCSS.

Data were shared with and input received from a broad spectrum of the educational community during each of the four steps of the adoption process. Stakeholder feedback and input was received from representatives of school districts and regional education service centers, higher education faculty, non-profit organizations, teachers, administrators and other key stakeholders. Participation and feedback collected during the pre-adoption process indicate that CSDE's approach to CCSS initiative thus far has been inclusive, collaborative, and data-based. Going forward, CSDE plans to continue and expand collaborations with the education community, business and industry leaders, family and social advocacy groups.

**Recommendations:** Participants provided a number of recommendations for the consideration of the CSDE. These recommendations include the following:

- Develop and communicate clear and consistent expectations for school districts regarding the implementation of the CCSS standards. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of including expectations on timeline, student performance, curriculum alignment and integration, student assessment, integration of technology, required materials, expected resources and assessments.
- Develop clear and simple descriptions of the standards for sharing throughout the school community. It was recommended that these descriptions be written in simple language to allow all educators to easily comprehend the standards.
- Develop and share cross-walks of the CCSS to the Connecticut standards for each subject area and grade level.
- Provide professional development to assist teachers and administrators to develop a bridge between standards and classroom practice. Stakeholders recommended that professional development be provided on topics including the link to SRBI, resources for students with special needs including gifted students and students in Tiers I, II and III, integration of technology, strategies for addressing needs of ELL and SPED students, differentiation, importance of and specifics of the CCSS and linkages between the CCSS and Connecticut standards, strategies for scaffolding from grade to grade, integration of literacy in the content areas, developmentally appropriate practice to meet standards, and content driven professional development for mathematics teachers. Professional development was described as particularly important for teachers in the early grade levels and for administrators to assist them to provide leadership throughout the schools related to implementation of the CCSS.
- Provide standards awareness workshops to stakeholders throughout Connecticut to ensure a general understanding of the implementation process.
- Ensure that adequate technology is available for all schools to allow the integration of the CCSS standards.
- Provide opportunities for teachers, administrators and faculty from higher education to interact and collaborate to provide a seamless transition between high school and college and a consistent approach to implementation across all grade levels.
- Work with districts to develop an action plan to align CCSS with existing district curricula. A number of individuals suggested that districts be able to work with Achieve to assist them to align CCSS with existing standards.
- Provide curriculum, student assessments, and instructional materials necessary to support districts in the implementation of the CCSS.

### Connecticut State Collaborative on Assessments and Student Standards (SCASS) Participation

- The Council of Chief State School Officer’s (CCSSO) *Implementing Common Core State Standards* State Collaborative on Assessments and Student Standards (SCASS), which is working with six-member teams across states to share resources and strategies to systematically implement the standards within our states;
- The *CCSSO Next Generation of Accountability* SCASS, which is a multi-state collaborative to establish policy that will reshape accountability at the state and national levels;
- The *CCSSO Math* SCASS, which provides leadership and multi-state collaboration on mathematics standards, curricula, instruction, and assessment. Multi-state collaboration includes the leading professional organizations and provides opportunities for sharing, reviewing and creating tools and resources;
- The *CCSSO ELA* SCASS, which provides leadership, cross-state sharing, and opportunities for multi-state collaboration to create new tools and resources;
- The *CCSSO English Language Learners (ELLs)* SCASS, which focuses on the assessment of ELLs' English language proficiency and inclusion of ELLs in academic content assessments;
- The *CCSSO Science* SCASS, which is dedicated to ensuring that the highest quality of science standards, instructional materials, and assessments are available to state and local education agencies across the country;
- The *CCSSO Accountability Systems and Reporting (ASR)*, which works to identify and share strategies that improve the reliability and validity of school accountability models, data and decisions;
- The *CCSSO Assessing Special Education Students (ASES)*, which supports states in efforts to develop assessment and accountability systems that provide full equity for students with disabilities;
- The *CCSSO Technical Issues in Large Scale Assessment (TILSA)*, which conducts and commissions practical research on critical topics in large-scale state assessments, creates guidelines for the design and implementation of assessment systems, and provides professional development opportunities for assessment staff from member states and staff representing associate members; and
- The *CCSSO Early Childhood Education Assessment (ECEA)*, which works to enhance young children's learning and school success from birth through 3rd grade.
- The *CCSSO SEA Institute on Expanded Learning Opportunities*, which occurred at the National Conference on Student Assessment.

CT State Department of Education

# Transition to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics in Connecticut

Guidelines for Full Implementation by 2014-2015

7/29/2011

## Transition to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

## Guidelines for Full Implementation by 2014-2015

In July 2010, the Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Mathematics. Between now and the 2014-2015 school year, districts must make a full transition from Connecticut's previous math standards to the CCSS. Beginning in 2014-2015, the state assessment for mathematics will assess students on the concepts and skills outlined in the CCSS.

In addition to adopting new standards for mathematics, Connecticut has taken an active role as a governing state in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). As part of its overall assessment system, the consortium is currently developing summative assessments for mathematics and English Language Arts to be administered in the final 12 weeks of the 2014-2015 school year to students in Grades 3-8 and in Grade 11.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for schools and districts to move toward full implementation of the math standards prior to the administration of the new assessments. The transition in mathematics must be done in a thoughtful manner to address the following challenges:

- The vertical progression of mathematical understanding often assumes a certain level of student prior knowledge;
- The content at each grade level will undergo changes from Connecticut's previous standards;
- Teachers and curriculum specialists must decide how to incorporate the new standards and replace standards that are no longer aligned at each grade level; and
- Students entering Grade 9 in 2012 will be responsible for all standards that appear in the first three years of high school mathematics, as outlined in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics document.

The following pages outline a transition plan that takes into account the need for *full implementation* of the CCSS for Grade 9 students in the 2012-2013 school year. If students are to be adequately prepared for full standards implementation in Grade 9 beginning in 2012, Grade 8 curriculum and instruction must partially transition to the new standards in 2011-2012. For some districts, this change may require a complete overhaul of their current systems, especially if a significant number of students is currently entering Grade 9 in a mathematics course that is considered lower than Algebra 1. [Additional guidance for implementation of the Grades 9-12 standards will follow at a later date.]

While Grade 8 is the most critical factor in the initial transition, this document outlines a transition plan that would introduce a fraction of new standards at every grade level each year for the next four years to allow students full access to the grade level mathematics standards by 2014-2015. This approach allows us to engage teachers at all grade levels (K-8) in the process and gradually build toward full implementation, rather than asking any one group of teachers to make a large scale change all at once. The tables on the following pages highlight two different approaches that districts or schools might consider for making the transition to the new standards in mathematics. The first column gives guidance for implementing the standards in mathematical domains by grade, adding one or two new domains each year over the course of the transition phase. The domains were selected based on their relative importance using a backwards-mapping strategy that assumes full implementation of the Grade 9 standards in 2012-2013. Teachers and curriculum specialists should work together to determine which standards are no longer essential grade level content and *creatively* incorporate certain skills into the new content. For example, if Grade 7 teachers typically teach operations with fractions, they should incorporate these skills into instruction on the standards found in the domains *Ratios and Proportional Relationships* and *The Number System* rather than as a separate body of content. The second column provides guidance for the implementation of a subset of units based on the curriculum unit shells that have been developed jointly by the Connecticut State Department of Education and stakeholders in the mathematics education community, including broad participation from institutes

of higher education, local education agencies, and regional education service centers. The curriculum unit shells were also selected based on their relative importance in terms of full implementation in Grade 9 by 2012; thus, there should be significant overlap between the domains presented in column 1 and the units listed in column 2.

It is important to remember that not all standards in a domain will be completely new to a particular grade level from a content perspective. There may be cases initially where the transition does not require sacrificing any standards to successfully incorporate standards from the CCSS. This does not mean, however, that the new standards are identical to Connecticut's former standards. Teachers and curriculum specialists should read the standards to identify key student understandings, and then use this information to develop or locate learning tasks and discuss how instruction must change under the new standards.

In the immediate future, it is essential to collaborate with grade level teachers on ways to incorporate new content by changing instructional practices and resources to better address the intent of the standards selected for 2011-2012. This may require identifying current content that is no longer included at the grade level and either removing it completely or rethinking it in another context (if it is still important for assessments and accountability). For example, the CCSS do not introduce the concept of probability until Grade 7 (although the domain Probability and Statistics appears in Grade 6). Therefore, it is important for teachers at lower grades to incorporate some basic probability into their work on fractions and/or percents to balance two competing issues: the transition to the new standards for curriculum and instruction and the accountability measures based on assessments of Connecticut's previous standards. An analysis of displaced grade level content based on Connecticut's previous curriculum standards can be found at the bottom of each table and may help guide the decision making process. In general, the CCSS represent a rigorous body of mathematical content and students should be engaged in mathematical thinking that meets or exceeds the expectations of our current accountability system (i.e., CMT and CAPT). A few cases, such as that highlighted in the probability example, will need greater attention by districts in moving forward.

	<b>Kindergarten Domains</b>	<b>Kindergarten Units<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>2011-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> </ul>	Unit 5: Addition & Subtraction within 0-5 Unit 6: Addition & Subtraction within 10
<b>2012-2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li><i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> </ul>	Unit 5: Addition & Subtraction within 0-5 Unit 6: Addition & Subtraction within 10 Unit 7: Teen Numbers (11-19) and Counting to 100
<b>2013-2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li><i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li><i>Counting and Cardinality</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Counting and Matching Numerals 0-5 with Comparing Unit 2: Counting and Matching Numerals 6-10 with Comparing Unit 3: Counting and Matching Numerals 11-20 Unit 5: Addition & Subtraction within 0-5 Unit 6: Addition & Subtraction within 10 Unit 7: Teen Numbers (11-19) and Counting to 100
<b>2014-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li><i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li><i>Counting and Cardinality</i></li> <li><i>Geometry</i></li> <li><i>Measurement and Data</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Counting and Matching Numerals 0-5 with Comparing Unit 2: Counting and Matching Numerals 6-10 with Comparing Unit 3: Counting and Matching Numerals 11-20 Unit 4: Identify & Describe 2-D & 3-D Shapes Unit 5: Addition & Subtraction within 0-5 Unit 6: Addition & Subtraction within 10 Unit 7: Teen Numbers (11-19) and Counting to 100 Unit 8: Compare, Analyze and Compose 2-D and 3-D Shapes Unit 9: Measurement

**Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade K content that is no longer in Grade K under the CCSS)**

- Patterns (First appear in Grade 3 of CCSS)
- Relationships between part & whole; fractional reasoning (Slight focus in Grade 2 CCSS, then strong focus in Grades 3-5)
- Story problems (Grade K CCSS focus on multiple informal representations for addition and subtraction
  - IMPORTANT NOTE: Addition and subtraction EQUATIONS (those using an equal symbol) are introduced in Grade 1, not in kindergarten.
- Money (First appears in Grade 2 of CCSS)
- Time using calendar (does not explicitly appear in CCSS)
- Data collection (Limited in CCSS to counting objects in classified sets)
- Probability (First appears in Grade 7 of CCSS)

<sup>1</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

	<b>Grade 1 Domains</b>	<b>Grade 1 Units<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>2011-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Numbers and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> </ul>	Unit 5: Counting and Place Value Unit 1: Using Place Value and Properties of Operations to Add and Subtract
<b>2012-2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Numbers and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> </ul>	Unit 2: Addition and Subtraction within Ten Unit 4: Addition and Subtraction within Twenty Unit 5: Counting and Place Value Unit 7: Addition and Subtraction within 100
<b>2013-2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Numbers and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> </ul>	Unit 2: Addition and Subtraction within Ten Unit 4: Addition and Subtraction within Twenty Unit 5: Counting and Place Value Unit 6: Measuring Length with Non-Standard Units Unit 7: Addition and Subtraction within 100 Unit 8: Time
<b>2014-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Numbers and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Reasoning with 2-D and 3-D Shapes Unit 2: Addition and Subtraction within Ten Unit 3: Partitioning Circles and Rectangles Unit 4: Addition and Subtraction within Twenty Unit 5: Counting and Place Value Unit 6: Measuring Length with Non-Standard Units Unit 7: Addition and Subtraction within 100 Unit 8: Time
<p><b><u>Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade 1 content that is no longer in Grade 1 under the CCSS)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patterns (First appear in Grade 3 of CCSS)</li> <li>• Relationships between part &amp; whole; fractional reasoning (Slight focus in Grade 2 CCSS, then strong focus in Grades 3-5)</li> <li>• Other discrete topics: Use of a balance scale; ordinal numbers; estimating; describing location, direction, position;</li> <li>• Money &amp; Calendar (Money focused in Grade 2 CCSS, Calendar not part of CCSS)</li> <li>• Data (Data in Grade 1 CCSS is limited to organization, representation and analysis with up to three categories)</li> <li>• Probability (First appears in Grade 7 of CCSS)</li> </ul>		

<sup>2</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

	<b>Grade 2 Domains</b>	<b>Grade 2 Units<sup>3</sup></b>
<b>2011-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Numbers and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> </ul>	Unit 3: Place Value Unit 5: Addition and Subtraction within 100 Unit 8: Addition and Subtraction within 1000
<b>2012-2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Numbers and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li><i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Fact strategies (Addition and Subtraction) up to Twenty Unit 3: Place Value Unit 5: Addition and Subtraction within 100 Unit 8: Addition and Subtraction within 1000 Unit 10: Exploring Multiplication
<b>2013-2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Numbers and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li><i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li><i>Measurement and Data</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Fact strategies (Addition and Subtraction) up to Twenty Unit 3: Place Value Unit 4: Linear Measurement with Standard Units Unit 5: Addition and Subtraction within 100 Unit 6: Representing, Analyzing and Interpreting Data Unit 7: Money Unit 8: Addition and Subtraction within 1000 Unit 9: Time Unit 10: Exploring Multiplication
<b>2014-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Numbers and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li><i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li><i>Measurement and Data</i></li> <li><i>Geometry</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Fact strategies (Addition and Subtraction) up to Twenty Unit 2: Reasoning with Shapes Unit 3: Place Value Unit 4: Linear Measurement with Standard Units Unit 5: Addition and Subtraction within 100 Unit 6: Representing, Analyzing and Interpreting Data Unit 7: Money Unit 8: Addition and Subtraction within 1000 Unit 9: Time Unit 10: Exploring Multiplication
<p><b><u>Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade 2 content that is no longer in Grade 2 under the CCSS)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patterns (First appear in Grade 3 of CCSS)</li> <li>Expanded form (There is a huge emphasis on place value, but not writing numbers in expanded form using multiplication as in CT GLEs)</li> <li>Relationships between part &amp; whole; fractional reasoning (Limited to partitioning geometric shapes in Grade 2 CCSS)</li> <li>Estimation (primarily only seen in the measurement standards in Grade 2 CCSS)</li> <li>Calendar</li> <li>Three-dimensional shapes</li> <li>Temperature, balance scales, capacity, volume, area, weight (emphasis in CCSS on linear measurement in Grade 2)</li> <li>Probability (First appears in Grade 7 of CCSS)</li> <li>Tables, tallies, posing data collection questions</li> </ul>		

<sup>3</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

	<b>Grade 3 Domains</b>	<b>Grade 3 Units<sup>4</sup></b>
<b>2011-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> </ul>	Unit 2: Computing with Whole Numbers Unit 6: Understanding Fractions Unit 7: Reasoning about Fraction Comparisons and Equivalence
<b>2012-2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> </ul>	Unit 2: Computing with Whole Numbers Unit 3: Exploring Measurement and Data Unit 6: Understanding Fractions Unit 7: Reasoning about Fraction Comparisons and Equivalence
<b>2013-2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> <li>• <i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Understanding Multiplication and Division Unit 2: Computing with Whole Numbers Unit 3: Exploring Measurement and Data Unit 4: Understanding Area and Perimeter Unit 6: Understanding Fractions Unit 7: Reasoning about Fraction Comparisons and Equivalence
<b>2014-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> <li>• <i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Understanding Multiplication and Division Unit 2: Computing with Whole Numbers Unit 3: Exploring Measurement and Data Unit 4: Understanding Area and Perimeter Unit 5: Reasoning about 2-Dimensional shapes Unit 6: Understanding Fractions Unit 7: Reasoning about Fraction Comparisons and Equivalence

**Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade 3 content that is no longer in Grade 3 under the CCSS)**

- Sorting, classifying, ordering, repeating patterns
- Comparing numbers using inequalities is focused on *fractions* in the CCSS for Grade 3
- Expanded form
- Ratios
- Money, including operations with money
- Calendars
- Data – major shift in focus
- Probability
- Capacity, weight, temperature
- Three-dimensional shapes
- Symmetry
- Coordinate grid

There is a major focus in the Grade 3 CCSS for Geometry on understanding area.

<sup>4</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

	<b>Grade 4 Domains</b>	<b>Grade 4 Units<sup>5</sup></b>
<b>2011-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> </ul>	Unit 4: Comparing Fractions and Understanding Decimal Notation Unit 5: Building Understanding of Addition, Subtraction, and Multiplication of Fractions
<b>2012-2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> </ul>	Unit 3: Multi-digit Whole Number Computation Unit 4: Comparing Fractions and Understanding Decimal Notation Unit 5: Building Understanding of Addition, Subtraction, and Multiplication of Fractions
<b>2013-2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> <li>• <i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Understanding and Using Place Value to Multiply and Divide Unit 2: Factors and Multiples Unit 3: Multi-digit Whole Number Computation Unit 4: Comparing Fractions and Understanding Decimal Notation Unit 5: Building Understanding of Addition, Subtraction, and Multiplication of Fractions Unit 6: Solving Problems Involving Measurement and Data
<b>2014-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> <li>• <i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Understanding and Using Place Value to Multiply and Divide Unit 2: Factors and Multiples Unit 3: Multi-digit Whole Number Computation Unit 4: Comparing Fractions and Understanding Decimal Notation Unit 5: Building Understanding of Addition, Subtraction, and Multiplication of Fractions Unit 6: Solving Problems Involving Measurement and Data Unit 7: Exploring Angles and Angle Measurement Unit 8: Understanding Properties of 2-dimensional Figures
<p><b><u>Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade 4 content that is no longer in Grade 4 under the CCSS)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratios and proportions</li> <li>• Story problems (Focus is on problem solving, not problem writing)</li> <li>• Recall of basic facts</li> <li>• Three-dimensional solids</li> <li>• Coordinate grids</li> <li>• Geometric transformations (reflections, rotations, translations)</li> <li>• Calendars and clocks</li> <li>• Circle graphs and broken line graphs</li> <li>• Range, median, mode, mean</li> <li>• Probability</li> </ul>		

<sup>5</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

	<b>Grade 5 Domains</b>	<b>Grade 5 Units<sup>6</sup></b>
<b>2011-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Understanding the Place Value System Unit 2: Computing with Whole Numbers and Decimals Unit 4: Addition and Subtraction of Fractions Unit 5: Making Sense of Multiplication of Fractions Unit 6: Understanding Division of a Unit Fraction and a Whole Number
<b>2012-2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Understanding the Place Value System Unit 2: Computing with Whole Numbers and Decimals Unit 4: Addition and Subtraction of Fractions Unit 5: Making Sense of Multiplication of Fractions Unit 6: Understanding Division of a Unit Fraction and a Whole Number Unit 7: Classifying 2-Dimensional Figures
<b>2013-2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Understanding the Place Value System Unit 2: Computing with Whole Numbers and Decimals Unit 4: Addition and Subtraction of Fractions Unit 5: Making Sense of Multiplication of Fractions Unit 6: Understanding Division of a Unit Fraction and a Whole Number Unit 7: Classifying 2-Dimensional Figures Unit 8: Exploring Volumes of Solid Figures
<b>2014-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number and Operations in Base Ten</i></li> <li>• <i>Number and Operation – Fractions</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> <li>• <i>Measurement and Data</i></li> <li>• <i>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Understanding the Place Value System Unit 2: Computing with Whole Numbers and Decimals Unit 3: Algebraic Connections Unit 4: Addition and Subtraction of Fractions Unit 5: Making Sense of Multiplication of Fractions Unit 6: Understanding Division of a Unit Fraction and a Whole Number Unit 7: Classifying 2-Dimensional Figures Unit 8: Exploring Volumes of Solid Figures
<b><u>Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade 5 content that is no longer in Grade 5 under the CCSS)</u></b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variables and equations</li> <li>• Numbers – Negative, prime, composite, perfect squares</li> <li>• Equivalent fractions, ratios, percent</li> <li>• Perimeter and area (Focus is on volume)</li> <li>• Calendars and clocks</li> <li>• Probability</li> <li>• All graphs except line plots, which are used for a very specific purpose</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Mean, Median, Mode, Range</li> </ul>		
	<b>Grade 6 Domains</b>	<b>Grade 6 Units<sup>7</sup></b>

<sup>6</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

<b>2011-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> </ul>	Unit 2: Operating with Positive Rational Numbers Unit 3: Understanding Positive and Negative Numbers Unit 4: Applications of Geometry
<b>2012-2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Using Expressions and Equations Unit 2: Operating with Positive Rational Numbers Unit 3: Understanding Positive and Negative Numbers Unit 4: Applications of Geometry Unit 6: Algebraic Reasoning I
<b>2013-2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>Statistics and Probability</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Using Expressions and Equations Unit 2: Operating with Positive Rational Numbers Unit 3: Understanding Positive and Negative Numbers Unit 4: Applications of Geometry Unit 6: Algebraic Reasoning I Unit 7: Statistics and Distributions
<b>2014-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>Statistics and Probability</i></li> <li>• <i>Ratios and Proportional Relationships</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Using Expressions and Equations Unit 2: Operating with Positive Rational Numbers Unit 3: Understanding Positive and Negative Numbers Unit 4: Applications of Geometry Unit 5: Ratios and Rates Unit 6: Algebraic Reasoning I Unit 7: Statistics and Distributions
<p><b><u>Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade 6 content that is no longer in Grade 6 under the CCSS)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place value, including expanded form notation (students understanding of place value should come to closure in Grade 5)</li> <li>• Fraction, decimal, percent equivalence (Introduction to percent in Grade 6 takes a different approach)</li> <li>• Addition and subtraction of fractions (Most fractional operations have come to closure – focus on dividing fractions by fractions)</li> <li>• Estimation</li> <li>• Symmetry</li> <li>• Geometric translations</li> <li>• Radius, diameter, circumference</li> <li>• Scale models and similar figures</li> <li>• Probability</li> </ul>		

<sup>7</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

	Grade 7 Domains	Grade 7 Units <sup>8</sup>
2011-2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Operating with Rational Numbers (Addition & Subtraction) Unit 2: Operating with Rational Numbers (Multiplication and Division)
2012-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Operating with Rational Numbers (Addition & Subtraction) Unit 2: Operating with Rational Numbers (Multiplication and Division) Unit 3: Two and Three Dimensional Geometry Unit 5: Algebraic Reasoning II
2013-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> <li>• <i>Statistics and Probability</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Operating with Rational Numbers (Addition & Subtraction) Unit 2: Operating with Rational Numbers (Multiplication and Division) Unit 3: Two and Three Dimensional Geometry Unit 5: Algebraic Reasoning II Unit 6: Inferences About Populations Unit 7: Probability
2014-2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> <li>• <i>Statistics and Probability</i></li> <li>• <i>Ratios and Proportional Relationships</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Operating with Rational Numbers (Addition & Subtraction) Unit 2: Operating with Rational Numbers (Multiplication and Division) Unit 3: Two and Three Dimensional Geometry Unit 4: Proportional Reasoning Unit 5: Algebraic Reasoning II Unit 6: Inferences About Populations Unit 7: Probability
<p><b><u>Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade 7 content that is no longer in Grade 7 under the CCSS)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent and dependent variables (In Grade 6 CCSS)</li> <li>• Linear vs. nonlinear (Grade 8 CCSS)</li> <li>• Number line (Grade 7 uses the number line for operations, but not for understanding the magnitude of numbers)</li> <li>• Squares and square root</li> <li>• Scientific notation (Grade 8 CCSS)</li> <li>• Powers of 10 (Grade 5 CCSS to maintain coherence with its connection to place value)</li> <li>• Classifying geometric figures</li> <li>• Geometric transformations</li> <li>• Symmetry</li> <li>• Irregular polygons</li> <li>• Measurement conversions, including time</li> <li>• Graphical representations of data (Focus in Grade 7 CCSS more on higher level analyses of distributions)</li> <li>• Note: The phrase “experimental probability” is not used in CCSS, but students do collect data on chance events in Grade 7</li> </ul>		

<sup>8</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

	<b>Grade 8 Domains</b>	<b>Grade 8 Units<sup>9</sup></b>
<b>2011-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Real Numbers Unit 3: Linear Relationships Unit 4: Systems of Linear Relationships
<b>2012-2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>Functions</i></li> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Real Numbers Unit 3: Linear Relationships Unit 4: Systems of Linear Relationships
<b>2013-2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>Functions</i></li> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Real Numbers Unit 2: Pythagorean Theorem Unit 3: Linear Relationships Unit 4: Systems of Linear Relationships Unit 5: Congruence and Similarity Unit 6: Volume
<b>2014-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressions and Equations</i></li> <li>• <i>Functions</i></li> <li>• <i>The Number System</i></li> <li>• <i>Geometry</i></li> <li>• <i>Statistics and Probability</i></li> </ul>	Unit 1: Real Numbers Unit 2: Pythagorean Theorem Unit 3: Linear Relationships Unit 4: Systems of Linear Relationships Unit 5: Congruence and Similarity Unit 6: Volume Unit 7: Patterns in Data
<p><b><u>Displaced Grade-Level Concepts (Former CT Grade 8 content that is no longer in Grade 8 under the CCSS)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recursive and explicit formulas</li> <li>• Equivalent forms of fractions, mixed numbers, decimals and percent</li> <li>• Computation with numbers and operations (Should be done in the context of Expressions and Equations in Grade 8)</li> <li>• Percent</li> <li>• Exponential growth and decay</li> <li>• Surface area</li> <li>• Data representations (limited to scatterplots in Grade 8 CCSS)</li> <li>• Sampling for statistical analyses</li> <li>• Permutations and combinations</li> </ul>		

<sup>9</sup> The unit titles refer to shells that have been developed to organize the content and practice standards into coherent clusters for curriculum development. These will be available on the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Please use the unit titles to guide the implementation as the unit numbers are subject to change.

## Connecticut Common Core State Standards Adoption/Roll-Out/Implementation Activities Related to ELLs

It is critical to note that throughout the Common Core State Standards adoption and implementation process in Connecticut, ESL and Bilingual Education practitioners and state consultants have been involved. The table below provides a brief description of some of the activities and documents on which ESL/Bilingual Education representatives have collaborated and consulted to ensure that we are taking into account the needs of *all* students as we move forward with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

Event/Document	Date	Details
Stakeholder Engagement Conference	6/17/10	ESL/Bilingual Education were representatives present at this event for state and district level stakeholders.
CCSSO ELL SCASS meeting review of Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	2010	Members of the CCSSO ELL SCASS were asked to provide feedback on the CCSS regarding their accessibility for ELLs. The CCSS were embargoed at this time. Marie Salazar Glowski participated in this review and feedback session.
CCSS ELA/CT ELA standard match	2010	ESL/Bilingual Education practitioners participated in this comprehensive “match” analysis (with mathematics also?)
CCSS Toolkit FAQs	Fall 2010	FAQs include question pertaining to ELLs. ESL/Bilingual Education consultant consulted for document development.
CCSS FAQs on CCSS page of CSDE website	Fall 2010	FAQs include question pertaining to ELLs. ESL/Bilingual Education consultant consulted for document development.
Priority School District Training: Instructional Practices and Task That Support ELLs’ Success in Mathematics.	10/28/10 12/2/10 2/9/11 2/10/11	During this two-day training, participants examined research about teaching English Language Learners (ELLs) and about teaching mathematics to ELLs and learned how to translate that research into instructional practices through the lens of equity and high expectations and how to differentiate for students with different proficiency levels and language domains. In addition, participants designed lessons using specific strategies learned to meet the needs of actual students.
CCSS ELA/CT ELL crosswalk work	1/10/11 ACES 2/28/11 ACES 4/25/11 ACES	Teams of ELA practitioners, ESL/Bilingual Education practitioners, and SDE consultants reviewed CCSS ELA

		standards and linked ELL framework indicators to them. This work was carried out for all grade levels. Work was continued by district volunteers, and is the process of being reviewed for final edits and revisions by CSDE staff.
CCSS Mathematical Practice/CT ELL crosswalk work	1/10/11 ACES 2/28/11 ACES	Teams of Mathematics practitioners, ESL/Bilingual Education practitioners, and SDE consultants reviewed the CCSS Mathematical Practice standards and linked ELL framework indicators to them. This work was carried out for all grade levels. The work is the process of being reviewed for final edits and revisions by CSDE staff.
Development of CALI Differentiation module	Winter-Fall 2011	ESL/Bilingual Education consultants were participants on the development team for the differentiation module, which addresses how to differentiate for all students while implementing the CCSS.
“CT’s Vision for Implementing the Common Core State Standards” event	9/26/11 Crowne Plaza Cromwell	ESL/Bilingual Education were representatives present at this event for state and district level stakeholders.
ELL Literacy Training for priority school districts	11/7/11, 11/9/11 11/14-16/11 Courtyard Marriot, Cromwell	This one-day training by Laura Sicola was conducted on five dates for ESL/Bilingual Education, Special Education and ELA/Literacy staff from the priority school districts. It focused on literacy strategies for ELLs. Dr. Sicola specifically addressed the CCSS and how to enable ELLs to access the standards.
CCSSO ELL SCASS Comparison of ELP standards and alignment	10/11-13/11 project developed during San Francisco meeting, work is ongoing	This multi-state collaborative project was brainstormed and begun at the CCSSO ELL SCASS meeting in October, and work is currently ongoing. States submitted their ELP standards (CT’s ELL Framework) for the initial phase of the work, and a comparative analysis is being conducted. The next stage of the work will determine commonalities among state ELP standards and look deeper into how they relate and align with the CCSS. Connecticut is taking part in this ongoing work.
CCSSO Implementing	12/5-12/7/11 San Diego,	An ESL/Bilingual Education consultant

the Common Core Standards meeting	CA	was included on a member of Connecticut's team at this meeting. The team developed a schedule and a list of goals for addressing issues pertaining to the implementation of the CCSS and engaging stakeholders at varying levels. The consultant will serve as a member of the CSDE Common Core committee.
Presentations on ELLs and the Common Core	Ongoing	Presentations have occurred at CAPELL and RESC Alliance meetings regarding ELLs and the CCSS, and these will continue to take place on an ongoing basis.
Data Showcase Conference	4/24-25/2012	This year's Data Showcase will focus on the Common Core Standards and the Smarter Balance Assessment. Jo Gusman will provide a lunch keynote pertaining to CCSS and ELLs. One of the CSDE's ESL/Bilingual Education consultants is a member of the Data Showcase planning committee.

**National Team**

Marion Martinez  
Barbara Beaudin  
Gail Pagano  
Joanne White

Harriet Feldlaufer  
Anne Louise Thompson  
Marie Glowski  
Shelbi Cole

**Leadership Team**

Barbara Beaudin  
Shelbi Cole  
Harriet Feldlaufer  
Gail Pagano  
Amy Radikas  
Michael Tavernier  
Charlene Russell-Tucker

Charlene Tate Nichols  
Anne Louise Thompson  
Joanne White  
Megan Alubicki  
Marion Martinez  
Marie Glowski

**Internal Team**

ELA Curriculum/Assessment – **Cristi Alberino/  
Deirdre Ducharme/Joe DiGarbo**  
Math Curriculum/Assessment – **Gail Pagano/  
Shelbi Cole**  
Special Education/Assessment – **Janet Stuck/  
Joe Amenta**  
ELL – Megan Alubicki/Marie Glowski  
Adult Ed – **Ajit Gopalakrishnan**  
Charter School  
CTE – **Lee Marcoux**  
IT  
CAS

**SERC**

Family Engagement – **Judy Carson**  
Accountability/School Improvement -  
**Iris White**  
Early Childhood – **Michelle Levy**  
Technical High Schools  
Public Relations  
Certification/Program Approval  
TEAM – **Sharon Fuller**  
Charlene Russell-Tucker

**External Team**

RESCs  
LEAs  
Higher Ed  
Deans  
CABE  
CAPEL  
CCLM (CT Council of Leaders in Mathematics)  
AMTEC (Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators in CT)  
Connecticut Reading Association (CRA)  
Parent Teachers Organization (PTO)  
CT Parent Information Resource Center (CT PIRC) – **Barbara Slone**  
CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) – **Nancy Prescott**

Superintendents/Assistants  
ConnCASE  
CASCD  
CEA/AFT  
P-20  
ATOMIC

## Connecticut Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Adoption/Roll-Out/Implementation Activities

The table below provides a brief description of some of the activities and documents pertaining to Connecticut's implementation of the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics.

<b>ADOPTION/COMMUNICATION</b>		
<b>Event/Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
1. CCSS Comparison Study	May, 28, 2010	CSDE content specialists and over 50 experts in Connecticut's English language arts and mathematics standards worked with a web-based program, designed by Achieve, to analyze matches between Connecticut's standards and the CCSS.
2. Stakeholder Engagement Conference	June 17, 2010	CSDE shares the results from the May 2010 Comparison Study with administrators, teachers, education organizations, higher education faculty, business leaders and community advocacy groups.
3. CT State Board of Education (SBOE) Adopts CCSS	July 7, 2010	On July 7, 2010, with a unanimous vote, the SBOE adopted new national academic standards, known as the CCSS in English language arts and mathematics.
4. SDE CCSS Webpage	August 2010	A dedicated page on the CT SDE website was created for the CCSS. Total number of hits January 2011 – January 2012: 224,255.
5. CCSS Toolkit FAQs	October 2010	FAQs developed and posted on SDE website as part of the CCSS webpage resources.
6. CCSS Unmatched Standards	November 30, 2010	Twenty- four K-12 experts in English language arts and twenty-six experts in mathematics education from across the state, including Institutes of Higher Education, spent a day reviewing all unmatched CT standards to determine if any should be considered for part of the additional 15% option.
7. e-Alerts	Quarterly	Statewide E-Alerts have been provided to stakeholders to provide regular updates regarding the CCSS and SBAC. Recipients for e-Alerts: Curriculum and Instruction 2,524, Mathematics 1353, and Student Assessment 355.

<b>CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK &amp; MATERIALS</b>		
<b>Event/Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
8. CCSS Curriculum Design	January 2011 February 2011 April 2011	Teams of thirty K-12 experts in English language arts and thirty K-12 experts in mathematics education from across the state, including Institutes of Higher Education, spent two weeks examining and organizing the CCSS into units based on a K-12 continuum. Units were designed to provide a foundation for assisting curriculum developers in the revision and alignment of current curriculum.
9. CCSS ELA/CT ELL crosswalk work	January – April 2011	A core team of twenty-eight including ELA practitioners, ESL/Bilingual Education practitioners, and SDE consultants reviewed CCSS ELA standards and linked ELL framework indicators to them, K -12.
10. CCSS Mathematical Practice/CT ELL crosswalk work	January-February 2011	A core team of fifteen including Mathematics practitioners, ESL/Bilingual Education practitioners, and SDE consultants reviewed the CCSS Mathematical Practice standards and linked ELL framework indicators to them. This work was carried out for all grade levels.
11. CT Transition Plan for Mathematics	June 2011	Provided districts with online access to a detailed implementation plan for the CCSS Mathematics with emphasis on a gradual implementation to support professional learning
<b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>National Level Event/Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
12. CCSSO Implementing the Common Core Standards meeting	January 2011 – ongoing	Participation by six SDE consultants in a multi-state collaborative for implementing the new standards, including presentations given by SDE consultants to other member states.
13. CCSSO ELA, MATHEMATICS and	2011-2012	Connecticut is actively participating in these multi-state collaborative projects.

ELL SCASS		(SCASS-State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards). Two SDE consultants attend each SCASS and represent the two divisions responsible for teaching, learning and assessment.
State Level Event/Document	Date	Details
14. RESC LA and Mathematics Council Meetings	Fall 2011- ongoing	Updates and Q & A regarding the CCSS for ELA and Mathematics and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). Designed for teachers and administrators. Typical session attendance 30 – 60 educators.
15. Charter School Directors	November 7, 2011 Fall 2010	Overview of adoption and implementation provided in fall 2010. Updates and Q & A regarding CCSS Mathematics and implications for teaching and learning. Attendance range from 15 – 20.
16. Supplemental Educational Services providers	Fall 2011	Overview presentation of ELA and mathematics Standards for staff and directors of SES programs. Thirty-two SES programs were present and 54 participants.
17. Regional Curriculum Design Sessions	Summer 2011	A SDE content and assessment consultant team worked with district teams to establish critical components of curriculum and begin to review and plan for district CCSS-based curriculum revision. Sessions were held at five of CT's RESCs and SERC. A total of 262 participants attended representing 59 districts.
18. CT Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) Re-design	Spring 2011 – ongoing	Re-design of professional learning modules to incorporate CCSS and SBAC
19. Instructional Practices and Task That Support ELLs' Success in Mathematics.	Fall 2010-Spring 2011	Two-day training provided by Nora Ramirez examining research about teaching mathematics to ELLs. Participants designed lessons using specific strategies learned to meet the needs of actual students. 207 participants.
20. RESC Curriculum council meetings	Fall 2010-Ongoing	Updates and Q and A discussions on CCSS for ELA and Mathematics and

District Level Event/Document	Date	Details
		Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) for district administrators and leaders of curriculum. Meeting attendance ranges from 15 – 40 attendees.
21. ELL and CCSS Literacy Training	November 2011	One-day trainings, by Dr. Laura Sicola, were conducted for CT's 15 priority school district teams consisting of ESL/Bilingual Education, Special Education and ELA/Literacy staff. Dr. Sicola specifically addressed the CCSS and how to enable ELLs access to the ELA standards. A total of 250 participants attended these sessions
22. East Haven	November 2011	CCSS overview in ELA and Mathematics and SBAC system. Implications and shifts for instruction discussed with approximately 265 grades K-12 classroom teachers, coaches, administrators.
23. Wallingford teacher training	November 2011	Overview of CCSS Math and SBAC system and implications for 50 classroom teachers.
24. North Stonington	October 2011	CCSS overview in ELA and Mathematics and SBAC system. Implications and shifts for instruction discussed with approximately 110 grades K-12 classroom teachers, coaches, administrators and invited guests from neighboring LEAs.
25. Bristol Administrators	October 2011	Overview of SBAC system and implications for classroom teachers. Forty administrators present.
26. Manchester Administrators	August 2011	Overview of SBAC system and implications for classroom teachers. About 24 individuals were in attendance.
27. New Haven Administrators	June 2011	CCSSM and SBAC overview for New Haven administrators. About fifty-four individuals were in attendance.

28. Data Team Facilitators Meeting	June 17, 2011	CCSS and SBAC presentation for RESC SERC Consultants who provide data team facilitation as part of the CALI. Fifty individuals attended.
29. Hartford teacher training	May 2011	CCSSM Keynote for approximately 200 grades 1-4 classroom teachers, coaches and administrators.
30. District and regional support	Spring 2011-ongoing	Overview and familiarization presentations for teachers, administrators and local Boards of Education
31. SRBI Anchor Trainers Meeting	March 16, 2011	CCSS presentation to RESC SERC Consultants who provide professional development and technical assistance on SRBI. Eighty individuals attended.
Professional Organizations Event/Document	Date	Details
32. CAS	January 19, 2012	CCSS information session for Executive Coaches. There are 50 executive coaches assisting 18 partner and/or supported districts.
33. CT Reading Association Conference	November 3, 2011	Specifics regarding the shifts for instruction in ELA to accommodate the CCSS were presented to participants.
34. ATOMIC conference	November 2011	Associated Teachers of Mathematics in CT-annual conference featured CCSS keynote by Steve Leinwand and CCSS presentations by grade band curriculum teams. Approximately 400 educators were in attendance.
35. CCLM	October 2011	SDE assessment consultants led <i>SBAC-focused</i> dine and discuss session for the Connecticut Council of Leaders of Mathematics. Forty professionals attended.
36. AMTEC conference	May 2011	SDE assessment and curriculum consultants collaborated on a <i>teacher preparation-focused</i> presentation for the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators in CT annual conference. Approximately 50 professors from public and private university teacher preparation

		programs were in attendance.
37. ATOMIC dinner meetings	Spring and Fall 2011	NCTM local affiliate sponsored <i>CCSS familiarization</i> dine and discuss sessions with SDE consultants. Eighty professionals attended.
38. PDK meetings	Spring and Fall 2011	Separate ELA and mathematics CCSS informational discussions with local Phi Delta Kappan chapters. Participants' attendance ranges from 20 – 30.
Teacher Prep Event/Document	Date	Details
39. Math Leadership Academy Presentation	October 2011	Overview of CCSS Math and SBAC system and implications for classroom teachers to group of 30 local teacher leaders.
40. SCSU Mathematics Teacher Preparation Program	September 2011	Guest lecture by SDE consultant on the CCSS and SBAC for 25 pre-service teachers.
41. IHE Alternate Route to Certification MS and HS teacher candidate training.	July 2011	CCSS, manipulative-based instruction for 40 prospective teachers trained through ARC program.
42. UCONN Mathematics Teacher Preparation Program	Fall 2010 – ongoing	Guest lectures by SDE consultant on the CCSS and SBAC for 75 pre-service teachers
ASSESSMENT		
National Level Event/Document	Date	Details
43. SBAC Content Specifications for Mathematics	October - December 2011	SDE Bureau of Student Assessment consultant worked with authors of SBAC's math content specifications and authors of the CCSS for Mathematics to incorporate public feedback into the second draft of SBAC math content specifications for summative assessment
44. Working with and advising SBAC Contractors	September 2011 – ongoing	SDE Bureau of Student Assessment consultants involved in onsite and virtual meetings with SBAC contractors to inform the processes needed to develop the assessment system
45. SBAC Technology Architecture Meetings	September - October 2011	Participation in series of three SBAC Technology Architecture Meetings by SDE Bureau of Student Assessment SBAC work group members (Chicago, New Hampshire, and Las Vegas)

46. USED Public Meeting on Accessibility and Accommodations	August 2011	Participation in USED public meeting by one SDE Bureau of Student Assessment SBAC work group co-chair
47. SBAC Work Group Co-Chair Meetings	July 2011	Participation in SBAC work group co-chair meetings in Denver, CO by two SDE Bureau of Student Assessment consultants
48. SBAC RFP Writing and Evaluation	July 2011 – ongoing	SDE Bureau of Student Assessment consultants part of writing and evaluation teams for major SBAC RFPs (Systems Architecture, Item Specifications, Accessibility and Accommodations, CAT and Test Specifications, Psychometric Services, Participation and Training Materials, Achievement Level Descriptors and Pilot Item/Task Development)
49. USED Public Meeting on AI Scoring	June 2011	Participation in USED public meeting by two SDE Bureau of Student Assessment SBAC work group co-chairs
50. SBAC Participation and Leadership	Winter 2010 – ongoing	Five members from the Bureau of Student Assessment assigned to SBAC work groups, including two co-chairs (Item Development, Performance Tasks, Reporting, Validation and Psychometrics, and Test Administration); Participated in all consortium sponsored webinars for up-to-date information on transitioning CT's assessment system; Participate in weekly meetings
State Level Event/Document	Date	Details
51. Connecticut Assessment Forum – The Future of Assessment in CT	August 2011	Forum providing over 300 participants with updated information regarding the CCSS and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).
52. CCSS mathematics assessment item writing	July 2011- ongoing	Seventeen members of the curriculum unit Design Teams and three SDE consultants received training and created assessment items for 2011-12 units identified in the Transition Guide.
53. SBAC Work Group and Contractor Collaboration Meeting	February 2011	SDE Bureau of Student Assessment consultants participate in bi-annual SBAC onsite collaborative meeting with all work groups overseeing active contracts and current contractors.
54. Connecticut	August 2010	Forum providing 220 participants with

Assessment Forum – Student Assessment in CT: Where We Are and Where We Are Going		updated information regarding the CCSS and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).
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## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
<b>Professional Development provided to LEAs by CSDE with RESC &amp; SERC support</b>					
<p><b>CSDE / RESC &amp; SERC PD</b></p> <p><b>Description:</b> CSDE curriculum and assessment consultants conducted two-day regional training sessions for all public and private school curriculum-writing teams. Sessions included CCSS familiarization activities, review of critical components of curriculum and the opportunity to work on LEA curriculum revision with CSDE support.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Providing LEAs with tools needed to become familiar with the CCSS and to begin or continue to plan for updating curriculum documents to reflect the new standards.</p> <p><b>Description:</b> CSDE collaborated with RESCs and SERC to provide an all-day session for LEAs including an overview of major curriculum shifts in ELA and mathematics and specific examples.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> To assist LEAs in creating and implementing a CCSS- based curriculum to prepare for a next generation of assessments.</p>	<p><b>June-October 2011:</b> Statewide professional development sessions at all RESCs and through SERC.</p> <p><b>December 2011:</b> Provide professional development sessions at all RESCs and SERC.</p> <p><b>March-April 2012:</b> Follow-up sessions at RESCs and SERC through LA Council and Mathematics Council.</p>	<p>CSDE curriculum and assessment consultants</p> <p>CSDE curriculum consultants, RESC &amp; SERC content specialists</p>	<p>Math/Science Partnership funds</p> <p>Math/Science Partnership funds, Priority School District funds.</p> <p>CSDE curriculum consultants (Bureau of Teaching &amp; Learning). Assessment/content consultants (Bureau of Assessment) RESC &amp; SERC content specialists</p>	<p>Completed evaluations and feedback from each session. Total of 262 participants from 59 districts and schools.</p> <p>Updated curriculum documents.</p>	<p>Maintaining consistent messaging.</p> <p>Limited CSDE staff to support LEAs.</p> <p>Limited RESC/SERC consultants with sufficient expertise to support ongoing work by LEAs.</p> <p>Analyze learning and accommodation factors necessary for student with disabilities.</p> <p>Reaching CT's IHEs and other teacher and principal preparation programs to better prepare incoming teachers and administrators.</p>

## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
			hours per session.		
Professional Development- Aligning existing materials with CCSS	Quarterly workshops 2012-13	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content specialists	IDEA funds  CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content specialists  LEA representatives (general and special education)	Offering of Sessions  Number and representation of participants from general and special education attending sessions  Classroom observations that reveal implementation of CCSS with existing instructional materials	Potential further reductions in IDEA grant award funds  Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education  Varying levels of knowledge/ understanding FFY 2012 IDEA grant award funds  Varying levels of knowledge/ Understanding of the CCSS among LEA representatives
Standards alignment workshop of grades 6-12 ELA and CTE frameworks	May 2012	CSDE ELA and CTE content specialists	CSDE ELA and CTE content specialists	Template includes crosswalk and ELA and CTE frameworks	
Teacher in Residence Program	Spring 2013				
Retired Administrator Support	Spring 2013				
Leadership Academy	Summer and Fall 2013				
<b>Curriculum Frameworks and Materials provided to LEAs</b>					
Review of planning templates completed by districts during the regional CSDE/RESC/SERC CCSS implementation sessions		CSDE Consultants	SEA Staff Time	Templates are completed and LEAs begin to implement plan based on recorded goals, objectives and action steps	CSDE lacks funding to create and put into operation a comprehensive system to collect LEA data around CCSS implementation

## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
CCSS Mathematical Practice/CT ELL crosswalk and CCSS ELA/CT ELL crosswalk	January 2011-January 2012	CSDE Consultants	SEA Staff Time; LEA personnel	Completion of and posting on CSDE's Web page for use by LEAs and schools	Time and labor to ensure the inclusion of ELL stakeholder from across the state
Utilization of worksheets in reading, math and writing to document appropriate instruction using the CCSS	Ongoing	Planning and Placement Teams	Worksheets in reading, math and writing	Eligibility determination paperwork reveal use of worksheets that reflect the CCSS	Time constraints during Planning and Placement Team meetings
<b>Assessment Support provided to LEAs</b>					
Data Showcase conference with a focus on the Common Core Standards and the Smarter Balance Assessment to support transition to CCSS and the Next-Generation Assessment		CSDE Consultants	SEA Staff Time; State funds	district-guided breakout sessions Evidence of broad participation from districts across the state; districts report the conference was useful via xxx	Identifying LEA presenters that are further along in implementing CCSS
<b>Engagement with Institutes of Higher Education</b>					
<p><b>IHE Symposium</b></p> <p><b>Description:</b> CSDE will collaborate with IHE, including an overview of major curriculum shifts in ELA and mathematics and their impact on teaching and learning.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> To provide IHE with updates regarding CCSS and a forum for discussion on how changes can be implemented to teacher and administrator preparation programs.</p>	<p><b>April 2012:</b> IHE Symposium</p>	<p>CSDE Curriculum consultants, RESC &amp; SERC content specialists</p>	<p>CSDE curriculum consultants (Bureau of Teaching &amp; Learning). Professors, academic officers and deans of IHEs.</p>	<p>Number of participants attending IHE Symposium.</p> <p>Changes to course work at IHE.</p>	<p>Ability for IHE to shift course work in a timely manner.</p>

## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
<p>ELL Literacy Training for priority school districts focused on literacy strategies for ELLs as determined by needs assessments</p> <p>ELL Basic Training for Classroom Teachers - CALI</p>	<p>November 2011</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CSDE Consultants</p> <p>RESC consultants and SERC</p>	<p>SEA Staff Time; State funds</p> <p>SEA Staff Time, State funds</p>	<p>High level of attendance from each priority school district; Evaluation forms indicated the information was useful and that participants plan to implement newly learned skills and strategies in their respective LEAs</p> <p>High attendance by general education teachers</p>	
<b>Special Education Support</b>					
Review of IEPs		CSDE Consultants	SEA Staff Time	IEPs reflect CCSS-based learning objectives	
<p>Promote tiered instruction through SRBI model-trainings, written guidance</p> <p>Impact of SRBI on ELLs training</p>	Ongoing	CSDE, SERC and RESC consultants	<p>IDEA funds</p> <p>CSDE, SERC and RESC consultants</p> <p>Guidance documents</p> <p>SRBI for ELLs</p> <p>Guidance document and SEA Staff Time</p> <p>Training materials</p>	<p>Bureau Bulletin articles (Bureau of Special Education)</p> <p>Offering of sessions</p> <p>Number and representation of participants from general and special education attending</p> <p>Appropriate compliant eligibility determinations of students with disabilities</p>	<p>Reductions in FFY 2011 IDEA grant award funds and anticipated further reductions in FFY 2012 IDEA grant award funds</p> <p>Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education</p> <p>Limited ESL-Bilingual staffing</p>
IDEA Partnership National Expert assistance	February 2012	Chief, Bureau of Special Education	Funds for travel reimbursement	Meeting with national expert	Scheduling conflicts

## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
				Plan designed to incorporate technical assistance from expert	
Orientation to Directors of Special Education	September 2011  June 2012	Chief and Consultants Bureau of Special Education	Chief and Consultants Bureau of Special Education  District Directors of Special Education  Meeting space  Training materials	Number of participants attending sessions	Varying levels of knowledge/ understanding of the CCSS among Directors of Special Education  Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
Orientation to State Advisory Council	November 2011  April 2012	Chief and Consultants Bureau of Special Education	Chief and Consultants Bureau of Special Education  State Advisory Council members  Training materials	Number of participants attending sessions	Varying levels of knowledge/ understanding of the CCSS among State Advisory Council members  Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
Orientation to Parent Advisory Committee for Indicator #8-State Performance Plan	December 2011  April 2012	Chief and Consultants Bureau of Special Education	Chief and Consultants Bureau of Special Education  Parent Advisory Committee members  Training materials	Number of participants attending sessions	Varying levels of knowledge/understanding of the CCSS among Parent Advisory Committee members  Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
Orientation to Administrators of Approved Private Special Education Programs	September 2011  November 2011	Chief and Consultants Bureau of Special Education	Chief and Consultants Bureau of Special Education  Administrators of	Number of participants attending sessions	Varying levels of knowledge/ understanding of the CCSS among Administrators of

## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
	June 2012		Approved Private Special Education Programs  Meeting space  Training materials		Approved Private Special Education Programs  Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
Crosswalk training-Provide training to special educators of initial trainings offered to general education on crosswalks	Spring 2012	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content specialists	IDEA funds  CSDE, SERC and RESC consultants  LEA representatives (special education)  Meeting space  Training materials (Crosswalks)	Number of participants attending sessions  Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for students with disabilities address CCSS	Reductions in FFY 2011 IDEA grant award funds and anticipated further reductions in FFY 2012 IDEA grant award funds
Professional Development-Major Curriculum Shifts: all-day session for special educators and pupil personnel staff in LEAs and Approved Private Special Education Programs including an overview of major curriculum shifts in ELA and mathematics and specific examples that was offered to general education.	<b>Spring 2012</b>	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content specialists	IDEA funds  CSDE, SERC and RESC consultants  LEA representatives (special education and pupil personnel, Approved Private Special Education Programs staff)  Meeting space  Training materials	Number of participants attending sessions  Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for students with disabilities address CCSS	Reductions in FFY 2011 IDEA grant award funds and anticipated further reductions in FFY 2012 IDEA grant award funds  Varying levels of knowledge/ understanding of the CCSS among staff in public schools and Approved Private Special Education Programs
Universal Design for Learning (UDL) training	2012-13	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESCA-1	IDEA funds  CSDE, SERC and RESC consultants	Offering of sessions  Number and representation of	Potential further reductions in IDEA grant award funds

## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
		& SERC content and special education specialists	LEA representatives (general and special education)  Meeting space  Training materials	participants from general and special education attending sessions  Classroom observations that reveal implementation of UDL principles	Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
UDL guidance documents	TBD	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content and special education specialists	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content and special education specialists, LEA representatives (general and special education)	Dissemination of Document	Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
Professional Development - Supporting and Providing the CCSS for students with disabilities in general education and special education environments	Fall 2012	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content specialists	IDEA funds  CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content and special education specialists, LEA representatives (general and special education)  Meeting space  Training materials	Offering of Sessions  Number and representation of participants from general and special education attending sessions	Potential further reductions in IDEA grant award funds  Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education  Limited participation of special educators in curriculum development in some districts
State Personnel Development Grant implementation-Literacy and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) with an RtI model to address student achievement in the CCSS	January 2012-July 2016	CSDE, SERC, RESC, UCONN with other stakeholder assistance	SPDG funds  CSDE, SERC and RESC consultants  UConn staff  LEA representatives	100 schools implementing PBIS and CCSS-literacy	Scheduling/staffing challenges for district personnel to attend required professional development meetings

## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

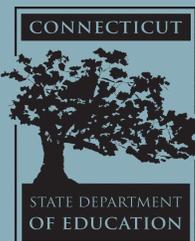
Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
			(general and special education)		
Professional development- Pacing guide use and impact on Students With Disabilities	TBD	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content specialist	IDEA funds	Published Pacing Guide	Potential further reductions in IDEA grant award funds  Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
Professional Development- Designing Standards- Based IEP to support progress in the general education curriculum	January 2012	SERC consultants	IDEA funds  SERC consultants  LEA representatives (general and special education)	Number and representation of participants from general and special education attending sessions	Reductions in FFY 2011 IDEA grant award funds and anticipated further reductions in FFY 2012 IDEA grant award funds  Varying levels of knowledge/understanding of the CCSS among LEA representatives
Meet with 18-21 year old providers of students in high school to develop technical assistance on college preparation services	TBD	CSDE and SERC special education consultants	IDEA funds  CSDE and SERC special education consultants  Meeting space	CSDE creates a guidance documents on college preparation services for 18-21 year olds	Potential further reductions in IDEA grant award funds  Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
Clarify definitions of college ready v. college prepared; higher education ready v. prepared; experience v. no access	TBD	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content specialists	CSDE curriculum and special education consultants, RESC & SERC content specialists  Guidance documents	CSDE creates guidance documents with defined terms	Group consensus for definitions
			A-18		

## CONNECTICUT CCSS PD IMPLEMENTATION

Description w/Rational	Key Milestones	Responsible Parties	Resources	Evidence of Success	Challenges
Educational Benefit training to develop and examine IEPs aligned with CCSS for educational benefit to be college and career ready	Fall 2011 and on going	CSDE and SERC special education consultants	IDEA funds  CSDE and SERC special education consultants  LEA representatives (general and special education)	Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for students with disabilities address CCSS	Reductions in FFY 2011 IDEA grant award funds and anticipated further reductions in FFY 2012 IDEA grant award funds  Varying levels of knowledge/understanding of the CCSS among LEA representatives
Secondary Transition Task Force to identify CCSS specific to transition	January 2012- November 2012	CSDE and SERC special education consultants	IDEA funds  CSDE and SERC special education consultants  Transition Task Force Members  Meeting space	Documents outlining CCSS related to secondary transition goals and objectives	Availability of members to attend meetings
IEP file review-focused monitoring	Winter/spring 2012-13	CSDE special education consultants	CSDE special education consultants  Representative sample of IEPs	Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for students with disabilities address CCSS	Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education
IEP file review- audit	Summer 2012	CSDE special education consultants	CSDE special education consultants  Representative sample of IEPs from LEAs	Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for students with disabilities address CCSS	Reduced staffing levels in the Bureau of Special Education

# CALI

## Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative 2011



Connecticut  
State  
Department  
of Education

*October 2011*

## 1 *Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative 2011*

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The Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) began in 2004 in collaboration with an international expert of school and district improvement, Dr. Douglas Reeves. It was a bottom up initiative, started first in two school districts (Bristol and New Haven), and then adopted by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) when the two districts began to demonstrate improved student achievement. CALI focuses on the use of data-driven decision-making and standards-based instruction to address the learning needs of each student in order to accelerate the closing of Connecticut's achievement gap and to ensure that ALL students achieve at high standards. In 2007, the initiative was significantly strengthened by accountability legislation, which supported the Department's efforts to identify and work with schools and districts that were identified by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) as underperforming.

Today, CALI includes four professional development modules: *Differentiated Instruction*, *Getting Ready for the Next Generation of Assessments*, *School and Instructional Data Teams* and *Improving School Climate to Support Student Achievement: Creating Climates of Respect*. The CALI initiative continues to be flexible and modules are redesigned or refined based on participant feedback, the changing needs of the districts and other state or national initiatives. The current modules, in particular, have been aligned with two new critical national and state initiatives described below.

The first initiative involves Connecticut's adoption of new national standards. On July 7, 2010, with a unanimous vote, the State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and mathematics. These standards, which are now referred to in Connecticut as CT (CCSS), establish new expectations of what Connecticut school students should know and be able to do as they progress kindergarten through grade 12. While a large percentage of the present Connecticut standards align well with the new standards, there are some significant changes that will require curriculum revisions in the districts. Information and tools regarding the new standards can be accessed on the CSDE Web site at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&q=322592>.

The second major initiative involves Connecticut's use of a national assessment system. In June 2010, Connecticut joined the national SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), which is developing a comprehensive and innovative assessment system aligned to the CCSS. In order to influence the development of the new assessments, Connecticut has become a governing state in SBAC and is taking an active role in the consortium by participating on several key workgroups.

The new assessments will be operational in the 2014-15 school year and will replace the Connecticut Mastery Tests (CMTs) and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). The core components will not only include end of the year summative assessments (as do the current CMTs), but will also include optional interim assessments and formative tools and processes for teachers and instructional data teams to use. Information regarding the national

## 2 *Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative 2011*

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assessment system and Connecticut's participation in their development can be accessed on the CSDE Web site at <http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/assessment/SBAC/Smarter%20Balanced.htm>.

As previously stated, then, the CALI modules have been re-evaluated and where appropriate, redesigned to:

1. Align CALI with Connecticut's adoption of the CCSS and the national SBAC to deliver a consistent message across all programs and training delivered and supported by the department.
2. Respond to district's requests to better understand the connections between assessment, data analysis and differentiated instruction to improve student achievement.
3. Integrate major Connecticut educational initiatives into a more cohesive whole for the local districts.

Although much of the information in the CALI modules will be familiar to those professionals who have been active participants in CALI, three of the four modules have been redesigned to achieve the purposes described above. A brief description of the modules is as follows:

1. *Differentiated Instruction (two days)*: Participants will focus on the importance of crafting an environment that actively supports each student's learning, having absolute clarity about the learning goal, knowing where the students are in relation to that goal and adjusting instruction to accommodate for student learning differences. Critical connections will be made between differentiated instruction, Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) and the CT Standards (CCSS).
2. *Getting Ready for the Next Generation of Assessments (one day)*: District teams will be able to formulate an action plan to improve the capacity of the district, school and classroom to engage in assessment practices that support and promote high quality learning. District teams will be able to recognize and understand the components of a balanced assessment system: interim assessments, formative assessment tools and practices, and summative assessments in alignment with the SBAC.
3. *School and Instructional Data Teams (two days)*: In this two day training, participants will learn an explicit process that focuses on adult actions (cause data) and their impact on student outcomes (effect data). As a result of this training, School and Instructional Data Teams will understand how to use data to develop, implement, monitor, and adjust school and instructional improvement plans designed to support effective teaching and learning.
4. *Improving School Climate to Support Student Achievement: Creating Climates of Respect (two days)*: Participants will focus on the principles, practices and strategies to establish

### 3 *Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative 2011*

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the kind of positive and respectful school climate required for students to realize optimal academic achievement. The training will provide participants with the skills necessary to collect appropriate data, create school climate improvement plans and to implement them in their respective schools.

In addition to the basic training modules, certification training is available for Improving School Climate to Support Student Achievement: Creating Climates of Respect. The purpose of this three day advanced training will be to certify staff to provide the basic training in their own districts. The certification training will be limited to persons who have completed the basic two-day training and who have been approved by their district to conduct in-district training.

The CALI professional development modules provide a comprehensive approach to ensure successful student learning and an opportunity for schools and districts to refine and improve much of what they are already doing. District and school participation is strongly encouraged.

For your information, the following modules that were previously offered through the CALI statewide program are still available thorough on-site professional development Request for Services (RFS) days or at SERC or your local RESC. Please log onto <http://sdecali.net> or your local RESC or SERC for more information:

- Classroom Data: Feedback, Follow up and Follow through
- Culturally Responsive Education
- Data Analysis for Educational Leaders
- Effective Teaching Strategies
- Effective Tier I Instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs)
- Formative Assessment Support
- Implementation for SRBI
- Leading Change and Getting Everyone on Board
- School Climate for Leaders

## Next Generation Science Education Standards

	adoption of NGSS and state focus on STEM Ed and STEM career pipeline.	CT Business & Industry Assoc rep CT Assoc of Boards of Ed rep
January 2012	SDE internal meeting with Bureau of Student Assessment to discuss inclusion of science assessments in state's new accountability system, and needed improvements to Next Generation science assessments; map 4-year transition plan for	SDE Science Consultant SDE Assessment Specialists SDE Associate Commissioner
February 2012	Brief State Board of Education about the process and timeline for completion of Next Generation national science education standards, how this process differs from the Common Core movement, and implications for Connecticut's state science standards and assessment program	SDE Science Consultant
February 2012	Attend CCSSO Science SCASS meeting concerning Next Generation science assessments.	SDE Assessment Consultant
February 2012	1 <sup>st</sup> state-level review of NGSS draft	SDE Science Consultant District content experts
Fall 2012	2 <sup>nd</sup> state-level review of NGSS draft	SDE Science Consultant District content experts
December 2012	NGSS published	
January 2013-March 2013	Development of state grade-by-grade standards adhering to NGSS guidelines.	
March 2013	State Board of Education adoption of NGSS; with possible decision to adopt grade-by-grade standards.	
September 2013-June 2015	Professional development, district curriculum revisions, begin to teach new NGSS; pilot new assessment items.	
2015-2016 school year	First administration of new NGSS assessments	

**CTE Professional Development Timeline 2010-2011**

**Conferences**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Conference Title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b># Attended</b>
December 2010	<b>Career Pathways: Changing Times</b>	The new vision for Career and Technical Education (CTE) was the focus of this conference. The discussions concerning the role of CTE in preparing students with 21 <sup>st</sup> Century skills, along with presentations from Fairfield, Suffield, Bridgeport, and Southington schools, made this a very successful conference.	184
April 2011	<b>Planning for Non-traditional Success in Career Technical Education: Boys in the Pipeline</b>	The Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund provided this conference on enrollment and retention of boys in CTE.	58
April 2011	<b>Teaching Personal Finance</b>	Nine sessions were offered over the course of the day, including Budgeting, the Math of Personal Finance, Teaching Personal Finance Using iPad, and Financial Education in Connecticut.	110
May 2011	<b>Business and Finance Technology Education Leadership</b>	Practical applications for the classroom, new software, and online resources were all discussed in this conference for Business Education leaders.	22

**Workshops**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Workshop Title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b># Attended</b>
November 2010	<b>Google Apps</b>	Business Education teachers learned how to make the best use of the updates in Microsoft Office 2007.	32
March 2011	<b>Perkins 101 Workshop</b>	An in-depth explanation of Perkins was provided to new administrators by the State Director.	35
April 2011	<b>21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Health – Concepts and Careers</b>	Educators discussed ways to raise student awareness of personal and community health issues. Participants visited public health worksites in the afternoon.	14
May 2011	<b>Designing a Web page for Your Classroom</b>	CTE teachers learned how to design and maintain a Google web page for their classroom.	16

May 2011	<b>Working Papers</b>	The updated regulations for issuing working papers were explained and presentations were given by the CSDE, OSHA, and DOL.	Appendix 1.12 90
June 2011	<b>Perkins, EDGAR, AEFLA and WIA Implementation Issues</b>	Speakers were Perkins, Secondary, Postsecondary, and Adult Education Administrators, and Michael Brustein of the law firm Brustein and Manasevit, Washington, DC. Mr. Brustein spoke about compliance issues related to federal education grants management.	180
June 2011	<b>Completing the Secondary Perkins ED400</b>	Secondary Perkins ED400 Data Stewards, responsible for data collection and entry, met with Perkins Program Manager, CSDE, to learn about new requirements for successful filing.	75
June 2011	<b>Connecticut Concurrent Enrollment Forum</b>	Secondary administrators and guidance met with Higher Ed faculty to discuss how to develop a dual enrollment program and how to build better faculty-to-faculty relationships. The national trends in standards-based curriculum were highlighted.	80

### Frameworks Review and Revision

<b>Date</b>	<b>CTE Area</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b># Attended</b>
October 2010	<b>Technology Education</b>	Framework sessions were held to review existing Connecticut and national standards and to update Connecticut standards.	39
October 2010	<b>Agriculture Education</b>	Framework sessions were held to review existing Connecticut and national standards and to update Connecticut standards.	18
May 2011	<b>Technology Education</b>	Framework sessions were held to review existing Connecticut and national standards and to update Connecticut standards.	37

The CSDE has offered statewide conferences with Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, OVAE and Kim Green, Executive Director of the National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) to explain the new vision for CTE to Connecticut policy leaders in education, business and industry, and the community. A detailed description of this vision can be found at [www.careertech.org](http://www.careertech.org) that embraces college and career readiness concepts.

<b>Timeline of Engagement with Institutes of Higher Education</b>
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<b>Event/Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Getting Ready for the Next Generation of Assessments Module Design Team	April-Present	Tony Rigazio-Digilio, Chair, Education Leadership Department, serves on the design team for the Getting Ready for the Next Generation of Assessments module
Meeting with AACTE-CT (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education) Deans	April 1, 2011	Initial meeting with Deans to share agenda of IHE Symposium on April 29, 2011
IHE Symposium	April 29, 2011	Presentation of current SDE Initiatives including CCSS. Symposium also offered an opportunity for faculty to network across institutes.
Meeting with AACTE-CT	June 3, 2011	Follow up meeting with Deans to debrief Symposium
Meeting with Commissioner Meotti and his Staff	June 7, 2011	Discussion of Higher Education Symposium and the CALI module redesign which integrates CCSS and SBAC
Vetting Session for CALI Redesigned Using Differentiated Instruction to Implement the Common Core State Standards Module	July 27 <sup>th</sup> and 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2011	IHE faculty were invited to participate in a vetting session to provide feedback on this redesigned module
Meeting with Southern CT University Ed Leadership Department	September 7, 2011	Meeting with faculty to discuss CALI module redesign which integrates CCSS and SBAC
IHE Distribution List	September-ongoing	Bureau of Accountability and Improvement maintains a distribution list of higher education contacts. This list will be used to send updated information to IHE faculty and policymakers regarding CCSS and SBAC, as well as other initiatives
CALI 2011 Conference	October 18, 2011	IHE faculty were invited to attend the CALI module redesign roll out for Partner Districts
Presentation to Sacred Heart University Education Department	November 3, 2011	Presentation included updates on SDE initiatives, including CCSS and SBAC
Meeting with AACTE-CT	November 4, 2011	Meeting to Plan next year's Higher Education Symposium
Information Sharing with Deans	November 2011 and ongoing	Updates regarding CCSS and SBAC are emailed to Hillary Freedman, AACTE CT Consultant, for forwarding to Deans
CALI Work Group	February 10, 2012	Jacqui Kelleher, Professor at Sacred Heart University, will facilitate a work group to delineate the core practices of the four CALI redesigned modules: Getting Ready for the Next Generation of Assessments and Using Differentiated Instruction to Implement the CCSS. This work group will develop a resource document for faculty to use when developing their course syllabi and field experiences
Regional Sharing Meeting for Sacred Heart University and University of Bridgeport	February 24, 2012	SDE consultants will facilitate table groups where faculty share their work regarding integration of CCSS into their course syllabi
IHE Symposium	April 27, 2012	2 <sup>nd</sup> Symposium will provide faculty with connections between SDE initiatives, including CCSS and SBAC, and articulate department's plans regarding standards and assessment and what will be expected of teacher and administrative candidates. Commissioner Pryor and President Kennedy, of the CT Board of Regents will provide opening remarks



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Barbara Q. Beaudin, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner  
Division of Assessment, Research and Technology

Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner  
Division of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Leadership

DATE: March 18, 2011

RE: Information on the Next Generation of Assessments

This is the first in a series of communications to superintendents to inform you about national initiatives that are directed at improving public school education across the states in this country. These initiatives will impact state and local curriculum and student assessment in the future. In 2009, the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) addressed the great variability in state-level academic achievement expectations for students by convening 48 states, two territories and the District of Columbia to develop Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in mathematics and English language arts. These standards define clear, consistent and rigorous K-12 expectations for the skills that students need to develop in order to succeed in post-secondary education and the workplace. The Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the CCSS at its meeting on July 7, 2010, and Connecticut is now one of 43 states and the District of Columbia to have adopted the CCSS. This is only the first step in what needs to be done to ensure that all U.S. students receive an education that will prepare them to be the most competitive adults in an international economy.

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education funded two consortiums of states to develop a new generation of assessments, covering the depth and breadth of the CCSS, which would capitalize on technology to deliver the assessments, provide timely and useful results to support instruction, and make available accurate information on the progress that students, schools and districts achieve over time. Connecticut is currently a governing member of one of the consortia, the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), which consists of 30 states working together to develop a comprehensive assessment system, including computer-adaptive assessments in mathematics and English language arts for Grades 3 through 8 and Grade 11. The assessments are targeted for first administration in the spring of 2015. The system will also include a digital clearinghouse of instructional tools and materials, interim/benchmark assessments and performance tasks.

The attached document, *Coming Together to Raise Achievement*, provides a succinct and clearly written description about the CCSS and how they differ from the standards that most states had in the past. It also outlines the proposed work and timelines of the two consortia that are working to build the new generation of assessments, and the issues that the consortia and states will have to address.

## Information on the Next Generation of Assessments

March 18, 2011

Page 2

There will be many challenges along the road to administration of the new assessments for mathematics and English language arts in the spring of 2015, and possible assessments in other disciplines that will comprise the future Connecticut assessment system, not the least of which will be the state's technology infrastructure and capacity to deliver such a system. Getting from where we are in 2011 to where we need to be in 2015 will require the best thinking and collaboration of all stakeholders who are invested in providing a high-quality education for all of the state's children.

State representatives attended a CCSSO Implementing Common Core Standards (ISCC) state-collaborative meeting in Washington, D.C., in late January and will be attending a second set of meetings in early April. As we at the State Department of Education learn more about the details of the implementation plan, we will be sharing that information with superintendents and other constituent groups.

I hope you find the attached document informative. Please feel free to share with teachers, administrators, your local Board of Education members and other interested parties.

bqb

cc: George A. Coleman, Acting Commissioner



## Quality Assurance Plan for CALI

2011-2012 School Year

### I. CALI Training Modules

Lead Consultants: Iris White and Shauna Brown

Area of Focus	Description of Quality Assurance
Evaluations centralized	Evaluations sent to Shauna Brown at CSDE, Support Staff enters results into a database. Evaluation results are compiled and sent to the presenters.
Vetting of New Modules	Teams of CSDE consultants, district staff, and RESC/SERC Consultants will vet the two new CALI modules this summer: Data Analysis/Data Teams and Differentiated Instruction.
Onsite observation	CSDE Consultants will observe statewide trainings, trainings at RESC/SERC and give feedback to presenters using the trainer evaluation form developed last year. One of the nine areas assesses the presenters demonstration of the alignment to other modules and SDE initiatives, specifically CCSS and SBAC.
Lead Trainer Model for SRBI, Differentiated Instruction, and ELL Basic Trainers	ELL Basic and SRBI Lead Trainer Model will continue. RESC and SERC will identify consultants who will act as Lead Trainers for Differentiated Instruction module. SRBI and Differentiated Instruction Anchor Trainers will meet together occasionally to ensure consistency between the two trainings.
Quarterly Newsletter Update	Emailed to CALI Certified Trainers every January, April, July, and October.
Professional Learning Community for Lead Developers	Shauna and Iris will meet with lead developers quarterly to ensure continuous alignment of the redesigned modules.
Training Registration	Participants must attend in teams, minimum of 3 and maximum of 5. One of the team members must be a Central Office or Building Level Administrator. CSDE will follow up with district teams to hear their feedback on the effectiveness of the training.

## II. Request for Service and Technical Assistance

### Lead Consultants: Iris White and Shauna Brown

Area of Focus	Action
RFS-TA-TAST	Work with EASTCONN to ensure that assistant superintendents and CALI Contacts are given access to the TAST Report and district trained lists.
Request for Services (RFS) preparation meetings with Assistant Superintendents of Partner Districts or Designee	Shauna and Iris will meet with the assistant superintendents of the Partner Districts or Designee to receive feedback on satisfaction with their service provider and on statewide training
Survey Advisory Committee for feedback on RFS, Technical Assistance and New Modules	Feedback will be considered when revising modules and technical assistance for 2012-2013 school year

### District Data Team Facilitators

#### Lead Consultant: Iris White

Area of Focus	Action
Feedback from Data Teams	Short survey monkey for principals to provide feedback on facilitation-emailed in January
Standards	Data Team Facilitators complete and submit standards every June
TAST	EASTCONN will implement suggested changes to the TAST Report
Professional Learning Community	Data Team Facilitators will form a PLC and meet five times between August and June in the school year to discuss best practices and problems of practice.

### Executive Coaches

#### Lead Consultant: Robert Pitocco

Area of Focus	Action
Feedback from Principals	Short survey monkey for principals to provide feedback on Coaches-emailed in January

Reports	Executive coaches, submit confidential reports to Susan Kennedy and Mike Buckley from CAS, after every school visit
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### **CALI Logistics**

**Lead Consultant: Shauna Brown and Iris White**

<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Action</b>
Coordination of CALI Logistics	Iris and Shauna will review procedures with EASTCONN and will once again hold a meeting with all site coordinators in September
No Shows	Names emailed to Assistant Superintendents or CALI Contacts

*For the purpose of these Standards, training is defined as the delivery of CALI training modules.*

**Name of Trainers:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

- CALI Module:**
- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Data Analysis for Educational Leaders</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Improving School Climate Basic</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Implementation of SRBI</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Differentiated Instruction Basic</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Improving School Climate Certification</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>School Data Teams</i>      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>English Language Learner Basic</i>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Instructional Data Teams</i>               |  |

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Location of Training:**
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>ACES - Hamden</i>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>ED Connection - Litchfield</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>CES – Trumbull</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>LEARN – Old Lyme</i>           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>CREC – Hartford</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>SERC – Middletown</i>          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>CAS- Cheshire</i>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rensselaer –Hartford</i>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>EASTCONN-Hampton</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other</i> _____                |

	Area of Focus	Exemplar:	4-Completely	3-Mostly	2-Somewhat	1- Not at All
1	Establish group norms	Norms are listed on a slide at the beginning of the presentation or posted. Reminds participants to turn off cell phones, step outside for personal conversations, check emails only during break, and actively participate in workshop.				

## Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative: Evaluation of Trainers

	<b>Areas of focus</b>	<b>Exemplar</b>	<b>4-Completely</b>	<b>3-Mostly</b>	<b>2-Somewhat</b>	<b>1-Not at all</b>
2	Articulate purpose of training, intended outcomes, and implementation expectations	Have an agenda and objectives posted and in Power Point presentation (or in participant training materials). Verbally share the agenda and objectives with participants.				
3	Align and make connections to other CALI modules and SDE initiatives	References CALI 2011 White Paper which explains module redesign and connections with CT CCSS (Common Core State Standards) and SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).				
4	Request and provide continuous feedback to be responsive to adult learning needs and styles	Presenter should not present over 7-10 minutes before asking them to do an activity or respond to a question or prompt. Plan a variety of engaging activities, provide opportunities for feedback, respond accurately to questions from the audience and peer engagement. Provide time for processing and reflection. Honor prior knowledge of participants.				
5	Provide activities to engage as active learners	Actively engage participants in a minimum of 6 content related activities for a six hour presentation (e.g. think-pair-share, cooperative learning, jig saw, response to a prompt). Activity should relate to exactly what participants need to know.				
6	Provide opportunities for participants to reflect and plan for implementation	Include a slide for reflection (e.g. SRBI Basic Slide #5 has a list of possible reflection questions). Provide a minimum of three or more opportunities for reflection.				

	<b>Areas of focus</b>	<b>Exemplar</b>	<b>4-Completely</b>	<b>3-Mostly</b>	<b>2-Somewhat</b>	<b>1-Not at all</b>
7	Model strategies, practices and give practical examples	Model at least 2-3 content related strategies that participants can use. Give 2-3 practical examples related to the content; provide a minimum of two opportunities to practice these strategies or examples.				
8	Co-Presentation/ facilitation	Evidence of shared responsibility for planning between presenters. Clear demonstration of shared time on the floor as co-presenters. All of the presenters are knowledgeable and collegial, respectful and help each other before, during and after the presentation.				
9	Adult Actions	Expectations for Adult Actions are clearly articulated. Presenters emphasize adult roles in implementing strategies from the presentation.				

Commendations:

Recommendations:

Next Steps:

# NCLB Report Card

## 2010-2011

Connecticut State Department of Education

### Connecticut State Report Card

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 requires a statewide school accountability system. As part of this system, school districts receiving federal dollars based on the percentage of district students in poverty (referred to as Title I funds) must prepare and disseminate annual accountability reports which in Connecticut, present the performance of students in mathematics and reading on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), as well as information about the qualifications of teachers based on the federal definition of "highly qualified" teachers.

#### Adequate Yearly Progress

The state is required to determine annually if it is making adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward reaching the goal, by 2014, of having 100 percent of its student population scoring at or above the Proficient level in mathematics and reading on the CMT and CAPT. In order to make AYP, the following criteria must have been met by all students and be each subgroup (major racial and ethnic groups, students in poverty, students with disabilities and English language learners): (1) 95 percent participation on both the mathematics and reading CMT and CAPT; (2) achievement of the AYP target percentage at or above Proficient in mathematics and reading on the CMT and CAPT; and (3) achievement of the AYP target for an additional academic indicator, 70 percent at or above Basic on the writing subtest of the CMT or improvement from the previous year. More information about AYP can be found on Page 2 of this report.

#### **Adequate Yearly Progress Status for Connecticut State Report Card = Not Achieved**

<b>CMT Two Year Trend Data: % At or Above Proficient</b>				
	<b>Mathematics</b>		<b>Reading</b>	
	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>
<b>Grade 3</b>	80.1	82.6	68.3	71.7
<b>Grade 4</b>	81.2	82.9	68.5	72.9
<b>Grade 5</b>	83.3	85.5	70.6	73.5
<b>Grade 6</b>	83.7	86.3	80.4	83.6
<b>Grade 7</b>	83.2	84.2	80.6	83.3
<b>Grade 8</b>	82.8	83.2	78.7	81.5

<b>CAPT Two Year Trend Data: % At or Above Proficient</b>				
	<b>Mathematics</b>		<b>Reading</b>	
	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>
	75.9	77.4	80.1	79.5

#### **Contents of NCLB District Report:**

Page 2: Adequate Yearly Progress Data

Page 3: Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Achievement Data

Page 4: Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Achievement Data

Page 5: Qualifications of Teachers Teaching in the Core Academic Areas

Page 6: National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

# Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Status Data for the 2010-11 School Year

Based on 2011 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) results and the 2011 Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)

Appendix 2.1

The tables below show the state's performance on the AYP indicators. The state fails AYP if there is a "No" under the AYP Target Met column for BOTH the CMT and the CAPT. Only students who were enrolled in the full academic year were included in these calculations.

### Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Results (Grades 3 through 8)

Subgroup	Participation Rate** (95% participation needed)										% At or Above Proficient							
	Mathematics					Reading					Mathematics (91% proficient needed)				Reading (89% proficient needed)			
	n	Current	2 Year Avg.	3 Year Avg.	Ayp Target Met?	n	Current	2 Year Avg.	3 Year Avg.	Ayp Target Met?	Unadjusted	Confidence Interval	Adjusted	AYP Target Met?	Unadjusted	Confidence Interval	Adjusted	AYP Target Met?
State	250,599	99.7	99.7	99.8	Yes	249,316	99.7	99.7	99.7	Yes	84.6	2.2	86.8	No	78.3	3.1	81.3	No
American Indian or Alaska Native	857	99.5	99.6	99.7	Yes	848	99.4	99.4	99.4	Yes	80.1	3.9	84.0	No	71.5	4.7	76.3	No
Asian	11,073	99.8	99.5	99.3	Yes	10,872	99.8	99.8	99.8	Yes	94.6	2.2	96.8	Yes	87.2	3.2	90.3	No
Black or African American	32,847	99.4	99.5	99.5	Yes	32,718	99.4	99.5	99.5	Yes	66.8	2.3	69.1	No	59.8	3.1	62.9	No
Hispanic/Latino	46,198	99.3	99.3	99.4	Yes	45,437	99.3	99.3	99.4	Yes	69.0	2.2	71.2	No	58.1	3.1	61.2	Yes
White	155,485	99.8	99.8	99.9	Yes	155,315	99.8	99.8	99.8	Yes	92.2	2.2	94.4	Yes	87.5	3.1	90.5	No
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	140	98.6	-	-	Yes	137	99.3	-	-	Yes	76.3	8.8	85.1	No	74.3	9.2	83.5	Yes
More than one race	3,999	99.9	-	-	Yes	3,989	99.9	-	-	Yes	84.0	2.6	86.6	No	76.7	3.4	80.2	No
English Language Learners	13,053	99.1	99.2	99.2	Yes	11,770	98.8	99.3	99.3	Yes	58.0	2.4	60.4	No	38.0	3.2	41.2	Yes
Students with Disabilities	31,211	99.1	99.3	99.4	Yes	31,134	98.8	99.3	99.4	Yes	59.2	2.3	61.5	No	51.2	3.1	54.3	No
Economically Disadvantaged	89,970	99.4	99.5	99.5	Yes	88,986	99.3	99.5	99.5	Yes	69.2	2.2	71.5	No	59.4	3.1	62.5	No

Additional Academic Indicator: Writing	AYP Target Met?	Yes
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Legend:

- : Fewer than 11 students tested for Students Overall; Fewer than 40 students tested for subgroups

### Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Results (Grade 10)

Subgroup	Participation Rate** (95% participation needed)										% At or Above Proficient							
	Mathematics					Reading					Mathematics (90% proficient needed)				Reading (91% proficient needed)			
	n	Current	2 Year Avg.	3 Year Avg.	Ayp Target Met?	n	Current	2 Year Avg.	3 Year Avg.	Ayp Target Met?	Unadjusted	Confidence Interval	Adjusted	AYP Target Met?	Unadjusted	Confidence Interval	Adjusted	AYP Target Met?
State	42,821	98.0	98.1	98.0	Yes	42,764	98.2	98.2	98.0	Yes	75.5	3.7	79.2	No	77.8	8.4	86.2	No
American Indian or Alaska Native	199	95.0	97.0	97.2	Yes	200	98.0	99.0	98.6	Yes	60.4	8.8	69.2	No	62.4	11.5	73.9	No
Asian	1,723	99.5	99.4	99.3	Yes	1,726	99.1	97.5	98.0	Yes	85.7	4.2	89.9	Yes	85.0	8.6	93.6	Yes
Black or African American	5,686	95.8	96.0	95.7	Yes	5,650	96.3	96.3	96.0	Yes	46.5	4.0	50.5	No	54.1	8.5	62.6	No
Hispanic/Latino	7,016	95.1	99.2	99.5	Yes	6,990	96.1	98.6	99.1	Yes	52.0	4.0	56.0	No	57.6	8.5	66.1	No
White	27,725	99.1	97.1	97.7	Yes	27,727	99.1	99.1	99.1	Yes	87.0	3.7	90.8	Yes	87.5	8.4	95.9	Yes
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	52	98.1	-	-	Yes	52	98.1	-	-	Yes	46.2	16.5	62.7	No	53.8	18.1	72.0	No
More than one race	420	97.6	-	-	Yes	419	98.1	-	-	Yes	74.0	6.2	80.2	No	77.8	9.6	87.4	No
English Language Learners	1,770	93.3	95.3	96.8	Yes	1,769	94.2	96.3	97.6	Yes	26.4	4.4	30.9	No	27.0	8.7	35.7	No
Students with Disabilities	5,075	94.8	96.2	95.8	Yes	5,072	95.8	96.2	95.6	Yes	37.1	4.0	41.1	No	45.4	8.5	54.0	No
Economically Disadvantaged	13,167	96.1	94.5	94.9	Yes	13,121	96.0	97.2	96.7	Yes	50.6	3.9	54.5	No	55.5	8.4	63.9	No

Additional Academic Indicator: Graduation Rate	AYP Target Met?	No
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Legend:

- : Fewer than 11 students tested for Students Overall; Fewer than 40 students tested for subgroups

# 2011 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Achievement Data

## Connecticut State Report Card

Appendix 2.1

NCLB requires assessment data to be reported by different achievement levels. The table below shows the percentage of students scoring at or above the Basic, Proficient, and Advanced levels on the spring 2011 CMT. The numbers on this page were calculated only for groups of 20 or more. The percentage at or above Proficient will not be the same number as on the previous page. The number on the previous page is based on a federally approved AYP calculation used to analyze the adequate yearly progress of the state.

	Math						Reading						Writing % of Students Scoring At or Above Basic
	Total # Students	# Students Tested in Subject	% Students Tested in Subject	% of Students Scoring At or Above			Total # Students	# Students Tested in Subject	% Students Tested in Subject	% of Students Scoring At or Above			
				Basic	Proficient	Advanced				Basic	Proficient	Advanced	
State Achievement	250,599	249,703	99.7	92.1	84.3	31.5	250,603	249,692	99.7	84.7	77.9	24.5	92.0
<b>Subgroup Achievement</b>													
American Indian or Alaska Native	857	853	99.5	90.0	79.5	18.9	857	852	99.4	79.1	70.9	13.7	88.8
Asian	11,073	11,049	99.8	96.9	94.0	54.6	11,073	11,045	99.8	89.9	85.6	37.7	94.9
Black or African American	32,847	32,650	99.4	82.7	66.6	9.6	32,848	32,645	99.4	71.4	59.5	7.4	86.0
Hispanic/Latino	46,198	45,859	99.3	82.8	68.2	12.1	46,201	45,878	99.3	67.9	57.1	7.8	83.2
White	155,485	155,162	99.8	96.5	92.2	40.4	155,485	155,141	99.8	92.1	87.4	32.2	95.7
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	140	138	98.6	88.4	75.4	28.3	140	139	99.3	80.6	72.7	15.1	87.8
More than one race	3,999	3,992	99.9	92.2	83.9	29.9	3,999	3,992	99.9	84.8	76.5	24.0	92.8
English Language Learners	13,053	12,932	99.1	68.0	48.4	<5%	13,057	12,913	98.9	37.6	25.3	<5%	63.6
Students with Disabilities	31,211	30,931	99.1	68.8	56.8	<5%	31,214	30,828	98.8	56.2	48.7	<5%	63.1
Economically Disadvantaged	89,970	89,378	99.4	83.5	68.7	11.5	89,971	89,365	99.3	70.0	58.8	7.5	84.4
Male	128,969	128,450	99.6	91.2	83.5	31.6	128,973	128,396	99.6	82.7	75.7	23.0	89.0
Female	121,630	121,253	99.7	93.1	85.3	31.5	121,630	121,296	99.7	86.8	80.2	26.1	95.2

Legend:

- : Fewer than 11 students tested for Students Overall; Fewer than 20 students tested for subgroups

Connecticut State Report Card

Page 3 of 6

# 2011 Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Achievement Data

## Connecticut State Report Card

Appendix 2.1

NCLB requires assessment data to be reported by different achievement levels. The table below shows the percentage of students scoring at or above the Basic, Proficient, and Advanced levels on the spring 2011 CAPT. The numbers on this page were calculated only for groups of 20 or more. The percentage at or above Proficient will not be the same number as on the previous page. The number on the previous page is based on a federally approved AYP calculation used to analyze the adequate yearly progress of the state.

	Math						Reading						Graduation Rate
	Total # Students	# Students Tested in Subject	% Students Tested in Subject	% of Students Scoring At or Above			Total # Students	# Students Tested in Subject	% Students Tested in Subject	% of Students Scoring At or Above			
				Basic	Proficient	Advanced				Basic	Proficient	Advanced	
State Achievement	42,821	41,950	98.0	88.8	77.4	21.0	42,764	42,005	98.2	91.4	79.5	19.9	81.8
<b>Subgroup Achievement</b>													
American Indian or Alaska Native	199	189	95.0	78.3	64.0	7.4	200	196	98.0	85.2	63.8	6.1	Graduation rate by subgroup will not be available until the class of 2011
Asian	1,723	1,714	99.5	93.5	86.5	36.3	1,726	1,710	99.1	92.8	85.9	30.6	
Black or African American	5,686	5,450	95.8	73.2	48.7	<5%	5,650	5,440	96.3	82.1	56.7	<5%	
Hispanic/Latino	7,016	6,671	95.1	75.3	55.0	<5%	6,990	6,717	96.1	80.2	60.3	5.2	
White	27,725	27,465	99.1	95.1	88.1	27.7	27,727	27,480	99.1	96.0	88.5	26.3	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	52	51	98.1	58.8	47.1	7.8	52	51	98.1	64.7	54.9	7.8	
More than one race	420	410	97.6	88.8	75.9	18.5	419	411	98.1	92.2	79.1	19.2	
English Language Learners	1,770	1,651	93.3	54.8	28.4	<5%	1,769	1,667	94.2	54.9	28.7	<5%	
Students with Disabilities	5,075	4,812	94.8	55.5	39.3	<5%	5,072	4,857	95.8	66.2	47.5	<5%	
Economically Disadvantaged	13,167	12,559	95.4	74.8	53.3	<5%	13,121	12,592	96.0	80.8	58.2	<5%	
Male	21,932	21,418	97.7	87.7	77.1	22.9	21,930	21,470	97.9	89.1	75.4	16.2	
Female	20,889	20,532	98.3	90.0	77.6	19.0	20,834	20,535	98.6	93.9	83.9	23.7	

Legend:

- : Fewer than 11 students tested for Students Overall; Fewer than 20 students tested for subgroups

# Qualifications of Teachers Teaching in the Core Academic Areas

## Connecticut State Report Card

Appendix 2.1

**Table 1. General Information**

These data are provided to describe the state of Connecticut because the NCLB law requires that poor or minority students are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at a higher rate than other students.	
State Percent Poverty:	33.9
State Percent Minority:	38.1
Percent of Teachers 2 or less years of experience:	10.7
Percent of Teachers with Emergency Certification:	0.4

**Table 2. General Teacher and Class Information**

These data are the highly qualified and not highly qualified teacher FTEs as well as the number of classes taught by highly qualified and not highly qualified teachers.	
Total Teacher FTE:	36,754
Highly Qualified Teacher FTE:	36,548
Number of Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers:	131,834
Number of Classes Taught by Not Highly Qualified Teachers:	767

**Table 3. Connecticut Classes Taught by Highly and Not Highly Qualified Teachers**

	Percent of Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers					Percent of Classes Taught by Not Highly Qualified Teachers				
	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
State Overall	98.0	98.5	98.7	99.2	99.4	2.0	1.5	1.3	0.8	0.6
State High Poverty Schools	95.9	97.0	97.5	98.3	98.5	4.1	3.0	2.5	1.7	1.5
State Low Poverty Schools	98.9	99.9	99.2	99.6	99.8	1.1	0.1	0.8	0.4	0.2
State High Minority Schools	95.8	96.8	97.5	98.2	98.4	4.2	3.2	2.5	1.8	1.6
State Low Minority Schools	98.6	99.1	99.2	99.5	99.8	1.4	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.2

## Connecticut Results From The 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Appendix 2.1

NAEP often is called the "Nation's Report Card." It is the only measure of student achievement in the United States where you can compare the performance of students in a state with the performance of students across the nation or in other states. NAEP, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, has been conducted for over 30 years. Beginning this year, the U.S. Department of Education required states to report state-level NAEP results in state and district Adequate Yearly Progress report cards. This reporting requirement was designed to provide parents and the public with additional important information about the performance of the students in their state. However, there are important differences to consider when reviewing state-level NAEP results alongside results from the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT). Specifically, state assessments and NAEP are developed for different purposes and performance standards (e.g., proficient) are set independently. Therefore, one should not expect performance results to be the same across CMT and NAEP. Instead, NAEP results are meant to complement our state assessment results. NAEP can be helpful in gauging the progress of Connecticut students over time and in reviewing our state performance relative to the performance of other states across the country.

The NAEP 2009 achievement data presented below are the percentages of Connecticut Grade 4 and 8 students in each of the NAEP performance levels for mathematics and reading.

REPORTING GROUP	GRADE 4 NAEP 2009								GRADE 8 NAEP 2009															
	MATHEMATICS				READING				MATHEMATICS				READING											
	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced								
Connecticut Overall	14	39	38	8	24	33	31	11	22	38	30	10	19	39	38	5								
White	7	35	47	11	15	33	38	15	13	38	36	13	12	37	46	6								
Black	38	48	13	1	46	32	18	4	50	40	10	1	45	44	11	#								
Hispanic	30	52	16	2	49	36	13	2	45	41	13	1	36	45	18	1								
Asian/ Pacific Islander	7	28	50	15	18	26	35	21	10	29	43	18	9	27	49	15								
Am Indian/ Alaska Native	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡								
Eligible for NSLP <sup>1</sup>	33	49	17	1	47	34	15	3	46	41	12	1	39	43	17	1								
Students with Disabilities	39	42	17	2	62	25	11	2	54	33	12	1	53	33	13	1								
English Language Learners	49	42	9	1	71	23	5	1	75	19	5	1	‡	‡	‡	‡								
<b>CONNECTICUT STUDENT PARTICIPATION RATES</b>																								
<sup>1</sup> NSLP is the National School Lunch Program. This reporting group is also referred to as "economically disadvantaged." ‡ Reporting standards not met # Rounds to zero																	<b>Grade 4</b>		<b>Grade 8</b>		<b>Grade 4</b>		<b>Grade 8</b>	
																	<b>Math</b>		<b>Reading</b>		<b>Math</b>		<b>Reading</b>	
																	Students with Disabilities	86	76	86	83	English Language Learners	87	69

For more information about the main differences between NAEP and CMT, please visit <http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/assessment/national/naep.htm>. The official NAEP website is <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Report  
2010 - 2011 School Year

Capital Preparatory Magnet School (CMT), Hartford School District  
Based on the spring 2011 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT)

The AYP Status of this school is **Safe Harbor**

CMT	Test Participation										Academic Performance % At/Above Proficient						
	Mathematics					Reading					Mathematics				Reading		
	N	Current	2 Yr. Avg.	3 Yr. Avg.	AYP Result	N	Current	2 Yr. Avg.	3 Yr. Avg.	AYP Result	Unadjusted %	CI %	Adjusted %	AYP Result	Unadjusted %	CI %	Adjusted %
<b>Target:</b>	95%					95%					91%				89%		
Students Overall	172	100.0	100.0	100.0	✓	172	99.4	99.7	99.8	✓	76.6	7.9	84.5	SH	73.7	8.5	82.1
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Black or African American	76	100.0	100.0	100.0	✓	76	100.0	100.0	100.0	✓	74.3	12.0	86.3	SH	74.3	12.2	86.5
Hispanic/Latino	54	100.0	100.0	100.0	✓	54	100.0	100.0	100.0	✓	81.5	12.4	93.9	✓	68.5	15.0	83.5
White	30	-	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
More than one race	10	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
English Language Learners	11	-	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	12	-	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Economically Disadvantaged	74	100.0	100.0	100.0	✓	74	98.6	99.3	99.5	✓	78.6	11.6	90.1	SH	72.9	12.7	85.6
<b>Additional Academic Indicator: Writing (70% At/Above Basic)</b>										<b>AYP Target Met: Yes</b>							

CI: Confidence Interval

- **ELL and SWD flex** -- Students who were identified as a student with a disability on the 2008 and/or 2009 CMT, but not on the 2010 CMT, were included in the percent at or above Proficient calculation for this subgroup.
- **Participation Rate information** -- For any school or subgroup that did not meet the 95 percent participation rate criterion, a two- and three-year average participation rate using 2010, 2009, and 2008 CMT is calculated. If the two-year or three-year average was greater than the current participation rate, it was used for the AYP analysis.
- **Cell Suppression rules** -- It is possible for a subgroup to be of sufficient size (40 or greater) for the calculation of the participation rate, but not of sufficient size (fewer than 40) for the calculation of the percent at or above proficient. This is due to the omission of absent students from the calculation of the percent at or above proficient. If a school does not have the required 95 percent participation with 40 or more students, it will not have made AYP, regardless of the subgroup size for the percent at or above proficient calculation.

Appendix 2.2 Legend	
✓	Group Met AYP
SH	Group Met AYP Using Safe Ha
✗	Group Did Not Meet AYP
-	Fewer than 11 students tested Students Overall; Fewer than students tested for subgroups

## Community Schools for Connecticut

*Every child and every school is capable of excellence given the right conditions for learning.*

### Community Schools, Defined

A Community School is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and the community. A unified focus on academics, services, supports and opportunities leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Schools become hubs of the community, open to everyone, all day, every day, evenings and weekends.

Community Schools represent a **strategy, not a program**. Partners and stakeholders come together to agree on a set of results for children that they will achieve together. They develop a coordination system to share leadership and connect children and families with opportunities, services, and resources. They share accountability for results. They transform schools and communities. Research supports that Community Schools make a positive difference in student achievement, behavior and attendance, family involvement, and community engagement with public schools.

### What Does a Community School Look Like?

In a Community School a core instructional program is delivered by qualified teachers and instruction is organized around a challenging curriculum anchored by high standards and expectations for students. Community Schools provide a wide range of supports and opportunities, including:

- Family engagement, parent leadership and adult education
- Extended learning opportunities and youth development
- Physical, dental and mental health programs and social services
- Social and emotional learning
- Early childhood development
- Professional development for school staff and community members
- Linkages between schools and partners

### How Do They Do It?

School and community partners work together to bring a Community School to life. These partners share in a common purpose to harness existing resources and reach across funding silos to support community schools. The essential activities of any Community School partnership include:

- **Coordination:** Coordinate, negotiate, mediate, and make connections among nonprofits, schools and other partners (note: it is key to have a high level coordinator).
- **Needs Assessment/Planning:** Identify service needs and gaps; examine and share relevant research; develop plans; provide training and support to build local capacity.
- **Communication:** Engage wide range of stakeholders; communicate among families, school staff, external service providers and the wider community.
- **Accountability:** Collect, maintain, analyze and disseminate data on programs and participants. Integrate with existing school data system.
- **Resource Development:** Seek financial support for services through grant writing and other fundraising activities.

### What do Community Schools cost?

By leveraging existing community resources, every dollar that is invested in a community school yields an additional \$4 – 7 dollars in other funded programs that are brought to the school. Costs associated with fully implementing a Community Schools model varies according to school size, differences in operational design and services and supports offered. The average cost of implementing the Community Schools model is: elementary level between \$500,000 - \$600,000; middle school level between \$800,000 - \$900,000; and high school level between \$1,600,000 – \$1,700,000. The average per pupil cost is \$1,000 for standard programming; \$1,500 if medical or mental health needs are high in the school/community.

A full-time school coordinator or director of programming is essential to the success of the program and must hold an administrative/policy-level position. A coordinator position typically costs between \$100,000 - \$150,000 per school.

The costs are broken down into these following categories: (a) Provide health and mental health services; (b). Develop learning competencies including after-school activities, academic enrichment, life skills, service learning and civic engagement, sports and recreation, and early childhood. (c) Support families including family resource centers, parent involvement and leadership, adult education and immigrant services and English Language Learners. (d) Staff sites including

## Community Schools for Connecticut

*Every child and every school is capable of excellence given the right conditions for learning.*

coordinator, tutors, interns, mentors, and volunteers. Funding to support implementation of Community Schools comes from multiple sources including private foundations; private businesses; and federal, state and local funding.<sup>1</sup>

### Connecticut's Foundation for Building Community Schools

Connecticut has a number of programs that are foundational to creating Community Schools. As examples, the Connecticut Family Resource Centers (FRC) program and School Based Health Centers (SBHC) are described below.

- **Family Resource Centers:** Each FRC provides a practical foundation to assist both school and community in the evolution to become a full-service Community School. Supplementation to the current funding structure is needed to maximize the efficacy of the FRC role within the Community School model. A funding level of \$165,000 per FRC is recommended for each site established as a CSDE Priority School.
- **School Based Health Centers:** SBHC are another foundational program within the Community Schools model. SBHC are a unique service delivery model that provides *medical care and preventive and behavioral health services* by a team of licensed interdisciplinary professionals with particular expertise in child/adolescent health who work side-by-side to address and coordinate a broad spectrum of students' physical, mental and behavioral health needs and medical needs and routinely offer to students time-intensive anticipatory guidance and health education. Optional preventive and restorative dental services may also be provided. To fully support the comprehensive SBHC model, a minimum funding level of \$350,000-\$400,000 is recommended for each site. If preventive and restorative dental programs are also needed, an additional \$50,000 - \$75,000 is recommended.

In addition to service delivery programs, Community Schools engage in practices that welcome families to the school environment and connect families with their children's learning. The examples below are Connecticut projects that are implemented by families and staff in the school, but require cost for training and support (approximately \$10,000 per school).

- **How Welcoming is Your School?** Because visitors' first impressions of the school often determine their future interactions, the CSDE in collaboration with CREC and the Connecticut Parent Information Resource Center offers training in the *Welcoming Atmosphere Walk-Through Tool Kit*. The walk-through is conducted by a team comprised of parents, community representatives and school staff members who assess physical environment; school-wide practices and policies; personal interactions; and written materials and communications. By assessing these critical areas, schools can develop plans to meet the needs of their school communities and improve their environments, thus creating a foundation for increasing parent and community involvement.
- **School-Family-Community Partnership Action Teams:** The CSDE supports schools and districts in forming School-Family-Community Partnership Action Teams based on the model developed by Dr. Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University and the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS). The model helps schools establish School Action Teams consisting of educators, parents and community members who craft an Action Plan for Partnerships linked to the school improvement goals.
- **Title 1 School-Parent Compacts:** Connecticut developed an innovative approach to using the required Title I School-Parent Compact as the bridge between school improvement goals and family engagement. In this new approach schools utilized their student performance data in working with families to develop Compacts that identify specific learning-oriented teacher and parent actions at the *grade level* – rather than vague, boilerplate statements associated with traditional compacts.

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<sup>1</sup> Source for cost of Community Schools:

Blank, M, Jacobson, R, Melaville, A, and Pearson, S. (2010). *Financing Community Schools: Leveraging Resources to Support Student Success*. Washington, D.C. Coalition for Community Schools, Institute for Educational Leadership.

## Community Schools for Connecticut

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### Legislation for Community Schools

Below are samples of legislative language based on Illinois' state law and the federal Full Service Community Schools Act.

- State legislation was passed in Illinois for a Community Schools Program (Public Act 096-0746). That legislation is available at: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=096-0746>. The relevant language from that legislation is pasted below:

In order to qualify for a community school grant under this Section, a school must, at a minimum, have the following components:

- (1) Before and after-school programming each school day to meet the identified needs of students.
  - (2) Weekend programming.
  - (3) At least 4 weeks of summer programming.
  - (4) A local advisory group comprised of school leadership, parents, and community stakeholders that establishes school-specific programming goals, assesses program needs, and oversees the process of implementing expanded programming.
  - (5) A program director or resource coordinator who is responsible for establishing a local advisory group, assessing the needs of students and community members, identifying programs to meet those needs, developing the before and after-school, weekend, and summer programming and overseeing the implementation of programming to ensure high quality, efficiency, and robust participation.
  - (6) Programming that includes academic excellence aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards, life skills, healthy minds and bodies, parental support, and community engagement and that promotes staying in school and non-violent behavior and non-violent conflict resolution.
  - (7) Maintenance of attendance records in all programming components.
  - (8) Maintenance of measurable data showing annual participation and the impact of programming on the participating children and adults.
  - (9) Documentation of true collaboration between the school and community stakeholders, including local governmental units, civic organizations, families, businesses, and social service providers.
- Community Schools are authorized by the federal Full Service Community Schools Act (FSCS) of 2011 (HR 1090, S 585). Below is draft language based on the federal law and the accompanying request for proposals.

The Department of Education shall coordinate a Community Schools program to provide community school services in all public elementary or secondary schools identified as "priority schools." Community school services are comprehensive academic, social, and health services that respond to the needs of its students, students' family members, and community members. Each participating "priority school" included in the Community Schools program shall establish or expand (through collaborative efforts among school districts, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other public and private entities) community school services that include:

- (1) High-quality early learning programs and services.
- (2) Remedial education, aligned with academic supports and other enrichment activities, providing students with a comprehensive academic program.
- (3) Family engagement, including parental involvement, parent leadership, family literacy, and parent education programs.
- (4) Mentoring and other youth development programs;
- (5) Community service and service learning opportunities.
- (6) Programs that provide assistance to students who have been chronically absent, truant, suspended, or expelled.
- (7) Job training and career counseling services.
- (8) Nutrition services and physical activities.
- (9) Primary health, mental health and dental care.
- (10) Adult education, including instruction of adults in English as a second language.

**Community Schools for Connecticut**

*Every child and every school is capable of excellence given the right conditions for learning.*

Each participating “priority school” included in the Community Schools program shall have a full-time community services coordinator to administer the effective facilitation of these partnerships, as well as the coordination and integration of services, programs, supports, and available opportunities. A community services coordinator’s main responsibility is to work closely and plan jointly with the school’s principal to drive, develop, and implement community school services to students, students’ family members, and community members. The community services coordinator shall utilize a cross-section of school staff, parents, and community organizations to assist in the development and maintenance of a system that coordinates new and existing programs that respond to the needs of the school and community through ongoing needs assessments.

Each participating “priority school” included in the Community Schools program shall provide a comprehensive plan based on results-focused outcomes that includes a description of well-aligned goals, services, activities, objectives, performance measures, project results and outcomes.

## Connecticut School-Parent Compacts, Welcoming Schools, and School Governance Councils

### □ Connecticut's Innovative Approach to Title I School-Parent Compacts

The CSDE has revamped the process for developing the required Title I School-Parent Compact – moving from a compliance-oriented boilerplate exercise to a value-added communication tool that links family engagement with the school's core learning goals. The new approach, based on a three-year pilot with Connecticut schools, focuses on grade-level goals and at-home strategies that link directly to school improvement and current student data. The CSDE developed a 10-step process for engage families, teachers and students in designing a school-parent blueprint for *action* tied to the school improvement plan. This new approach addresses Title I requirements but is relevant to any school that wants to communicate their school improvement plan with families. For more information, go to:

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&Q=322630&sdePNavCtr=|45712>

The School-Parent Compact Project has recently gotten national attention:

- **Making the Most of School-Family Compacts** by Anne T. Henderson, Judy Carson, Patti Avallone, and Melissa Whipple. Published in *Educational Leadership*, May 2011, volume 68, pages 48-53. Available at: [http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational\\_leadership/may11/vol68/nm08/Making\\_the\\_Most\\_of\\_School-Family\\_Compacts.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/may11/vol68/nm08/Making_the_Most_of_School-Family_Compacts.aspx)
- The Family-School Compact project at Geraldine Johnson Elementary School in Bridgeport was highlighted in **Family-School-Community Partnerships 2.0: Collaborative Strategies to Advance Student Learning**, lead author Anne T. Henderson for the *National Education Association Priority Schools Campaign*, 2011. Available at: <http://neaprioritieschools.org/2011/11/07/family-school-community-partnerships-2-0/>
- Judy Carson (CSDE Program Manager) and Patti Avallone (external consultant) were on a webinar for the US Department of Education November 29, 2011 describing the project. It is archived at: <http://www.schoolturnaroundsupport.org/event/session-3-systemic-family-engagement-view-archive>

### □ Connecticut's Approach to Creating Welcoming Schools

School invitingness has been shown to be the most consistent predictor of parent involvement.<sup>[1]</sup> Schools that extend a genuine welcome to parents have strong partners in the education process, with parents much more likely to be involved both at the school and in helping their children at home. An inviting atmosphere has been shown to be the most consistent predictor of parent involvement and is especially important to

## Connecticut School-Parent Compacts, Welcoming Schools, and School Governance Councils

making stronger connections with families in communities with diverse culture, language and economic factors. Parents report that feeling welcomed is just as relevant at the secondary level as it is in elementary and middle school.

Because visitors' first impressions of the school often determine their future interactions, the CSDE in collaboration with CREC and the Connecticut Parent Information Resource Center offers training in the *Welcoming Atmosphere Walk-Through Tool Kit* (developed by Fairfax, Virginia Public Schools). There are four components highlighted during the walk-through: physical environment; school-wide practices and policies; personal interactions; and written materials and communications. The walk-through is conducted by a team comprised of parents, community representatives and school staff members. The team completes a Welcoming Atmosphere Commendation/Recommendation Form, which includes commendations on "what is working" and specific recommendations for how schools may become more welcoming. By assessing these critical areas, schools can develop plans to meet the needs of their school communities and improve their environments, thus creating a foundation for increasing parent and community involvement.

### □ Connecticut's School Governance Councils

School Governance Councils were created by the state's recent education reform law (Public Act 10-111) to enable parents, school staff, students (where appropriate) and community leaders to work together to improve student achievement in the state's lowest performing schools. School Governance Councils serve in an advisory capacity and are charged with assisting the school administration in making programmatic and operational changes to improve the school's achievement. School Governance Councils (councils) provide a remarkable opportunity for Connecticut schools to engage with families and community members in the essential dialogue about student achievement and preparing all students for success. For information, go to: [www.sde.ct.gov/sde/SGC](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/SGC).

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## IV.B.

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Hartford**

**TO:** State Board of Education

**FROM:** Mark K. McQuillan, Commissioner of Education

**DATE:** October 6, 2010

**SUBJECT:** External Evaluation Report on the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI)

**Introduction**

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has designed and undertaken implementation of a statewide system of support to improve its districts and schools. The support system is responsive both to Connecticut accountability legislation and to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Title I, Section 1117 requirements for state support to schools and districts not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The statewide system of support is called the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI). Because of the resources invested in CALI to date and its ongoing development, the state contracted with RMC Research Corporation for an evaluation of the process thus far. The evaluation began in January 2009 and concluded with the delivery of a final report in June 2010.

**History/Background**

CALI represents a major effort of the CSDE and high-need districts working together to bring about improvement. Currently, 15 “Partner Districts” have been identified by the CSDE to receive more intensive supports as a result of being identified in year three or greater of in need of improvement at the whole district level in reading, mathematics or both according to the NCLB AYP criteria. Through CALI, these districts have received professional development for staff at no cost, executive coaches for school administrators and ongoing technical assistance for district-level data teams, among other supports and services. The Partner Districts are: Ansonia, Bridgeport, Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, Middletown, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford, Waterbury and Windham. An evaluation study is timely; intensive support to the Partner Districts has been provided. CALI has continued to grow during the period that the evaluation was underway and it will continue to evolve and provide supports to more districts throughout the state. In the spirit of data-driven continuous improvement, now is an opportune moment for CSDE and the Partner Districts to reflect on progress and be informed by lessons learned.

Prior to the evaluation, CSDE had done initial work on a Theory of Action for the initiative. This theory identifies the inputs needed and outcomes expected as school districts work towards fidelity of implementation of the data-driven school improvement practices supported by CALI. RMC confirmed and further specified the CALI Theory of Action through an initial series of

interviews with state staff. RMC's evaluation of CALI was driven by this Theory of Action, which includes a CALI mission and vision; CALI inputs, resources and components; and short-, mid- and long-term outcomes that are expected. The evaluation design was based on progressive data collection to inform each segment of the logic model. Information on inputs, resources and services was derived from interviews with CSDE, RESC (Regional Education Service Center) Alliance and SERC (State Education Resource Center) staff. Perceptions of short-, mid- and long-term outcomes were assessed by data gathered from a web-based survey administered to district and school staff in Partner Districts. Survey findings were used to create an implementation index that, along with analysis of school progress based on state test data, were used to create a sampling matrix. The sampling matrix identified four districts and four schools, which were then selected for on-site visits to inform case studies.

Key questions for the evaluation were defined at the outset:

1. To what extent and degree of fidelity is CALI being implemented at the district and school levels in districts identified as in need of improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under NCLB?
2. Do the components/interventions support each other? If so, how and to what degree?
3. What impact is CALI having on district, school, teacher and student performance?

Evaluation findings were framed according to the status of the inputs and resources in place to support CALI, and then by an analysis of how the districts are positioned relative to the various stages of implementation (short-, mid- and long-term outcomes). In terms of inputs and resources, the evaluators found that the resources at the initial start-up phase were sufficient to bring about early implementation of CALI at the local level. These need to continue in order to reach greater fidelity of CALI implementation and to support ongoing sustainability of this work. In many ways, CALI has created district capacity to support schools to implement data driven improvement of student learning.

Short-term outcomes as defined by the Theory of Action focus on whether the inputs for CALI and participation in CALI services were adequate to create an understanding of CALI and its goals and purposes; garner buy-in to CALI as a workable system; and create a sense of urgency to move ahead in order to meet the CALI vision and mission. Certainly these outcomes were observed in full bloom at the district level in most of the 15 Partner Districts, especially the four that received site visits. Awareness seems to have penetrated more fully at the district level; district outcomes at this level would be expected to be ahead of school outcomes because implementation of the core improvement mechanism is more complicated and challenging at the school and classroom levels.

The primary finding regarding midterm outcomes was that districts and schools have begun implementation of the key structures for implementing CALI but need more support (i.e., professional development and technical assistance) to make deep changes in practice. Furthermore, it was concluded that schools need more or perhaps a different kind of support to ensure that they can implement CALI fully and well and therefore reap its benefits.

The evaluation data indicated that long-term outcome of high fidelity implementation of CALI at all levels of the educational system within a district varied in level depending on the particular

district. Some of the general challenges to reaching a high level (fidelity) of implementation are discussed in detail in the final evaluation report.

### **Recommendations and Justifications**

The State Board of Education should review the findings from the RMC evaluation of CALI and consider the information presented as a context for understanding the work and progress of the 15 Partner Districts. The evaluation confirms the CALI design as an appropriate and well designed system of statewide supports for continuous improvement. Findings suggest that a “culture shift” in terms of accountability for student learning has taken root in districts throughout the state. At the same time, the evaluation indicates that the change of the sort being supported by CALI takes time to occur, and that more time is needed before the state will see the ultimate payoff of CALI in terms of improved student achievement.

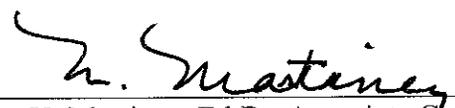
### **Policy Implications**

The CALI evaluation confirms that the CSDE should continue to provide supports and resources to our Partner Districts in the form of professional development and technical assistance for both teachers and administrators. The CSDE should continue to engage in activities to ensure the quality and consistency of supports offered under the CALI framework.

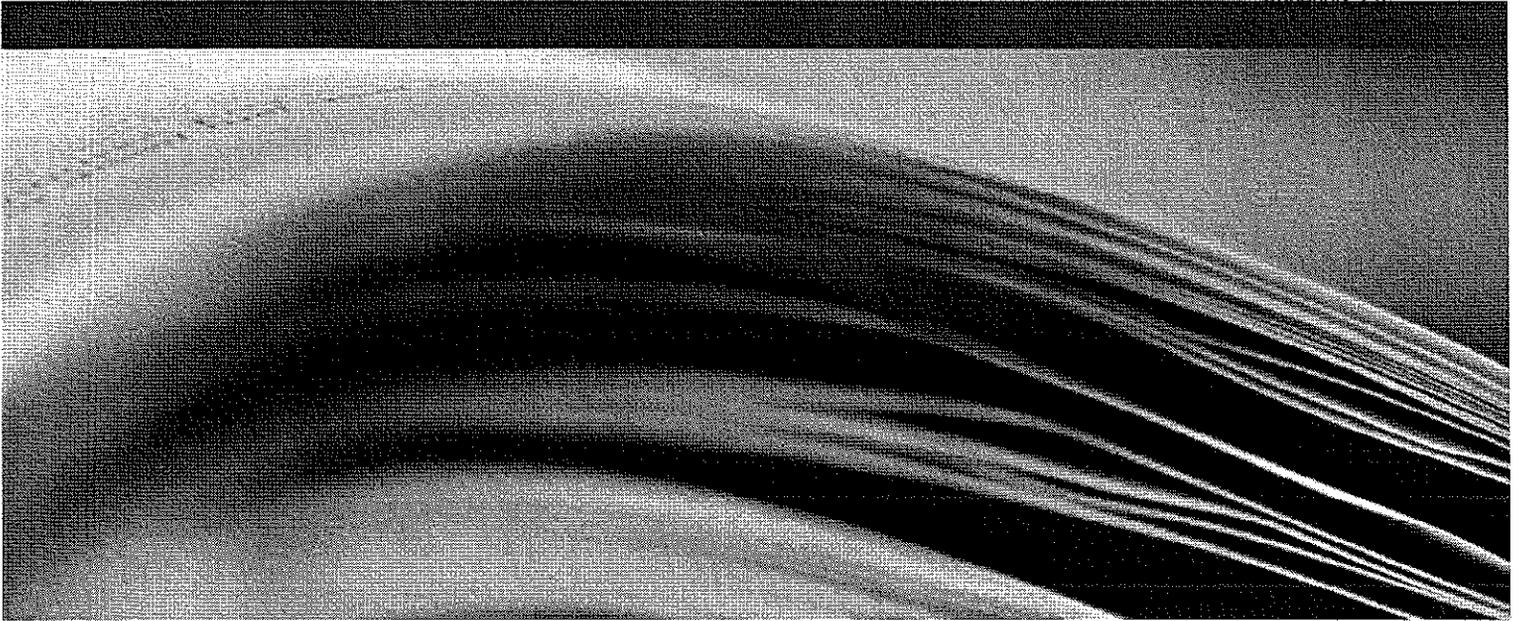
### **Follow-up Activities**

The Bureau of Accountability and Improvement has shared the findings from the RMC evaluation with the Partner District Advisory Committee as well as with the CALI Quality Assurance Committee, which is developing protocols and practices to ensure high-quality delivery of CALI services. Moving forward, the findings and recommendations from the evaluation will be used to inform the provision of CALI services to districts. Furthermore, the CALI Theory of Action used to frame the evaluation will continue to be used as a reference point as we monitor the progress and quality of CALI implementation in schools and districts throughout the state.

Prepared by:   
 Heather Levitt Doucette, Associate Consultant  
 Bureau of Accountability and Improvement

Reviewed by:   
 Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner  
 Division of Teaching, Learning and Instructional  
 Leadership

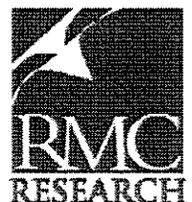
Approved by:   
 Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner  
 Division of Teaching, Learning and Instructional  
 Leadership



## Executive Summary

# Evaluation of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI)

June 30, 2010



*Executive Summary*

**Evaluation of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI)**

*Submitted to:*

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*June 30, 2010*



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) is well underway. The design, intentionally “built while flying,” is sound. Inputs and resources were sufficient during the initial stages of the work to support the model in early implementation, and will need to continue throughout these critical implementation years to reach fidelity and sustain the momentum. Participants are aware of CALI throughout partner districts and many of the districts’ schools; buy-in is growing. Key actions to bringing implementation to scale and sustaining this work are:

- continuing to develop strong and focused state, district, and school leadership;
- continuing the fine tuning of the professional development modules, particularly of their quality, delivery, availability, and accountability through the quality assurance work;
- developing newer, more school- and classroom-embedded professional learning opportunities to sustain the implementation of the module content as well as the finer content and content pedagogy needed for instructional practice to change;
- increasing available resources in order to sustain the work; and
- communicating and marketing the need for CALI within and beyond education.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) contracted with RMC Research Corporation to conduct an evaluation of the statewide system of support known as the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI). Work on the evaluation began early in 2009, and continued through June, 2010. This Executive Summary provides an overview of the full Final Evaluation Report submitted to the CSDE June 30, 2010. This final report builds upon an earlier Interim Report, presented in September of 2009 that presented a picture of CALI implementation at the district level; this report examines CALI implementation at the school level, as well, and blends the two pictures into one comprehensive view.

CALI represents a major effort of the state education agency and high-need districts working together with key statewide partner agencies to bring about improvement through intensive support to the partner districts. This report enables CSDE and the entire collaboration to reflect on progress and be informed by lessons learned as it moves into work with additional supported districts. This evaluation is intended to highlight key issues in the CALI improvement model for consideration as the Initiative moves ahead.

This evaluation study is theory-driven. A Theory of Action, drawn from the original CALI design, provides the foundation for this evaluation, and includes the CALI mission and vision; inputs and resources; services, activities, and outputs; and short-, mid- and long-term outcomes that are expected. Data sources include interviews with CSDE, Regional Education Service Center (RESC) Alliance and the State Educational Resource Center staff, a web-based survey administered to district and school staff in all partner districts, a review of related documents, site visits to four districts, and then four schools, and additional interviews with External Consultants, Executive Coaches, Data Facilitators, and statewide Teacher Union representatives.

Analysis was designed to shed insight on how the components of CALI work together as a system, what changes in practice have been made at the district level as a result of the implementation of the CALI model; why and how CALI has been of benefit to districts and schools in improving teaching and learning; and what modifications CSDE might make to its Theory of Action to ultimately be more effective in working with districts to build capacity to support schools in need of improvement. The evaluation is guided by the following three questions.

***1. To what extent and degree of fidelity is CALI being implemented at the district and school level in partner districts?***

This first phase of the evaluation focused at the district level, where leaders have worked in earnest and made progress in reaching fidelity. The 15 partner districts are knowledgeable of CALI, buy in to the CALI model as a viable way to bring about school and district improvement, and have participated in CALI activities to a degree of depth. Some major components, such as the Cambridge Education reviews and the development and approval of District Improvement Plans were completed early on. It is fair to say that the state has been untiring in its efforts to implement CALI, and that the RESC Alliance and SERC and district leaders have stepped up to the plate in the spirit of partnership to work together. As one might expect, at the school level, examined during the second phase of the evaluation, knowledge of CALI, per se, buy-in to the model, and implementation of the vision in a daily, on-the-ground manner is a work in progress, with multiple variations on the theme, depending on local district demographics, policy making, and culture or personality. Also at various stages are the actual results achieved for student learning. RMC visited schools ranging from finding their way out of identification entirely to losing ground for meeting AYP in spite of diligent intention and effort. What is common is that all districts and schools visited have embraced District, School, and Instructional Data Teams to look collaboratively at student work and data in order to make sound decisions for students at all levels – perhaps the very heart of CALI.

Fidelity of implementation is extremely important at the school level simply because it is in the interactions of teachers and students in classrooms that improvement will ultimately happen or not. The partnership between districts and their schools in reaching fidelity in using data-driven improvement is the real arena of change, and the second phase of the evaluation sought to gather and report insights into how implementation occurs at this level.

**Commendations**

- CALI is well underway and partner districts are deep into implementing the Data Team work!
- CSDE has created strong partnerships for a solid foundation for the Statewide System of Support. The CSDE has worked in successful collaboration with its partners - the RESC SERC Alliance, the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), the professional statewide Teacher Unions, and their partner districts and schools - to create, adjust, and to support the CALI model, the necessary inputs, resources, supports and activities that have built such a foundation to the statewide Initiative.

- Quality assurance collaboration is in progress. The CSDE has established a Quality Assurance Workgroup to continue the work of the partnership described above to continue to improve upon the quality, communication, and accountability of the work of the partner districts.
- Data Showcases have provided networking opportunities. Five annual “Data Showcase” Conferences have convened partners and other districts and school personnel for the purposes of exchanging best practices, networking, and learning.
- “Celebrating Stories of Success” celebrated the particular strengths and journeys of the “Fabulous 15” partner districts; the Commissioner and invited dignitaries joined in the evening celebration to honor the districts.
- Continuing to support the current cadre of Demonstration Schools rather than starting to support new schools is a wise decision, and will be greatly appreciated by the current group.

## **Recommendations**

RMC suggests that CSDE consider the following as it provides on-going support for implementing the CALI vision of practice. These recommendations focus on establishing implementation support that is intensive enough to take data use and instructional practices into the classroom level and sustain the work of the initiative.

- Continue to take steps to get maximum power from CSDE partner associations - the RESC Alliance and SERC, the CAS, the professional teacher associations, Connecticut Education Association (CEA) and the American Federation of Teachers Connecticut; continue to address issues of quality, consistency, timely participant access to professional development or modules, communication, and the transition to more embedded professional learning opportunities that will naturally follow the initial module design. Also important in this next phase is the attention to implementation fidelity and the science and research that is available to support that critical work.
- Provide guidance on human and fiscal resources to support reaching fidelity of implementation at the school and classroom levels; recognize that to bring this Initiative to scale will require immense resources from a variety of sources. Building district capacity to support schools in this work is critical.

## ***2. Do the components/interventions support each other? If so, how, and to what degree?***

The CALI components and interventions support one another in the model as designed. CALI is fundamentally a data-driven continuous improvement model: it started with use of the Cambridge Education reviews for districts (however received – well or not) to understand current status, write and implement aligned improvement plans, both at the district and school level, to address needs for improvement and build on strengths; then it makes data central at each decision-making level from instructional teams up. As conceptualized, the CALI teams up. As conceptualized, the CALI components and interventions are cohesive and coherent.

Districts are beginning to see CALI as a system, with interdependent and connecting components, although views do differ on this. Some feel that CALI is a coherent, cohesive program, and others do not. Most of the weight on on-going implementation will be carried by the training modules and by follow-up support received after participation in training.

While school principals see the larger view, as do district leaders, teachers tend to see what is on their plates – the Data Team work, and the necessary shifts in culture, strategy, and practice they need to make in order to change the learning trajectories for their students. Many are welcoming this new way of *doing school*, while others are continuing to struggle with change. Their view is also affected by the number of additional initiatives valued at their school, and how well they are aligned with CALI.

### **Commendations**

- Districts and schools have made it work! Either by strict adherence to the original design and theory, or through flexible use of resources and urgency, CALI districts and schools are making this work.
- CSDE has worked to consolidate CALI components. No new modules were added this year, and the Quality Assurance group has focused their work on Data Teams and SRBI as the backbone of CALI. CSDE has worked to create a message that other modules support the DDDM team work, and the work to provide instruction in regular classrooms.

### **Recommendations**

RMC offers the following recommendations on increasing cohesiveness and coherence of CALI.

- Think deeper, not broader and strengthen the integration of a few, powerful CALI components, rather than adding new services.
- Market a big CALI message to keep attention and focus on the what, how, and why of CALI.
- Demonstrate how data-driven decision-making works so improvement processes and results are visible and tangible.
- Celebrate successes to create momentum.
- Switch the orientation of CALI from state down to student up.
- Cast the nets to communities beyond education, and broaden the dialog beyond an education.

### ***3. What impact is CALI having on district, school, teacher, and student performance?***

This evaluation provides a lot of encouragement for what has been accomplished to date. Districts view CSDE staff as effective in creating and supporting the CALI model. Short-term outcomes have largely been accomplished, and work is active to achieve mid-term outcomes. Most of the partner districts and schools are in the thick of implementation, some with greater fidelity than others, some with greater student results than others. It is too soon to expect significant impact on performance or to investigate it in a rigorous way. This is a clear next step. There is anecdotal evidence of improvement in particular situations, and some schools are improving, which is encouraging.

#### **Commendations**

- The Commissioner, in addressing the partner schools at the spring 2010 CALI Celebration, confirmed his commitment to CALI and to the CALI schools. All Connecticut schools will become a part of the work, and no new initiatives will supersede continuing through with this important work of CALI.
- Clusters of CALI schools have made AYP. With CALI supports aligned with district and school initiatives, some schools have made AYP and are no longer in need of improvement. Schools are optimistic that the 2010 data will continue with this trend.
- The CSDE was open and reflective about the interim evaluation results, and made some critical changes and improvements as a result of that reception.

#### **Recommendations**

RMC offers the following recommendations regarding impact on district, school, teacher, and student performance:

- Stay the course, continue implementing this Initiative.
- Use TAST (Technical Assistance Service Tracking) and other sources of implementation data, to their fullest potential, in order to look more deeply into the connections between CALI participation and use with student achievement.
- Continue to evaluate, reflect upon, and make use of the data from the work of CALI as schools are in these critical implementation years.

CALI is a strong model for school and district improvement. It is likely that few states have created a statewide system of support that is as comprehensive, as well thought out, and as intensive in what it has done as CALI. But CSDE cannot rest on its laurels. The challenges of implementing and sustaining CALI at the classroom level, keeping and building the CALI focus are significant. All CSDE, RESC, SERC, and partner association members, partner district staff who participated in this evaluation expressed commitment, integrity and a lot of heart to meet these challenges. RMC encourages the state to keep working together and not to give up or change course at this time.

## Evaluation of External Partners

<b>1. Legal Name of External Provider</b>	Name:  Doing Business As (DBA):
<b>2. CEO/Owner Information</b>	Name:  Title:  Phone:  Email:
<b>3. Federal EIN, Tax ID Number, or Social Security Number (SSN)</b>	Check which applies and type in the number: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal EIN _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Tax ID Number _____ <input type="checkbox"/> SSN _____
<b>4. Type of Provider</b>	<b>a. Indicate if your organization is:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> For-profit <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit  <b>b. Check all categories that best describe your organization:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Business (public or private) <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietorship <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Liability Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> General or Limited Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Community-Based Organization  <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Educational Service Center (e.g., RESC) <input type="checkbox"/> Institution of Higher Education <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____
<b>5. Contact Information</b>	<b>Provide contact information of the authorized representative for your organization:</b>



<p><b>7. Provide evidence that your organization has a demonstrated record of effectiveness on increasing academic achievement of students on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) or the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT).</b></p>	<p>Provide the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At least one year of data indicating that your organization can show an increase in student achievement on a district, state or national assessment.</li> <li>2. Research studies that support the claim that your organization increased student achievement on a district, state, national or provider administered assessment.</li> <li>3. Feedback from parents, school officials or others that indicate the effectiveness of your organization.</li> </ol>																																																				
<p><b>8. Subject Areas &amp; Grade Levels to Serve</b></p>	<p><b>Check all subject(s) and grade(s) for which you have experience providing services:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reading/Writing</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="483 999 1430 1131"> <tr> <td><b>K</b></td><td><b>1</b></td><td><b>2</b></td><td><b>3</b></td><td><b>4</b></td><td><b>5</b></td><td><b>6</b></td><td><b>7</b></td><td><b>8</b></td><td><b>9</b></td><td><b>10</b></td><td><b>11</b></td><td><b>12</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="483 1304 1430 1436"> <tr> <td><b>K</b></td><td><b>1</b></td><td><b>2</b></td><td><b>3</b></td><td><b>4</b></td><td><b>5</b></td><td><b>6</b></td><td><b>7</b></td><td><b>8</b></td><td><b>9</b></td><td><b>10</b></td><td><b>11</b></td><td><b>12</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>																								
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<p><b>9. Students with Disabilities</b></p>	<p><b>Indicate whether you have experience providing services to students with disabilities:</b></p>																																																				



Connecticut.	<input type="checkbox"/> Articles of Incorporation <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietorship
<b>13. Financial Soundness</b>	<p>Financial Soundness: Criteria for Approval</p> <p>1. Positive net assets</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>2. Current assets exceed current liabilities</p> <p>What total percentage of your organization's revenue do you expect from providing services for SIG? ____%.</p> <p>Please include your organization's most current accrual balance sheet, such as audited financial statements or personal financial statements.</p>

Performance Evaluation Advisory Council  
Potential Goals and Activities  
Revised 12/12/11

Goal	Activities	Required by Statute or Law?	Responsible Party	Partners	Timeline	Notes
CSDE Survey to LEAs on a number of questions related to teacher and principal evaluation systems as required by SFSF (see SFSF application plans for descriptor (a)(1); Indicators (a)(3),(4),(5); descriptor (a)(2); indicators (a)(6),(7)).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze results of the survey</li> <li>Develop a report outlining the results of the survey to post online for public transparency and as required by SFSF</li> </ul>	Yes	CSDE	Districts	Distribute 1/2011, Due 2/2011, Redistribute 1/2012; Analyze & develop report	
Developing Guidelines Document for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the following documents for development of guiding framework: <b>Common Core of Learning; Common Core of Teaching; Connecticut School Leader Standards; 1999 Evaluation Guidelines for Teachers and Administrators.</b></li> <li>Review current research and readings on teacher and administrator evaluation issues to bring to discussions.</li> <li><b>Provide Professional Development for PEAC committee on student achievement measures, reliability and validity of student achievement measures, etc. . . .</b></li> </ul>	Yes	PEAC	Teachers, Administrators & Superintendents	April 2012  Ongoing  Ongoing	
Develop Guiding Framework for a Model Teacher Evaluation Program.	CGS 10-151b(4)(a) The superintendent of each local or regional BOE shall continuously evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher, in accordance with guidelines established by SBOE, pursuant to subsection (c) for the development of evaluation programs and such other guidelines as may be established by mutual agreement between the local or regional BOE and the teachers' representative, continuously evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher. An evaluation shall include, but need not be limited to, strengths, areas needing improvement, strategies for improvement and multiple indicators of student academic growth. Claims of failure to follow the established procedures of such evaluation programs shall be subject to the grievance procedure in collective bargaining agreements negotiated subsequent to 7/1/2004. The superintendent shall report the status of teacher evaluations to the local or regional BOE on or before June first of each year. The term "teacher" shall include each professional employee of a BOE, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a		PEAC		March 2012	

**Performance Evaluation Advisory Council  
Potential Goals and Activities  
Revised 12/12/11**

Goal	Activities	Required by Statute or Law?	Responsible Party	Partners	Timeline	Notes
	<p>certificate or permit issued by the SBOE.</p> <p>(b) Each local and regional BOE shall develop and implement teacher evaluation programs consistent with guidelines established by the SBOE, pursuant to subsection (c), and consistent with the plan developed in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of 10-220a.</p> <p>(c) On or before July 1, 2012, the SBOE shall adopt, in consultation with PEAC established by this act, guidelines for a model teacher evaluation program. Such guidelines shall provide guidance on the use of multiple indicators of student academic growth in teacher evaluations. Such guidelines shall include, but not be limited to: (1) Methods for assessing student academic growth; (2) a consideration of control factors tracked by the state-wide public school information system, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-10a, as amended by this act, that may influence teacher performance ratings, including, but not limited to, student characteristics, student attendance and student mobility; and (3) minimum requirement for teacher evaluation instruments and procedures.</p> <p>(1) Develop a New Model for Evaluating Educators that will include, but not be limited to, multiple indicators of Student Academic Growth using summative, formative, interim and benchmark assessment results that would establish a body of evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecticut Mastery Test Vertical Scales (Grades 3-8)</li> <li>• Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System (Optional – reading &amp; math (gr. 3-8) are completed; writing &amp; algebra I are in progress)</li> <li>• LEA student growth measures</li> <li>• Grades K-2 Interim Assessments (math, science &amp; reading)</li> <li>• Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)</li> <li>• DIBBLES</li> </ul> <p>10-10a(c): On or before July 1, 2013, the department shall expand the state-wide public school information system as follows:</p>		<p>CSDE</p> <p>CSDE CSDE</p> <p>LEAs CREC</p> <p>CSDE</p>	<p>PEAC – review, provide input and adapt for ed eval system</p> <p>CSDE</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>March 2012</p> <p>Completed Partially Completed</p> <p>In progress Partial complete</p> <p>July 1, 2013</p>	

**Performance Evaluation Advisory Council  
Potential Goals and Activities  
Revised 12/12/11**

Goal	Activities	Required by Statute or Law?	Responsible Party	Partners	Timeline	Notes
	<p>(1) Track and report data relating to student, teacher and school and district performance growth and make such information available to local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating educational performance and growth of teachers and students enrolled in public schools in the state. Such information shall be collected or calculated based on information received from local and regional boards of education and other relevant sources. Such information shall include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>(A) In addition to performance on state-wide mastery examinations pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, data relating to students shall include, but not be limited to, (i) the primary language spoken at the home of a student, (ii) student transcripts, (iii) student attendance and student mobility, and (iv) reliable, valid assessments of a student's readiness to enter public school at the kindergarten level;</p> <p>(B) Data relating to teachers shall include, but not be limited to, (i) teacher credentials, such as master's degrees, teacher preparation programs completed and certification levels and endorsement areas, (ii) teacher assessments, such as whether a teacher is deemed highly qualified pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110, or deemed to meet such other designations as may be established by federal law or regulations for the purposes of tracking the equitable distribution of instructional staff, (iii) the presence of substitute teachers in a teacher's classroom, (iv) class size, (v) numbers relating to absenteeism in a teacher's classroom, and (vi) the presence of a teacher's aide. The department shall assign a unique teacher identifier to each teacher prior to collecting such data in the public school information system.</p> <p>(C) Data relating to schools and districts shall include, but not be limited to, (i) school population, (ii) annual student graduation rates, (iii) annual teacher retention rates, (iv) school disciplinary records, such as data relating to suspensions, expulsions and other disciplinary actions, (v) the percentage of students whose primary language is not English, (vi) the number of and professional credentials of support personnel, and (vii) information relating to instructional technology, such as access to computers.</p>					



**Performance Evaluation Advisory Council  
Potential Goals and Activities  
Revised 12/12/11**

Goal	Activities	Required by Statute or Law?	Responsible Party	Partners	Timeline	Notes
Design Guiding Framework to Evaluate Connecticut Administrators/Principals.	Develop guiding framework for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and SBOE adopt administrator standards</li> <li>New statewide system of administrator/principal evaluation and professional development as it relates to administrative evaluation based on the new <i>Connecticut School Leader Standards</i> and the <i>Connecticut Common Core of Leading</i> (2009).</li> <li>Methods of measuring the administrator/principal effectiveness based on criteria above that can be monitored by the CSDE and reported quantitatively on an annual basis.</li> <li>Statewide data reporting system to collect annual administrator/principal evaluation data based on the methods and performance criteria established. . State must report for each LEA in the State the number and percentage (including numerator and denominator) of administrators rated at each performance rating or level.</li> <li>Training for LEA superintendents and administrators targeted to supporting and evaluating school based administrators/principals</li> </ul>	Yes	PEAC CSDE  PEAC  CSDE  CSDE  CSDE	CAS, CAPSS, RESCs Admin & Teachers CSDE  PEAC	June 2012 March 2012  March 2012  March 2012  December 2012  Ongoing (funding needed)	
Create Advisory <u>Teacher Workgroup</u> to Develop Performance Criteria and Rubrics.	Develop performance criteria, rubrics and other tools based upon the CCT standards and aligned with PEAC measures of effectiveness with a range for guiding evaluation decisions about teacher effectiveness. Criteria will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>student academic growth measure(s) as a criteria;</li> <li>a decision guide to determine how each "measure" should be weighted, contrasted with or compared with other measures of performance beyond observation.</li> </ul>	Yes	CSDE	Teachers & Administrators	Convene March 2012; Complete June 2013  ?????	
Create Advisory <u>Administrative Workgroup</u> to Develop Performance Criteria and Rubrics.	Develop performance criteria, rubrics and other tools based upon administrator standards and aligned with PEAC measures of effectiveness with a range for guiding evaluation decisions about administrator/principal effectiveness, using student academic growth measure(s) as a criteria.	Yes	CSDE	Teachers & Administrators	Convene March 2012; Complete June 2013 ???????	
Provide Input to the Development of Continuing Education Units; Revise to Promote Engaged Learning of All Students.	Collaboratively convene working group to <u>develop recommendations for modification</u> of CEU requirements.	Yes	CSDE	LEAs	Begin Jan 2013; Complete by Dec 2013	

## Principles for Teacher Evaluation Guidelines

(Agreed upon by PEAC)

1. The primary purpose of evaluation is to strengthen individual and collective practices in order to improve student learning.<sup>1</sup> Show a clear link between educator evaluation and professional learning<sup>2</sup> and improved student learning.
2. The evaluation systems should be based on educator knowledge, skills and demonstrated practice. It should include multiple indicators of student academic growth and development while taking into account measurable student characteristics included in the state data systems (e.g., poverty, English language learners, special education, attendance, etc. . .).
3. The evaluation systems should be standards-based using the Common Core of Teaching, state-adopted leadership standards, national pupil personnel professional standards, professional learning guidelines with an emphasis and focus on improved student learning.
4. When weaknesses in an educator's performance are identified, the educator should actively seek resources and support, including peer assistance, which will be included in the improvement plan. In addition, the educator should actively participate in the resource opportunities and support provided by the district. Both components should be part of an improvement plan. If weaknesses persist, the evaluation will be used as a basis for employment decisions.
5. Within a framework of procedural guidelines, local district evaluation plans should be developed collaboratively by educators, pupil personnel professionals and administrators and adopted by the local Board of Education.
6. Professional learning plans should reflect the needs of individuals and groups of educators identified through the evaluation process. It should address the needs of educators along the career continuum from novice to mid-career to veteran educator.
7. Evaluation systems should include opportunities for formative, summative and self-evaluation.
8. Districts should provide regular and ongoing professional learning opportunities and allocate time for educators and evaluators to collaborate in order to promote effective implementation of the evaluation plan.
9. Evaluation plans should include a process for resolving disputes in cases in which the educator and the evaluator disagree on goal-setting, formative or summative evaluation, and/or the improvement plan.
10. Districts should review and revise their evaluation plans at least every five years, using current research and best practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Student learning is broadly defined to include educator, pupil service professional and administrator assessment of student work samples, performance measures (i.e., holistic scoring of writing), as well as district-designed formative assessments and state standardized tests (i.e., CMT and CAPT). In addition, technology is available to permit educators to disaggregate data (i.e., using the data analysis tools on the CEDAR website) to determine curricular strengths and weaknesses. Educators should be guided to use these tools and encouraged to regularly make use of them.

<sup>2</sup> Professional learning - the educator's primary focus must be on student learning so that the needs of all students are addressed in a timely manner with the emphasis on intervention rather than remediation.

<b>PEAC-Full Committee Members</b>			
<b>Names</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization Represented</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Barbara Beaudin	Associate Commissioner	CSDE - Research Evaluation & Student Assessment	<i>Removed</i>
Bruce Douglas	Executive Director	Capitol Region Education Council (RESC)	
Mike Buckley	Associate Executive Director	CT Association of Schools (CAS)	
Carole Clifford	Professional Development Consultant	American Federation of Teachers-CT	
George Coleman	Acting Commissioner	CSDE	
Dennis Carrithers	Co-Director, CT Principal	CT Association of Schools (CAS)	
Diane Ullman	Superintendent	Simsbury Public Schools	
Joe Cirusuolo	Executive Director	CT Association of Public School Superintendents, Inc.	
Karissa Niehoff	Executive Director	CT Association of Schools	
Louise Feroe	Interim Vice President, CT State Universities	CT State Colleges & Universities - Board of Regents for Higher Education	
Ed Malin	Chair, School of Education	Sacred Heart University	
Marion Martinez	Associate Commissioner	CSDE - Teaching, Learning & Instructional Leadership	
Mary Loftus-Levine	Executive Director	CT Education Association	
George Michna	Education Consultant	CSDE - Research Evaluation & Student Assessment	
Patrice McCarthy	Deputy Director & General Counsel	CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE)	
Paula Colen	Executive Director	EASTCONN (RESC)	
Phil Apruzzi	President	CT Education Association	
Robert Rader	Executive Director	CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE)	
Roch Girard	President	CT Federation of School Administrators	
Sharon Palmer	President	American Federation of Teachers - CT	
Susan Kennedy	Assistant Executive Director	CT Association of Schools (CAS)	

<b>PEAC Meetings</b>			
<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Meeting</u></b>	<b><u>Place of Meeting</u></b>	<b><u>Time</u></b>
6/17/2010	Teacher Evaluation Partnership Mtg	CAS	2-4:30 pm
9/2/2010	Teacher Evaluation Partnership Mtg	CAS	2-4:30 pm
1/6/2011	Partnership on Educator Evaluation Mtg	CAS	9-Noon
2/14/2011	Partnership for Educator Evaluation Mtg	CAS	9-Noon
3/24/2011	Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) Mtg	CAS	9-Noon
3/29/2011	PEAC Sub-committee Mtg	CABE	1-2:30 pm
4/13/2011	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	CAS	9-Noon
5/5/2011	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	CAS	All Day
6/2/2011	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	CAS	9-Noon
6/15/2011	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	CAS	9-Noon
8/24/2011	PEAC Sub-Committee Mtg - Develop Guidelines	CAS	9-Noon
10/3/2011	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	CAS	9-Noon
12/20/2011	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	SDE-Room 307A	1:30-4:30 pm
1/9/2012	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	SDE-Room 307A	3-5:00 pm
1/25/2012	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	SDE-Room 307A	9-11:00 am
2/6/2012	PEAC Full Committee Mtg	SDE-Room 307A	9-Noon