

ESEA Flexibility

Peer Panel Notes



State Request: New York

Date: 3/30/12

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF REQUESTS

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

This document provides guidance for peer review panels as they evaluate each request during the on-site peer review portion of the review process. The document includes the specific information that a request must include and questions to guide reviewers as they evaluate each request. **Questions that have numbers or letters represent required elements.** The italicized questions reflect inquiries that reviewers will use to fully consider all aspects of an SEA's plan for meeting each principle, but do not represent required elements.

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

Review Guidance

Consultation

1. Did the SEA meaningfully engage and **solicit input on its request from teachers** and their representatives?

- *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?*
- *Did the SEA indicate that it **modified any aspect** of its request based on input from teachers and their representatives?*

Consultation Question 1 Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New York State Education Department (NYSED) had individual meetings with the New York State United Teachers and the United Federation of Teachers where the proposal was presented and feedback was requested. NYSED also consulted with the School and District Accountability Think Tank, Title I Committee of Practitioners, and the Bilingual Committee of Practitioners.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED met with teacher representatives that were statewide and New York City-based to cover most of its teaching workforce (p. 10). • Teacher representatives were active participants in groups consulted by the SEA such as the School and District Accountability Think Tank, the Title I Committee of Practitioners, and the Bilingual Committee of Practitioners. • NYSED worked from guiding principles. • NYSED demonstrated significant reflection upon comments of stakeholders and influencing the flexibility request.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA’s consultation included a heavy emphasis on working with official organizations but not necessarily via informal channels (e.g. direct to teachers). • It is unclear if significant effort was made in outreach outside of the New York City metropolitan area.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategic communication strategy to inform all stakeholders (e.g., school board, parents, teachers, community) about progress related to flexibility.

2. 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?
- *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?*
 - *Did the SEA indicate that it **modified any aspect of its request** based on stakeholder input?*
 - *Does the input represent feedback from a **diverse mix of stakeholders** representing various perspectives and interests, including stakeholders from high-need communities?*

Consultation Question 2 Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED requested input from parents, civil rights organizations, English learner and special education advocates, and the business community. Based on feedback NYSED received from these organizations, NYSED revised parts of its flexibility request. In addition, NYSED was transparent in posting responses to comments received on their website.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED revised its flexibility request based on input received from public stakeholders (pp. 11-12). • NYSED consulted with stakeholders through Regents Forums, public meetings, statewide webinars, web postings, and convening of Task Forces (pp. 13, 15). • In anticipation of a flexibility opportunity, NYSED invited representatives from key stakeholder organizations to participate in a “School and District Accountability Think Tank” made up of representatives from 23 external organizations that assisted NYSED in reviewing and rethinking key elements of NYSED’s current differentiated accountability system (p. 13). • NYSED conducted individual meetings and obtained input from the Commissioner’s Advisory Panel (CAP) for Special Education Services, special education directors representing four of the “Big 5” city school districts and small-city districts, Title I Committee of Practitioners, and the Bilingual and English as a Second Language Committee of Practitioners (Bilingual COP) (p. 14). • NYSED provided transparency of process by posting responses to comments received through its public comment and meeting period on their website (pp. 17-19). • NYSED considered “Special Act” LEAs and “Transfer High Schools” in flexibility request (p. 12).
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request is unclear whether students or Indian tribes were engaged in providing input based on the information provided (pp. 10-11). • The request is unclear on the extent to which School Boards were consulted.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should continue to involve students and Indian tribe representatives in the implementation of the waivers sought. • Develop a strategic communication plan to inform all stakeholders (e.g., school boards, parents, teachers, community) about progress related to flexibility.

Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

Note to Peers: Staff will review 1.A Adopt College-And Career-Ready Standards, Options A and B.

1.B Transition to college- and career-ready standards

1.B Part A: 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**?

Note to Peers: See ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance for additional considerations related to the types of activities an SEA includes in its transition plan.

1.B Panel Response, Part A

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has partnered with “Student Achievement Partners” to ensure the quality of its standards implementation and is conducting alignment studies on its current 2005 New York State Core Curricula and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts (ELA) and math.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED is conducting alignment studies as part of its implementation strategy (p. 32). • To assist in an effective implementation of the CCSS, NYSED used several formal methods of outreach: EngageNY (website), stakeholder engagement meetings, webinars, memos and emails to the field, and regionally based technical assistance through NYSED’s 12 Regional Information Centers (RICs) (pp. 35-36). • NYSED is building a comprehensive system of supports for its educators through existing technical assistance networks such as Teacher Centers and Regional Special Education and Technical Assistance and through the launch of a regional infrastructure of Network Teams (pp. 37-39). • NYSED is working with traditional and alternative educator preparation programs and developing a new certification exam that is consciously designed to reflect the CCSS shifts. It is also developing more rigorous Content Specialty Tests aligned with the CCSS (pp. 40-41). • NYSED’s new assessments will undergo the scrutiny of full Universal Design reviews and NYSED will design and execute a comprehensive and ongoing validation strategy to collect and analyze evidence to ensure the assessments meet the expectations of the CCSS (p. 45). • NYSED is contracting with the College Board to conduct alignment studies on their current 2005 New York State Core Curricula and the CCSS in ELA. • The Board of Regents approved and adopted pre-K learning standards. • NYSED’s existing P-20 longitudinal data systems will help the SEA fulfill the goals of data-driven decision-making based on assessments. • NYSED recognized the disconnect between graduation rates and college performance data, so it raised the cut scores in ELA and math to correlate the cut scores for proficiency with college and career readiness (p. 27). • The Board of Regents defined readiness more clearly by adopting Aspirational Performance Measures (APMs), which are student achievement levels that highly correlate with success in a first year credit-bearing college course (p. 28). • NYSED is holding teacher preparation programs accountable for outcomes.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED needs to elaborate further on the “12 Shifts in Instruction” that NYSED will use to align instruction to the CCSS (p. 32). • The request is unclear about what quality controls are in place for content of EngageNY website. • The request lacks details about the SEA’s plans to train principals to change culture regarding evidence-based observations as part of the professional performance review system.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.

Part B: 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?

Note to Peers: See ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance for additional considerations related to the types of activities an SEA includes in its transition plan.

1.B Panel Response, Part B

Tally of Peer Responses: 5 Yes, 1 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED is ensuring that there is built-in scaffolding for English learners and students with disabilities to provide grade level instruction and techniques to provide language supports for English learners and additional supports to students with disabilities with different learning needs.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are being provided tools and resources to provide grade-level instruction to English learners while taking into account their different proficiency levels, as well as subgroups of English learners, such as students with interrupted formal education, English learners with disabilities, and long-term English learners (p. 33.) • NYSED is planning to pilot curriculum modules for English as a Second Language (ESL) throughout the state and develop them in the top five languages spoken in the state (p. 33). • New alternate achievement standards are under development for students with disabilities and NYSED is a part of the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) Project working on developing a comprehensive assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities (p. 33). In the meantime, NYSED has an interim plan for students participating in alternate assessments, since new alternate assessments will not be developed until 2014-15. • NYSED has a new “Educating All Students” test designed to ensure that all incoming teachers and school building leaders understand how to address the learning needs of diverse student populations and how to support them in attaining the new standards (p. 41). • NYSED has awarded Race to the Top-funded grants to develop graduate-level teacher preparation pilot programs with a focus on preparing candidates to work with students with disabilities and English learners (p. 42). • NYSED’s plan includes a focus on principal development and support of teachers of students with disabilities within the regional Special Education Technical Assistance and Support Centers.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request is unclear as to whether the scaffolding techniques will be provided to or accessible by all teachers and not just English Learner or special education teachers (pp. 33-34). • Given that most students receive services in general education, there is no concentrated effort on ensuring that all teachers are provided the tools and resources to ensure effective instruction for English Learners and students with disabilities. • The request is unclear as to the extent that opportunities are being extended to English learners and students with disabilities for advanced coursework regarding AP/IB and dual credit courses.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should continue to implement outreach and dissemination regarding CCSS. • NYSED should make a concerted effort to ensure that all teachers have access to the tools and resources available for teaching diverse student populations.

1.C Develop and Administer Annual, Statewide, Aligned, High-Quality Assessments that Measure Student Growth

- 1.C Did the SEA develop, or does it have a plan to develop, annual, statewide, high-quality assessments, and corresponding academic achievement standards, that measure student growth and are aligned with NYSED’s college- and career-ready standards in reading/language arts and mathematics, in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school, that will be piloted no later than the 2013–2014 school year and planned for administration in all LEAs no later than the 2014–2015 school year, as demonstrated through one of the three options below? Does the plan include setting academic achievement standards?

Note to Peers: Staff will review Options A and C.

If the SEA selected Option B:

If the SEA is neither participating in a State consortium under the RTTA competition nor has developed and administered high-quality assessments, did the SEA provide a realistic, high-quality plan describing activities that are likely to lead to the development of such assessments, their piloting no later than the 2013–2014 school year, and their annual administration in all LEAs beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year? Does the plan include setting academic achievement standards?

1.C, Option B Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 1.C, Option A or Option C

Tally of Peer Responses: NA

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	NA
<i>Strengths</i>	NA
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	NA
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	NA

Principle 1 Overall Review

Is the SEA’s plan for transitioning to and implementing college-and career-ready standards, and developing and administering annual, statewide, aligned high-quality assessments that measure student growth, comprehensive, coherent, and likely to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement? If not, what aspects are not addressed or need to be improved upon?

Principle 1 Overall Review Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state conducted individual meetings and requested input from key stakeholders and based on feedback received, revised its waiver request. In order to ensure the quality of its standards implementation, the state is conducting alignment studies and is ensuring that there is built-in scaffolding for English learner and Special Education students to provide grade level instruction and techniques to support them. The state has partnerships and contracts in place to assist in the transition. In addition, the state has partnered with two states, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, to ensure that once the CCSS are in place there is alignment of pedagogy, content, and assessment.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NY worked from guiding principles. • The state provided transparency of process by posting responses to comments received through its public comment and meeting period on their website. (p. 17-19) • Board of Regents approved and adopted pre-K learning standards. • The state considered Special Act LEAs and Transfer High Schools in flexibility request. (p. 12) • To assist in an effective implementation of the CCSS, the State used several formal methods of outreach: EngageNY, stakeholder engagement meetings, webinars, memos and emails to the field, and regionally based technical assistance through the state’s 12 Regional Information Centers (RICs). (p. 35-36) • NYSED is building a comprehensive system of supports for its educators through existing technical assistance networks such as Teacher Centers and Regional Special Education and Technical Assistance and through the launch of a regional infrastructure of Network Teams. (p. 37-39) • The state is working with traditional and alternative educator preparation programs and developing a new certification exam that is designed to reflect the Common Core shifts and developing more rigorous Content Specialty Tests aligned with the Common Core. NY is holding teacher preparation programs accountable for outcomes. • Teachers are being provided tools and resources to provide grade-level instruction to English learners while taking into account the different proficiency levels, as well as subgroups of English learners, such as students with interrupted formal education, English learners with disabilities, and long-term English learners. (p. 33) • New Alternate Achievement Standards are under development for students with disabilities and NYSED is a part of the National Center and state Collaborative (NCSC) Project working on developing a comprehensive assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities. (p. 33) In the meantime, an interim plan for students participating in alternate assessments exists, since new alternate assessments will not be developed until 2014-15. • There is a focus on principal development and support of teachers of students with disabilities within the regional Special Ed Technical Assistance and Support Centers.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a heavy emphasis on working with official organizations but not necessarily via informal channels (e.g. direct to teachers) and it was unclear the extent to which School Boards were consulted. • It is unclear what quality controls for content of EngageNY are in place. • Details are lacking about state plans to train principals to change culture regarding evidence-based observations as part of the professional performance review system. • Given that most students receive services in general education, there is no concentrated effort on ensuring that all teachers are provided the tools and resources to ensure effective instruction for English learners and students with disabilities. • It is unclear to what extent opportunities are being extended to English learners and students with disabilities for advanced coursework regarding AP/IB and dual credit courses.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategic communication strategy to inform all stakeholders (e.g. school board, parents, teachers, community) about progress related to flexibility. • Continue to implement outreach and dissemination regarding CCSS. • Make a concerted effort to ensure that all teachers have access to the tools and resources available for teaching diverse student populations.

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 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?** (*note to Peers, please write to this question after completing 2.A.i.a and 2.A.i.b*)

2.A.i Panel Response*Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No*

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building upon the strengths of NYSED’s accountability system, NYSED has outlined a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that will comply with the timeline requirements and includes incentives and supports that are likely to be effective in closing achievement gaps for all subgroups of students.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NYSED has based a new theory of action within the Regents Reform Agenda and RTTT and is committed to shifting accountability efforts from a compliance and inputs-based system toward a system based on performance and outcomes (p. 50). NYSED has designed a system of support that includes assistance from the regional network teams, the School Turnaround Office, distinguished educators, and the External Technical Assistance Centers (p. 64). NYSED’s turnaround strategy intends to empower districts in developing systemic supports, structures, and interventions so that school capacity is improved (p. 56). NYSED will create a more rigorous accountability system by ensuring that standards are aligned with college and career readiness and translated into a quality curriculum so that rigorous indices and annual measurable objectives (AMOs) can be established. NYSED will build upon existing structures to promote more appropriate identification of schools and districts by: incorporating into NYSED’s accountability system standards that are better aligned with college and career readiness; modifying how NYSED’s ELA and mathematics performance indices are computed; using growth measure for all students, including ESEA subgroups, to determine progress compared to statewide median growth percentiles; revising its AMOs to reflect the rigor of CCSS.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NYSED’s proposed differentiated accountability system is based on the current system, for which there is a lack of demonstrated success. Timeline requirements appear to be in compliance with ESEA flexibility requirements; however, some activities are lacking specific timelines.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should continue to invest appropriate and sufficient resources in creating, piloting, and validating a robust diagnostic tool, given the essential role it plays in the proposed system.

- a. Does the SEA’s accountability system provide differentiated recognition, accountability, and support for all LEAs in NYSED and for all Title I schools in those LEAs based on (1) **student achievement** in reading/language arts and mathematics, and other subjects at NYSED’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**?

2.A.i.a Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED’s system reflects the required components of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support, including additional factors of student outcomes.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED includes science, career and technical completion, and four- and five-year cohort graduation rates. • Subgroups are accounted for in each of the components of the accountability system. • Achievement index includes “on-track” to proficiency distinction because it gives schools credit for students that make improvements towards proficiency. • NYSED has carefully considered the challenges it will encounter due to the size of the state system in implementing the new differentiated accountability system (pp. 56-57).
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unclear how NYSED will integrate the additional components for accountability, e.g., science, career and technical completion, and four- and five-year cohort graduation rates, into the index. It is unclear how NYSED will overcome some challenges associated with successfully implementing such a comprehensive and complex system given the size of the state.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the system understandable to parents, teachers and the public is important and the SEA may need to provide technical assistance to LEAs on how to communicate this effectively. • NYSED should develop a strategic communication plan to ensure that stakeholders, including parents, are informed of the changes made as a result of the flexibility request.

- b. 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?

2.A.i.b Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has outlined a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes incentives and supports that are likely to be effective in closing achievement gaps for all subgroups of students.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED aims for greater continuity between expectations and monitoring by aligning various accountability systems (e.g., NLCB, IDEA, and Title II of the ESEA) (p. 54). • NYSED’s Office of Special Education has revised its performance criteria for determination of school districts under IDEA as “needs assistance” or “needs intervention” based on whether a school district has one or more schools not making AYP for the students with disabilities subgroup. • NYSED is assigning, to the extent resources allow, a special education school improvement specialist to provide technical assistance during the differentiated accountability reviews (p. 54). • NYSED will continue to direct technical assistance to schools for efforts focused on English Learners and students with disabilities.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.

<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.
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a. Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.A.i.c

Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.A.ii Option A.

ONLY FOR SEAs SELECTING OPTION B: If the SEA elects to include student achievement on assessments other than reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system by selecting Option B, review and respond to peer review questions in section 2.A.ii. If the SEA does not include other assessments, go to section 2.A.iii.

2.A.ii 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?

a. Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.A.ii.a

b. Does the SEA’s **weighting of the included assessments** result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve NYSED’s college- and career-ready standards?

c. Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.A.ii.c

2.A.ii.b PANEL RESPONSE

Not applicable because the SEA selected 2.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED will increase AMOs for grades 4-8 in annual equal increments towards the goal of reducing by half the distance between the current proficiency level and 200, the maximum score. Student achievement on the science assessment is integrated into the identification of reward schools. Achievement on the science assessment carries the same weighting as achievement on assessments for other subjects.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of science assessments in the accountability system addresses a general problem of narrowing curriculum. • A school needs to meet AYP for science in order to be eligible to be identified as a reward school.

<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.

2.B Set Ambitious but Achievable Annual Measurable Objectives

2.B Note to Peers: Staff will review Options A and B.

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 NYSED 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 below?

If the SEA selected 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?

- i. Did the SEA **provide** the new AMOs and the **method** used to set these AMOs?
 - ii. Did the SEA provide an **educationally sound rationale** for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs?
 - iii. 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**?
 - iv. 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)
- *Are these AMOs **similarly ambitious** to the AMOs that would result from using Option A or B above?*
 - *Are these AMOs **ambitious but achievable** given NYSED’s existing proficiency rates and any other relevant circumstances in NYSED?*
 - *Will these AMOs result in a significant number of children being on track to be **college- and career-ready**?*

2.B, Option C (including Questions i–iv) Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 2.B, Option A or Option B

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED chose Option C and plans to use the methodology established in Option A to reset its AMOs while also providing credit for schools and districts reaching AMOs for particular subgroups. The proposed method is educationally sound.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The baseline for 2010-11 school year performance will be reset to allow for higher aspirational performance measures (p. 66). The AMOs for grades 3-8 ELA and mathematics will be reset to reflect the incorporation of student growth into the Performance Index and the baseline for 2010-11 school year for high school ELA and mathematics will be reset to reflect the new cut scores for proficiency (p. 66). • Student scores on the tests are converted to one of four performance levels (p. 67). • AMOs include a variable to determine whether students are on track to proficiency (p. 70).
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the growth-to-standard component of the proficiency index further to ensure masking of the performance of subgroups and schools is not an unintended consequence.

2.C Reward Schools

2.C.i Did the SEA **describe its methodology** for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as **reward schools**?

2.C.i PANEL RESPONSE

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has proposed a rigorous methodology to identify high-performing and high-progress schools that have been successful at improving the academic performance of students.
<i>Strengths</i>	<p>NYSED will identify reward schools in a rigorous manner. At the elementary, middle, and high school levels a school will be identified as a reward school if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's combined ELA and mathematics Performance Index places it among the top 20 percent (10 percent for high schools) of all schools; • The school has made AYP with all groups and all measures for which it is accountable; • The school's student growth percentile for the past two years in ELA and mathematics equals or exceeds 50 percent; • The school's student growth percentile for ELA and mathematics in the most recent year for its bottom quartile of students, as measured by their student growth percentile in the previous year, equals or exceeds 50 percent in the current year; and • The school does not have a gap in performance larger in 2010-2011 than it did three years prior for all subgroups of students and students who are not a member of the subgroups.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.

Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.C.ii.

2.C.iii 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?

➤ *Has the SEA consulted with LEAs and schools in designing its recognition and, where applicable, rewards?*

2.C.iii PANEL RESPONSE

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has established rewards and recognition for identified reward schools.
<i>Strengths</i>	<p>NYSED has created innovative ways of recognizing and rewarding high-performing schools, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually identifying and publicly recognizing the schools with a press release and a posting of the list to NYSED’s website. • Making the schools eligible to compete for a Commissioner’s Schools Dissemination Grant of up to \$100,000, which is currently funded through the RTTT initiative. • Making having one or more reward schools a potential factor beginning in the 2012-2013 school year in determining which districts receive District Performance Improvement Award Grants. • Potentially permitting reward schools to seek expedited variances from certain provisions of NYSED’s Commissioner’s Regulations. <p>NYSED will partner with reward schools to determine best practices to be shared with and implemented in other schools throughout the state.</p>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peers expressed concern regarding work required for a reward school to apply for a dissemination grant. The level of work involved may limit the extent to which eligibility for the grant acts as an incentive.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should continue to consider additional options for innovative awards, such as directing funds to build teacher and principal leadership opportunities (e.g., provide honoraria to teachers or principals to speak to other schools about their efforts to close the achievement gap and/or to provide professional development, and identification of “lab schools”).

2.D Priority Schools

Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.D.i and 2.D.ii.

2.D.iii 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?

a. 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**?

2.D.iii.a (including questions (i)-(vii)) Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED regulations and procedures provide requirements for priority schools to develop improvement plans, including a listing of interventions that include all turnaround principles.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority schools are required to develop a plan that either implements one of the four Federal SIG intervention models or implements interventions that include all turnaround principles and are designed in collaboration with partner organizations. • Priority schools must develop a District Comprehensive Improvement Plan, which should be informed by the School Quality Review or Joint Intervention Team visit. • Stakeholders must have a meaningful opportunity to participate in the development of the plan. • Although resources are not required to be used for supplemental educational services (SES), SES providers will be required to reapply for NYSED approval to ensure, among other things, that they will provide services aligned with the CCSS (p. 121). • Technical assistance resources will be provided to schools that were identified for poor performance of English learners and students with disabilities subgroups. • Leadership Academy holds promise of building the pipeline of strong leaders. • Flexibility request language reflects the importance of authorizers holding charter schools accountable for performance as required by state charter statute.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerable focus is given to the process of developing an “improvement” plan; however, less significant attention is dedicated to the provision of high quality professional development proven to lead to improved instructional practice. • Little attention is placed on developing a methodology to determine if the interventions have produced improved outcomes in professional practice and student achievement. • NYSED’s request is unclear as to the rationale behind the decision to require LEAs to continue the public school choice option for students in priority and focus schools (e.g., peers wondered about the value of choice for rural districts) (pp. 17, 83, 121). • The request does not explicitly address the capacity of LEAs of all sizes to integrate the principles into their interventions.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should track leading indicators of turnaround success to enable NYSED to closely monitor efforts and, if necessary, make adjustments if efforts are not leading to substantive changes. For instance, if the principal has not been able to demonstrate the ability to obtain buy-in from staff or improve instruction in a tangible way within the first two years of implementation, serious consideration of whether the leader is the right fit is warranted.

- b. 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**?

2.D.iii.b (including questions (i)-(iii)) Panel Response*Tally of Peer Responses: 4 Yes, 2 No*

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulations and procedures are in place with the potential to drive changes that will influence instruction, leadership, and outcomes for all students, including English learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest-achieving students.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts are required to develop local assistance plans with a focused attention on increasing the quality of instruction, improving the effectiveness of the leadership and teaching, and improving student achievement and graduation rates (pp. 88-89). School quality review teams will concentrate on quality of curriculum, instructional plans, and practice when conducting school audits. NYSED’s plan includes a clear focus on professional development with a specific focus on ensuring teacher preparation to meet the needs of English Learners and students with disabilities. NYSED aligned several new and current initiatives that are targeted to produce positive student outcomes (e.g., Network Teams, distinguished educators, Imagination University).
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School plans may lack a meaningful way to evaluate outcomes of interventions. School plans could potentially be a listing of interventions without necessarily targeting them to address the specific school needs. It is unclear whether districts and schools have capacity to identify needs and implement quality professional development.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NYSED should collect and monitor intervention outcomes (e.g., the results of professional development, longer school days, collaborative meeting time) and, if necessary, make adjustments if efforts are not leading to improved student performance, most particularly for at-risk student populations. The SEA should develop the capacity of districts to select and implement instructional and professional development strategies that are likely to have the greatest impact and a depth of rigor needed to drive systemic change.

c. *Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.D.iii.c*

2.D.iv 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?

➤ *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**?*

2.D.iv Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED will require 50 percent of the state’s priority schools to begin implementing interventions in the 2012-13 school year. An additional 25 percent will begin implementing in the 2013-14 school year and the remaining 25 percent must begin implementing in the 2014-15 school year (p. 94).
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED will identify priority schools once during the three-year waiver period. This identification will occur in the 2011-12 school year for implementation beginning in the 2012-13 school year. • NYSED will review each plan submitted by LEAs for priority schools to ensure that each LEA has a comprehensive intervention plan that employs all the necessary monetary and human capital resources needed for effective implementation over the course of a three-year period (p. 92). • Site team visits will include interviews with administrators regarding leadership support, with staff regarding the effectiveness of the professional development and use of data, with students regarding the rigor of instruction, and with parents regarding the efforts of school staff to involve them (p. 92).
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED’s proposal permits LEAs to opt out of the requirement to implement interventions that meet all turnaround principles by permitting LEAs to “phase in” principles (p. 94), but this is not permissible under ESEA flexibility. • The possibility of “compelling justification” for priority schools left peers wondering if high-need schools could be neglected in the provision of services and assistance.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should develop a three- to five-year evaluation plan with ambitious but realistic annual benchmarks, and mid-point check-ins. • NYSED should consider the balance between monitoring and giving teachers and principals time to implement reforms to avoid unintended consequences such as grade inflation and questionable assessment results. • NYSED may want to consider some sort of review of schools on the cusp of being identified as priority schools in subsequent years to ensure that schools are not on a downward slide. • NYSED might want to consider providing additional monies for smaller districts without the resources to undertake one of the four strategies in a realistic and comprehensive manner. • NYSED should provide technical assistance to LEAs to build their capacity to build robust recruitment, selection, hiring and evaluation systems. This strategy could be particularly potent for both rural and urban schools. • NYSED should consider other appropriate ways to implement the principles with consideration for rural schools

2.D.v Did the SEA provide **criteria** to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement **exits priority status**?

- a. Do the SEA's criteria ensure that schools that exit priority status **have made significant progress** in improving student achievement?
 ➤ *Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit priority status likely to result in **sustained improvement** in these schools?*

2.D.v and 2.D.v.a PANEL RESPONSE

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED's criteria ensure that schools that exit priority status have made significant progress in improving student achievement and are likely to result in sustained improvement.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED requires the full turnaround model process to be completed across three years rather than allowing efforts to stop once a school is released from priority status. • Priority schools must exhibit high performance for two consecutive years (versus just one year) before they can exit priority status. • NYSED’s Commissioner can intervene if priority schools do not demonstrate progress (instead of languishing indefinitely in priority status). • For high schools, the four-year graduation rate must equal at least 70 percent.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None indicated.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should continue to provide technical assistance to LEAs regarding sustaining reforms after exiting priority status in order to promote sustainability.

2.E Focus Schools

Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.E.i, 2.E.i.a, and 2.E.ii

- 2.E.i** Did the SEA describe its methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of NYSED’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?
- Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.E.i.a.
 - 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?

2.E.i.b Panel Response*Tally of Peer Responses: 3 Yes, 3 No*

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED’s focus on LEAs as well as schools is educationally sound and increases the likelihood of systemic and sustainable change, including for subgroups. • The methodology offered by NYSED indicates that there is a high likelihood that at least 10 percent of schools will be selected for focus schools.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-faceted method of identifying focus schools creates means to identify intended schools. • Attention to detail regarding charter school accountability and specifically, authorizer accountability. • Examples helped peers understand how focus school identification will be operationalized.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing LEAs choice of which “list” of ranked schools (count of schools fulfilling criteria vs. percentage of schools fulfilling criteria) to identify may lead to ignoring underperforming schools (per Addendum Steps 32 and 33). • Peers voiced a concern about the language that NY is “extremely confident” that the methodology will ensure that at least 10% of Title 1 schools being selected as focus schools--this requirement should be an absolute certainty.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure face-validity of focus school identification formula (i.e., formulas identify the diversity of schools one would expect, including rural and urban). NY should also consider ways to ensure that LEAs are not overlooked for entrance into focus status due to masking of underperforming schools. Consider the challenges of using LEA mean indicators for combined proficiency and graduation rate. • SEA should develop thoughtful guidelines for LEAs to use in making decisions at the local level about identifying focus schools, to avoid unintended consequences (i.e., an LEA not identifying a school in need).

2.E.ii *Note to Peers: Staff will review 2.E.ii*

2.E.iii 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?

- 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?
- 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)?

2.E.iii Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 4 Yes, 2 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NY's process and timeline ensures 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. SEA provided examples of the interventions. Interventions are 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.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a reasonable plan to identify focus districts and schools. • Charter school guidelines and parameters are included as part of the plan. • Itemization of interventions provides clear parameters for use of federal funds. • List of interventions reflects current research and represents integration of all three principles. • Use of the Diagnostic Tool during 2012-13 is a timely and effective planning tool for subsequent interventions.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although a listing of potential interventions are provided the request does not provide examples of and justifications for specific interventions that are more likely to be successful for subsets of students, e.g. no examples of specific interventions that have proven to be particularly effective for high schools. • Unclear whether focus schools would have the capacity to choose the interventions that would be most appropriate. • There is a lack of details regarding integrated intervention teams, in particular the ratio of intervention teams to schools, and expectations regarding the extent of these interactions. E.g., it is unclear how many intervention teams will there are and how often they will interact with staff at the school level.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should build LEAs capacity around determining needs and selecting aligned interventions. • NYSED provides training around each potential interventions to build LEA capacity for implementation. • NYSED should continue to invest appropriate and sufficient resources in creating, piloting, and validating a robust diagnostic tool given the essential role it plays in the proposed system

2.E.iv 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**?

a. Do the SEA’s criteria **ensure** that schools that exit focus status have made **significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps**?

➤ *Is the level of progress required by the criteria to exit focus status likely to result in sustained improvement in these schools?*

2.E.iv and 2.E.iv.a PANEL RESPONSE

Tally of Peer Responses: 2 Yes, 4 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED provides brief description of exit criteria. Lack of details makes it difficult to assess.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires continued implementation of improvement plan even after progress is noted to exit status. • Plans to monitor exiting focus schools/districts for another year. • Includes state level accountability for progress, i.e. NYSED determines when a LEA exits (and all schools in the LEA, with it).
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peers expressed significant concern regarding whether or not the proposed exit methodology meets flexibility requirements. Greater detail is required to assess the potential of the methodology to mask underperforming schools, e.g. whether or not one high-performing school could mask another school's decline in or lack of improvement in performance. • There is a lack of clarity regarding implications of monitoring of exiting LEAs, i.e. what happens if the schools performance doesn't continue to improve.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine methodology to ensure that exit methodology does not lead to masking of schools that continue to underperform.

2.F Provide Incentives and Support for other Title I Schools

2.F.i 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**?

2.F.i Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 4 Yes, 2 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has proposed a support system based on the SEA's new AMOs for schools not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps building on existing systems of support.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED plans to identify other schools that have significant achievement gaps and require them to submit a Local Assistance Plan focused on closing those gaps. A district that does not have any Priority or Focus Schools but instead has schools that have persistently failed to make AYP with one or more subgroup(s) will be required to develop a Local Assistance Plan for these schools. • NYSED proposes to develop a comprehensive feedback loop to inform and target supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on NYSED’s new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps. • The Plan shall specify the process by which the plan was developed and how school leadership, staff, parents and students, if appropriate, were give meaningful opportunities to participate in the development of the plan; the additional resources and professional development that will be provided to each school to support implementation of the plan; and the timeline for implementing the plan. (p. 105) • NYSED explicitly engages School Boards. • NYSED will advocate for regulatory changes to reporting requirements related to performance, to increase accountability.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed system of incentives and supports does not provide details of how supports will be differentiated according to LEA needs, and how new system is different from old system. • Lack of incentives. • Peers expressed concern about the process of engaging BOCES to be equal and proactive partners in the transformation, e.g. to what extent the chief officers of BOCES will be strong advocates for the new NYSED model. For instance, peer wondered how to leverage 34,000 (p. 108) combined instructional and technical professionals in the BOCES and RICS.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant resources will need to be devoted to building buy-in at every level of the support system to ensure fidelity of implementation, e.g. build buy-in from all key entities outlined in the graphic on p. 108 of the request.

- 2.F.ii** 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**?

2.F.ii Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 4 Yes, 2 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has proposed a support system based on the SEA’s new AMOs for schools not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps building on existing systems of support. Has also devoted resources to ensuring that these systems benefit English learners and students with disabilities.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RBE-RN offers PD opportunities that enhance the skills and competencies of all educators in order to assist English learners in meeting CCSS. • RBE-RN provides TA to LEAs and schools that have engaged in a self-assessment monitoring process that includes LEP/ELL Program Evaluation Toolkit. Implementation of RTI reflects Special Ed best practices. • NYSED requires the creation of special education quality improvement plans. • RSE-TASCs provide structure to ensure that needs of students with disabilities are met.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding above RBE-RN Toolkit, unclear if all schools will be asked to engage in self-assessment per above • Peers were concerned about quality controls of staffing in the RS-TASCs given critical shortages of qualified Special Ed personnel. • Peers were concerned about there being no description of how UDL is integrated into curriculum structures for meeting the needs of diverse students.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should consider devoting more resources to improved instruction in these schools, e.g. cultivating a pipeline of special education teachers.

2.G Build SEA, LEA, and School Capacity to Improve Student Learning

- 2.G** 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?
- i. 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?
 - *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?*
 - ii. 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?
 - iii. 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?

2.G (including i, ii, and iii) Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: 3 Yes, 3 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has proposed a dynamic multi-tiered approach to building LEA capacity, reflecting LEAs critical role in transformation; however, given the size and diversity of NYSED, peers are concerned about implementation and accountability.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has been realistic in assessment of its own ability to conduct implementation (i.e. has appropriately delegated to LEAs), especially given the number of students in the state school system. • There is evidence of political will to drive capacity-building efforts, e.g. multiple examples of legislative and regulatory changes. • NYSED Turnaround Office was established to work with the persistently lowest achieving schools. (p. 113). Creation of this office signals NYSED’s commitment to prioritizing low-performing schools. One of the responsibilities of STO is the creation of statewide guidance on external partner selection and matching. • For the upcoming year, STO is planning statewide professional development events for administrators; quarterly meetings with district improvement and turnaround offices to share information; launch of a web-based communication platform; and technical support site visits to priority districts and principals (p.114) • NYSED has unified and thereby streamlined its monitoring process, via Integrated Intervention Teams, the single Diagnostic Tool, and monitoring support. • The assessment reviews, site visits and subsequent reports will gather qualitative and quantitative evidence specifically related to effective staffing, planning, professional development, curriculum and teaching, student support, transformational leadership, school climate; community engagement, funding sources and district support. (p. 115) • The commissioner retains authority over schools that don’t progress to place them in SURR status. • Charters are held accountable, while autonomy is respected.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED did not describe a process for the rigorous review and approval of external providers used by the SEA and its LEAs to support the implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools. • Peers expressed concerns about SEA capacity to train existing personnel. NYSED plans a capacity-building RFP to provide annual targeted training to district turnaround offices, rather than hiring additional staff; however there will be significant challenges in training the large staff of NYSED and BOCES. (pages 114-115) • Peers have concerns about LEA capacity to provide interventions in an effective manner. • Unclear how NYSED will build capacity in LEAs to choose the interventions that would be most appropriate. This concern is particularly strong in focus LEAs. • Peers expressed concern about the role of various state support teams and whether the ratios of teams to schools will enable them to provide meaningful support (Network Team, Integrated Intervention Teams, etc.). • Request was clear on accountability for schools, but unclear on accountability for LEAs. This is particularly important given that NYSED has opted to identify focus districts.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build LEAs' capacity around determining needs and selecting aligned interventions. • Provide training around each potential intervention to build LEA capacity for implementation • Continue to invest appropriate and sufficient resources in creating, piloting, and validating a robust diagnostic tool, given the essential role it plays in the proposed system

Principle 2 Overall Review

Is the SEA’s plan for developing and implementing a system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support likely to improve student achievement, close achievement gaps, and improve the quality of instruction for students? Do the components of the SEA’s plan fit together to create a coherent and comprehensive system that supports continuous improvement and is tailored to the needs of NYSED, its LEAs, its schools, and its students? If not, what aspects are not addressed or need to be improved upon?

PRINCIPLE 2 OVERALL REVIEW PANEL RESPONSE

Tally of Peer Responses: 4 Yes, 2 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED proposes to leverage ESEA flexibility to implement a system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support for all LEAs in NYSED and for all schools in those LEAs. The system is based on student achievement; graduation rates for all students and all subgroups; and school performance and progress over time, including the performance and progress of all subgroups. NYSED’s plan reflects NYSED’s theory of action based on the Regents Reform Agenda and RTTT and also reflects its commitment to shifting accountability efforts from a compliance and inputs-based system to a system based on performance and outcomes. • NYSED’s proposed system builds on existing structures to promote more appropriate identification of schools and districts by: incorporating standards that are better aligned with college and career readiness; modifying how NYSED ELA and math performance indices are computed; using growth measure for all students, including ESEA subgroups to determine progress compared to Statewide median growth percentiles; and revising its AMOs to reflect the rigor of CCSS. Given the size and diversity of NYSED, the system relies heavily on engaging regional support systems and districts to lead change efforts.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has proposed a support system based on the SEA’s new AMOs for schools not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, building on existing systems of support, and has also devoted resources to ensuring that these systems benefit English learners and students with disabilities. • Regulations and procedures are in place with the potential to drive changes that will influence instruction, leadership, and outcomes for all students, including English learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest achieving students. • NYSED’s focus on LEAs as well as schools is educationally sound and increases the likelihood of systemic and sustainable change, including for subgroups. • NYSED has proposed a rigorous methodology to identify high-performing and high-progress schools, priority schools and focus districts and schools and conversely, exit priority and focus schools. • NYSED plans to identify other schools that have a significant achievement gaps and require them to submit a Local Assistance Plan focused on closing those gaps. A district that does not have any Priority or Focus Schools but instead has schools that have persistently failed to make AYP with one or more subgroup(s) will be required to develop a Local Assistance Plan for these schools. • Reflecting its unique size and diversity, NYSED’s turnaround strategy intends to empower districts in developing systemic supports, structures, and interventions.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of charter school guidelines and parameters as part of the plan reflects a commitment to upholding the NY state charter statute and specifically, holding charter schools accountable for performance. • Itemization of interventions provides clear parameters for use of federal funds, reflects current research and represents integration of all three principles. • NYSED has designed a dynamic and multi-tiered system of support (e.g., Network Teams, a state-level Turnaround Office, distinguished educators, and the External Technical Assistance Center). • There is clear evidence of political will to drive capacity-building efforts (e.g. multiple examples of legislative and regulatory changes). • NYSED has unified and thereby streamlined its monitoring process (e.g. Integrated Intervention Teams, single Diagnostic Tool, and monitoring support). • NYSED proposes to develop a comprehensive feedback loop to inform and target supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on NYSED’s new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps • NYSED explicitly engages School Boards, which should raise levels of local community buy-in. • The assessment reviews, site visits and subsequent reports will gather qualitative and quantitative evidence specifically related to effective staffing, planning, professional development, curriculum and teaching, student support, transformational leadership, school climate, community engagement, funding sources and district support. • The Commissioner retains authority to place schools that do not progress into Schools Under Register Review status. This authority represents a potentially powerful incentive for change by local actors.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a lack of details concerning the validation of the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness. • It is unclear whether LEAs may opt out of requirement to implement interventions that meet all turnaround principles, by “phasing-in” principles (p. 94). Peers would like justification as to what constitutes an exception to implementing all turnaround principles at once. • Timeline requirements appear to be in compliance but some activities are lacking specific timelines. • NYSED did not describe a process for the rigorous review and approval of external providers used by the SEA and its LEAs to support the implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools. • Peers expressed significant concern regarding whether or not the proposed exit methodology for focus districts and focus schools meets flexibility requirements. Greater detail is required to assess the potential of the methodology to mask underperforming schools, e.g. whether or not high-performing schools could mask another school’s decline in or lack of improvement in performance. • Proposed system of incentives and supports for “other Title I schools” does not provide details regarding how supports will be differentiated according to LEA needs, how new system is different from old system, and actual incentives to be offered to schools with Local Assistance Plans. • Peers expressed concern about process of engaging BOCES to be proactive partners (e.g. it was unclear to what extent chief officers of BOCES will be strong advocates for the new NYSED model). • Not enough details were provide regarding monitoring of exiting LEAs (e.g., it was unclear what happens if a school’s performance doesn’t continue to improve after existing priority or focus status). • Peers expressed concerns about SEA capacity to train existing personnel. NYSED plans a capacity-building RFP to provide annual targeted training to district turnaround offices, rather than hiring additional staff; however there will be significant challenges in training the large staff of NYSED and BOCES. • It is unclear how NYSED will build capacity in LEAs to identify and implement interventions. • Peers expressed concern about the role of various state support teams and whether the ratios of teams to schools will enable them to provide meaningful support (Network Team, Integrated Intervention Teams, etc.). • The request was clear regarding accountability for schools, but unclear on accountability for LEAs. This is particularly important given that NYSED has opted to identify Focus Districts.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devote resources to building buy-in at every level of the support system to ensure fidelity of implementation. • Continue to invest appropriate and sufficient resources to creating, piloting, and validating a robust diagnostic tool given the critical role it plays in the proposed system. • Ensure face validity of all school identification and exit formulas (i.e., verify that the formulas identify the diversity of schools one would expect, including rural and urban schools). NYSED should also consider ways to ensure that LEAs are not overlooked for entrance into or exit from focus status due to masking of underperforming schools. Consider the challenges of using averaged LEA indicators for combined proficiency and graduation rate in this regard. Develop thoughtful guidelines for LEAs to use in making decisions at the local level about identifying focus schools, to avoid unintended consequences. • Build LEAs capacity around determining student needs and selecting aligned interventions and provide training around each potential intervention (e.g., Response to Intervention, data-based decisions making). • Continue to provide TA to LEAs regarding sustaining reforms after exiting priority status to promote sustainability. • Continue to consider additional options for innovative awards, such as directing funds to build teacher and principal leadership opportunities (e.g., provide honoraria to teachers or principals to speak to other schools about their efforts to close the achievement gap and/or to provide professional development, identify “lab schools”). • Track leading indicators of turnaround success to enable NYSED to closely monitor efforts and, if necessary, make adjustments if efforts are not leading to substantive changes. For instance, if the principal has not been able to demonstrate the ability to secure buy-in from staff or improve instruction within the first two years, consider leader replacement.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

3.A Develop and Adopt Guidelines for Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

3.A.i Has the SEA developed and adopted guidelines consistent with Principle 3 through one of the two options below?

- **If the SEA selected Option A:**

If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the 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?

3.A.i, Option A.i Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option B

Tally of Peer Responses: NA

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	NA
<i>Strengths</i>	NA
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	NA
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	NA

- Does the SEA's plan include sufficient involvement of teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines?

3.A.i, Option A.ii Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option B

Tally of Peer Responses: NA

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	NA
<i>Strengths</i>	NA
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	NA
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	NA

- Note to Peers: Staff will review iii.*

If the SEA selected **Option B**:

If the SEA has developed and adopted all guidelines consistent with Principle 3:

- i. Are the guidelines the SEA has adopted **likely to** lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that **increase the quality of instruction** for students and **improve student achievement**? (See question 3.A.ii to review the adopted guidelines for consistency with Principle 3.)

3.A.i, Option B.i Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has described a set of guidelines around teacher and principal evaluations, which require the use of multiple measures to evaluate effectiveness. These measures must include both measures of professional practice and measures of student outcomes. NYSED’s guidelines also require educators to receive feedback on their practice and receive opportunities for appropriate professional development.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<p>General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA has developed an on-line tool that will allow for evaluators in a district to develop a level of inter-rater reliability <p>Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidelines require 60 percent of a teacher’s evaluation to be based on classroom practice. • The guidelines include a requirement for multiple observations of teachers’ classroom practice, as well as the optional use of other feedback and measures. • The guidelines require the use of trained observers and evaluators. • The guidelines require the use of rubrics aligned with the teaching standards adopted by NYSED. • The guidelines include a requirement that teachers receive timely feedback on their performance. • The guidelines require the use of multiple student growth and, moving forward, value-added measures. <p>Principals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidelines require multiple measures to be used in evaluating principal performance, including the use of student growth and other outcome measures, such as graduation rates, in principal evaluations, multiple observations (p. 133). In addition, the SEA includes feedback and opportunities for professional development.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<p><i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i></p>	<p>General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request does not provide details of the process to be used for combining multiple measures in evaluating teachers and principals. • NYSED asserts that the system for linking students to teachers, and the process for attributing student outcomes to teachers, is developed and running. Details of how this is being done would be useful in terms of assessing how the system addresses issues such as student mobility, attribution in cases of multiple teachers working with individual students, etc. <p>Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request is not clear as to whether the requirement for multiple observations of each teacher throughout the year will allow for thorough and deep observations that focus on classroom practice. The request does not provide any specifics about what “feedback” entails nor whether there will be adequate training of evaluators to ensure that they are able to give constructive and useful feedback. • The guidelines do not include any specific guidance about what type of professional supports should be offered to teachers (i.e., it could remain generalized district- or school-level professional development that has been shown to be unrelated to the improvement of classroom-level practice). • The guidelines have an almost exclusive focus on the use of state standardized assessments of student achievement, which rarely provide information that informs teachers about how to change their actual practice (even within student learning objective (SLO) development). The guidelines do not have an explicit recommendation to districts on the use of formative assessment outcomes, or outcomes on teacher-developed assessments for SLOs. • No specific mention of how to evaluate student outcomes for ECE and early grades. • Not clear that there is a recognition of the tension between “valid” and “reliable” measures for teachers not within tested subjects and grades. Desire to improve instruction would generally push in the direction of “valid” measures that are more closely aligned with what teachers teach, but the system does not appear to recognize the tradeoffs and assist districts in recognizing the benefits and deficits of both approaches. • Individual districts are likely to lack the capacity to choose technically-valid student achievement/growth measures, and the costs associated with accurately calculating student growth is likely to be prohibitive for individual districts. • Does not take into account the unique considerations of rural and very small districts (e.g. what about situations where a principal is a superintendent or a principal is also a teacher?)

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<p>Principals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear that multiple observations of principal will yield useful information since the content and scope of a principal's work does not lend itself to observations in the same way as for teachers • Not clear that principal standards and evaluations are aligned to teacher standards in a manner that prioritizes a principal's role in supporting teachers to improve their classroom instruction • No allowance for the specific context in which a principal works that mitigates certain factors such as the percentage of effective teachers in a building (e.g. may be a need to decrease the number of effective teachers over a couple of years in order to allow for the identification and removal of ineffective teachers)
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since so much deference is given to individual districts, NYSED needs to ensure that it builds district capacity to choose technically valid student achievement and growth measures. • NYSED may wish to consider creating consortia of smaller districts to share curricula and assessments, and to mitigate the costs of calculating student growth, which is likely to be prohibitive for individual districts.

ii. Note to Peers: Staff will review ii.

iii. Did the SEA have sufficient **involvement of teachers and principals** in the development of these guidelines?

3.A.i, Option B.iii Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request included evidence of agreement between NYSED and the teachers union, and the use of a large task force with subgroups focusing on specific issues.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request demonstrated NYSED's efforts to get feedback from educators. • By statute, the task force has a continuing role in the development of the value-added models.

<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not clear in the request what specific feedback was given about the evaluation system and how it informed the development of the evaluation system. • The task force only met seven times during the development of the evaluation system, and the composition of subgroups was not specified. It is not clear the extent to which these practitioners drove the actual development of the system. • There is a potential loss of buy-in from teacher stakeholders due to contentious proceedings between teachers and the SEA. (p.131)
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should develop a strategic communication strategy to inform all stakeholders (e.g., school boards, parents, teachers, community) about progress related to evaluation of teachers and leaders.

ONLY FOR SEAs SELECTING OPTION B: If the SEA has adopted all guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by selecting Option B in section 3.A, review and respond to peer review question 3.A.ii below.

3.A.ii Are the SEA’s guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with Principle 3 — *i.e.*, will they promote systems that:

a. Will be used for continual improvement of instruction?

➤ *Are the SEA’s guidelines likely to result in support for all teachers, including teachers who are specialists working with students with disabilities and English Learners and general classroom teachers with these students in their classrooms, that will enable them to improve their instructional practice?*

3.A.ii.a Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 5 Yes, 1 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has established preliminary guidelines that will be used for continual improvement of instruction. By statute, educator evaluations must be used for coaching, induction support, and differentiated professional development.

<p><i>Strengths</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request articulates that one of the important goals of this system is to improve instruction. • NYSED’s guidelines ensure that evaluations are done with a frequency that will provide a regular amount of feedback about practice. • NYSED’s guidelines require that feedback and professional development opportunities are provided to teachers and principals. • NYSED has established a common language for what it means to be an effective teacher and effective leader, and effectiveness has been aligned to the NYSED’s leader standards.
<p><i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peers expressed concern about the possibility of overemphasizing summative student outcome results, which would mean that feedback about student performance will not inform teachers’ immediate instructional practice. • NYSED’s guidelines do not include specific requirements for evaluators observing teachers who may be working with English Learners and students with disabilities to have some level of knowledge of best practices in instructional methods and strategies for those student populations, which would seem to be a prerequisite to their providing meaningful feedback. • NYSED’s guidelines do not provide specific guidance about what type of professional supports should be offered to teachers (i.e., these supports could remain generalized district- and school-level professional development). • NYSED’s guidelines have an almost exclusive focus on the use of state standardized assessments of student achievement (even within SLO development), which rarely provide information to inform changes to instructional practices. • The panel has concerns that the proposed guidelines may incentivize teachers to focus on their own classroom practice rather than encourage collaboration between teachers

<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should focus on training peer observers or specialist instructors to observe all teachers, but in particular subsets of teachers working with specialized student populations (e.g., English Learners, students with disabilities, and in early childhood contexts). • NYSED should provide clarity around the type, frequency, and timeframe for feedback. • NYSED should re-evaluate the guidance and requirements around the student growth and achievement measures to incorporate more district- or school-based measures that are closely aligned with the curriculum and scope or sequence which teachers use to develop instruction. • NYSED should develop district capacity to build high-quality district-level assessments and consider use of content collaboratives to develop some state-level assessments in particular subjects. • NYSED should encourage Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) to facilitate inter-district efforts to develop common assessments that are developed with the input of subject-area teachers. • NYSED should incorporate teacher feedback into principal evaluations to obtain feedback about the extent to which teachers feel their evaluations are providing them with feedback that helps them to improve their instruction.
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b. Meaningfully differentiate performance using at least three performance levels?

➤ *Does the SEA incorporate student growth into its performance-level definitions with sufficient weighting to ensure that performance levels will differentiate among teachers and principals who have made significantly different contributions to student growth or closing achievement gaps?*

3.A.ii.b Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED requires teachers and principals to be classified into one of four performance categories.

<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED’s guidelines require the use of four levels which allows for more differentiation than the required three levels and decreases the likelihood that all teachers will fall into the “effective” category. Each level is described by an explicit narrative in guidance materials. • The SEA will provide training to Network Teams and LEAs about how to rely on valid and reliable judgments about educator effectiveness (p. 135).
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED’s guidelines do not provide guidance for LEAs on how individual measures should be weighted as part of the overall process of combining sub-scores into final performance rating (e.g., weighting of sub-components within overall indicators: observations vs. artifacts vs. survey weightings within teacher performance piece). • The request is not clear as to who will develop the cut scores for placement within each of the three categories. The narrative descriptions are not particularly helpful because they rely on BOCES or district standard-setting, and it is not clear how cut scores will be evaluated for realistic yet rigorous expectations. • NYSED’s guidelines assume that districts have the capacity to meaningfully calculate student growth and achievement in the proper way on local assessment outcomes.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should provide more structure and technical guidance on this aspect of the system, rather than deferring almost entirely to local decisions, particular around the combination of multiple measures into final summative ratings. • NYSED should provide guidelines around the weighting of individual measures (e.g., weight of a measure or a student growth measure should reflect in some way the validity and technical quality of that measure). • NYSED should articulate the need for human judgment to be brought to bear in the assigning of educators to performance levels (e.g., provide guidance on what evaluators should do when there are conflicting data points, such as collection of more data).

- c. Use **multiple valid measures** in determining performance levels, including as a significant factor data on **student growth** for all students (including **English Learners** and **students with disabilities**), and other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as **observations** based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher **portfolios**, and student and parent **surveys**)?

- (i) Does the SEA have a process for ensuring that all measures that are included in determining performance levels are **valid measures**, 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?

3.A.ii.c(i) Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 5 Yes, 1 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED uses multiple measures across all three proposed categories, but there is no articulated process for ensuring that all of these measures will be valid. Rubric validation is evident, but validation is not evident for other measures such as student surveys and measures of student growth.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED’s guidelines require the use of multiple measures. • NYSED proposes the inclusion of varied student growth measures such as review of student work, surveys, etc. • NYSED will provide examples of specific tools that have been validated (e.g., some observation rubrics aligned with the standards, surveys, etc.). There is a process for validation of rubrics, if an LEA chooses to use a rubric that is not provided by the SEA. • The request describes the creation and dissemination of videos regarding inter-rater reliability.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request is unclear as to which mechanisms are in place to ensure that tools other than rubrics (e.g., student surveys) adopted by districts are valid. • To the extent that there are implications for job retention, promotion, and differences in salary, NYSED must focus more on the issue of validation of student growth measures for use for specific categories of teachers at the district level. Such assessments cannot reasonably be created at the district or BOCES level without a great deal of technical support.

<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED should continue to support districts in the identification and/or development of valid measures. Some suggestions include the provision of additional validated tools on NYSED website, especially rubrics for evaluating student work, teacher surveys, parent surveys, student surveys. • NYSED could consider developing a state model system that includes valid measures for all components of teacher and principal evaluations. This system can be adopted by districts that wish to do so.
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(ii) For grades and subjects in which assessments are required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), does the SEA define a **statewide approach for measuring student growth** on these assessments?

3.A.ii.c(ii) Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED does propose guidelines for the inclusion of scores on state summative assessments into the evaluation of teachers.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED’s guidelines show an effort to calculate student growth off state summative assessment measures and include it in the evaluation of all teachers. • NYSED’s guidelines include growth scores for students with disabilities and English Learners (p. 138-139). • NYSED’s guidelines exhibit concern for clean data and roster verification. • NYSED’s guidelines consider ways to share growth attribution. • Principle 1 addresses need to develop assessments that can be used to determine growth for purposes of teacher growth (good integration of principles).

<p><i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are references to moving from student growth (which is the basis for the accountability system described throughout this proposal) to value-added, but it is not always clear what the implications of this will be.
<p><i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State should develop more specific and nuanced guidance for the inclusion of state summative assessments scores into the evaluations of teachers not teaching in these subject areas.

(iii) For **grades and subjects in which assessments are not required** under ESEA section 1111(b)(3), does the SEA either specify the **measures of student growth** that LEAs must use or select from or **plan to provide guidance** to LEAs on what measures of student growth are appropriate, and establish a **system for ensuring** that LEAs will use valid measures?

3.A.ii.c(iii) Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 4 Yes, 2 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<p><i>Rationale</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NY has established a process to identify assessments and measures of growth; however, some peers expressed concern about the technical adequacy of those measures and processes.

<p><i>Strengths</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an attempt to address the issue of including student growth in the evaluations of teachers in non-tested subjects and grades • There is recognition that districts should have a role in selecting appropriate measures for these teachers • Use of student learning outcomes is a good one, but as proposed it is only a partially an SLO approach, and one that pushes in the direction of reliable though not necessarily facially-valid assessments for teachers. • For non-tested grades and subjects, English learners and students with disabilities are not excluded (use of growth measures for all). All students are required to be included under an SLO. • NY identified acceptable assessments to which SLOs are evaluated. (p. 139)
<p><i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No effort to provide parameters for districts as to a set of measures that might be appropriate to use for the purposes of measuring student growth for different categories of teachers • SLOs are set primarily against standardized test outcomes, or other commercial NRTs. • No system to ensure that even BOCES-developed assessments meet a minimal technical bar • The SLO process does not provide guidance or require the SLO to consider different learning targets for particular subgroups of students.

<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to intentionally align the work around assessments in principle 1 with the need for assessments in Principle 3. • Develop statewide content collaboratives to develop assessments for teachers in non-tested subjects and grades; or facilitate development of such assessments by BOCES or consortia of districts. State should provide technical experts to assist all of these collaborative groups to ensure the development of valid measures. • Develop district capacity to develop high-quality SLOs. • Consider allowing for the use of curriculum-based assessments for all subjects and grades. Will need to ensure that teachers are trained on how to develop high-quality assessments.
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d. Evaluate teachers and principals on **a regular basis**?

3.A.ii.d Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, NYSED guidelines require all teachers and principals to be evaluated once a year.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effort to ensure that there are multiple opportunities for data collection, and multiple types of data that will give information about teacher/principal performance
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to frequency of evaluations and observations it will be difficult to execute timely and meaningful feedback.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NY could consider tailoring level and frequency of evaluations according to teachers’ demonstrated levels of effectiveness.

- e. Provide clear, timely, and useful **feedback**, including feedback that identifies needs and **guides professional development**?
 - *Will the SEA’s guidelines ensure that evaluations occur with a **frequency** sufficient to ensure that feedback is provided in a timely manner to inform effective practice?*
 - *Are the SEA’s guidelines likely to result in **differentiated professional development** that meets the needs of teachers?*

3.A.ii.e Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 3 Yes, 3 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NY has established a plan to ensure PD however details are lacking, causing peers to question the level of effectiveness.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks about the importance of providing feedback and providing professional development. • Recognized cultural shift required to implement new evaluation system. • There is a requirement for Individual Performance Plans to be developed for teachers rated in lower-performing bands.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No time built in or timeframe required during which feedback must be given. If the assumption is that annual feedback on performance will be sufficient this does not address the need for timely feedback. • If feedback cannot be given in a timely manner, it is unlikely that PD will be tailored to individual needs of teachers. No indication that there needs to be increase in the number of school or district coaches to work with individual or small groups of teachers. Focus may remain on high-altitude PD at the district/state level. • Lack of training for evaluators in providing meaningful feedback.

<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training on crucial conversations to enhance evaluator capacity to provide truly constructive feedback, and the ability of educators to receive constructive feedback. • Consider providing more pre- and post-conference opportunities to provide meaningful feedback. • Help evaluators at LEA level to use performance results to develop job-embedded PD aligned with teacher-identified needs. • Build capacity of LEAs to choose high-quality external providers of PD.
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f. Will be used to **inform personnel decisions**?

3.A.ii.f Panel Response

Not applicable because the SEA selected 3.A, Option A

Tally of Peer Responses: 6 Yes, 0 No

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NY intends to use data from the teacher and principal evaluation system to inform personnel decision; however the timeline is not explicit.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive itemization of categories of personnel decisions to be made including promotions, retention, tenure determinations, termination, supplemental compensation, and teacher and principal development.
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no details of any appeals process for educators who believe their evaluation to be unfair, especially once there are consequences attached.
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require all evaluation systems to provide a process for educators to appeal their performance ratings especially in light of the many unknowns around systems and their accuracy in rating teachers. • Consider the use of peer assistance and review panels to include educators and district personnel in the process

3. B Ensure LEAs Implement Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

3.B 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**?

- *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?*
- *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**?*
- *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, meaningful 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**)?*
- *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?*
- *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?*
- *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?*
- *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?*
- *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?*

3.B Panel Response*Tally of Peer Responses: 4 Yes, 2 No*

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has created guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation system and providing some guidance in some areas for their implementation; however, it is delegating a lot of responsibility for implementation to LEAs. It is not clear it are adequately supporting LEAs in this effort.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request gives an appropriate level of recognition to the need for training. • NYSED is making an effort to implement the train-the-trainer model and provide some important supports such as the inter-rater reliability tool. • NYSED has realistic assessed that they cannot micro-manage the development and implementation of local evaluation systems. • NYSED provides tools to teachers and LEAs that can be accessed via a training website. • There is financial support for those LEAs implementing systems “expeditiously”. • The requests demonstrates good alignment between Principle 1 and Principle 3.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The timeline for piloting and implementation is very short given the number of districts in NYSED and the limited capacity of the Network Teams. There doesn't seem to be "space" given for evaluating pilots and improving system before consequences for teachers are imposed. • The process for evaluating LEA proposals did not provide sufficient detail for the peers to understand how exactly the SEA plans to evaluate the categories of information provided by 700 different districts in their APPR applications (p154), and how to ensure that all of them are judged in a rigorous and uniform manner, especially with respect to the technical aspects of the evaluation. This list of information is also not comprehensive enough for the state to determine how districts are ensuring the validity of student growth measures particularly for non-tested subject and grades or inter-rater reliability • The plan outlined by the state does not break down to a sufficient level of detail the necessary steps involved in piloting and implementing this model. It is not clear what has been learned from the NYC pilot process nor how those lessons have been integrated into this new plan. • The ramp-up of implementation from ELA and math teachers in 4-8 schools in 2011-12 to all teachers in all schools by 2012-13 seems highly ambitious.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider increasing the variety of districts involved in the piloting process. • Develop a clear plan for evaluating the outcomes of the pilot process, and the implementation and rollout of the overall evaluation system. Include outcome measures during the initial years that will allow for an evaluation of the implementation process (e.g., asking teachers whether they feel they are getting feedback that helps them to improve their classroom practice or whether the PD they are provided is aligned to their professional needs). • Develop additional strategies and processes to enhance the capacity of districts to implement these systems. • Develop a clear set of criteria to evaluate the evaluation systems developed by local districts. One strategy might be to train some of the integrated intervention teams that will be supporting districts or BOCES-based personnel or teams to examine the specifics of local evaluation systems and assist in the development of capacity around evaluations as part of their overall work with districts. • Consider developing a state model system which districts can “opt in” to. This system could have all of the tools and guidelines needed for districts to use in implementation and allow the state to provide very targeted training around this model in addition to more generic training for LEAs using their own systems. It would address some of the capacity issues of smaller and rural districts. • Consider the challenges involved around change management and the critical role it plays in ensuring buy-in and the ability to embed systemic change. Encourage districts to intentionally take the time to focus on change management as part of their overall implementation plan. • Consider support issues for rural and smaller districts.

Principle 3 Overall Review

If the SEA indicated that it has not developed and adopted all guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with Principle 3 by selecting Option A in section 3.A, is the SEA’s plan for the SEA’s and LEAs’ development and implementation of teacher and principal evaluation and support systems comprehensive, coherent, and likely to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement? If not, what aspects are not addressed or need to be improved upon?

If the SEA indicated that it has adopted guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with Principle 3 by selecting Option B in section 3.A, are the SEA’s guidelines and the SEA’s process for ensuring, as applicable, LEA development, adoption, piloting, and implementation of evaluation and support systems comprehensive, coherent, and likely to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement? If not, what aspects are not addressed or need to be improved upon?

Principle 3 Overall Review Panel Response

Tally of Peer Responses: Yes, 4 No 2

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state has outlined a framework for evaluating teachers and principals which includes some important components related to the improvement of classroom instructional practice. As with all systems, the extent to which this is successful will depend on the quality of instruction.
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed framework and the details provided reflect some of the “best practices” around evaluation including the admonition to provide feedback and professional development for teachers.

<p><i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lot of discretion left to districts around developing the specific tools that will be used for local systems, and about the specific implementation decisions and processes. Due to the challenges of implementation (technical, time, expertise) this is likely to result in uneven implementation. Smaller districts, in particular, are likely to struggle with implementing in a high-quality manner. • There is not significant recognition of the challenges that will be faced by smaller districts, nor any articulated efforts to address these needs. • The plan to address the issue of student growth does not adequately reflect complexities in this area, or push in the direction of an approach that will improve instructional practice.
<p><i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance its plans to develop the capacity of districts to implement the model beyond existing plans to train evaluators on observation tools. State should pay particular attention to issues related to student growth measures and calculating student growth, as well as the combining of multiple measures and the setting of cut score. • Develop a clear plan for evaluating the outcomes of the pilot process, and the implementation and rollout of the overall evaluation system. Include outcome measures during the initial years that will allow for an evaluation of the implementation process (e.g. asking teachers whether they feel they are getting feedback that helps them to improve their classroom practice; or whether the PD they are provided is aligned to their professional needs)

Overall Request Evaluation

Did the SEA provide a comprehensive and coherent approach for implementing the waivers and principles in its request for the flexibility? Overall, is implementation of the SEA’s approach likely to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement? If not, what aspects are not addressed or need to be improved upon?

Overall Request Evaluation Panel Response

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
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<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED has established a vision for each student graduating college- and career-ready, with the freedom to choose his or her life’s course. Its articulated plan for the translation of this vision into reality is commendable. The Peer Reviewers appreciated NYSED’s recognition that the sheer size of the state system necessitates giving LEAs a large role in making decisions about how to support schools and conduct evaluations of educators. It will be important to build the capacity of districts to identify and support schools, administrators and educators in a manner that will improve outcomes for students, close the achievement gap, and improve equality of education for all students. Several components of the proposal lacked a level of detail Peer Reviewers needed to feel confident about the state’s ability to roll out an overall system of differentiated recognition, accountability and intervention. Peers also felt it will be important to hold LEAs accountable for ensuring progress for underperforming schools and students. • NYSED has spent considerable effort ensuring its transition to the CCSS, aligning their state standards with the CCSS (including new Pre-K standards), and developing aligned curricular materials and assessments. NYSED has also worked to align the work of Principle 1 with Principle 3 with respect to creating assessments that will be valid for use in educator evaluations. The state is working closely with higher education institutions to ensure preparation programs for teachers and leaders are aligned to the CCSS, that certification exams are updated and that programs are held accountable for the performance of their graduates. • NYSED proposes to build on a number of its existing school accountability and improvement systems to provide support to districts and schools. In particular, it is examining how to consolidate and align the work of many of its existing district review and support teams to ensure more integrated feedback and support to districts. NYSED acknowledges many of the challenges involved in building appropriate capacity at the district level to ensure deep-seated systemic change that will improve educational outcomes for students; however, it would have been helpful to Peers to get a better sense of specific strategies the state is proposing to build the capacity of districts as they implement the system. • The state’s proposed guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation systems are reasonable including some important components related to the improvement of classroom instructional practice. As with all systems, the extent to which this is successful will depend on the quality of implementation. Political and technical challenges exist around the issues of fairly and comprehensively measuring schools’ and educators’ impact on student academic achievement and growth, especially in light of the proposed consequences attached to such determinations.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NYSED has translated its vision for students and teachers into a system that captures a range of student outcomes, and identifies a wide-range of high-needs students, including those within ESEA subgroups. ● NYSED has involved various stakeholders in mapping its existing standards to the common core including ● working with IHEs to ensure that pre-service teachers and leaders are familiar with CCSS standards ● NYSED is working to develop new CCSS assessments that can be used to measure student growth for the purposes of teacher evaluations. ● NYSED has proposed a rigorous methodology to identify high-performing and high-progress schools, priority schools and focus districts and schools and conversely, exit priority and focus schools. The State plans to identify other schools that have a significant achievement gaps and require them to submit a Local Assistance Plan focused on closing those gaps. ● NYSED articulates a dynamic and multi-tiered system of support (e.g., Network Teams, a state-level Turnaround Office, distinguished educators, and the External Technical Assistance Center). Clear evidence of political will to drive capacity-building efforts (e.g. multiple examples of legislative and regulatory changes).NY has unified and thereby streamlined its monitoring process (e.g. Integrated Intervention Teams, single Diagnostic Tool, and monitoring support). ● Components of NYSED’s plan for differentiated accountability and supports fit together to create a coherent and comprehensive system that supports continuous improvement and is tailored to the needs of the State, its LEAs, its schools, and all of its students including English learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest-achieving students. ● The proposed framework and the details for educator evaluations reflect some “best practices” around evaluation including the admonition to provide feedback and professional development for teachers.

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Weaknesses, issues, lack of clarity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough details about the State’s plan to evaluate professional development and other proposed supports to determine effectiveness. • Unclear how State will hold districts accountable for performance relative to implemented interventions. Given their prominence in implementing all components of the proposed models, there is a need to develop robust systems to monitor activities and progress including consequences for non-performance. • Peers expressed concerns about leveraging existing personnel, for instance NY plans a capacity-building RFP to provide annual targeted training to district turnaround offices, rather than hiring additional staff. Given the sheer number of personnel employed by NYSED and BOCES, peers questioned the potential option of allocating existing personnel to meet these needs. • Unclear how NY will build capacity in LEAs to choose the interventions that would be most appropriate and thereafter implement the interventions with fidelity. • NYSED has opted to grant a lot of discretion left to districts around developing the specific tools that will be used for local systems, and about specific implementation decisions and processes around all three principles. Due to the challenges of implementation (technical, time, expertise) this is likely to result in uneven implementation. Smaller districts, in particular, are likely to struggle with implementing in a high-quality manner. • There is not adequate recognition of the challenges that will be faced by smaller districts, nor any articulated efforts to address these needs. • Student growth is designated as a specific component in educator evaluations; however questions about the methodology proposed to obtain and attribute student growth remain

<i>Response Component</i>	<i>Peer Panel Response</i>
<i>Technical Assistance Suggestions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NYSED’s timeline to implement the system reflects the urgency to address low-performance but this must be balanced with the need to set realistic goals to achieve systemic change. ● Continue to implement a strategic communication plan to ensure that stakeholders, including parents and school boards are informed of the changes made as a result of this flexibility request ● Continue to ensure that the strategies and initiatives within Principle 1, 2 and 3 align and work collaboratively and strategically toward the same vision. Academic growth for students is more likely to be achieved if all 3 principles work cohesively so that all students exit school, college and career ready. Ensuring that newly designed assessments are valid for measuring student growth for the purposes of evaluation; or that the competencies that teachers need to address the needs of students with disabilities and English learners are included within the teacher evaluation framework, can only serve to strengthen the educational framework that NYSED is proposing (e.g. ensuring alignment of training and roll-out across Principles). Significant resources will need to be devoted to building buy-in at every level of the NYSED support system to ensure fidelity of implementation. ● Continue to invest appropriate and sufficient resources in creating, piloting, and validating a robust diagnostic tool given the critical role it plays in the proposed system. ● Build LEAs capacity around determining needs and selecting aligned interventions and provide training around each potential intervention (e.g., Response to Intervention, data-based decisions making) to build LEA capacity for implementation. ● Provide technical assistance to districts to fully implement a process to evaluate the quality, depth, and effectiveness of professional development efforts across principles and to ensure the fidelity of implementation. ● Ensure alignment between the professional teaching and administrator standards, and the overall accountability systems to ensure that incentive and support systems for teachers and administrators align. ● Consider the special challenges involved in measuring the academic growth of students with disabilities and English language learners, and incorporating such measures into the evaluation framework. ● Provide a clear description of all of the teacher and principal evaluation goals and how progress and the supporting data and benchmarks will be established across 1, 3, and 5 years of implementation would create a clear plan for the determining effectiveness. ● Continue to seek out assistance from national experts and other states to ensure fidelity of implementation of the SLO process. ● Engage school boards in order to build buy-in, given their role in working with superintendents to make personnel decisions.