ESEA Flexibility

Request

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This document replaces the previous version, issued September 23, 2011. (The document was formatted to ease usability on October 14, 2011)

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC  20202

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Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0708. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 336 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.
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INTRODUCTION

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

The Department invites interested SEAs to request this flexibility pursuant to the authority in section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which allows the Secretary to waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for an SEA that receives funds under a program authorized by the ESEA and requests a waiver. Under this flexibility, the Department would grant waivers through the 2013–2014 school year, after which time an SEA may request an extension of this flexibility.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF REQUESTS

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

An SEA seeking approval to implement this flexibility must submit a high-quality request that addresses all aspects of the principles and waivers and, in each place where a plan is required, includes a high-quality plan. Consistent with ESEA section 9401(d)(1), the Secretary intends to grant waivers that are included in this flexibility through the end of the 2013–2014 school year. An SEA will be permitted to request an extension of the initial period of this flexibility prior to the start of the 2014–2015 school year unless this flexibility is superseded by reauthorization of the ESEA. The Department is asking SEAs to submit requests that include plans through the 2014–2015 school year in order to provide a complete picture of the SEA’s reform efforts. The Department will not accept a request that meets only some of the principles of this flexibility.

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

A high-quality request will (1) if an SEA has already met a principle, provide a description of how it has done so, including evidence as required; and (2) if an SEA has not yet met a principle, describe how it will meet the principle on the required timelines, including any progress to date. For example, an SEA that has not adopted minimum guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with principle 3 by the time it submits its request for the flexibility will need to provide a plan demonstrating that it will do so by the end of the 2011–2012 school year. In each such case, an SEA’s plan must include, at a minimum, the following elements for each principle that the SEA has not yet met:

1. **Key milestones and activities:** Significant milestones to be achieved in order to meet a given principle, and essential activities to be accomplished in order to reach the key milestones. The SEA should also include any essential activities that have already been completed or key milestones that have already been reached so that reviewers can understand the context for and fully evaluate the SEA’s plan to meet a given principle.

2. **Detailed timeline:** A specific schedule setting forth the dates on which key activities will begin and be completed and milestones will be achieved so that the SEA can meet the principle by the required date.

3. **Party or parties responsible:** Identification of the SEA staff (e.g., position, title, or office) and, as appropriate, others who will be responsible for ensuring that each key activity is accomplished.

4. **Evidence:** Where required, documentation to support the plan and demonstrate the SEA’s progress in implementing the plan. This ESEA Flexibility Request indicates the specific evidence that the SEA must either include in its request or provide at a future reporting date.

5. **Resources:** Resources necessary to complete the key activities, including staff time and additional funding.
6. **Significant obstacles:** Any major obstacles that may hinder completion of key milestones and activities (e.g., State laws that need to be changed) and a plan to overcome them.

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

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

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

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

Each request must include:

- A table of contents and a list of attachments, using the forms on pages 1 and 2.
- The cover sheet (p. 3), waivers requested (p. 4-5), and assurances (p. 5-6).
- A description of how the SEA has met the consultation requirements (p. 8).
- An overview of the SEA’s request for the ESEA flexibility (p. 8). This overview is a synopsis of the SEA’s vision of a comprehensive and coherent system to improve student achievement and the quality of instruction and will orient the peer reviewers to the SEA’s request. The overview should be about 500 words.
- Evidence and plans to meet the principles (p. 9-18). An SEA will enter narrative text in the text boxes provided, complete the required tables, and provide other required evidence. An SEA may supplement the narrative text in a text box with attachments, which will be included in an appendix. Any supplemental attachments that are included in an appendix must be referenced in the related narrative text.

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

**Process for Submitting the Request:** An SEA must submit a request to the Department to receive the flexibility. This request form and other pertinent documents are available on the Department’s Web site at: [http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility).
Electronic Submission: The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA’s request for the flexibility electronically. The SEA should submit it to the following address: ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

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

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

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

REQUEST SUBMISSION DEADLINE

SEAs will be provided multiple opportunities to submit requests for the flexibility. The submission dates are November 14, 2011, a date to be announced in mid-February 2012, and an additional opportunity following the conclusion of the 2011–2012 school year.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MEETING FOR SEAS

To assist SEAs in preparing a request and to respond to questions, the Department will host a series of Technical Assistance Meetings via webinars in September and October 2011.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact the Department by e-mail at ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.
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Insert page numbers prior to submitting the request, and place the table of contents in front of the SEA’s flexibility request.

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

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## COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

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<td>Indiana Department of Education</td>
<td>151 West Ohio Street</td>
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<td>Indianapolis, IN 46204</td>
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### State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request

- **Name:** Marcie Brown
- **Position and Office:** Deputy Chief of Staff
- **Contact’s Mailing Address:** 151 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204
- **Telephone:** 317-232-0551
- **Fax:** 317-232-8004
- **Email address:** mbrown@doe.in.gov

### Chief State School Officer (Printed Name):

- **Dr. Tony Bennett**
- **Telephone:** 317-232-6610

### Signature of the Chief State School Officer:

- **X**

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

1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State’s proficient level of academic achievement on the State’s assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.

2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.

3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.

4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.

5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a schoolwide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.

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

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

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

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

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

Optional Flexibility:

An SEA should check the box below only if it chooses to request a waiver of the following requirements:

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

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that:

1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of the flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.

2. It will adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State’s college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the new college- and career-ready standards, no later than the 2013–2014 school year. (Principle 1)

3. It will develop and administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State’s college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)

4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State’s ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii). (Principle 1)

5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)

6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)

7. It will report to the public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools at the time the SEA is approved to implement the flexibility, and annually thereafter, it will publicly recognize its reward schools. (Principle 2)

8. Prior to submitting this request, it provided student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs, or it will do so no later the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)
9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)

10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its request.

11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs (Attachment 2).

12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the State customarily provides such notice and information to the public (e.g., by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice (Attachment 3).

13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout this request.

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

14. It will submit to the Department for peer review and approval a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year. (Principle 3)
An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State’s Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

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

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has worked proactively in taking advantage of its extensive communication network and infrastructure to engage and consult with stakeholders regarding the key components of the state’s flexibility plan. This includes initiating dialogue with the leaders of various education interest groups, soliciting input from State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett’s numerous advisory groups (including his Superintendents Advisory Council and Principals Advisory Council), all local superintendents in the state, and Indiana’s Title I Committee of Practitioners.

Given the tight timeframe between release of the application and the deadline for submission, IDOE sought to distribute and discuss the state’s plan with as many stakeholders as quickly and efficiently as possible. IDOE circulated the draft plan in a targeted manner for review and employed a survey tool to collect feedback in an organized way. IDOE held a meeting via WebEx to discuss the plan and solicit feedback from the Committee of Practitioners.

Additionally, Dr. Bennett shared details of IDOE’s plan during a series of teacher forums—which include presentations by Dr. Bennett and other IDOE staff as well as question and answer time with attendees—held in eight cities throughout Indiana in recent weeks.

The feedback received on the plan to date has been positive, and very few suggestions have been offered. A member of our Title I Committee of Practitioners encouraged IDOE to identify methods to clearly communicate to parents any changes stemming from being granted the requested flexibility, and as a result the IDOE built communication with parents into our ESEA Flexibility communication strategy.

It is important to note that collaboration and communication are not just activities the IDOE initiated within the past few weeks. In fact, Dr. Bennett has made educator and community outreach a key priority in his strategy to comprehensively transform student outcomes in Indiana. Along with collaboration with regard to the state’s flexibility plan, IDOE has gathered input from educators, parents, and the public on every reform initiative—from state accountability metrics and teacher evaluations to Common Core implementation and performance-based compensation systems. Without a doubt, frequent input and constant two-way communication have been instrumental in the successful passage of “Putting Students First,” Indiana’s groundbreaking education agenda passed into law in the spring of 2011.
To ensure the successful implementation of these reforms, Dr. Bennett has dedicated an unprecedented amount of time and energy to personally meeting with educators throughout the state. He has visited schools in 81 of Indiana’s 92 counties since taking office, engaging in direct dialogue with students, parents, teachers, administrators and community leaders. Since August 2010, Dr. Bennett personally has met with more than 9,000 educators in a variety of settings to present reform proposals, hear feedback and suggestions, and answer important questions regarding the new education laws. He met with educators in many formats, including public forums, informational and small group meetings at schools across the state, teacher/principal/superintendent advisory groups, and one-on-one conversations with school leaders and teachers in his office.

In addition, Dr. Bennett’s IDOE staff has met with more than 30,000 educators during that same time period, sharing details of exciting new reform initiatives—like Indiana’s trailblazing Growth Model—and supporting educators as they work to implement reforms like locally-developed educator evaluations. At the same time, IDOE has seized upon the intersection of the four principles of ESEA flexibility and Indiana’s recently enacted legislation to illustrate to stakeholder groups across Indiana the close alignment between state and federal priorities. This intersection provides local school districts for the first time an unprecedented opportunity to leverage federal and state resources in supporting the challenging work of school innovation and improvement.

Additionally, the IDOE sends via email biweekly updates directly to about 100,000 teachers and other stakeholders. These updates provide yet another vehicle for IDOE to promote the opportunities of ESEA flexibility and to collect feedback. For example, the state’s proposed accountability plan, described in greater detail as part of Principle 2, was greatly enhanced as a direct result of input received in response to these communications to the field.

Dr. Bennett and the department have also maintained an open-door policy with members of the Indiana State Teachers Association as well as other groups representing education professionals. The department held at least seven meetings with ISTA senior officials during the 2011 legislative session and continues to work with teacher representatives at the local and state level. In addition, Dr. Bennett and senior staff members continue to enjoy a productive relationship with the Indiana Association of School Principals and the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents. Both groups have made substantial contributions to the revamped school accountability process.

IDOE has also created specialized advisory boards and councils so members can contribute significantly to the development of important initiatives and tools as well as share information with other educators and provide regular feedback. For example, The Educator Learning Link (TELL) is a network of educators who volunteer to share with colleagues in their buildings important updates from IDOE. Currently, there are 641 TELL Ambassadors across the state. The Indiana Educator Reform Cabinet (IERC) is another group of eager and committed teachers who
devote about thirty hours per year to organizing regional meetings and discussing and providing useful input on education issues and IDOE initiatives. All of these groups have been engaged in the development of the state’s flexibility plan.

Educators also played an important role in IDOE’s efforts to develop the best possible teacher and principal evaluation legislation and model rubrics, described further in Principle 3. The Educator Evaluation Cabinet helped ensure the proposed laws and tools were fair, rigorous, and multifaceted. As part of IDOE’s current efforts to implement Indiana’s new educator effectiveness law, the state worked with The New Teacher Project (TNTP) to launch the Indiana Teacher Effectiveness Pilot Program. Administrators, teachers and community members from six school districts are working together to implement new evaluation tools that provide meaningful feedback and recognize the best educators. This important initiative allows the IDOE to provide vital resources to schools while empowering local teachers and school leaders to be the driving force behind policies that will improve student learning and close achievement gaps. Specialized groups of educators—such as ELL teachers, special education teachers, art teachers and music teachers—are also helping to create guidance documents to support local school districts as they develop their own evaluation metrics and tools.

The development of Indiana’s new state accountability model was an eighteen month process that incorporated input from key educational stakeholders in Indiana. In the spring of 2010, the IDOE convened two separate councils to serve as advisory committees for IDOE’s development of the new A-F school accountability model. Based on the significantly distinct instruments used to measure the effectiveness of the schools encompassing grades K-8 compared to grades 9-12, it was quickly determined that two discrete models were needed. One group was dedicated to developing the Elementary and Middle Schools (E/MS) model while the other focused on the High Schools (HS) model.

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

Dr. Bennett’s Superintendents Advisory Committee, Principals Advisory Committee, School Boards Advisory Committee, ARC of Indiana and Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education (ICASE) were all consulted and asked for feedback. A draft was published for review and a survey tool was established to collect organized feedback. A WebEx conference call was held to solicit discussion and feedback from the Committee of Practitioners. IDOE also shared a draft of the application with our local Stand for Children chapter to ensure buy-in—particularly surrounding altered accountability requirements.

In fact, the state under Dr. Bennett’s leadership enjoys a vast network of grassroots oriented groups ready to contribute to import initiatives. The following entities have been established by the department or invited to provide regular input to support efforts to increase
communication and collaboration between the department and field:

- Indiana Dual Credit Advisory Council
- Indiana Association of Career and Technical Education Directors
- ESC Director's Advisory Committee
- Superintendents Advisory Council
- Principals Advisory Council
- School Boards Advisory Council
- PTA Advisory Committee
- School Counselors Advisory Committee
- ARC of Indiana
- Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education
- Non-Public Education Advisory Committee
- Reading Advisory Council
- Indiana Education Reform Cabinet
- The Educator Learning Link Ambassadors Program
- Teacher Advisory Council (Teacher of the Year and Milken winners)
- Textbook Advisory Committee
- Indiana School Board Association
- Indiana Association of School Principals
- Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- National Council on Education Black Children
- Indianapolis Urban League
- Central Indiana Corporate Partnership
- Indiana Chamber of Commerce
- Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce
- Teach Plus

As with his outreach to educators, Dr. Bennett has made stakeholder outreach and engagement a priority during his tenure. To engage families, IDOE has partnered with Indiana’s Parent Teacher Association to make sure parents and guardians receive important information about IDOE’s efforts to provide more educational options, increase accountability, recognize and reward great educators, and increase local flexibility. Dr. Bennett and IDOE recognize the important role families play in educating their children. To help encourage and support parental involvement, IDOE created and introduced The Parent Pledge, a contract between teachers and parents meant to foster greater parental engagement. To date, more than 4,000 parents in more than 200 schools have signed the pledge, and several schools have developed their own locally tailored versions of this written commitment.

In the development of the state’s flexibility plan, IDOE has made every effort to engage stakeholders, gather information, and build upon partnerships with a variety of community
groups. For example, the Arc of Indiana, established in the mid-1950s by parents of children with intellectual and other developmental disabilities, has worked with IDOE in all aspects of the state’s education reform agenda. These partnerships are particularly powerful when it comes to the state’s efforts to turn around its chronically underperforming schools and school districts, which often have a higher concentration of at-risk and high-needs students. To help organize public meetings and share important information with parents and community members in these school communities, IDOE has worked closely with civic organizations such as the Urban League, the NAACP, Indiana’s Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs, and the Indiana Civil Rights Commission. Based on the positive feedback from these groups as part of the state’s early turnaround efforts, IDOE has made community outreach and engagement a key accountability metric for schools under state intervention.

Corporate partnerships have also played a critical role in Indiana’s reform efforts. Companies like Comcast have partnered with IDOE to rapidly expand the availability of certain technologies, like broadband internet and on-demand educational programming, for Indiana schools. To help local school districts save money and retain instructional staff to drive more dollars directly to student learning, companies like Cummins (based in Columbus, Indiana) have partnered with IDOE to send corporate Six Sigma experts into schools to identify cost-saving opportunities so more dollars can flow into Indiana’s classrooms. Recently, more than ten additional companies have stepped forward to offer similar efficiency training and support to our local schools. Support such as this from corporate groups helps to undergird the state’s efforts to keep the focus of schools on quality instruction.

As with our plans to continue our collaborative efforts with teachers, IDOE will also maintain efforts to reach out and engage education stakeholders. One way Indiana has expanded its collaborative and outreach efforts is by adding an Educator Effectiveness Communications and Outreach Manager as well as an Educator Effectiveness Communications Specialist. These two new positions will work together to develop, organize and execute outreach and engagement strategies for Indiana educators (including strategies aimed at parents and students) and will work to partner with key community stakeholders.

### Evaluation

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

**OVERVIEW OF SEA’S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY**

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

1. explains the SEA’s comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA’s strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and

2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA’s and its LEAs’ ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.

Like all Americans, Hoosiers are responding to the call for dramatic change in our education system. This year, Indiana took the biggest step in state history to advance education reform by passing the “Putting Students First” agenda. This comprehensive legislative package, which focused on teacher quality and flexibility coupled with a marked expansion in educational options for students and families, represented a sea change to the state’s education landscape.

The opportunity to request ESEA flexibility catches Indiana full stride in implementing the bold education reforms within “Putting Students First” — reforms that align completely with the four principles for improving student academic achievement and increasing the quality of instruction for all students. This flexibility will allow Indiana to set the bar high for the state and the nation by raising our standards and expectations for students, educators and school systems without succumbing to the temptation to water down important accountability provisions.

Indiana’s reform strategy reflects the following three tenets of Dr. Bennett: (1) competition, (2) freedom, and (3) accountability. Educational offerings and instructional quality can only improve in an environment of healthy competition; parents must have the freedom to choose the best educational options for their children, while school leaders must have the flexibility to make decisions based on their students’ needs; and all stakeholders must be held accountable for their individual performance.

Building upon “Putting Students First,” ESEA flexibility will help fundamentally shift the role of the IDOE from a compliance-based organization to one that supports educators in carrying out swift-moving and sweeping reforms. IDOE recognizes the need to focus on setting high standards and expectations, supporting bold and innovative practices, and holding schools accountable — and then getting out of their way while they deliver.

Flexibility to discard the 2013-2014 proficiency requirement will allow Indiana to fully utilize new advances in measuring student growth and overall school performance. Indiana’s proposed state accountability plan aligns with federal efforts to support high standards and...
increase transparency. The accountability framework the state will implement uses easy-to-understand (A-F) categories for school performance, includes measures of both pass/fail and growth, and puts a strong focus on closing the achievement gap by targeting growth for the lowest 25 percent of students.

Indiana’s coordinated effort to improve teacher quality throughout the state aligns with federal priorities and clearly establishes a sound basis for flexibility related to the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirement. Indiana is now focused on evaluation systems and tools that analyze student outcomes and provide teachers the professional support needed to ensure growth. Recent legislation ensures all school corporations will utilize annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include student achievement and growth data and support efforts to make sure every child has access to quality instruction.

Efforts to attain other flexibilities focus on similar attempts to realistically and transparently align federal priorities with recent reforms and structural advances at the state and local level. Indiana is committed to not only meeting NCLB’s and ESEA’s minimal standards but also to going far beyond them to drive meaningful reforms in college and career readiness, school accountability, educator effectiveness, and the reduction of superfluous rules and regulations. This must be the case. Our flexibility plan must be demanding enough to convey the sense of fierce urgency necessary to transform Indiana’s schools and support those who run them and teach in them. Most important, our plan must focus on the students whose lives depend on the quality of learning our schools provide. Nothing matters more than that.

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

1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

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

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

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

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

On August 3, 2010 and by unanimous agreement, the Indiana State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English/Language Arts (E/LA) and grades 6-12 Literacy for Social Studies, History, Science and Technical Subjects, and for Mathematics. See Attachment 4 for a copy of the board minutes that show adoption of the CCSS.

**Alignment**

In April 2010, the Mathematics and English/Language Arts specialists at IDOE, in conjunction with a team of teachers and university professors, analyzed the alignment between early drafts of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Indiana Academic Standards (IAS). This initial analysis yielded a document that was presented to Indiana’s Education Roundtable on May 18 of that year. Co-chaired by the Governor and Superintendent of Public Instruction, Indiana’s Education Roundtable serves to improve educational opportunity and achievement for all Hoosier students. Composed of key leaders from education, business, community, and government, the Roundtable is charged with doing the following:

- Ensuring the state has world class academic standards for student learning,
- Aligning the *Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+)* assessments that measure student achievement with those standards,
- Setting the passing scores for *ISTEP+*, and
- Making ongoing recommendations focused on improving student achievement to the Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, General Assembly, Indiana State Board of Education, and others.
A subsequent analysis was completed for the final released CCSS documents using materials provided by Achieve, Inc., and the results of this analysis were presented to the Education Roundtable and the State Board of Education to assist with their decision to adopt the Common Core Standards on August 3, 2010.

To provide additional information to teachers in the alignment of resources and assessment to the CCSS, IDOE specialists translated the information from these two analyses into documents that summarized not only the level of alignment but also descriptive statements to provide further information on the gaps that existed. These Transition Guidance documents are available at [http://doe.in.gov/commoncore](http://doe.in.gov/commoncore). A final product of this analysis was a subset of CCSS in both Mathematics and E/LA at each grade that schools should begin building into their curriculum to assist in closing the identified gaps between the IAS and the CCSS.

**English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities**

The IDOE has partnered with Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center/American Institutes for Research to conduct an analysis of the correspondence between Indiana Kindergarten English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards and the linguistic demands of the Common Core State Standards. The analysis has now been completed and will be shared with educators around the state.

Indiana is monitoring the work of a consortium of 28 states participating in World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA). In early November of 2011, WIDA released a draft of the 2012 English Language Development standards. The results of this work will inform IDOE’s analysis of the linguistic demands of the state’s college and career ready standards and the revision of grades 1-8 English Language Proficiency Standards by the 2014-2015 school year. To accomplish this, IDOE will do the following:

- Recruit and onboard a strong Coordinator of English Learning (EL);
- Utilize the WIDA standards that have been created and aligned with the CCSS;
- Develop an internal Key Stakeholders group that will review the WIDA work (including Coordinator of English Learning, Assistant Directors of College and Career Readiness, content area specialists, and EL specialists);
- Develop an internal/external Work Group (facilitated by a few members of Key Stakeholders and mainly comprised of practitioners) to review/revise/propose changes to the WIDA work (as guided by the Key Stakeholders group);
- Develop an external Advisory Group to provide lend practitioner expertise to the work (facilitated by a member of the Key Stakeholders group and comprised of university, school board, parents, business, and other extended members of the educational community);
- Roll out the revised ELP standards aligned to the CCSS to the field, providing WebEX overview and potential regional workshops and ask for feedback on all;
- Revise as appropriate, with the involvement and support of the Key Stakeholders
group, Work Group, and Advisory Group; and

- Formalize and provide additional technical assistance and supports statewide.

The implementation of this plan will ensure all ELL students will have the opportunity to achieve the standards.

To further support Indiana’s migrant students, IDOE will create a resource center to provide technical assistance to LEAs throughout Indiana. IDOE began preliminary work in fall of 2011, by identifying and reserving sufficient federal migrant education funding to create and provide this technical assistance. The next step is to recruit and onboard a new Coordinator of English Learning, which is expected to be completed within the first few months of 2012.

The CCSS are a benchmark for all students, including special education students. The IDOE’s expectation is that special education teachers will utilize the CCSS in their classrooms for students with disabilities but may teach that curriculum in a method different from those other teachers use. For example, they may be utilizing different modalities to ensure they are reaching all types of learners, they may engage in more small-group instruction, and the pacing of delivering the instruction may be different. The largest challenge is helping students with disabilities reach the level of achievement at the same pace as their general education counterparts. This often is where students in special education struggle; it is not that they cannot obtain those skills, but at times it is the rate at which they can obtain them that becomes problematic. Indiana has begun to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve to the college and career ready standards.

To better gauge how students with disabilities are performing, schools can utilize a predictive measure to determine whether they will be able to meet those standards set by the CCSS. Currently, about 92 percent of districts utilize the IDOE-provided Acuity testing as predictive or diagnostic assessments.

IDOE is working with the state’s assessment vendor to provide information regarding how many students with disabilities in each district participate in the Acuity assessments. If the number is substantial, Acuity could be utilized to determine whether special education students are close to or on target to pass a standardized assessment (whether it be the End-of-Course Assessment (ECA) or ISTEP+).

Because IDOE can identify students by Student Testing Number (STN) and determine which students took which assessments, IDOE can identify from Indiana’s electronic IEP data system (which over 95 percent of schools utilize) what types of accommodations and modifications were provided to each student and make correlations between the two. Student results from the current school year can show who took the Acuity assessments for predictive purposes. These results can be compared with a student’s identified disabilities and accommodations. This information can be utilized throughout a student’s career to tailor instruction to ensure
college and career readiness. Aggregated information about the types of accommodations that are being offered to students who are passing assessments can be shared widely throughout Indiana’s educator community with the hopes of spreading practices that work.

Outreach and Dissemination

The IDOE has partnered with the Curriculum Institute to conduct outreach and disseminate information about the CCSS via professional development for administrators and educators in locations across the state. Starting in June of 2011 and continuing to date, nearly 900 curriculum directors, district-level administrators, and building-level administrators have participated in professional development sessions. Sessions planned for the end of 2011 through February of 2012 will add instructional coaches to the target audiences. By February 2, 2012, an additional 600 participants will receive professional development on transitioning to the CCSS.

Participants are now asking for greater specificity regarding the design of curriculum and instruction around the new standards. Future sessions will include specific content and pedagogy related to implementing the Mathematical Practices, disciplinary literacy, the role of argument and evidence-based writing, and so forth.

The following outlines the sessions’ targeted audience, scope, and number of participants.
Session I

Intended Audience: Curriculum directors and district-level administrators

Overview:

- Transitioning to the CCSS with the Indiana multi-year transition plan
- Update on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Consortium
- Strategies for utilizing Indiana’s Instructional and Assessment Guidance documents
- Discussion on the requirements of IAS versus the CCSS
- Development of a district-wide action plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 17, 2011</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>190</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 30, 2011</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 7, 2011</td>
<td>Plymouth, IN</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 8, 2011</td>
<td>Decatur, IN</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 14, 2011</td>
<td>Highland, IN</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 19, 2011</td>
<td>Jasper, IN</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>456</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session II

**Intended Audience:** Curriculum directors, district-level administrators, building-level administrators

**Overview:**

- Update on the PARCC content framework and additional resources
- Major shifts in mathematics and ELA
- Requirements of PARCC assessments verses the *ISTEP*+ assessment
- Conducting a close reading of the standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 18, 2011</td>
<td>Connersville, IN</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31, 2011</td>
<td>Fort Wayne, IN</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1, 2011</td>
<td>Plymouth, IN</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 8, 2011</td>
<td>Highland, IN</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 9, 2011</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 6, 2011</td>
<td>Jasper, IN</td>
<td>32 registered thus far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 24, 2012</td>
<td>West Lafayette, IN</td>
<td>30 registered thus far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>435 (not including the 12/6 &amp; 1/24 sessions)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session III

**Intended Audience:** Curriculum directors, district-level administrators, building-level administrators, and instructional coaches

**Overview:**

- Update on the Indiana transition plan and available resources
- PARCC Model Content Frameworks
- The importance of Disciplinary Literacy, core competencies, and securely held content
- Mathematics Resource Analysis Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session III</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Participants (Current Registrations / Total Capacity)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 10, 2012</td>
<td>Jasper, IN</td>
<td>19/32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 11, 2012</td>
<td>Connersville, IN</td>
<td>31/36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 17-18, 2012</td>
<td>Fort Wayne, IN</td>
<td>128/175</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 25, 2012</td>
<td>Highland, IN</td>
<td>22/100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 30, 2012</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>27/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 31, 2012</td>
<td>Plymouth, IN</td>
<td>11/80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 2, 2012</td>
<td>Plymouth, IN</td>
<td>16/80</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**TOTAL** TBD

Indiana intends to conduct additional outreach and dissemination of information on the CCSS to key stakeholders to increase awareness and understanding. To do this, with the support of PARCC, the IDOE will hire a full time Project Manager starting in early 2012 to coordinate the work of key action groups responsible for targeted aspects of the work identified below. These groups will phase in over the course of one year, with the initial meeting of the Vision Team in December of 2011. Coordinated by the Project Manager, each group will align its work with the others.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision Team</td>
<td>• Clarify CCSS and PARCC vision for Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Define key messages and expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop plan for Indiana based on strengths and needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine SEA role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Define graduation implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
<td>• Implement vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Define Functional Groups and appoint group leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Define delivery chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional Work Group</td>
<td>• Create and deliver products and processes, as outlined by Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>• Gather feedback from the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure appropriate SEA support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Development, Supports and Materials**

To support students with disabilities, professional development of local directors of special education and administrators will be required to implement the Acuity-Indiana IEP data comparison explained previously in this document. The delivery of this professional development is manageable and achievable in the near term. USDOE’s Office of Special Education supports nine resource centers that build capacity in the delivery of instruction. Trainings are already offered on Acuity; more will be added in 2012.

Indiana participates in the General Supervision Enhancement Grant (GSEG) through the National Alternate Assessment Center. This grant is focused on creating a new alternate assessment to replace Indiana's current ISTAR alternate assessment. In 2012, IDOE will explore utilization options for the new assessment. The new assessment will measure students on the alternate standards based on the CCSS.

The GSEG grant requires a specific work group dedicated to substantive professional development, which will focus on how to appropriately and effectively teach students with cognitive impairments. It centers on how to provide appropriate instruction in English/Language arts, Mathematics, and all academic subjects. The professional development will involve the curriculum, the standards of which will be the "core connections" to the CCSS.
As referenced above, in conjunction with the Curriculum Institute and the state's regional Education Service Centers (ESCs), the IDOE has developed and presented a three-part professional development series on Indiana's plan for transitioning to the CCSS and the PARCC assessments. The purpose of these sessions is to assist district- and building-level administrators in moving from the current set of Indiana Academic Standards and ISTEP+ to the CCSS and PARCC assessment. The sessions provide updates and discussion on the curriculum alignment guidance documents, instruction and assessment guidance documents, and the PARCC developments. Sessions II and III specifically target the building administrators.

Throughout the 2010-11 school year, IDOE specialists worked with teachers and university faculty to develop transition guidance documents. IDOE has developed sixteen individual videos for Mathematics, E/LA, and 11 content areas. The videos explain the instructional changes that likely need to take place during the implementation of the CCSS as well as identify resources schools can use to better understand and implement these changes.

From October 2010 through February 2011, IDOE worked with Indiana teachers and the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas Austin to evaluate the quality and alignment of Mathematics textbooks and curricular materials to the CCSS. IDOE made these reviews public, and the materials have been used widely to help districts understand the effect of the CCSS on local curriculum and instruction decisions. The state is engaged in a parallel process for the analysis of reading materials and plans to conduct a similar review for E/LA.

IDOE has actively engaged educators in Indiana to support the CCSS in the development and delivery of aligned instructional materials. Last spring the department convened a “curriculum council” that vetted much of the materials the department distributed on the transition to the CCSS. The council helped determine the instructional priorities referenced immediately below. IDOE has developed several instructional materials aligned to the CCSS, exemplified by the following:

- In conjunction with PARCC, IDOE has developed content frameworks that will serve as a strong basis for future work;
- IDOE has evaluated the alignment of Mathematics textbooks to the CCSS and is currently reviewing reading textbooks;
- The IDOE will begin reviewing E/LA materials in the next few months;
- Indiana's state-wide curriculum maps have been revised and include “instructional priority” standards from the CCSS, which shows how to integrate the CCSS with the Indiana standards from now until 2014-15. Each year, IDOE will provide an updated list of “instructional priorities;” and
- IDOE is in the process of writing a Secondary Literacy Framework, which will (1) provide guidance to school leaders on what the CCSS literacy standards mean and guidance on how they can be implemented; and (2) provide guidance to content-area teachers on how to incorporate these standards into existing lessons.
Accelerated Learning Opportunities

The vision of the IDOE is the following: “The academic achievement and career preparation of all Indiana students will be the best in the United States and on par with the most competitive countries in the world.” The first pillar of the plan for achieving the vision is to “Create and promote a statewide culture of academic excellence, in which at least 25 percent of all graduates receive a score of 3, 4, or 5 on at least one Advanced Placement exam, a 4 or higher on an International Baccalaureate exam, or receive the equivalent of 3 semester hours of college credit during their high school years.”

Providing all Indiana children with the academic preparation they will need to navigate a 21st Century global workplace began in earnest with the adoption of the P-16 Plan for Improving Student Achievement developed in 2003 by the Indiana Education Roundtable and the Indiana State Board of Education. The P-16 plan is an integrated approach to ensuring success for students at every level of education, providing an ongoing strategic framework for aligning policies, resources, and strategies in the state.

Indiana leaders in education reform consider Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams, International Baccalaureate courses and exams, and quality Dual Credits to be an important part of the effort to provide high standards and high expectations for all students. Each year the IDOE informs all district superintendents, high school principals, and high school test coordinators that the administration of the PSAT/NMSQT would be funded by the state for all grade 10 students attending state accredited high schools. This enables extensive use of AP Potential™ to identify students who are likely to experience success in taking AP courses and the related exams. This tool of the PSAT may also be used for identification in all advanced coursework. The IDOE also offers extensive workshops and online trainings for using AP Potential™; schools are then provided user names and passwords to utilize this predictive tool. This encourages schools to expand enrollment in their AP course offerings and dual credit course offerings or perhaps offer courses for the first time. Additional educator workshops will include the Summary of Answers and Skills and the Skills Insight tools free to schools who administer the PSAT. Beginning in July 2009, high schools were encouraged to identify a specific teacher or administrator as an “AP Champion” to further promote more students in both Paid and Free/Reduced Lunch categories to enroll in Advanced Placement classes.

In 1990, Indiana’s General Assembly passed legislation that created a Program for the Advancement of Mathematics and Science. This program was established to encourage students to pursue advanced courses in critical fields of career employment such as biomedical sciences and engineering. Mathematics and science courses were judged to be critical for the continued economic welfare of the state. By July 1, 1994, each school corporation was required to provide Advanced Placement courses in Mathematics and science for students who were qualified to take them, and funds were provided to cover the cost of those exams and training for teachers. In 2011 this was 21,388 exams, up from 19,847 exams in 2010. Federal grant monies have traditionally paid for all AP exams for students on free/reduced lunch – thus
eliminating the barrier for low income students (low income students accounted for 6,881 exams in 2011 and 5,588 exams in 2010).

The adoption of the Core 40 diploma has focused additional attention on the AP, International Baccalaureate (IB) and Dual Credit programs and has contributed to increasing numbers of students enrolled in each. Core 40 became the minimum diploma for all students entering high school in 2006. The additional requirements for the Core 40 with Academic Honors diploma include fulfilling one of five options: completion of two Advanced Placement courses and the associated exams, completion of two quality dual credit courses (equivalent to six college credits), a combination of Advanced Placement and dual credit courses to earn the required advanced academic credits, a minimum SAT or ACT score, or earning the full IB Diploma. Seventy-nine percent of Indiana students completed Core 40 curriculum in the 2009-10 academic year. Of these, thirty percent qualified for the Core 40 with Academic Honors diploma.

In 2010, the Indiana General Assembly passed House Bill 1135/Public Law 91, better known as the “AP Law.” This law provides that starting with the 2011 Advanced Placement exams, a student who earns a score of three or higher shall receive college credit toward his/her degree if he/she attends any Indiana public institution of higher education; this includes all two-year and four-year schools and any accompanying satellites. The actual number of exam scores of three or higher in 2011 was 22,954, which is over 18 percent more than in 2010. This translates into 68,862 college credit hours and a truly significant amount of college savings for students and their families.

In May, 2011, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education released a policy that limits the fees that public higher education institutions offering dual enrollment courses in the high school may charge high school students. This eliminates financial barriers for high school students taking college-level courses. Additionally Ivy Tech Community College, and all of its fourteen campuses statewide, has made a commitment to provide all dual enrollment courses that are offered in the high school setting to students at no cost.

Indiana has out-paced the national average in growth of students taking Advanced Placement exams, the number of test takers, and scores of three, four, and five:

- Indiana test takers grew by 9.7 percent in 2010-2011 (38,418 total) and 28.1 percent in 2009-2010 as compared to the national growth of 7 percent in 2010-2011 and 9.5 percent in 2009-2010.
- Growth in the number of exams taken in Indiana was 11.3 percent in 2010-2011 and 29.2 percent in 2009-2010 compared to the national growth of 7.6 percent in 2010-2011 and 10.2 percent in 2009-2010.
- The number of scores of 3, 4, or 5 increased by 16.8 percent in 2010-2011 and 13.3 percent in 2009-2010 as compared to 7.6 percent nationally in 2010-2011 and 8.3 percent in 2009-2010.
Access to AP is part of the overall achievement goal—to see increases in both access and success in all student demographic categories. The number of black students who passed an AP exam in Indiana in 2011 increased by 27 percent in one year and 123 percent in 5 years; Hispanic students who passed an AP exam increased by 25 percent in one year and 200 percent in five years.

Indiana has also demonstrated notable growth in the number of high schools that offer the IB Diploma Program for students since the first school was authorized in 1986 to the 100 percent increase shown below. Twenty high schools around the state now offer the IB Diploma. Additionally three middle schools and three primary schools have been authorized to offer the full IB program for grades K-10. This growth exemplifies the concern of Indiana high schools to offer high-achieving students diverse and ever-broadening opportunities in preparing for success beyond high school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth of Indiana High Schools Authorized to Offer IB Diploma Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total IB schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrollment in IB classes now includes a significant number of low-income students as determined by Indiana’s guidelines for the free and reduced lunch program. The number of low-income students registering for IB exams in May 2011 also indicates a projected increase of seventy-five percent from those projected to take the May 2010 exams. This continuing increase is explained primarily by the greater number of low-income IB students in the most recently authorized IB World schools.

To further support high schools and middle schools in the expansion of rigorous college-preparatory coursework, the Indiana General Assembly in 2011 passed the Mitch Daniels Early Graduation Scholarship. This scholarship allows students to graduate from high school in three years and apply the $4,000 that would have been appropriated to the secondary school to the post-secondary institution on behalf of that student in the form of a scholarship. To make allowance for students to do this, schools may offer high school courses to qualified middle school students. Schools may also award students credit for courses by demonstration of proficiency.

The drive toward better college preparedness includes increasing the percentage of students completing the more rigorous requirements of Indiana’s Core 40 diploma, Core 40 diploma with Academic or Technical Honors, and the IB Diploma. High student achievement is supported through implementing End-of-Course Assessments designed to ensure the quality, consistency, and rigor of Core 40 courses across the state. The state vision to have twenty-five percent of all Indiana graduates earn quality college credits has changed the culture of our schools, by asking
each to support the student’s success beyond K-12.

Schools in Hendricks County, near Indianapolis, are creating a cooperative to expand their dual credit programs. If one school in the county offers dual credit calculus, students from all other county schools may attend. Another example of culture change is at Speedway High School in Indianapolis where the local education foundation supported payments to students and teachers for passing AP exams. These one-time $100 payments for each assessment passed changed students’ approach to testing and teachers’ approach to instruction.

Northwest Indiana schools are collaborating to purchase a membership in the National Student Clearinghouse so they can track their own students’ successes in post-secondary enrollment. This tracking will include persistence rates, graduation rates and grade point averages. This data will enable schools to take a close look at how their students fare in higher education.

Additionally, more schools than ever have adopted online providers for AP courses. These online courses are primarily delivered in schools that are too small to house a full AP program or in schools that want to offer the entire menu of AP courses but cannot afford to hire all the staff. This new access to AP for all students is a major shift in practice.

**Educator Preparation and Licensing**

Indiana is engaged in a systematic reform of its education system. Dr. Bennett’s vision is to create an educational system that produces graduates who are able to compete successfully with students from across the nation and around the world. Attaining this vision involves reforms to all facets of Indiana’s educational system, including educator preparation and licensing.

One part of the reform effort has involved educator licensing requirements. The Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA), enacted in 2010, revised Indiana’s educator licensing structure to emphasize content knowledge as follows:

- Elementary teachers (K to 6) must earn a baccalaureate degree consisting of an education major with a content-area minor OR a content area-major with an education major.
- Secondary teachers (5 to 12) must earn a baccalaureate degree consisting of any applicable content-area major—as well as a minor in education.

In spring of 2010, the IDOE sought a contractor to develop high quality educator standards to support REPA and to provide guidance to educator preparation programs as they revise their programs to meet the state’s new licensing requirements. The IDOE also stipulated that the standards would be grounded in scientifically-based research and aligned with IAS and the CCSS.

IDOE contracted with Pearson to develop the Indiana Developmental and Content Standards for Educators, which include educator standards in 46 content and administrative areas and at five
school setting developmental levels. The standards are grounded in scientifically based research and are aligned with REPA, the IAS, Indiana Core Standards, the CCSS for Mathematics and for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, standards of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), and other relevant standards of national professional organizations.

The Indiana educator standards are custom-designed for Indiana and articulate the IDOE’s expectations regarding the content and pedagogical knowledge and skills that are important for Indiana educators. The primary focus of the 46 content-area standards is the subject-matter knowledge and skills needed to teach effectively in Indiana classrooms or to provide effective leadership in Indiana schools. The primary focus of the five school setting developmental standards is on the pedagogical knowledge and skills needed to teach in various school settings.

These standards can be found using the following link: http://www.doe.in.gov/educatorlicensing/standards.html.

Indiana has standards that specifically address the following areas in the pedagogy standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Setting</th>
<th>Standard Addressing English Learners</th>
<th>Standard Addressing Students with Disabilities</th>
<th>Standard Addressing Working with Low-Achieving Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>1.6, 3.4, 4.5</td>
<td>1.5, 3.4, 4.4, 6.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>1.6, 3.6, 4.3</td>
<td>1.5, 3.6, 4.3, 6.10</td>
<td>3.10, 4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>1.7, 3.6, 4.3</td>
<td>1.6, 3.6, 4.3, 6.8</td>
<td>3.10, 4.4, 7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>1.4, 1.6, 3.6, 4.3</td>
<td>1.5, 3.6, 4.3, 6.8</td>
<td>3.10, 4.4, 7.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, Indiana has licensure content areas for teachers to gain additional certification in exceptional needs: mild intervention, exceptional needs: intense intervention, and teachers of English Learners. Standards for each of these areas are available via the IDOE website: http://www.doe.in.gov/educatorlicensing/pdf/EnglishLearners.pdf http://www.doe.in.gov/educatorlicensing/documents/INExceptionalNeeds-Mild.pdf http://www.doe.in.gov/educatorlicensing/documents/INExceptionalNeeds-Intense.pdf
The IDOE is currently in the process of developing customized licensure assessments in collaboration with Evaluation Systems to measure candidates’ mastery of the new teacher standards. Content tests for all licensure areas will be developed and required for licensure. In addition, candidates will also complete a pedagogy assessment for licensure. Implementation of content and pedagogy tests is expected by September 1, 2013. A basic skills test aligned to the CCSS is being developed and will be required for admission to any teacher preparation program in Indiana. This test is expected to begin implementation January 1, 2013.

The IDOE is working closely with Evaluation Systems in the design of the data systems for the new licensure assessment system. Aggregate data on candidate performance per domain (logical groupings of individual standards) will be provided to each teacher preparation program for review and program feedback.

The IDOE is beginning the process of developing an accountability system for teacher preparation programs. The end result will mirror the P-12 accountability system which provides an easily understood A-F letter grade. A teacher preparation advisory group was established in the fall of 2011 and will begin to determine sources of evidence, benchmarks, and applicable metrics recommendations.

Providing teacher preparation programs with a clear blueprint of state expectations through the standards, providing quality assessments and data reporting on candidate competency on these measurements, and reporting outcomes publically in a clearly communicated accountability system will ensure teacher preparation programs will better prepare teachers to teach all students.

New principal and superintendent standards were adopted at the same time the new teacher standards were developed.

http://www.doe.in.gov/educatorlicensing/pdf/SchoolLeaderBuildingLevel.pdf
http://www.doe.in.gov/educatorlicensing/pdf/SchoolLeaderDistrictLevel.pdf

The administrator standards begin with the following statement:

The School Building Leader standards reflect the most current research on effective educational leadership and advance a new and powerful vision of principal effectiveness. The standards define those skills and abilities that school leaders must possess to produce greater levels of success for all students. Bringing significant improvement to student achievement and teacher effectiveness requires an unapologetic focus on the principal’s role as driver of student growth and achievement.

The standards provide a basis for professional preparation, growth, and accountability. However, the standards should not be viewed as ends in themselves; rather, they provide clarity for building leaders about the actions they are expected to take in order to drive student achievement and teacher effectiveness outcomes.
This statement indicates the expectation that the building principal first serve as the driver of student growth. All other roles and responsibilities should be in alignment with this primary function. New licensure assessments are currently being developed, with implementation of new tests beginning September 1, 2013. Test development is customized to standards to ensure candidates have met state expectations as outlined in the standards document.

Indiana’s plan to improve the preparation of incoming teachers and principals has three steps.

Step 1 – Provide rigorous, high quality standards that clearly communicate state expectations for teacher licensure programs.

Step 2 – Customize assessments that measure the standards to ensure candidates are well prepared. Provide timely specific outcome data aligned to standards regularly to programs to drive program improvement.

Step 3 – Design metrics for data collection on multiple measures to be applied to all teacher preparation programs to ensure accountability.

Indiana completed Step 1 in 2010, and programs will be required to fully implement those standards by 2013 in 515-IAC-9-1-2 Sec 2(d). Indiana is aggressively working on Step 2 with test implementation beginning September 1, 2013. Initial conversations on Step 3 began in fall of 2011 with the expectation of having an accountability system in place by 2014-2015.

Assessment
Indiana’s assessment system is robust and comprehensive to prepare students at each grade level on their way to becoming college and career ready by the end of high school. Assessments are standards-driven, student-centered, and learning-focused, and the curricular aims prepare students for post-secondary success. The assessment system supports learning-based and data-driven instruction; performance evaluation and improvement; and accountability for educators, schools and school corporations.

Diagnostic Assessments
Indiana’s assessment system begins with diagnostic assessments in grades K-2. Assessments at this level are focused on literacy and numeracy as they assess the student’s ability to read, comprehend, and use numbers. Wireless Generation’s tools, *mCLASS: Reading* and *mCLASS: Math*, are used to measure student progress in K-2.

Diagnostic assessments in grades 3-8 are also part of Indiana’s assessment system. Student learning in the content areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies is measured using CTB/McGraw-Hill’s *Acuity* tools. Indiana also provides the *Acuity Algebra* program for schools.
Both mCLASS and Acuity provide immediate results, actionable reports, and instructional activities, which enable teachers to address the individual learning needs of students. In addition, professional development related to data analysis and using results to inform instruction plays an important role in the use of these diagnostic programs.

**Accountability Assessments**

Indiana’s assessment system includes summative assessments for students in grades 3-8. The *Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+)* measures student progress in English/language arts and mathematics at each grade level, in addition to science in grades 4 and 6 and social studies in grades 5 and 7. *ISTEP+* is comprised of two assessment windows: the first window includes open-ended items in the four content areas as well as a writing prompt; the second window consists of multiple-choice items. *ISTEP+* at the high school level is implemented as End-of-Course Assessments (ECAs) in Algebra I, English 10, and Biology I.

Special populations are also part of Indiana’s assessment system. The *Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR)* program measures student achievement in the subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies based on alternate academic achievement standards. *ISTAR* is a web-based system that utilizes teacher ratings. The Case Conference Committee determines, based on the eligibility criteria adopted by the Indiana State Board of Education and the student’s individual and unique needs, whether a student with a disability will be assessed with *ISTAR*.

The *LAS Links* assessment is used to determine a student’s level of English proficiency. The placement test, administered upon the student's arrival in the United States, is used to determine the EL services appropriate for the student. The annual assessment, administered in January and February, is used to determine the student’s current level of English proficiency and is used for accountability purposes.

**Other Assessments**

The *Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (IREAD-3)* assessment measures foundational reading standards through grade 3. Based on the Indiana Academic Standards, IREAD-3 is a summative assessment developed in accordance with 2010’s Public Law 109 which "requires the evaluation of reading skills for students who are in grade three beginning in the Spring of 2012 to ensure that all students can read proficiently before moving on to grade four."

The *Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting of Kindergarten Readiness (ISTAR-KR)* is a web-based instrument rated by teachers to measure skills in children from infancy to kindergarten. A derivative of Indiana’s Early Learning Standards (which are part of the Foundations to Indiana Academic Standards), *ISTAR-KR* is aligned to the Indiana Standards for
Kindergarten in the areas of English/language arts and mathematics and includes three functional areas: physical, personal care and social-emotional skills. Data from ISTAR-KR assessments are used for state reporting for PK students receiving special education, and the assessment can be used for local purposes for grades PK through 1.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "The Nation's Report Card," is used to demonstrate performance over time for a selected sample within Indiana. This assessment is administered annually to students in grades 4, 8, and 12 and can be used to compare student performance across the United States. During selected assessment cycles, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), and Progress in International Reading Study (PIRLS) are administered in conjunction with the NAEP assessment.

The variety of assessment tools encompassed within Indiana’s assessment system provide vertical articulation through a student’s entire K-12 experience, enabling teachers, parents, schools, and school corporations to anticipate, determine, and address learning as it occurs. Indiana’s assessment system drives and measures each student’s annual academic progress and overall preparation for post-secondary success.

The first PARCC assessment results describing the college and career readiness of Indiana’s high school will not be available until well after the end of the 2014-15 school year. To begin the evolution toward those more demanding assessments based on the CCSS, Indiana has entered into agreements with ACT and College Board to pilot the interim use of their assessment suites as measures of college and career readiness to provide transition to the CCSS expectations for Indiana high schools. Both of the terminal instruments (ACT and SAT) have existing (pre-CCSS) determinations of college readiness. The Indiana graduating class of 2011 had only thirty-one percent of students who chose to take the ACT meet the all four of ACT’s college ready benchmarks. To prepare students, parents, schools, teachers and the community for the rigor of the anticipated PARCC performance standards, all of the IDOE’s reporting will use the available “College Ready” benchmarks. The state’s pilot includes an independent evaluation and a timeline for making a recommendation at the end of this school year on adopting stronger Indiana college and career readiness tools and indicators for school years 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Indiana has already begun work with content committees and the state’s testing vendor on making changes to the 3-8 assessments within the current requirements of ESEA, current state contracts and available assessment dollars.

1. At each grade level and in both CCSS content areas, Indiana assessment and content specialists have begun the initial process of “double mapping” Indiana’s test items to the CCSS. This winter and spring larger practitioner committees will meet to review and refine the mapping and alignment to CCSS and determine at which grade levels and content areas of the Common Core standards there are sufficient items to report CCSS data in addition to the regular Indiana standards results. These committees will prepare
recommendations for Indiana’s Expert Panel on the levels (student, classroom, and or school) which they believe this interim information will provide the most benefit. Indiana will rely on the Expert Panel for guidance on the most appropriate metric and methodology to use in reporting. The state will begin the dual reporting on the additional CCSS information in the spring of 2013.

2. The IDOE is working with the state’s test vendor on the remaining item development in the current contract to move (with the constraints of the current test blueprints) toward more “PARCC-like” items, selecting passages based on the proportion of reading types required by the CCSS and selecting those passages with a deliberate review of the range of text complexity.

3. Finally, Indiana has joined Achieve, Student Achievement Partners and other states in collaboratively investigating a more systematic and cost effective process to better aligning state tests during this transition period with the common core and with PARCC. A short chain of emails explaining these efforts is located at Attachment 12. The steps involved include the following:

- Identify the biggest shifts in the CCSS – the standards that result in the most significant changes teachers are likely to experience with regard to expectations for student learning and for instructional practices
- Help each state determine the priority standards it wishes to incorporate into revised assessments, either as substitutes for existing items or as additions to the existing items.
- Provide specifications and/or models for items associated with the key standards, including item types, which states can provide to their test vendors. These specifications are already under development for the PARCC item development ITN; consequently the participating states would be asking their vendors to develop items using the same specifications that will guide the development of PARCC assessments. Multiple states can draw on the same specifications to modify their own tests.

**1.C DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER ANNUAL, STATEWIDE, AlIGNED, HIGH-Quality ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH**

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

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

See Attachment 6 for Indiana’s PARCC MOU.
PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

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

2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA’s plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2012–2013 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

“To evaluate schools, it has to be wedded to a simple, clear measurement – A, B, C, D, F.”
– Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels

Description of A-F
Indiana’s new state accountability framework uses traditional A to F letter grades to give parents, educators, and students an easy-to-understand system for understanding student performance. At the same time, letter grades provide a heightened awareness of school performance in local communities throughout the state.

Prior to the 2010-11 school year, Indiana’s framework used an inscrutable labeling system illustrated in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Labels</th>
<th>Old Labels (Prior to 2010-11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Exemplary Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Commendable Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Academic Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Academic Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Academic Probation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the IDOE initially introduced letter grades, many schools and school districts that previously gave no pause to being labeled under the old system became vehemently vocal about the new one. As an example, a school could have been in “Academic Progress” for years without protestation, yet once that same school was labeled a “C,” the outcry was fervent and immediate. A stunning ripple effect has occurred in local communities throughout the state as parents and civic groups have begun coalescing around and taking a greater interest in the quality of their schools. The amplified attention to school and student performance would have never happened without the shift to letter grades. The impact has been profound, prompting all stakeholders to ask difficult questions about increasing academic achievement and raising instructional quality within Indiana’s schools.
Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, the A-F grading system will utilize an enhanced methodology that offers a more comprehensive analysis of school performance. This new analysis lends itself to a more meaningful accountability system that is better designed to differentiate, recognize, and support schools across the state. The new methodology reflects several core principles:

- All students can and should learn at least a year’s worth of knowledge in a year’s time.
- Student growth is a better measure of effectiveness than is absolute performance. Growth is also the best way to provide for the differentiated recognition of teachers and schools.
- Student achievement and school performance, including the closing of achievement gaps, are strongly correlated to effective teaching and leadership.
- Effective teaching makes a difference in how much a student learns, and how much a student learns is a measure of effective teaching.
- A heavy emphasis on accountability is necessary to create a system that supports the increase in the quality of instruction for students.

Indiana’s A-F system is comprised of an elementary/middle schools model and a high schools model. Both models look at the performance and progress of students over time for all students and all subgroups. A key component of the model is a newer and more efficient way to track the proficiency and progress of traditionally underperforming subgroups and other low performing students by creating a super subgroup that analyzes the bottom 25 percent of students throughout the state. Focusing on this super subgroup coupled with utilizing Indiana’s revolutionary Growth Model is far more effective at shining a light on exactly where the achievement gaps are occurring and for whom than was the case for subgroups as traditionally contemplated. Indiana believes this bold approach to subgroup identification (i.e. all schools have a bottom 25 percent) promises to directly attack the intractable issue of achievement gaps in a way many states would be more hesitant to utilize.

Moreover, Indiana’s demographic outlay is such that hundreds of schools have significant traditionally underperforming student populations but too often those same schools have multiple subgroups that do not meet the 30 student count threshold to allow for accountability (e.g. 25 Hispanic students, 28 Black students, 18 Special Education students). As a result, too many underperforming students are slipping through the cracks and falling off the accountability grid. This oversight by the traditional, static definition of subgroups is simply unacceptable.

Indiana’s new and dynamic super subgroup enables the state to ensure those missing students are now calculated in each school’s accountability because every school has a bottom 25 percent. Data show that traditionally underperforming students in Indiana comprise a
significant amount of that bottom 25 percent population. Indiana schools must improve the proficiency levels and demonstrate significant growth for the new super subgroup in order to receive an acceptable mark on the state’s new A-F grading scale. Notably, IDOE has run data, shown later in this section, that illustrate the strong potential for a dramatic narrowing of Indiana’s achievement gaps as a result of this focus on the bottom 25 percent.

More information about A-F is included as Attachment 13 and 14

Description of the Indiana Growth Model
Notably, the Elementary and Middle School model is built on the trailblazing Indiana Growth Model, which Dr. Bennett has described as the “game-changer” with regard to school accountability. Indiana has been at the nation’s forefront in ensuring that student progress, or growth, over time provides the foundation for recognizing and supporting student and school performance.

Based on the innovative work initiated in Colorado and developed in partnership with the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA), the Indiana Growth Model is a statistical model used to calculate student progress, or growth, on state assessments. The Indiana Growth Model fundamentally re-conceptualizes the state’s accountability system in two key ways:

1. Growth shines a spotlight on the closing of achievement gaps
2. Growth promotes a focus on all students and not just the “bubble kids”

Moreover, the Indiana Growth Model allows for an unprecedented level of public disclosure of information about individual student, school, and district performance. IDOE is committed to focusing educational reform and school improvement efforts around the Growth Model to raise student achievement for every student and close achievement gaps.

The Growth Model also enables parents, teachers and administrators to understand how individual students are progressing from year to year. This capability is not insignificant, as prior to the implementation of the Growth Model, classroom teachers were the only ones who knew anything about a student’s progress. Now, for the first time, student progress is being made transparent to a broader array of education stakeholders in an easy and readily accessible format. Based on where each individual student begins, IDOE expects all students to achieve at least one grade level of growth in an academic year.

More information about the Indiana Growth Model is included as Attachment 15.
**Implementation Plan**

Indiana is on track to implement its accountability plan way ahead of the 2012-13 school year. In fact, the A-F category labels were implemented with the 2010-11 school year and will be updated with the following metrics for 2011-12:

**Elementary and Middle Schools**
- Student achievement (English/Language Arts and Mathematics)
- Student growth
  - The growth of students in the bottom 25 percent
  - The growth of the remaining 75 percent of students

**High Schools**
- Student performance and improvement on End-of-Course Assessments
  - English 10
  - Algebra I
- Graduation rate
  - Four-year
  - Five-year
- College and career readiness
  - Advanced Placement (AP) exams
  - International Baccalaureate (IB) exams
  - Dual/Concurrent Enrollment college credits
  - Industry Certifications

The targets, or cut scores, for each of these metrics is aligned with Dr. Bennett’s broader “90-25-90” goals, established shortly after he took office in 2009:
- 90 percent of students pass the Mathematics and English/Language Arts portion of the state’s annual assessments (*ISTEP*)
- 25 percent of graduates pass an AP or IB exam or earn college credit during high school
- 90 percent of students graduate with a meaningful diploma

As described earlier in this plan, the development of Indiana’s A-F accountability model was an eighteen-month process that incorporated input from numerous educational stakeholders. The state’s rule-making process for A-F was initiated by the State Board of Education on November
The bottom 25 percent: the new “Super Subgroup”

Indiana’s accountability system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students. Based on research conducted by IDOE, Indiana is confident that this bold new system recognizes top performers, targets support to those who struggle, and provides a renewed focus on addressing achievement gaps.

The accountability system’s attention to the bottom 25 percent reflects the state’s commitment to bridging the gap between the highest and lowest performers. Addressing these stubborn achievement gaps is a precondition to significantly raising student achievement and school performance across the state. IDOE has been able to identify the traits of students that makeup the bottom 25 percent of student achievement on the state’s annual assessment (ISTEP+) as defined by scale score at each grade level. IDOE has examined a combination of one-year and three-year results of both the lowest performers in English/Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics to be sure our system directly attacks this problem.

Key characteristics of the bottom 25 percent include the following:

- 40 percent minority
- 70 percent receive free or reduced priced meals
- 28 percent receive Special Education services
- 10 percent are Limited English Proficient (LEP)

It is important to remember that every school in the state of Indiana has a bottom 25 percent.

The bottom 25 percent students historically pass the state assessment at a rate fifty percent lower than the top seventy-five percent population. Students in the traditional subgroups that are not included in the bottom 25 percent population have a cumulative proficiency rate of ninety percent. These data reaffirm Indiana’s assertion that subgroups should be targeted based on performance rather than just demographics. The relentless focus on performance reflects how serious Indiana is about not just closing achievement gaps but eliminating them outright.

More information about the bottom 25 percent is included as Attachment 16.

Merging State (P.L. 221) and Federal (AYP) Accountability Systems

Since Dr. Bennett took office in 2009, student performance on the statewide assessment has steadily risen each year. At the same time, state and national expectations continue to rise for our schools and students. Within the context of heightened accountability, Indiana has shifted to an A-F system as part of an ongoing effort to align the state’s accountability measures with
twenty-first century demands and to ensure all Indiana students graduate from high school well-prepared for college or career.

Public Law 221 (P.L. 221) is Indiana’s comprehensive accountability system for K-12 education. Passed by the Indiana General Assembly in 1999 – prior to the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 – the law aimed to establish major educational reform and accountability statewide. To measure progress, P.L. 221 places Indiana schools (both public and accredited non-public) into one of five categories (A, B, C, D or F) based upon student performance and growth data from the state’s ISTEP+ and End-of-Course Assessments (ECAs).

Schools in the lowest P.L. 221 category (F) face a series of interventions designed to provide the additional support needed to improve student achievement. A chart describing these interventions is located in 2.D.iii. (page 60). These interventions become more serious the longer schools remain in the bottom category.

One of the key obstacles to student achievement and school performance in our state has been the confusion between P.L. 221 and AYP (i.e. state versus federal accountability). While there is some overlap, the two systems are unique enough that it has become customary for the State Superintendent to make “two announcements” each year with regard to school performance – one about how schools fared under P.L. 221 and a separate announcement about AYP status.

Indiana is seeking approval of the state’s new accountability system – transparent letter grades coupled with an aggressive timeline for state support and intervention – to fulfill federal accountability requirements. This flexibility would allow Indiana to make one annual announcement about school performance, thereby providing clearer information to schools and educational stakeholders while eliminating any conflicting messages about state or federal expectations for schools and educators.

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

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

**Option B**
- If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must:
  - provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each assessment for all
grades assessed; and
b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.

Insert text for Option B here.

2.B SET AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option A</th>
<th>Option B</th>
<th>Option C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</td>
<td>□ Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–2020 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</td>
<td>□ Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs. ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below. iii. Provide a link to the State’s report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explanation for Option C

Indiana elected option ‘C’ to create “ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups.” Indiana’s proposed AMO would greatly increase proficiency rates across the state while holding more schools accountable for more students in traditional subgroup populations than option ‘A’ or ‘B’ would have allowed.

By selecting option ‘C,’ Indiana will have a proficiency rate that is ten percent higher than under option ‘B,’ while also greatly increasing the state’s graduation and college and career readiness rates, which would have otherwise been unaffected by the AMO under the alternative options. Indiana’s AMO will also lead to more accountability for traditional subgroups while concentrating efforts on all historically underperforming students – and not simply by the limited targeting of students based solely on race, gender, socio-economic, special education, or LEP status as prescribed under options ‘A’ and ‘B.’

By focusing on one super-subgroup, the bottom 25 percent, Indiana will see a greater impact (twenty percent increase in proficiency rates and twenty percent decline in the achievement gap), touch more students (see table below), and target additional resources to the students that need them the most. Indiana’s proposed AMO is the only option that specifically addresses the lowest achieving students and promotes high student growth and proficiency improvement from this population. As a result, Indiana’s AMO will have a greater impact than any of the alternatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Subgroup</th>
<th>Under Option ‘A’ and ‘B’</th>
<th>Under Indiana’s AMO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free or Reduced Priced Meals</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited English Proficient</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As an example, in 2011, fifty-seven percent of all schools were assessed in AYP in the special education subgroup. Under Indiana’s proposed AMO, ninety-nine percent of all schools in 2011 would have had special education students captured in the bottom 25 percent super-subgroup. This translates into an additional forty-two percent of schools that would have been held accountable for their special education students. Indiana’s proposed AMO represents a far more aggressive approach to identifying and eliminating achievement gaps for all subgroups.

**AMO Methodology**

Indiana’s accountability model encompasses not only state assessment proficiency levels but also a number of other school and district level indicators to ascertain a clear and comprehensive view of performance. As a result, Indiana has outlined the following AMO that defines a proficient school:

*All Indiana schools, and all subgroups within the school, must receive an ‘A’ or improve by two letter grades by 2020.* This is an ambitious and achievable goal that reflects the state’s commitment to ensuring more students are on track for college and careers.

Schools assigned a grade other than an ‘A’ for the 2011-12 school year must do the following:

- Receive a school grade of an ‘A’ or improve at least one letter grade over the next three ensuing years; AND

- Improve by two letter grades by 2020; AND

- Receive a grade no worse than a ‘C’ in any subgroup or show substantial high growth within that subgroup.

  - “Substantial high growth” is defined as being in the top twenty-five percent of all schools statewide in the percentage of students within that subgroup that showed more than one grade level worth of growth during the most recent school year.

**Timeline**

- **2012** – A new baseline grade will be established for each school based on the grade received for the 2011-12 school year.

- **2015** – Each school is expected to receive an ‘A’ or improve by one letter grade from the 2012 baseline grade.

- **2020** – Each school is expected to receive an ‘A’ or improve by two letter grades from the 2012 baseline grade; AND all subgroups must receive a ‘C’ or show
substantial high growth within that subgroup.

The table below illustrates the expected distribution of schools across the state based on the proposed methodology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected School Grades based on AMO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notably, Indiana has set a goal of significantly reducing the number of ‘D’ and ‘F’ schools. If the AMO is met by 2020, Indiana could expect a twenty percent decline in the achievement gap. Additionally, Indiana would expect to have at least ninety percent of all students passing the state assessment – consistent with the “90-25-90” goals Dr. Bennett has established.

Although Indiana has realized steady improvement on ISTEP+ scores since 2009, the passage rate is currently at seventy-one percent. Through the proposed AMO, that rate will increase by twenty percent by 2020. Indiana is switching the focus from static subgroup performance and the accompanying limitations to the performance of each school’s bottom 25 percent in proficiency. This shift allows schools to deliberately move from a diffused attention of up to eight subgroups to a concentrated focus on one – the lowest performing – and to more strategically align their resources to the students that need the most help. Indiana believes this shift is essential to unleash the potential of schools and school districts to close the gap between the highest and lowest performers. Indiana’s bold and aggressive approach provided incentive for schools not only to increase their proficiency levels but also to reward individual student growth. Indiana’s AMO and state accountability model encourages schools to continue to grow each student in the school regardless of proficiency level by rewarding schools for getting high achievers to achieve even higher, low achievers to grow more quickly, and all students to grow at or above grade level. This differentiated strategy allows Indiana students and schools to increase proficiency, graduation, and college and career readiness rates at a faster pace than in previous years. Moreover, Indiana believes this formula could serve as a national model for increasing student performance and tackling the persistent gaps in student achievement.

At the high school level, if current trends hold true for ‘A,’ ‘B,’ and ‘C’ schools, in 2020 Indiana could expect the following:

- A statewide graduation rate of over ninety percent
- A third of all graduates to receive an honors diploma
- Forty percent of all graduates to receive postsecondary credit prior to graduation
A fifty percent decline in the high school dropout rate, for an estimated 2020 dropout rate of only three percent.

The table below projects Indiana’s improvement trend along several key indicators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Pass ISTEP+</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Rate</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Receiving Honors Diplomas</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Earned College Credit</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout Rate</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table illustrates the number of Academic Honors Diplomas that could be expected during benchmark years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Earning Academic Honors Diplomas</th>
<th># of Graduates</th>
<th>% of Graduates</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>19,452</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>20,840</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>22,987</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>3,535</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below.

Indiana’s proposed AMO is based on the state’s robust accountability system. It provides an accurate pattern of LEAs’ and schools’ academic progress by focusing not only on student proficiency but also on individual student growth (i.e. Indiana’s Growth Model) and improvement (i.e. improvement in an LEA’s or school’s percent of students passing state tests from one year to the next), graduation rates, and college and career readiness indicators. Using multiple student performance variables, Indiana provides more robust accountability measures through a combination of key benchmarks and annual goals.

**Key Benchmarks**

Indiana’s plan sets both a three-year benchmark and an eight-year benchmark within its AMO. These benchmarks are illustrated in the example below. In order for a school or LEA to meet Indiana’s AMO, a school would have to demonstrate consistent improvement across all state measures. This innovative design parallels the state’s A-F accountability system and reflects Indiana’s belief that in order for accountability to be rigorous, student performance cannot be limited to solely one measure.

*Example:* Hoosier High School received a ‘D’ in 2011-12 under Indiana’s state accountability system. That ‘D’ grade translated into a 60 percent passage rate on the
state assessments (ISTEP+), 5 percent of graduates being college & career ready (CCR), and a 60 percent graduation rate. Per Indiana's AMO, the school is required to improve by two letter grades or receive an “A” by 2020. In order to reach this target, Hoosier High School would need to demonstrate annual improvement as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Benchmark Goal</th>
<th>Annual State Assessment (ISTEP+) Proficiency Goal*</th>
<th>ISTEP+ %</th>
<th>Annual College &amp; Career Readiness (CCR) Rate Goal*</th>
<th>CCR %</th>
<th>Annual Graduation Rate Goal*</th>
<th>Grad Rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase by 3.3 percentage points</td>
<td>Increase by 2.3 percentage points</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>Increase by 3.3 percentage points</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Increase by 3.3 percentage points</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase by 3.3 percentage points</td>
<td>Increase by 2.3 percentage points</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>Increase by 3.3 percentage points</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>Increase by 3.3 percentage points</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>Three-Year Benchmark</td>
<td>Achieve an 'A' or improve by one letter grade from the 2012 baseline</td>
<td>Increase by 3.4 percentage points</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>Increase by 2.3 percentage points</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>Increase by 3.4 percentage points</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>Increase by 2.6 percentage points</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>Increase by 2.6 percentage points</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>Increase by 2.6 percentage points</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>82.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>Increase by 2.6 percentage points</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>Eight-Year Benchmark</td>
<td>Achieve an ‘A’ or improve by two letter grades from the 2012 baseline</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>Increase by 2.7 percentage points</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>Increase by 4.0 percentage points</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*This example is for illustrative purposes only. The annual goal will vary depending on what letter grade the school receives in its baseline year and the grade levels served by the school. A school can increase its grade from the 2012 baseline using any combination of increased proficiency and high student growth/improvement over a sustained period of time. The power of Indiana’s AMO is that it differentiates and is individualized to each LEA and school.

If Hoosier High School achieved the annual proficiency rate increases in the table above, it would receive an “A” in 2020. This grade translates to a 90 percent passage rate on the state assessments, 25 percent of graduates being college or career ready, and a 90 percent graduation rate – consistent with Dr. Bennett’s “90-25-90” goals.

The three-year benchmark calls for each LEA and school to either receive an ‘A’ rating or to improve by one letter grade from its 2012 baseline rating. Each LEA and school will be allowed three years to show improvement due to the rigorous progress that is necessary to increase a school’s or LEA’s grade. To improve one letter grade, a school must increase its proficiency level by ten percentage points, show substantially high growth among its student subgroups, or a combination of the two. This approach is unique in that it requires schools and LEAs to focus on each individual student within the school while placing a special emphasis on the bottom 25 percent population. Without substantial improvement and growth among the bottom 25 percent, a group of students that has historically faced more educational challenges with a proficiency rate of only forty percent, it would be impossible for all but a few schools to show the necessary progress within three years. Allowing only three years to reverse a decades-long trend of stagnant low performance within the bottom 25 percent population, while simultaneously improving all other student proficiency levels, is not only daring but also achievable through the measures and focus Indiana’s AMO lays out.

The eight-year benchmark calls for each LEA and school to either receive an ‘A’ rating or to improve by two letter grades from its 2012 baseline rating. Each LEA and school will be allowed eight years to show the necessary improvement due to the rigorous process required. Specifically, a two letter grade improvement translates into a twenty percentage point increase in proficiency. For LEAs and schools, this figure would also represent an unprecedented reduction in the percentage of students showing low growth and improvement. The eight-year benchmark also requires that no subgroup receive below a ‘C’ rating or the LEA and school must show substantial high growth in each subgroup. To accomplish both of these feats, students at each school and LEA must consistently show substantial improvement and growth over a sustained period of time, with the majority of that improvement and growth coming from the bottom 25 percent subgroup. Realizing the eight-year benchmark would result in a 75 percent increase (from 40 percent proficient to 70 percent proficient) in the proficiency level of these students.

Both Indiana’s three-year and eight-year benchmarks are extremely ambitious given historic statewide proficiency trends. But by building in a laser-like focus on each school’s lowest achievers, the new AMO and accountability system incent a strategic allocation of resources at the local level. Students will no longer slip through the accountability cracks of the traditional
subgroup structure. Instead, every school across the state will, for the first time, be held accountable for the performance of all struggling students. This strengthening and streamlining of school and district accountability will allow Indiana to race ahead of other states, put an end to a decades-long trend of poor performance among its bottom 25 percent subgroup, and bridge the gap between the state’s highest and lowest performers.

**Annual Goals**

Even though Indiana’s AMO provides three-year and eight-year benchmarks, all schools and LEAs will still be assessed annually for progress and performance under Indiana’s state accountability system. For a chart that outlines annual goals under this system, see page 64. Schools will be categorized as Focus, Priority, and Reward schools on a yearly basis as well. As outlined previously in this plan, Indiana has developed a rigorous state accountability system that holds schools and LEAs accountable for low growth and for poor proficiency, graduation, and/or college and career readiness rates.

**Indiana’s Proposed AMO within the Context of “Putting Students First”**

Indiana is one of the country’s leaders in providing a diverse environment of quality educational options. As part of “Putting Students First,” Indiana established the most expansive school choice system in the nation’s history. For the first time, all Indiana schools – traditional public, public charter, and private or parochial – are competing for the same students and the accompanying funding. As a result, there are new pressures on the system writ large to ensure every school and LEA continues to improve both their student proficiency levels across all subgroups and their overall grade.

The Indiana State Board of Education will have the ability to increase the required proficiency levels necessary to achieve each grade. IDOE is also in the process of developing an “automatic trigger” to ensure that the proficiency bar remains rigorous for all schools. Additionally, the growth and improvement targets will be re-evaluated at least every three years. In other words, schools will need to continue to improve just to maintain their current grade.

Considering Indiana’s accountability system within the new landscape of school choice and competition and the categorization of Title I schools, Indiana schools will be operating in a climate that promotes improvement at unprecedented levels. The pressures and incentives to increase student growth and achievement will increase while the additional layer of federal accountability standards will no longer act as a barrier to improvement.

To illustrate the potency of this new context, the following are possible scenarios for schools that fail to improve or receive an ‘A’:

- The school could be subject to state intervention, including but not limited to state takeover
- The school could lose state money as a result of students transferring to higher performing public and non-public schools.
- The school could have federal money withheld due to being classified as a Focus or Priority School
On the flip side, high performing schools will be celebrated in new and innovative ways, from preferred access to state grants that reward educator effectiveness to recognition ceremonies held in local communities throughout the state. Earlier this year, the Indiana General Assembly approved a two-year budget that includes $15 million in competitively allocated state funding to drive educator effectiveness. State legislators have expressed interest continuing to purpose state dollars for the improvement of human capital within schools; those that consistently deliver with regard to raising student performance may receive special consideration from IDOE in applying for these dollars. The expertise of high performers will also be leveraged by IDOE as the state acts to broker best practices in addressing achievement gaps and improving student outcomes.

For these reasons, Indiana schools and districts will be highly motivated to make annual progress and hit both the 2015 and 2020 benchmarks. Indiana’s proposed AMO outlines a bold, new approach toward realizing significant student performance gains by 2020. Our plan requires low-performing LEAs and schools to improve at a rate nearly double the state average while also being realistic about each school’s individual starting point or baseline.

LEAs and schools may also use a combination of proficiency level improvement and growth among their historically underperforming students to increase their grade. With Indiana’s proposal, rigorous measures are coupled with strong supports to ensure each school and district continues to progress on a yearly basis. This combination ensures that Indiana’s proposed AMO is both ambitious and achievable for every school in the state.

ii. Provide a link to the State’s report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010-2011 school year in reading/Language Arts and Mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)

See Attachment 8 for a chart outlining average statewide proficiency for all subgroups in 2010-11.

Indiana’s AMO would exceed the intention of both Options A and B.

Indiana’s AMO would result in forty-one percent of all non-proficient students becoming proficient by 2015 and sixty-five percent of all non-proficient students becoming proficient by 2020. It will also require the bottom 25 percent subgroup to nearly double its proficiency rates while maintaining high growth among the subgroup population.

The AMO calls for each LEA and school to receive an ‘A’ under the state accountability system or make great progress to that end by 2020. This target would translate into a state proficiency level of ninety percent. Moreover, each subgroup below that threshold would have made substantial gains and/or shown substantially high growth during that period.

As outlined in 2.A.ii, Indiana’s AMO is designed to be both ambitious and attainable. It is a bold
and considered approach that does not rely on static proficiency targets based on arbitrary percentages. Rather, Indiana’s proposed system is pegged to letter grades – embedded within which is a simple yet sophisticated mechanism for examining school and student performance. The improvement levels laid out in the AMO require LEAs and schools to improve proficiency levels at an achievable rate, while also rewarding them for making substantially high growth among its subgroup populations.

By realizing Indiana’s AMO, the state could expect 12,000 additional students to be college and career ready. Indiana defines a student as college or career ready if the student earns an academic honors diploma, passes an AP or IB exam, earns transcripted college credit, or earns an approved industry certification. Students who meet one or more of these indicators are significantly less likely to require remediation than their counterparts.

Indiana’s AMO would result in twenty percent more graduates being college or career ready in 2020 – an unprecedented accomplishment.

### 2.C Reward Schools

2.C.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools.

#### Rationale

Within a new culture of accountability in the state, Indiana proposes a differentiated recognition and reward system that engages schools and school districts in taking ownership of their results and drives them toward ongoing improvement. This recognition system, described below, was developed in consultation with multiple stakeholders and reflects the state’s commitment to setting and keeping the bar high. As such, this system will highlight and celebrate the schools to which communities across Indiana can look to find exemplars of excellence.

#### Highest Performing Schools

Any Title I school that receives an ‘A’ under the state accountability model for at least two consecutive years shall be classified as a **Highest Performing School**. The Highest Performing School designation reflects a firm belief in the importance of not only recognizing schools that make significant progress within a year but also celebrating the state’s highest achievers who have performed at a remarkably high level over a sustained period of time.

Recognizing both achievement and growth will ensure that all schools, regardless of their overall performance, focus on the improvement of each individual student rather than simply those on the cusp of proficiency (i.e. the “bubble kids”).
**High-Progress Elementary & Middle Schools**

Any Title I elementary or middle school that shows high growth in its bottom 25 percent student subgroup in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics shall be designated as a **High Progress Elementary/Middle School**.

The bottom 25 percent student population captures the lowest performing students within a school on the state assessment (*ISTEP*). This super subgroup encompasses each school’s lowest performers across all ethnic, socio-economic, special education, and LEP subgroups. By placing a special emphasis on the bottom 25 percent, High Progress Elementary/Middle Schools will close the achievement gap between top and bottom performers, leading to overall improvement in student proficiency levels.

The focus on the bottom 25 percent, consistent with Indiana’s state accountability model, is essential to meet Indiana’s proposed AMO by 2020.

**High-Progress High Schools**

Any Title I high school that shows significant high improvement within its not-proficient student population in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics shall be designated as a **High Progress High School**.

Consistent with current national trends, Indiana does not have yearly state assessments for students in grades 9-12. As a result, High Progress High Schools will be determined using the improvement made by previously not-proficient students. Any student that fails to pass the Algebra I (Mathematics) assessment or the English 10 (ELA) assessment by the completion of grade 10 is deemed to be non-proficient. Only schools that have the highest percentage (the top twenty-five percent improvement of all schools statewide) of these students passing both sections of the assessment prior to graduation will be categorized as High Progress High Schools.

Indiana will also recognize any Title I high school that makes a concerted effort to support those students who are not able to graduate within four years, but are able to graduate in five. This recognition does not lower expectations – the emphasis will remain on graduating within four years. However, schools must not give up on those who do not graduate on time and this recognition provides some incentive to keep pressing so that those students also receive a Core 40 diploma.

Indiana’s Core 40 is the academic foundation all students need to succeed in college, apprenticeship programs, military training, and the workforce. More information about Core 40 is available at [http://www.doe.in.gov/core40/diploma_requirements.html](http://www.doe.in.gov/core40/diploma_requirements.html)

At the high school level, Indiana is placing a heightened focus on non-proficient students because research shows that students who fail to pass these assessments by the end of grade 12 are far more likely to drop out of school, less likely to graduate, and – for those that do...
graduate—significantly more likely to require remedial coursework if they continue on to a postsecondary institution. This focus is also consistent with Indiana’s state accountability model and the state’s goal to produce more high school graduates that are prepared for college and careers.

Indiana is also calling attention to fifth-year graduates as part of the High Progress High School designation, consistent with efforts to support those who do not graduate within a four-year window. This attention recognizes schools that take students who may otherwise be forgotten, endeavor to turn their performance around, and set them on course for a productive future.

The High Progress School recognition, for both elementary/middle and high schools, places a premium on supporting historically low performing students who would have otherwise been on track to drop out, not receive a high school diploma, and not been properly prepared for college or career. This recognition seeks to highlight the schools that are successful in proving what is possible with some of the most challenging student populations.

Statewide, nearly sixteen percent (152 schools) of Title I schools would be identified as reward schools. See Attachment 9, Table 2 for a list of Indiana’s reward schools.

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

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

Reward schools will be recognized in a number of ways:

- All reward schools will receive bonus rubric points on their application for the Excellence in Performance Award for Teachers. This is a state-level competitive grant of $9M for FY12-13.
- IDOE will pursue greater funding flexibility for reward schools via the State Board of Education and the Indiana General Assembly.
- Best practices of reward schools will be highlighted and disseminated across the state.
- Dr. Bennett and IDOE staff will travel to the Highest Performing Schools to give their official ‘A’ plaque in a school-wide celebration.
- Reward schools will be exempt from certain regulations, such as complying with the administrative functions of Indiana’s 3rd grade reading plan.
- High Progress Schools may be honored at the State Capitol by the Governor or State Superintendent.
- High Progress Schools may be asked to present at the State Board of Education meetings as part of the monthly “Spotlight on Learning” that highlights outstanding schools and educational initiatives.
2.D  **Priority Schools**

2.D.i  Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State’s Title I schools as priority schools.

Any Title I school that receives an ‘F’ or is a persistently low-achieving school shall be classified as a *Priority School*. A persistently low-achieving school is defined as any school that receives a ‘D’ or an ‘F’ for two or more consecutive years.

Schools that meet this definition are among the lowest performing schools in the state and typically have extremely high rates of low growth (improvement) among all student subgroups. In fact, between schools categorized as *priority* and *focus schools*, the entire fifteen percent of schools with the lowest performance would be facing some level of state intervention under proposed definitions. These schools also encompass all Title I schools in the state that have a graduation rate of less than sixty-percent. In fact, these schools have an average graduation rate of less than fifty percent.

It is essential that these schools get back on track and increase their performance across all areas (state assessments, graduation, and college and career readiness rates). Notably, students in priority schools are sixty-three percent less likely to pass a state assessment, fifty-five percent less likely to graduate, and six times more likely to drop out of school than are students in Indiana’s ‘A’ schools.

Statewide, approximately sixteen percent (154 schools) of Title I schools would be identified as priority schools. See Attachment 9, Table 2 for a list of Indiana’s priority schools.

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

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

**State Authority**

Public Law 221 (P.L. 221) is Indiana’s comprehensive accountability system for K-12 education. Passed by the Indiana General Assembly in 1999 – prior to the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 – the law aimed to establish major educational reform and accountability statewide. To measure progress, P.L. 221 places Indiana schools (both public and accredited non-public) into one of five categories (A, B, C, D and F) based upon student performance and growth data from the state’s *ISTEP*+ and End-of-Course Assessments (ECAs).

Schools in the lowest P.L. 221 category (F) face a series of interventions designed to provide the additional support needed to improve student achievement. These consequences become
more serious the longer schools remain in the bottom category.

Public Law 221 Timeline for “F” Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Action</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Action</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years 2 and 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Action</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Action</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years 4 and 5</th>
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</thead>
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<td><strong>State Action</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Local Action</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Action</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Action</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the fall of 2011, for the first time since P.L. 221 was signed into law, seven schools reached their sixth year of academic probation – the lowest performance category (now called “F”). At the August 29, 2011 State Board of Education (SBOE) meeting, the board approved IDOE’s intervention recommendations and voted in favor of assigning a special management team to operate five of the seven schools and implementing a lead partner intervention at the remaining two schools.

Prior to the state’s action, school reform opponents were highly skeptical and dubious of Dr. Bennett’s and the State Board of Education’s resolve to intervene. In fact, some publicly questioned what they perceived as a “game of chicken” and one school administrator even remarked, “The State of Indiana will never take over a school. It never has and it never will.” To the surprise of these detractors, the SBOE has proven its willingness to exercise the full scope of its authority and act with the sense of urgency needed to quickly and dramatically improve the educational quality in these schools.

As a result of Dr. Bennett’s leadership and the SBOE’s courage and conviction, a new dawn of school accountability has finally begun in Indiana. Prior to August 29, there was no precedent for this level of state action. Not surprisingly, a clear message has been sent that the state will not stand idly by when schools continue to fail and students are permitted to languish. Perhaps more importantly, the landscape has permanently shifted to one where accountability is real.

Process
The state’s process and strategy for intervening in the lowest performing schools is predicated upon the development of clear goals and measurable success indicators through the lens of a seminal framework developed by Mass Insight and outlined in The Turnaround Challenge, which U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan has called “the Bible of school turnaround.” Indiana is currently one of a few select states participating in Mass Insight’s School Development Network as part of a concerted effort to trailblaze cutting-edge, best-in-class turnaround policies.

The special management team assigned by the SBOE is also referred to as a Turnaround School Operator (TSO). TSOs run operations for all or part of a school, using the school’s per-pupil funding allocation. The TSO intervention is the most severe of the options available under state statute. It is reserved exclusively for the chronically lowest performing schools. In schools not assigned TSOs, Lead Partners (LPs) work strategically with the leadership appointed through the school district to support and implement targeted improvements. Each TSO has entered into an initial one-year contract with the state, and the SBOE has established aggressive benchmarks that TSOs and LPs must hit to maintain their good standing.

TSOs will spend the rest of the 2011-12 academic year evaluating and preparing to assume full operational control in the 2012-13 school year. Consistent with Mass Insight’s groundbreaking research, benchmarks for this transitional year include a strong focus on community and parent
outreach as well as a thorough evaluation of school programs, staff and curriculum. The data collected by TSOs will lay the groundwork for a fast start when they take the wheel from the local school district next year.

LPs will also engage key stakeholder groups to establish buy-in to the support services provided. They will be held responsible for integrating their work with existing school initiatives and ensuring that the school is on track to dramatically improve. LPs will spend a few months embedding themselves into the school and assessing its needs before initiating services this year.

The TSOs and LPs are under the direct oversight of IDOE and are directly accountable to the State Board of Education. IDOE’s Office of School Improvement and Turnaround will conduct constant and ongoing oversight of the TSOs and LPs through weekly meetings, attendance at key events and functions (e.g. community forums), and review of all deliverables, which are subject to IDOE approval. IDOE’s engagement with TSOs and LPs will be “high touch,” as this is one of Dr. Bennett’s key education priorities.

**School Turnaround and Community Involvement**

Limited or non-existent community engagement is one of the most frequently cited reasons for the failure of school turnaround. Consequently, IDOE intentionally built in a transitional year that prioritizes community engagement (e.g. focus groups, community forums, partnerships) in each of the four phases of work required of TSOs during the initial year. This transition affords TSOs critical time to develop a bold and aggressive school transformation plan while building meaningful community will and coalitions that can later be leveraged to sustain ongoing improvement. LPs will also be responsible for engaging their respective communities to generate support for its school turnaround efforts.

More information about the state’s turnaround process is included as Attachment 17 and available at [http://www.doe.in.gov/turnaround/](http://www.doe.in.gov/turnaround/).

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

**Current and accelerated timeline**

P.L. 221 clearly outlines interventions for priority schools across a six-year trajectory, ultimately resulting in SEA intervention authorized by the SBOE. The timeline and specifics of this trajectory are detailed in section 2.D.iii. The SBOE has shown that it will not hesitate if and when intervention becomes necessary.

Of particular importance are the ways in which the LEA has the flexibility and authority to leverage SEA resources to apply interventions aligned with turnaround principles prior to the
SBOE’s authority to act in the sixth year of academic probation or “F.” It behooves an LEA with one or more priority schools to utilize this flexibility to retain its authority rather than allowing the SBOE to assign a special management team.

As dramatically as Indiana’s accountability climate has recently shifted, the six-year timeline is far too long considering it is nearly equivalent to a student’s entire middle and high school experience. Notwithstanding Dr. Bennett’s impatience with mediocrity, the PL. 221 timeline must be accelerated to ensure all LEAs with one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions. Allowing schools to linger in “F” status for six consecutive years before demanding action is an injustice to Indiana’s students.

At the same time, it is hardly better to allow “D” schools and those that bounce between “D” and “F” to avoid accountability completely. For example, in the spring of 2011, eighteen schools in Indiana had been designated as “F” for five consecutive years. Eleven of these eighteen made just enough improvement to escape intervention. As a result, the clock has reset for these eleven schools. If they return to an “F” rating this year, it will take five additional consecutive years of “F” ratings before IDOE and SBOE can apply an intervention. This statutory shortcoming must soon be remedied.

Given the need to boldly intervene in the lowest performing schools, Dr. Bennett is aggressively pursuing an accelerated accountability timeline. Specifically, he seeks one in which schools that are an “F” for four consecutive years or any combination of “D” and “F” for five consecutive years would face state intervention. Dr. Bennett will ask the Indiana General Assembly to take up the issue during the next legislative session, which commences in January 2012. IDOE is counting on having an accelerated timeline ready to commence in the 2012-13 school year – far ahead of 2014-15.
## PL 221 Timeline – Current versus Proposed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Current timeline*</th>
<th>Proposed timeline (Starting in 2012-13)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>LEA holds a public hearing</td>
<td>LEA holds a public hearing and forwards minutes to the State Board of Education within 45 days of the hearing. This also applies if the school receives a “D” rating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Nothing additional</td>
<td>Parents of at least 51% of students in an “F” school may petition SBOE to place the school into the equivalent of Year 4 status – allowing SBOE to intervene earlier. This “parent trigger” may be implemented any time between Years 2-4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Nothing additional</td>
<td>SEA conducts a Quality Review visit to audit the school against the Mass Insight readiness framework. This Quality Review requirement applies to schools with 3 consecutive years of any combination of “D” or “F.” School remains subject to the parent trigger. A “D” or “F” school remains subject to these provisions until the school achieves a “C” or higher for two consecutive years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>SEA conducts a Quality Review visit to audit the school against the Mass Insight readiness framework.</td>
<td>SBOE holds a public hearing. SBOE votes on potential interventions. Schools with 4 years of any combination of “D” or “F” remain subject to the parent trigger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>LEA implements Quality Review recommendations.</td>
<td>Fully implement interventions. For schools with 5 years of any combination of “D” or “F,” SBOE holds a public hearing and votes on potential interventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>SBOE holds a public hearing. SBOE votes on potential interventions. Full implementation of interventions begins in the subsequent year.</td>
<td>Continue implementation of interventions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*The current timeline only applies to “F” schools. The proposed timeline addresses both “D” and “F” schools.*

**Schools after successful turnaround**

Once administrative rules recently initiated by the SBOE become final, the state will have an established process for schools ending the five-year turnaround period. At the end of a TSO’s four-year operational contract (which follows the initial one-year contract), the initial oversight of the school will come from a newly created local governing board. This board will be made up of three members appointed by the highest level official of the political subdivision and four members appointed by the SBOE. The initial governing body will determine the length of terms, term limits, and other governing matters. Notably, the governing body of a school may do any of the following:

1. Enter into an agreement with the school district in which the school is located for the operation of the school. Before an agreement is finalized, the SBOE:
   (A) must approve the transfer of operations; and
   (B) may set requirements for the operation of the school district.
2. Join with another school to form a single school.
3. Apply to an appropriate sponsor to become a charter school.
4. Enter into a contract with a management team to operate the school or any part of the school.
5. Enter into a contract with another school to provide educational services.
6. Operate the school.

The flexibility provided to the initial governing body provides a clear exit strategy for IDOE, as the SEA should not be in the long-term business of running schools. Moreover, this process ensures that a school that has been successful transformed does not return to the original school district by default, especially if it is in a state of chronic dysfunction.

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

To exit priority status, a school must maintain a ‘C’ grade or better for at least two consecutive years or earn the status of being a reward school for one year.

Carrying this out would require a school to show a combination of significant improvement on proficiency rates (between ten to twenty percent) and substantially high growth over that two-year period (ranking in the top twenty-five percent of all schools in student growth). In most cases, this type of movement (i.e. grade improvement) would demonstrate that the school has made major changes in the quality of instruction provided, in how the school operates, and the methods used to teach its students. Indiana’s proposed criteria makes it extremely difficult to exit priority status without establishing meaningful and long-term strategies that promise to put the students and the school on a path of future success.
Notably, a ten percent improvement in proficiency rate or showing high student growth is required to increase a school’s grade to the next level. A school that is able to raise its letter grade by that amount for two or more consecutive years is unlikely to precipitously regress.

2.E  **Focus Schools**

2.E.i  Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State’s Title I schools as “focus schools.”

Any Title I school that receives a ‘D’ and is not identified as a priority school shall be classified as a **Focus School**.

Schools that receive ‘Ds’ under Indiana’s state accountability model also have the largest achievement gaps in the state (i.e. the five percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps). In fact, ninety-five percent of the Title I schools with the largest achievement gap between their highest performing students (top seventy-five percent subgroup) and their lowest performing students (the bottom 25 percent subgroup) received ‘Ds’ and would be captured under this definition. These schools also have some of the largest achievement gaps across traditional subgroups as well.

Indiana’s focus schools have both low proficiency rates and significant achievement gaps. It is Indiana’s goal to reduce the number of focus schools by two-thirds (from sixteen percent to five percent) by 2015 and to completely remove the need for this designation by 2020.

Statewide, sixteen percent (154 schools) of Title I schools would be identified as focus schools.

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

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

See Attachment 9, Table 2 for a list of Indiana’s focus schools.

Currently, schools similar to focus schools only have to set-aside ten percent of their Title I budget for professional development. They frequently use these funds to hire instructional coaches to deliver professional development, but there is little if any accountability for achieving results. Under this proposal, IDOE will approve and require schools to select
meaningful, rigorously implemented interventions tied to the Mass Insight readiness framework IDOE uses to drive school improvement.

IDOE will require LEAs with one or more focus schools to implement scientifically-based interventions aligned with demonstrated needs supported by quantitative and qualitative data. The process and timeline for these efforts are as follows:

In Year 1, focus schools must do the following:
- Select at least three interventions, at least one from each of the three “readiness” domains, and determine how to implement each intervention with at least “Tier 2” rigor. The domains and tiers are outlined in section 2.F.
- Submit to IDOE an outline of each proposed intervention and a justification for the selections with evidence from School Improvement Plans and/or student-/school-level data
- Subject to IDOE review and requests for revisions, implement the interventions during Year 1

In Year 2, focus schools must do the following:
- Analyze student-/school-level data to determine necessary modifications to the interventions, the “rigor tier” or fidelity of implementation
  - The number of interventions and their corresponding domains can be adjusted based on demonstrated needs (i.e. at least three interventions, one from each of the “readiness” domains, are no longer required)
  - All implementation plans for proposed interventions must be at least “Tier 2” rigor
- Submit a report to the IDOE outlining each proposed intervention and justifying the selections with evidence from previous year’s findings as well as School Improvement Plans and/or student-/school-level data
- Subject to IDOE review and requests for revisions, implement the interventions during Year 2

In Year 3, focus schools must do the following:
- Analyze student-/school-level data to determine necessary modifications to the interventions, the “rigor tier” or fidelity of implementation
  - The number of interventions and their corresponding domains can be adjusted based on demonstrated needs (i.e. at least three interventions, one from each of the “readiness” domains, are no longer required)
  - All implementation plans for proposed interventions must be at least “Tier 2” rigor
- Plan to make modifications to proposed interventions based on mid-year findings from IDOE-provided Technical Assistance Team Quality Review
- Submit a report to the IDOE outlining each proposed intervention and justifying the selections with evidence from previous year’s findings as well as School Improvement Plans and/or student-/school-level data
- Subject to IDOE review and requests for revisions, implement the interventions during Year 3
Plans and/or student-/school-level data

- Subject to IDOE review and requests for revisions, implement the interventions during Year 3
- Participate and comply with IDOE-provided Technical Assistance Team Quality Review
- Based on findings from the Quality Review and IDOE review (subject to requests for revisions), adjust interventions accordingly

In year 4, focus schools must do the following:

- Implement interventions and their corresponding “rigor tier” as stipulated by the IDOE, based on findings from the Technical Assistance Team Quality Review
- LEAs that choose not to comply with this expectation will not be provided school improvement funding

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

To exit focus status, a school must maintain a ‘C’ grade or better for at least two years or earn the status of being a reward school for one year. If a school moves from being a ‘D’ school up to at least a ‘C’ for two years, this attainment means it has made significant gains in student growth and achievement. If a school can move one letter grade and sustain that level of achievement for two years, it is likely that substantive changes were made to the instructional quality at the school.

As described in 2.D.v., it takes a ten percent improvement in proficiency rate or showing high student growth to increase a school’s grade to the next level. Such an achievement is not insignificant.
**Table 2: Reward, Priority, and Focus Schools**

Provide the SEA’s list of reward, priority, and focus schools using the Table 2 template. Use the key to indicate the criteria used to identify a school as a reward, priority, or focus school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEA Name</th>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>School NCES ID #</th>
<th>REWARD SCHOOL</th>
<th>PRIORITY SCHOOL</th>
<th>FOCUS SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex. Washington</td>
<td>Oak HS</td>
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<td>C</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Maple ES</td>
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<td>Elm HS</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total # of Schools:**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reward School Criteria:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Highest-performing school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. High-progress school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority School Criteria:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the proficiency and lack of progress of the “all students” group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Title I-participating or Title I-eligible high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Tier I or Tier II SIG school implementing a school intervention model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus School Criteria:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Has the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup(s) and the lowest-achieving subgroup(s) or, at the high school level, has the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. A Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years that is not identified as a priority school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE I SCHOOLS

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

Under Indiana’s proposal, priority and focus schools will be provided substantive flexibility to implement scientifically-based, student-/school-based data-informed interventions. As described below, these interventions will be tied to a framework utilized by the IDOE during Technical Assistance Team Quality Reviews – Mass Insight’s “Readiness Model.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readiness to Learn</th>
<th>Readiness to Teach</th>
<th>Readiness to Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Safety, Discipline, and Engagement</td>
<td>• Shared Responsibility for Achievement</td>
<td>• Resource Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Action Against Adversity</td>
<td>• Personalization of Instruction</td>
<td>• Resource Ingenuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Close Student-Adult Relationships</td>
<td>• Professional Teaching culture</td>
<td>• Agility in the Face of Turbulence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intervention Examples**

- **Readiness to Learn**
  - School culture specialist
  - Attendance officer
  - ELA specialist
  - Community liaison
  - Family liaison

- **Readiness to Teach**
  - 8-step process
  - Formative assessment training (e.g., Acuity)
  - Revise schedule to build-in time for professional learning communities
  - Restructure the academic schedule to increase core content or remediation time
  - Tutoring or extended learning time

- **Readiness to Act**
  - Performance incentives tied to high-need areas of instruction and/or student performance indicators
  - Replace principal with one who has a track record of success in school turnaround

The LEA may propose an intervention not listed above as long as it is anchored in the “Readiness Model.”
Moreover, the rigor with which an LEA is responsible for implementing these interventions will be tied to the “rigor tiers” outlined below.

**Tier 1 Implementation Rigor – Overall**
- Designed for all students and/or staff
- Considered requisite for the operation of the school
- Intervention implementation plans may not fall into this tier

**Tier 2 Implementation Rigor – Targeted**
- Designed to provide strategic, targeted modifications to one or more constitutive elements of the school, such as the following:
  - Core curriculum
  - Data-driven instruction
  - Community partnerships

**Tier 3 Implementation Rigor – Highly-Targeted**
- Designed as intense intervention to meet demonstrated individual or subgroup needs, such as the following:
  - English language learner support
  - Exceptional learners support
  - Specialized English/Language Arts and/or Mathematics support

In Year 1, priority schools must do the following:
- Select at least three interventions, at least one from each of the three “readiness” domains, and determine how to implement each intervention with at least “Tier 2” rigor
- Submit a report to the IDOE outlining each proposed intervention and justifying the selections with evidence from School Improvement Plans and/or student-/school-level data
- Subject to IDOE review and requests for revisions, implement the interventions during Year 1

In Year 2, priority schools must do the following:
- Analyze student-/school-level data to determine necessary modifications to the interventions, the “rigor tier” or fidelity of implementation
  - The number of interventions and their corresponding domains can be adjusted based on demonstrated needs (i.e. at least three interventions, one from each of the “readiness” domains, are no longer required)
  - All implementation plans for proposed interventions must be at least “Tier 2” rigor
- Plan to make modifications to proposed interventions based on mid-year findings from IDOE-provided Technical Assistance Team Quality Review
- Submit a report to the IDOE outlining each proposed intervention and justifying the selections with evidence from previous year’s findings as well as School Improvement
Plans and/or student-/school-level data
- Subject to IDOE review and requests for revisions, implement the interventions during Year 2
- Participate and comply with IDOE-provided Technical Assistance Team Quality Review
- Based on findings from the Quality Review and IDOE review (subject to requests for revisions), adjust interventions accordingly

In Year 3, priority schools must do the following:
- Implement interventions and their corresponding “rigor tier” as stipulated by the IDOE, based on findings from the Technical Assistance Team Quality Review
- LEAs that choose not to comply with this expectation will not be provided school improvement funding

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

2.G Describe the SEA’s process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:

i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;

ii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools; and

iii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources).

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

To bolster IDOE’s monitoring of and technical assistance for LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools, additional structures and supports will be built around the proposed interventions. For priority and focus schools, the LEA will be required to submit an intervention plan each year, which in turn will be reviewed by the IDOE and subject to necessary revisions. This additional check will provide meaningful monitoring and technical assistance to ensure the interventions selected from the menu of options are data-driven and reflective of the school’s demonstrated needs. This review and potential revision process persists for priority schools until year 3 and for focus schools until year 4, when the LEA must align its interventions to the IDOE’s recommendations based on the findings of the
Rather than creating another compliance exercise, this process is designed to align federal and state improvement efforts into a singular, coherent strategy. IDOE is serious about ensuring that all plans, interventions and uses of funds (federal and state) are closely aligned. More importantly, all plans and funds must directly address the needs of the students and be firmly grounded in relevant performance data.

   ii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around priority schools; and

IDOE will hold LEAs accountable for turning around priority schools by enforcing, as demonstrated by recent actions taken by the SBOE at the recommendation of the IDOE, the interventions prescribed in P.L. 221, including changing the priority school’s governance structure. Specifically, if an LEA fails to utilize the resources and authority at its disposal across a six-year trajectory for turning around its priority schools, IDOE and SBOE will take the appropriate actions to ensure a dramatic course correction is applied.

As described in 2.D.iii., Indiana recently demonstrated this commitment by directly intervening in seven of the state’s persistently lowest performing schools. Five of these schools are no longer a part of the LEA and are now designated “Turnaround Academies” under the auspices of the SBOE. For a Turnaround Academy to rejoin the LEA, the SBOE will need to see that the LEA has, in the time that the Turnaround Academy has been operated by a TSO, demonstrated significant improvement in its other priority and focus schools as well as made appropriate district-level changes in staffing and structure to better support its low-performing schools. When determining the next steps for a Turnaround Academy at the end of the TSO’s four-year operational contract, the SBOE will have a menu of options from which to select, including renewing the TSO’s contract.

The assignment of TSOs constitutes a school restart, one of the four federal turnaround models. A recent analysis of School Improvement Grant recipients identified that less than 3 percent of all SIG interventions utilize the restart model. The fact that IDOE and SBOE selected the restart model for over two-thirds of the schools within its jurisdiction highlights the urgency that both groups bring to the critical job of turning around Indiana’s lowest-performing schools. Even the application of a lead partner intervention, certainly not a mild intervention by any means, at the remaining two schools is designed to hold the LEA accountable for improving its priority schools.

Priority schools assigned a lead partner intervention by the SBOE remain under the LEA’s jurisdiction. But if the priority school does not demonstrate measured and agreed upon gains and/or if the LEA impedes upon the LP’s work, the SBOE has the authority and conviction to modify the intervention as soon as it deems necessary. As a result, the LEA is compelled to work collaboratively and support LPs to both retain LEA authority and ensure the marked improvement of priority schools.
iii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under IDOE’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).

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

Interventions selected by priority and focus schools will undergo a rigorous review process by the IDOE and its Office of School Improvement and Turnaround. This review process will not be compliance driven but rather rooted in high expectations that proposed interventions will be decided upon based on a theory of action and anchored in relevant quantitative and qualitative data. Moreover, IDOE will require LEAs to clearly describe its implementation plans for proposed interventions in terms of three tiers of rigor (discussed in 2.F).

If the plan is approved, IDOE specialists in the Office of School Improvement and Turnaround will conduct monitoring visits to ascertain the fidelity with which the intervention is truly being implemented. This information will in turn inform subsequent IDOE and SBOE decisions for state intervention. In the short-term, monitoring of intervention selection and implementation will inform how much flexibility LEAs are given to determine their own interventions; in the long-term, it will shape the SBOE’s recommendation for state intervention.

Summary

IDOE has thoughtfully and carefully designed its new accountability system to differentiate recognition, accountability, and support. The A-F letter grades – built on top of a robust growth model and a bottom 25 percent focus that targets the achievement gap – coupled with a state accountability statute (P.L. 221) that provides for an aggressive state support and intervention mechanism fit together as part of a coherent and comprehensive system that supports continuous school improvement.

When it comes to the state’s chronically lowest performing schools, Indiana proposes a tiered intervention system aligned to the latest research and best practices in school turnaround. Working alongside the SEA, successful schools and LEAs are provided greater support, flexibility, and latitude. Conversely, those that persistently struggle will receive interventions of increasing severity, proportional to the level of need at the school.

Moreover, the efficacy of this system is promising within Indiana’s new education climate – one that promotes strong school choice and competition. As part of “Putting Students First,” parents and families can compare traditional public, public charter, and private school options because all receive letter grades as part the state’s broader effort to increase the
engagement and involvement of all stakeholders.
### 3.A  Develop and Adopt Guidelines for Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option A</th>
<th>Option B</th>
<th>Option C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="#" alt="If the SEA has not already developed any guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="If the SEA has already developed and adopted one or more, but not all, guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. the SEA’s plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year;</td>
<td>i. a copy of any guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students;</td>
<td>i. a copy of the guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and</td>
<td>ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11);</td>
<td>ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14).</td>
<td>iii. the SEA’s plan to develop and adopt the remaining guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year;</td>
<td>iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
adopted guidelines and the process to continue their involvement in developing any remaining guidelines; and

v. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the remaining guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14).

i. a copy of the guidelines IDOE has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students;

- evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and

First and foremost, IDOE’s priority with regard to improving student achievement and the quality of instruction for students is to recognize great teaching and leadership. Few states are as well positioned as Indiana to lead the way in the important work of improving teacher and principal support systems. Indiana has fully embraced this challenge and opportunity to fundamentally reshape the quality of feedback provided to educators and to develop robust evaluation systems that shine a spotlight on excellence.

As part of “Putting Students First,” IDOE recently established bold new guidelines for holding principals and teachers accountable for their students’ performance and achievement through meaningful evaluations. These guidelines are designed to assist schools and LEAs in their efforts to increase teacher and leader effectiveness, close the achievement gap and promote the equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders across the state. Nowhere is this task more urgent and important than in high-poverty and high-minority schools that have been historically marginalized. Addressing this inequity and eliminating the achievement gap are the civil rights issues of our time.

Indiana’s new evaluation system provides a transparent way to validate the quality of a school’s human capital by coupling professional accountability with school accountability. For example, an “A” school with over 90 percent of its teachers rated effective or highly effective is far less problematic than an “F” school with a similar distribution. Examining the new evaluation system alongside the new A-F accountability framework provides a unique check and balance that will allow IDOE to continue supporting the field in this new and innovative approach to transforming schools.

Through legislation passed during the 2011 session of the Indiana General Assembly, all LEAs must establish a teacher evaluation system by July 1, 2012. Public Law 90 (PL 90) details
several clear and rigorous guardrails for evaluations that are outlined below. Specifically, evaluations must reflect the following state priorities:

- Be conducted at least annually
- Include objective measures of student data
- Include multiple measures
- Differentiate across four discrete category ratings (i.e. highly effective, effective, improvement necessary, ineffective)
- Include valuable feedback that is tied directly to professional development

Recognizing the importance of PL 90, the state legislature included funding in the state budget to provide a monetary incentive for LEAs to embrace the primacy of educator effectiveness. Six million dollars in pay for performance grants are competitively available to school districts that wish to reward high performing teachers by implementing rigorous evaluation systems. An additional nine million dollars in performance-based compensation grants are available the following year. IDOE has been charged with administering this grant and will do so to drive the development of innovative evaluation systems that best promise to boost student achievement and growth.

PL 90 also mandates that evaluations directly support teachers by identifying areas of improvement to be targeted via professional development. The goal is to increase the frequency and quality of feedback to Indiana’s educators so that they can leverage this information to improve their instructional practice and raise student performance.

As described earlier in this proposal, Indiana is one of only a handful of states in the country with a clear approach to measuring student growth at the individual student level. As part of the evaluation guidelines required by PL 90, LEAs must include objective measures of student data as part of their evaluation of teachers and principals. When available, LEAs are strongly encouraged to use student growth data as part of a teacher’s evaluation.

Currently, growth data is available for Mathematics and English/Language Arts teachers in grades 4 through 8. Using growth model data, IDOE will provide a rating based on the four categories (4=highly effective, 3=effective, 2=improvement necessary, 1=ineffective) for teachers working with students with growth model data. For teachers in untested subject areas, the state is developing guidelines around best assessments, sources of data and how to utilize that information for the purposes of teacher evaluation. Although school districts have some flexibility with how data is weighted, PL 90 mandates that any teacher with a negative impact on student growth cannot receive a rating of effective or highly effective (regardless of the tool or weighting in place at the local level). Moreover, the definition of negative impact is determined by IDOE.

See Attachments 10 and 11 for an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems and for evidence of their adoption.
ii. a description of the process IDOE used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.

Educators played an important role in the state’s efforts to develop the best possible teacher and principal evaluation legislation and model rubrics. IDOE staff traveled across the state presenting and facilitating discussions with over 30,000 teachers to help inform legislative policy and implementation plans for changes in evaluation practice. In working to develop a model tool, the state convened an Educator Evaluation Cabinet to help ensure proposed laws and tools were fair, multifaceted and comprehensive. This group met monthly for over eighteen months and continues to do so as the tool gets piloted throughout the state and as training sessions are developed. The Educator Evaluation Cabinet represents a diverse cross-section of educators and education advocates:

- **J. Matthew Walsh**: Brownsburg Community School Corporation Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, 2003 Milken National Educator
- **Keith Gambill**: President, Evansville Teachers Association
- **Steve Baker**: Indiana Association of School Principals President, Principal in Bluffton-Harrison MSD
- **Anna Shults**: IDOE Literacy Specialist, 2007 Indiana Teacher of the Year
- **Lorinda Kline**: 2009 Indiana Teacher of the Year Runner Up, District Mathematics Coach, Warsaw Community Schools
- **Alicia D. Harris**: 2001 Milken Educator, Assistant Principal in MSD Washington Township
- **Jim Larson**: Teach Plus Policy Fellow, Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School, 2009-2010 Tindley Teacher of the Year
- **Tom Keeley**: Director of Business and Personnel, Beech Grove City Schools
- **Mindy Schlegel**: IDOE Senior Policy Advisor for Educator Effectiveness

The evaluation tool developed through this process is known as RISE. As part of current efforts to implement Indiana’s new educator evaluation law and test RISE, the IDOE has launched the 2011-2012 Indiana Evaluation Pilot. The pilot will do the following:

1. Establish that evaluation systems (including the state model as well as other diverse models currently in use) can incorporate state priorities and are fair, accurate and feasible,
2. Gather key lessons about systems and implementation to improve resources and outcomes in the statewide rollout, and
3. Create a community of early adopters of state priorities to share information and problem solve in real time.

IDOE recognized that there were school districts in the state already using rigorous evaluation systems. Some of these districts were also included in the pilot. As a result, the state pilot runs on two tracks:

- Track 1 is for districts interested in piloting the state model (i.e. RISE) district-wide.
- Track 2 is for districts interested becoming early adopters incorporating state
priorities into their current district evaluation tool (e.g. annual evaluations, the use of student growth data, and summative ratings in four categories).

The pilot was deliberately structured to include evaluation tools school districts were already using. This design was intentional so the state could promote best practices and lessons learned from not only the state’s tool but also those gleaned from the best locally developed tools already in use. In the coming year, as more LEAs begin to consider changes to their current systems, they will have access to lessons learned from this year’s pilot.

There are six LEAs participating in the pilot, reflecting two distinct cohorts. The first cohort is comprised of the three LEAs implementing RISE. The second constitutes the three LEAs implementing their own models with adjustments that ensure alignment to the state priorities outlined in PL 90. LEAs were selected to reflect diversity in size/population, geographic region and socio-economic status. Qualitative and quantitative data sources will be collected during the pilot year, culminating in a mid-year and summative report that will be published and made available via the IDOE website.

Methodology for the reporting will include multiple data sources and a combination of analyses. A primary data source will be confidential administrator and teacher surveys that will probe viewpoints on teacher evaluation systems. The information from these surveys will be linked to district data sources on teacher evaluation. The study will compare the responses of teachers based on effectiveness ratings as well as other relevant factors (such as level of school need, seniority, etc.). In addition to surveys, interviews and focus groups will be conducted with key stakeholders. These interviews will provide important qualitative data to help round out findings from the report, specifically those related to challenges and successes regarding implementation.

Indiana’s school districts have already expressed excitement with regard to RISE implementation. For many, the need to explore a revamping of teacher and principal evaluations systems is long overdue. This sentiment is reflected in the sampling of quotes below, which attests to the promise of RISE and the state’s commitment to overhauling educator evaluation systems:

“We developed a process that has been effective in turning around our 11 LEAD Schools that includes a four-step support system. Because of our relationship with the state, we signed on to pilot its Teacher Effectiveness rubric that is closely aligned to the evaluation tool we are already using. This will also give us the opportunity to validate our support system to improve instruction.”

   – Dr. Wendy Robinson, Superintendent, Fort Wayne Community Schools

“Beech Grove City Schools is excited to be part of the IDOE pilot to enhance teaching and learning in our school district. The pilot will provide the opportunity to be involved in the new model of staff evaluation from the ground floor. Our involvement will assist school
districts throughout the entire state of Indiana.”

– Dr. Paul Kaiser, Superintendent, Beech Grove City Schools

“The goal is to carefully develop a teacher evaluation process and instrument, pilot the instrument and train the evaluators and teachers in the implementation. We are looking to develop a reliable and valid process and instrument that will provide data that can be transformed into meaningful information.”

– Russ Mikel, Superintendent, Bremen Public Schools

RISE represents the tip of the spear in ensuring evaluation systems across the state are markedly improved. This pilot paves the path for strengthening the teaching profession, because it offers a unique opportunity to put best practices into action and enables IDOE to further support teacher and principal improvement down the line. The state will study the successes and challenges of each pilot district and leverage this information to support evaluation reforms statewide.

In an ongoing effort to develop customized guidance for school districts, IDOE has identified working groups of teachers to research and recommend appropriate assessments for districts to use in assessing student growth in their subject area. In particular, the state has established working advisory groups for some of the non-tested subject areas including special education, career and technical education, art, music, and physical education. These working groups are producing guidance documents on assessments, quality data sources, and issues to consider specific to their content area. IDOE is confident this collaboration with the field will build credibility in the model across the state. Moreover, the wisdom, knowledge and practical experience these practitioners have brought to be bear to this process has been invaluable.

Teachers and principals are accountable to students and parents for employing high expectations and world-class standards to drive student achievement each day. Now, these professionals will be evaluated annually and rewarded for their performance based on objective data on student learning. Working side-by-side with some of the state’s finest educators, Indiana is laying the groundwork for becoming the best state in the union in establishing a positive culture where professional support, cultivation and training are second to none.

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

3.B Provide the SEA’s process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA’s adopted guidelines.
As part of Dr. Bennett’s call to shift IDOE from a compliance-based organization to one that supports educators in carrying out swift-moving and sweeping reforms, IDOE was again reorganized in July 2011 to align with the demands of “Putting Students First.” A new division, the Office of Educator Effectiveness and Leadership, was created specifically to address the new initiatives called for with the implementation of PL 90. With the establishment of this office, IDOE has committed resources and personnel to adequately staff the work needed to ensure successful statewide implementation.

The Office of Educator Effectiveness and Leadership will support districts as they embark on this groundbreaking work, develop training modules and support documents, and provide assessment support for areas not covered by state exams. PL 90 provided districts with one school year for the planning and development of tools to meet the new expectations for teacher and principal evaluation. IDOE is creating guidance support in helping districts understand and implement the steps needed. Moreover, IDOE representatives presented information at all of the state’s regional superintendent meetings this fall in order to ensure school districts are on track with the timeline and changes required.

**Educator Evaluations**

The following requirements are provided under state law due to the passage of PL 90. A school district may adopt the model plan (RISE) without the SBOE’s approval, or the district may modify the model plan or develop the school district’s own plan, so long as it fulfills the state’s priorities for all evaluations. If a school district modifies the model plan or develops its own, the district must have seventy-five percent of teachers approve the plan in order to apply for state pay for performance grant monies. IDOE will ensure these plans meet the minimum criteria. Each school district must submit its plan to IDOE, which will publish all plans on IDOE’s website.

Every school district must annually provide to IDOE the results of the staff performance evaluations, including the number of certificated employees placed in each of the four performance categories. IDOE will annually report the results of staff performance evaluations to SBOE and will publish aggregate information on the IDOE’s website. As described earlier in 3.A.ii., the collection and display of teacher evaluation data in combination with the A-F grading system will make the alignment of teacher effectiveness to school achievement transparent. Failing schools with high percentages of effective or highly effective teachers will easily be identified for remediation. Identifying any disconnect between school accountability and professional accountability will enable IDOE to target assistance and support in a strategic manner. These two key indicators run parallel to one another and should work in conjunction so parents and community members have access to clear and transparent information about their schools and the teachers that work in them.

While districts are obligated to comply with legislative mandates, the state also installed sound mechanisms to ensure that districts could take ownership in improving their systems. The performance grants, described earlier, will incent districts to do just this. These competitive
grants will increase in amount over the next two years with early indication that additional dollars will be allocated in the future.

The performance grant application is included as Attachment 18 and also available at: http://www.doe.in.gov/puttingstudentsfirst/documents/performance_grant_application.pdf.

Additionally, evaluation guidance will direct districts to develop a review system as a part of the evaluation plans they must submit to the state. School districts will outline a clear process for review and refinement to ensure they are moving towards high quality evaluations, professional development, and improved instructional practice for all teachers and leaders.

While evaluations will be used to inform professional development, they must also be leveraged to ensure all students are receiving instruction from an effective teacher. The information provided to administrators through evaluations will be used to make human capital decisions in their buildings. Specifically, evaluations are now tied to a teacher’s contract status, which for all intents and purposes is analogous to tenure. The chart below describes possible status changes based on evaluation ratings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>RATING</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Ineffective</td>
<td>Status Changed to Probationary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probationary</td>
<td>Ineffective or 2 times Improvement Necessary</td>
<td>Contract may be cancelled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any teacher hired after July 1, 2012 (probationary teacher) must demonstrate a pattern of effectiveness (i.e. by receiving three effective or highly effective ratings in any five-year period) to receive professional status. One ineffective or two consecutive improvement necessary ratings can lead to (though does not automatically require) the dismissal of a probationary teacher. Professional status can be lost with one ineffective rating. These teachers then move to probationary status. These status changes reflect Indiana’s new paradigm for teacher tenure. Professional status is the new equivalent to obtaining tenure; however, tenure is no longer automatic or permanent – it must be earned. Moreover, tenure can always be lost if effectiveness in the classroom dips.

IDOE recognizes that having effective teachers is just one piece of the equation. Schools must also have strong and effective leadership. In PL 90, principal evaluations were designed to mirror the teacher evaluation system described above. A principal evaluation system includes all of the same components as teacher evaluations. The Educator Evaluation Cabinet also developed a model principal evaluation rubric. As with the Teacher Effectiveness Rubric, the Principal Effectiveness Rubric was based on exemplars from across the country.
RISE: the state’s model tool

As described in 3.A.iii., IDOE is currently piloting the model teacher evaluation system, named RISE, in three school districts of varying sizes and geographic locations. Information on the state model is available for school districts to use via the IDOE’s website at www.riseindiana.org.

RISE is a differentiated system of teacher evaluation that defines effective teaching in a rubric across four domains and 24 components of practice. It incorporates measures of student learning for teachers and principals. As mentioned earlier, RISE was developed in collaboration with a statewide advisory evaluation cabinet of practicing teachers and administrators. The RISE Evaluator and Teacher Handbook and RISE How it Works document are included as Attachment 18.

The development of RISE and the Teacher Effectiveness Rubric were informed by numerous sources, including the following:

- Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teachers
- Iowa’s A Model Framework
- KIPP Academy’s Teacher Evaluation Rubric
- Robert Marzano’s Classroom Instruction that Works
- Massachusetts’ Principles for Effective Teaching
- Kim Marshall’s Teacher Evaluation Rubrics
- National Board’s Professional Teaching Standards
- North Carolina’s Teacher Evaluation Process
- Doug Reeves’ Unwrapping the Standards
- Research for Bettering Teaching’s Skillful Teacher
- Teach For America’s Teaching as Leadership Rubric
- Texas’ TxBess Framework
- Washington DC’s IMPACT Performance Assessment
- Wiggins &McTighe’s Understanding by Design

The system was also designed with three key purposes:

- To shine a spotlight on great teaching
  - The rubric is designed to assist principals and teachers in their efforts to increase teacher effectiveness and ensure a differentiated distribution of great teachers across the state.

- To provide clear expectations for teachers
  - The rubric defines and prioritizes the actions that effective teachers use to achieve gains in student achievement.

- To support a fair and transparent evaluation of effectiveness
  - The rubric provides a foundation for accurately assessing teacher effectiveness along four discrete ratings, in addition to growth data.
There are three possible measures of student learning in RISE for teachers: an individual growth model score (where available), a school wide learning score, and a student learning objective score. How these data points roll up into a summative rating is shown below.

As the chart above illustrates, teachers are assigned into one of three groups. This trifurcated design, based on the feedback of educators across the state, was intentional in order to maximize the differentiation of teachers and in recognition of the variability of data sources currently available. The component weighting assigned to each group will be closely examined as part of the pilot, though as assessment systems and measures improve over time, the state anticipates that more teachers will move from Group 3 into Group 2 and from Group 2 into Group 1.

Guidance on these multiple measures was distributed to school districts this fall. This document is included as Attachment 18. The RISE website provides resources on implementation of quality measures including an assessment handbook. Training on the RISE model will be provided statewide prior to the beginning of the 2012-13 school year.

*Leadership Practice*

The Educator Evaluation Cabinet led the development of a model principal evaluation rubric. As with the Teacher Effectiveness Rubric, the Principal Effectiveness Rubric was developed from multiple sources and for the same three key purposes:

- To shine a spotlight on great leadership
  - The rubric is designed to assist schools and districts in their efforts to increase principal effectiveness and promote the equitable distribution of great leaders
across the state.

- To provide clear expectations for principals
  - The rubric defines and prioritizes the actions that effective principals must engage in to lead breakthrough gains in student achievement.
- To support fair and transparent evaluation of effectiveness
  - The rubric provides the foundation for accurately assessing school leadership along four discrete proficiency ratings with student growth data used as the predominant measure.

While drafting the Principal Effectiveness Rubric, the development team examined leadership frameworks from numerous sources, including:

- Achievement First’s Professional Growth Plan for School Principals
- CHORUS’s Hallmarks of Excellence in Leadership
- Clay Christensen’s Disrupting Class
- Discovery Education’s Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED)
- Doug Reeves’ Leadership Performance Matrix
- Gallup’s Principal Insight
- ISLLC’s Educational Leadership Policy Standards
- Kim Marshall’s Principal Evaluation Rubrics
- KIPP’s Leadership Competency Model
- Mass Insight’s HPHP Readiness Model
- National Board’s Accomplished Principal Standards
- New Leaders for New Schools’ Urban Excellence Framework
- NYC Leadership Academy’s Leadership Performance Standards Matrix
- Public Impact’s Turnaround Leaders Competencies
- Todd Whitaker’s What Great Principals Do Differently

The Principal Effectiveness Rubric is comprised of two domains and thirteen individual indicators. A copy of the rubric is included as Attachment 18. The student learning measures for principal evaluation are still in development, but currently include whole school growth, A-F school accountability grade, district goals, and school goals. Once the weighting and final measures are finalized, principals will receive a summative rating in the same four categories as teachers.

**Summary**

Over the last eighteen months, Indiana has worked collaboratively with an array of stakeholders to develop and build support for a comprehensive teacher and principal evaluation system that recognizes and rewards excellence. The state understands that the development of a robust system is an iterative process. As IDOE continues to work closely with school districts and gets further into the weeds, the state will leverage its unique position as the SEA to provide resources and disseminate best practices across the state.

Both the teacher and principal evaluation models include a collaborative goal-setting
component for teachers and principals to set growth goals specific to student achievement and teacher or principal effectiveness. This design reflects Indiana’s belief in the power of evaluations to support the improvement of human capital and ensure a pipeline of great teachers in every classroom and strong leaders in every building.

In addition to using student growth to evaluate teachers and principals, IDOE is a strong proponent of using student growth and performance to evaluate the institutions that train teachers and principals. In collaboration with state institutions of higher education, the state’s evaluation framework will be taught in teacher and principal preparation programs. These programs will be held accountable for producing effective teachers and leaders. Modeled after Louisiana’s initiative, Indiana plans to tie student growth data into a chain of evaluation that reaches all the way to teacher colleges. Those with a pattern of weak performance would face shake-ups or, in extreme cases, more severe sanctions.

Among other things, the state’s evaluation support system includes (a) the pilot of a statewide evaluation protocol, collaboratively developed with top educators, based on the latest research and best practices; (b) the refinement and possible expansion of current evaluation systems with a proven track record of identifying and differentiating exceptional human capital; (c) clear guardrails for the implementation of evaluation systems, regardless of where they originated or how they were developed; and (d) the increased frequency of high quality feedback to drive the improvement of student achievement and provision of high quality instruction.

**Conclusion**

Indiana is one of only a few states that are aggressively advancing education reforms. The state’s plan for ESEA flexibility accelerates the bold and innovative initiatives called for as part of “Putting Students First” that will dramatically close the achievement gap and have a lasting impact on education in this state.

Indiana’s proposal raises the bar on the original 2013-2014 proficiency requirement called for in No Child Left Behind by utilizing new advances in measuring student growth and overall school performance. Indiana’s A-F framework closely aligns with federal efforts to support high standards without compromising on accountability. Moreover, Indiana’s focus on the bottom 25 percent hones in on the need to close the achievement gap and prevent more students from slipping through the cracks in the current accountability system.

RISE and the state’s efforts to improve educator effectiveness improve upon the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirement and exceed HQT’s original intent of ensuring that every student receives a high quality education. By prioritizing effectiveness over qualifications, Indiana is now focused on indicators that directly relate to a teacher or principal’s performance. This shift from inputs to outputs and outcomes reflects Dr. Bennett’s firm conviction that student performance is the ultimate measure of success.

Working collaboratively with schools and LEAs, IDOE will continue to move swiftly and
deliberately in pursuit of our vision for academic achievement and global competitiveness, encouraging fresh new ideas and out-of-the-box thinking. Contrary to what other states may be contemplating, Indiana’s efforts to attain these flexibilities does not reflect a desire to slow down or back off of the importance of accountability. In fact, Indiana intends to use these flexibilities to provide fuel for Indiana’s reform efforts and align federal priorities with recent structural changes at the state and local level. Indiana’s commitment to high standards and accountability has never been greater. The urgency to improve has never been higher and the focus on putting students first has never been stronger.
SAMPLE FORMAT FOR PLAN

Below is one example of a format an SEA may use to provide a plan to meet a particular principle in the ESEA Flexibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Milestone or Activity</th>
<th>Detailed Timeline</th>
<th>Party or Parties Responsible</th>
<th>Evidence (Attachment)</th>
<th>Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)</th>
<th>Significant Obstacles</th>
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