ESEA Flexibility

Request Renewal

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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.

This version of the *ESEA Flexibility Request* replaces the document originally issued on September 23, 2011 and revised on September 28, 2011. Through this revised version, the following section has been removed: 3.A, Option B (Option C has been renamed Option B). Additions have also been made to the following sections: Waivers and Assurances. Finally, this revised guidance modifies the following sections: Waivers; Assurances; 2.A.ii; 2.C.i; 2.D.i; 2.E.i; Table 2; 2.G; and 3.A, Options A and B.

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. 4-6), and assurances (p. 7-8).
- A description of how the SEA has met the consultation requirements (p. 9).
- Evidence and plans to meet the principles (p. 10-18). An SEA will enter narrative text in the text boxes provided, complete the required tables, and provide other required evidence. An SEA may supplement the narrative text in a text box with attachments, which will be included in an appendix. Any supplemental attachments that are included in an appendix must be referenced in the related narrative text.

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

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

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

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

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 have multiple opportunities to submit requests for the flexibility. The submission dates are November 14, 2011, February 28, 2012, and an additional opportunity following the conclusion of the 2011–2012 school year.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MEETING FOR SEAS

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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

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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.

LABEL	LIST OF ATTACHMENTS	PAGE
1	Notice to LEAs	3
2	Comments on request received from LEAs (if applicable)	NA
3	Notice and information provided to the public regarding the request	3
4	Evidence that the State has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with the State's standards adoption process	7
5	Memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs) certifying that meeting the State's standards corresponds to being college- and career-ready without the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level (if applicable)	N/A
6	State's Race to the Top Assessment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (if applicable)	NA
7	Evidence that the SEA has submitted high-quality assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review, or a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review (if applicable)	NA
8	A copy of the average statewide proficiency (revised) based on assessments administered in the 2012–2013 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups (if applicable)	51
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COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction	Requester's Mailing Address: 301 North Wilmington Street Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request Name: Dr. Lou Fabrizio Position and Office: Director of Data, Research and Federal Policy, Office of the State Superintendent Contact's Mailing Address: 6367 Mail Service Center Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6367 Telephone: (919) 807-3770 Fax: (919) 807-3772` Email address: lou.fabrizio@dpi.nc.gov	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): June St. Clair Atkinson	Telephone: (919) 807-3430
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:	Date: August 6, 2014
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of the ESEA Flexibility.	

WAIVERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

☒ 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that

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

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

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

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

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

Optional Flexibilities:

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

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

☒ 12. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA's State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools that are not reward schools, priority schools, or focus schools.

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

ASSURANCES

By submitting this application, the SEA assures that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

☒ 8. Prior to submitting this request, it provided student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, all teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs, or it will do so no later than the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)

☒ 9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)

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

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

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

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

☒ 14. It will report annually on its State report card, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the "all students" group and for each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State's annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. It will also annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively.

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

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

CONSULTATION

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

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

OVERVIEW

North Carolina, for its initial ESEA Flexibility Request, involved many individuals and organizations in coming to agreement on the principles of the ESEA Waiver Application. Some topics had been debated and reviewed over the last several years prior to the initial request. As a matter of fact, the State Board of Education had had the agenda item of the new accountability model discussed at 16 meetings between October of 2009 and February 2012. A list of the initial ESEA Waiver Application Working Team and information on the various groups and their members can be found in **Supplemental Attachment A**. Included in the list are the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission Members, Educator Effectiveness Work Group Members, SIG Advisory Members, North Carolina Title I Committee of Practitioners (COP), North Carolina National Title I Distinguished Schools Advisory Council, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Family and Community Task Force Members, specific parent input, and ACRE Project External Stakeholders. Please also note that a list of education acronyms used in this request can be found in the revised **Supplemental Attachment I**.

Principle 1 - College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students	
Opportunity for Consultation	**Development of New College- and Career-Ready Standards (2008-2010)** North Carolina embarked on the revision of *all* state standards in the fall of 2008 as a result of the *Framework for Change* (FFC) (see 1A). Our goal was to set standards that - if achieved - prepare students to be globally competitive and ready for post-secondary education. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) sought feedback on drafts of the new standards (as well as connecting stakeholders to feedback opportunities on drafts of the Common Core State Standards in early 2010).
Who responded	• More than 12,000 educators across all content areas and specialties including educators for English Learners (EL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD) • Members of the North Carolina Education and Business Community • Schools of Education • Members of Educational Organizations
What we heard	1. **What do the standards mean?** Desire for improved clarity and specificity in drafts – particularly around the use of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy and what the verbs used in the taxonomy intend a child will know or be able to do. 2. **How will the standards be assessed?** Desire for a concrete understanding of how a particular standard might be assessed.
What we did about it	1. **What do the standards mean?** NC refined language and in some cases re-wrote standards. The NCDPI developed unpacked content documents as well as other support tools http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/support-tools/ and we conducted targeted professional development on the new standards starting with 2011 summer institutes. 2. **How will the standards be assessed?** NC used assessment prototypes through the standards design process to ensure measurability and are developing formative processes and interim assessment tools as part of RttT-enabled Instructional Improvement System (IIS) that will make available to teachers *many* example assessment items aligned to the new standards.

Opportunity for Consultation	**Transition to New Standards** District Leadership Teams of up to 13 individuals came together for Summer Institutes in 2011 to learn, plan, and prepare for the transition to the new standards. Participant feedback was collected through real-time exit tickets, and electronic follow-up forms.
Who responded	Participating superintendents, district administrators, curriculum leaders, and teacher leaders provided feedback.
What we heard	Respondents indicated which aspects of the institute were most beneficial and identified areas of need. Specific requests included additional follow up with the standards, and more focused time for the district teams to engage in deployment planning.
What we did about it	Working in partnership, the Curriculum and Instruction Division and the Educator Recruitment and Development Division (ERD) provided face-to-face follow up sessions to dig deeper into the standards, and explore resources and support documents. ERD provided ongoing formative support to district leaders, and brought teams together to provide fidelity support, and facilitate collaborative peer review of district implementation efforts. In addition to these opportunities, the agenda and focus of summer institutes in 2012 have been heavily influenced by the needs identified through these processes.

Principle 2 - Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support System	
Opportunity for Consultation	**Development of New Assessment and Accountability System (2010-2011)** In addition to revising state standards, The *Framework for Change (FFC)* also called for the revision of the assessment and accountability system. The *FFC* was influenced by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability (see **Supplemental Attachment A**) which set out to rework North Carolina's Testing and Accountability system, called the ABCs of Public Education. Discussions around the new state accountability model began in 2009 and have continued through the present. Various feedback opportunities have been provided both electronically and in-person, on the development of a new model.
Who responded	• Educators via electronic feedback, regional meetings, Superintendent advisory group, principal/teacher-of-the-year meetings, and education conferences • External Stakeholders Committee • North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE)
What we heard	1. **Indexing and labeling.** Many respondents in feedback meetings and via contributions to newaccountabilityfeedback@dpi.nc.gov stated that indexing measures to determine a single label or category for every school was both unnecessary and - at times - harmful. In the past, the accountability model used distinctions which conflated status and growth. NC believes that how well students do in an individual year (status) and how much they are improving over time (growth/progress), are ideas not to be combined. Additional feedback advocated for maintaining a strong focus on student growth and progress.

	2. **Align measures (and weightings) to values.** In the initial design work of the new model (2009-2010), NCDPI worked on an indexing system that, particularly at the high school level, would require careful weighting between the graduation rate and measures of what students learn. The SEA heard that high schools must put a sizable emphasis on graduation rate. For instance, polled superintendents rarely suggested weighting below 25% for graduation rate in the proposed index.
What we did about it	**1. Indexing and labeling.** NC adjusted the State approach from indexing and labeling all schools to keeping disaggregated indicators for all subgroups and using those indicators to make decisions. Indexing systems that combine growth and performance into one number run the risk of identifying very different schools in the same way (in much the same way that NCLB clumped schools with radically different student outcomes into the same *met* or *not met* AYP categories). Importantly, this requires us to ensure that disaggregated reporting is simple, understandable and easy to access for the public. To this end, NC is revising the reporting system to focus on scaffolding data to make it more understandable and useful to the public. **2. Align measures (and their contribution to ratings) to values.** While in the end NC adjusted from an indexing system, feedback did help us understand the central value graduation rate must have on decisions. This is reflected both in how NC proposes to make decisions about support of schools in the future (meaning the methodology will include a substantial focus on graduation rates triggering action as well as achievement and growth) and the State's approach to identifying Priority and Focus Schools.

Principle 3 - Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership	
Opportunity for Consultation	The first development stage of NC's Educator Evaluation System took place during the mid-2000s. At this time, the Professional Teaching Standards Commission (see **Supplemental Attachment A** for list of members) brought together educators, members of institutions of higher education, representatives from the NC Association of Educators (NCAE) and NC Principals and Assistant Principals Association (NCPAPA), and other school leaders to craft a vision of what teachers should know and be able to do in a 21st century classroom. The Commission traveled across NC to meet with teachers, administrators, and other district leaders. The SBE approved the standards for teachers in June 2007, and later approved the standards for school executives in May 2008. The Commission then shifted its work to the design of rubrics and evaluation processes used by teachers and their administrators, as well as executives and their evaluators. Members sought additional feedback from teachers, school leaders, and central office staff members during work on the rubrics and processes. In addition, teachers and leaders in the field used the instruments and processes during pilot and field tests for the NC Educator Evaluation System. The Department of Public Instruction then revised processes based on feedback gathered during the pilot and field tests. After winning the RttT grant, North Carolina established an Educator

	Effectiveness Work Group to bring together teachers, administrators, district office staff members, superintendents, parents, research scholars, leaders from the university system, representatives of various professional organizations, and policy analysts from not-for-profit organizations(see **Supplemental Attachment A** for list of members).The Work Group vets all policies related to educator effectiveness before they are presented to the SBE for discussion and decision. The NC Department of Public Instruction has also sought feedback from district leaders at facilitated discussions during Superintendents' Quarterly Meetings, as well as smaller, regional groups of superintendents. Staff members have travelled to all eight regions of the state to seek input from human resource directors who typically oversee the implementation of the Educator Evaluation System in the State's districts. Lastly, in partnership with the State's eight Regional Education Service Alliances (RESAs), staff have held educator effectiveness focus groups in all regions of the state. Eight meetings, reaching approximately 400 teachers and principals, have already been held, and a second round of meetings is currently in progress. A third round will take place in the late spring; in total, approximately 1,200 teachers and principals will have the opportunity to reflect on the State's proposed educator effectiveness policies. Note that North Carolina is *not* a union state and therefore, does *not* have to engage in collective bargaining. Regardless, North Carolina has a history of collaboration with various organizations representing teachers, principals, superintendents, etc.
Who responded	• Educators, including charter schools (feedback from more than 1,000 by May 2012) • Principals • Central office staff members (including 115 human resources administrators) • Superintendents • NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission • Educator Effectiveness Work Group • NCAE • NCPAPA • Governor's Education Transformation Commission (GETC)
What we heard	1. **Non-Tested Grades and Subjects**. Originally, the State planned to allow districts to develop their own assessments for those subjects and grades not assessed with state exams. All stakeholders expressed concerns about this approach. Many educators and leaders from small districts raised the issue of having insufficient resources to design sound assessments. Across the state, educators were concerned about equity across districts if some assessments were easier or less sound than others. 2. **Communication**. Stakeholders have expressed a need for clear, concise, and frequent communication on this policy area. Implications of these new educator effectiveness policies will personally affect all of the more than

	100,000 teachers and school leaders working in North Carolina. 3. **Fidelity of Evaluation System**. With the planned uses of educator evaluation results (for example, for career status [tenure] decisions), stakeholders have been concerned about inter-rater reliability on the observation-based standards. Teachers worry about variability in how school leaders conduct observations and rate teachers on the first five standards of the Teacher Evaluation Instrument.
What we did about it	1. **Non-Tested Grades and Subjects**. With an RttT amendment, the State shifted resources and brought together around 800 educators to design statewide Measures of Student Learning (MSL) for currently non-tested grades and subjects. These new measures rolled-out statewide in the 2012 – 13 school year. At its November 7, 2013 meeting, the SBE changed the name of the MSL Common Exams to the NC Final Exams and required that the results for these exams at the high school level count as 20% of a student's final grade in the course. See SBE Policy GCS-A-016. 2. **Communication.** While communication continues to be a challenge, the State has developed a monthly Educator Effectiveness Newsletter that is distributed through various role-specific listservs. A refreshed Educator Effectiveness Section of the NC Public Schools website also was developed in 2012. The policy area was a key area of focus at the March 2012 READY meetings (see page 39 for more information on READY), which reached a principal and teacher from each of the State's 2,500 plus schools. 3. **Fidelity of Evaluation System**. The Department of Public Instruction also hired a new staff member whose focus is on increasing inter-rater reliability on the Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Training on the use of the rubrics includes in-person meetings, webinars, online modules, a video database of classroom observations, and companion documents for the instrument.

Principle 4 - Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden	
Opportunity for Consultation	In response to Session Law (SL) 2011-379, the NCDPI Data Management Group (DMG) and the Business Owners in the agency conducted a thorough review of the Master Data Calendar (MDC) to find opportunities to consolidate similar reports or eliminate reports that are no longer necessary. After the internal review process, the Regional Roundtable leads, in conjunction with the Regional Education Service Alliance (RESA) directors, contacted all LEAs by phone, email and in-person to solicit their feedback on the MDC. The DMG also asked the members of its LEA Advisory Group for input.
Who responded	• DMG LEA Advisory • 55 LEA representatives (e.g., teachers, principals, central office staff, etc.)
What we heard	See **Supplemental Attachment H** - *Report to the North Carolina General Assembly: Response to the School and Teacher Paperwork Reduction Act* (*Session Law 2011-379; House Bill 720*
What we did about it	1. Eliminated 20 reports. 2. Began research to automate or consolidate other reports as needed.

Feedback on the Application
In the development of the initial ESEA Flexibility proposal, North Carolina consulted with its Title I Committee of Practitioners through face-to-face meetings conducted on November 2, 2011 and December 13, 2012.

The initial public notice was sent out on multiple listservs including superintendents, principals, and teachers. The notice posted on October 13, 2011, is available at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/publicnotices/notices/. Note that the State did not receive any written feedback from LEAs based on the public notice.

An overview of the initial ESEA Flexibility Request was provided at the State's Title I Conference on November 1, 2011 to teachers, coordinators, and directors as well as written updates and webinars as the proposal evolved. On February 14, 2012, a webinar was conducted for Title I directors and other district staff to discuss the entire flexibility proposal and provide an opportunity for questions. Finally, the COP, NCAE, NC Association of School Administrators (NCASA), the NC School Boards Association (NCSBA) and NCPAPA each were sent an advanced draft copy of the agency's Waiver Application on February 23, 2012.

For the ESEA Flexibility Request Renewal, public notice was posted on April 3, 2014 on the NCDPI website at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/publicnotices/notices/2013-14/20140403-01 and also sent to various listservs including: LEA Superintendents and Charter School Directors, NC Principals, NC Teachers, NC Partners in Education, NC Education Associations, NC School Administrators and all LEA Communication Directors. (Also see revised Attachment 3). Please note that the State did not receive any written feedback based on the public notice. This is not surprising because all of the changes to the initial Flexibility Request are the result of either State Board of Education actions or legislation from the NC General Assembly.

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.

Consultation with Parents and Civil Rights Groups

Throughout the redesign of North Carolina's standards, assessments, and accountability model, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) provided multiple opportunities for stakeholder feedback through State Board of Education (SBE) monthly meetings, public notices, news articles, town hall meetings, focus groups, and web-based communication tools (see page 10). Over the four years prior to the initial ESEA Flexibility Request in 2012, stakeholder inputs have impacted decision-making to ensure that all schools are held accountable for all student populations and that public reporting of school information provides the state with an opportunity to recognize the individual achievements of schools. One example is noted on page 12 in that stakeholder feedback resulted in the state's decision to move from a "labeling system" to an accountability

reporting model that makes information easily accessible and understandable to the parents of students as well as the public.
In all cases, consultation groups were comprised of a broad spectrum of state and community representatives including teachers, teacher organizations, civil rights groups, parents, and business and community leaders. For example, the primary role of the Parent Involvement Task Force (see page 16) has been to develop strategies that bring authentic parent voice to state-level decision making. On December 15 and 16, 2011, Task Force members brought parents from communities across North Carolina to discuss the impact of potential changes offered through the Flexibility Request. This diverse stakeholder group represented various subgroup populations within the state including non-English speakers, Native Americans, and migrant families as well as including parents and grandparents of students with disabilities and English learners. Meeting materials were provided in Spanish and English and Spanish interpreters were available at each meeting. As a result of parent inputs, the state will continue to require that progress reporting for all students and schools be provided to parents and the community through both direct and indirect means. Additionally, the NCDPI will emphasize that schools must clearly communicate to the families of all students the strategies and options in place at each school to ensure that all students are successful. Local education agency (LEA) communication strategies and tools will continue to be monitored as a component of on-site federal program reviews by NCDPI.

Consultation with Teachers and Teacher Representatives

As noted on previous pages, diverse stakeholder groups were consulted as the North Carolina Educator Evaluation system was developed. The Educator Effectiveness Work Group brought together fifty stakeholders from across the state, including teachers, principals, central office staff, superintendents, research scholars, parents, and community leaders to grapple with issues of teacher and principal evaluation and effectiveness, as well as to offer feedback on proposed policies before they were brought to the SBE.

The NCDPI has conducted sixteen (16) Educator Effectiveness Focus Groups: eight (8) regional meetings in October and November of 2011 and eight (8) regional meetings in March 2012, with approximately fifty (50) teachers at each meeting. The feedback from these teachers influenced the SBE's selection of a weighting for the sixth standard on student growth for this school year. Feedback from teachers also was a major factor in the state's decision to pilot a student survey.

The North Carolina Parents and Teachers Association (NC PTA) provided feedback on how to display and explain the educator effectiveness information released in January of 2012. Specifically, NC PTA members emphasized that parents need concrete information on how to use the data and what it "should" look like. These suggestions were incorporated in the final version of the explanatory text that accompanied the educator effectiveness data.

Additional stakeholder consultation was conducted through face-to-face meetings as follows:

- SEA Parent Involvement Task Force – October 5, 2011
- Parent focus groups – December 15-16, 2011
- NC Distinguished Schools Advisory Council – October 5, 2011 and December 13, 2011
- NC School Improvement Grants (SIG) Advisory Council – December 8, 2011 and January 11, 2012

All stakeholder groups included representation of urban and rural communities in all eight regions of the state and include stakeholders from high-need communities.

Based on inputs from these stakeholders, the following decisions were made in the initial proposal:

- Provide the top 10% of all Reward Schools with resources to expand best practices and increase opportunities for showcasing them.
- Include only Title I schools at or above a 50% poverty threshold to be included on the Reward Schools list.
- Include only Title I schools performing at or above 50% proficiency on the Reward Schools list for high progress.
- Maintain the list of Focus and Priority Schools for three years to provide sufficient time for interventions and turnaround principles to be supported thus increasing the likelihood for sustainability.

As North Carolina continues to develop and implement ESEA flexibility, diverse stakeholder groups, including teachers and parents, will be provided with information through listservs, webinars, and face-to-face meetings. In all communications, stakeholders are invited to provide feedback. Stakeholder comments will continue to be considered as part of subsequent decision making by the State. Specific examples are as follows:

- ESEA Flexibility Request information provided via listservs for superintendents, principals, and teachers with invitation to provide feedback
- Title I Committee of Practitioners Meeting – April 25, 2012
- Statewide Title I Forum – April 30, 2012
- 21st Century Community Learning Center Forum – May 3-4, 2012
- Title I Parent Involvement Coordinators Meeting – September, 2012
- North Carolina Association of Compensatory Educators Conference – October, 2012

Additionally, North Carolina will continue to seek ways to expand representation on existing advisory groups to ensure that rural and urban community members representing student subgroups, including English learners and students with disabilities, have opportunities for meaningful engagement in the decision-making process.

For a full list of initial stakeholder representatives, see **Supplemental Attachment A**.

EVALUATION

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

appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

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

OVERVIEW OF SEA'S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY

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

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

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

The guiding mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) is that every public school student will graduate from high school globally competitive for work and post-secondary education and prepared for life in the 21st century. Prior to the opportunity for ESEA Flexibility, the work of increasing the college- and career-readiness of our students was well underway.

In 2008, NC began the work of transitioning state-level educational standards and assessments, and accountability through the Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort (ACRE). Then in 2009, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) was reorganized to provide a comprehensive system of support for districts and schools across the state. As a result, NCDPI also refocused its efforts to build teacher and leader effectiveness by developing new evaluation protocols and procedures.

NC is uniquely positioned to support the implementation of the principles outlined in the ESEA Flexibility package as these principles are aligned to the goals identified in its approved Race to the Top (RttT). Allowing the State to utilize its limited federal resources more flexibly will ensure that our goals are met:

- A great teacher in every classroom and a great principal in every school;
- College- and career-ready standards;
- Turning around the lowest performing schools; and
- Data systems to improve instruction.

School districts and charter schools receive support for implementing creative and meaningful programs and activities that will result in more students graduating from high school, being better prepared for college, and possessing skills necessary for careers in today's economy. By establishing partnerships with districts and schools, NC can continue to support the principles of the ESEA Flexibility by comprehensively planning and delivering support for teachers and leadership teams

across the state as the State transitions to new standards for teaching and learning.

Additionally, the waivers reduced the administrative and reporting burden created under pre-flexibility provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) thereby allowing the SEA and LEA to focus the State's limited federal resources on more effectively identifying the needs of schools and customizing support through a coordinated comprehensive statewide system of support. Ultimately, the goal is to build the capacity of NC's LEAs and schools in order to ensure that student success is sustained beyond any single intervention or initiative.

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.

Option A	**Option B**
☒ 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. i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)	☐ 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. i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State's standards adoption process. (Attachment 4) 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.

OVERVIEW

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) leads 115 local education agencies (LEAs) and 127 public charter schools (in the 2013-14 school year) in accomplishing the goals and policies of the SBE as well as legislative mandates specified by the North Carolina General Assembly. The LEAs are comprised of large urban, suburban, and small rural districts with 2,526 schools, 177,149 staff, and a diverse population of nearly 1.5 million students (-52.2% White, -26.1% Black, -14.0% Hispanic, - 2.6% Asian, 1.4% American Indian, 0.1% Pacific Islander and 3.6% Two or More Races based on fall 2012 data). NC has a history of establishing high achievement standards to ensure that all schools are held accountable for each and every child so all students are college- and career-ready.

Theory of Change

In 2007, the SBE adopted a Future-Ready Core Course of Study to prepare all students for careers and college learning in the 21st century. Board members unanimously approved the new high school graduation requirements, effective with the ninth grade class of 2009-10. The Future Ready Core graduation requirements were established to ensure more students graduate having taken additional courses needed to prepare them for success in the workplace or college. (See **Supplemental Attachment B**)

Educators, parents and lawmakers continued to press for changes to the curriculum and accountability systems. In 2008, following extensive input from the Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability, the SBE crafted the *Framework for Change*, a publication containing twenty-seven recommendations to dramatically change the scope of the Standard Course of Study, assessments, and accountability. The foundational principle of this document outlined the need for teaching and learning to be aligned with the 21st century skills that students need for success in their educational, work, and life pursuits. The *Framework for Change* demonstrated the SBE's deep commitment to school accountability, to high standards, and to success for all students. More information about the *Framework for Change* is available to the public and is accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/history/.

In response to the *Framework for Change*, NC demonstrated the leadership needed to transform state-level educational standards and assessments through the Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort (ACRE). ACRE is the State's comprehensive initiative to redefine the North

Carolina Standard Course of Study for K- 12 students, the student assessment program, and the school accountability model. The outcome of the ACRE work would demonstrate NC's commitment to internationally and nationally benchmarked, "fewer, clearer, and higher" standards. Information about the ACRE project is available to the public and is accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/.

For the next four years, the ACRE work involved many educators from across North Carolina – classroom teachers, school administrators, content and curriculum experts from local school districts, curriculum experts from NCDPI, university and community college faculty, and national experts on curriculum design and testing. These educators met for over a year to review the current standards in order to determine what knowledge, understanding, and skills are critical for students to be college- and career-ready. They also researched international and national benchmarks and reviewed the work of other states and content-specific trends in order to identify the most essential knowledge, understanding, and skills needed to be successful in the 21st century. The timeline for the ACRE initiative is available to the public and is accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/timeline/.

In 2010, North Carolina became one of only twelve recipients of the 2010 federal Race to the Top (RttT) grant, bringing nearly $400 million to the state's public school system for use over four years. With the support of the RttT grant, North Carolina continued the work developed through the ACRE project. School districts and charter schools receive support for implementing creative and meaningful programs and activities that will result in more students graduating from high school, being better prepared for college, and possessing skills necessary for careers in today's economy.

New College- and Career-Ready Standards

North Carolina has demonstrated a commitment to education reform by adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, which were approved by the North Carolina SBE on June 2, 2010. In conjunction with the adoption of CCSS, NCDPI developed Essential Standards for other content areas including:

- Arts Education
- Career and Technical Education
- English Language Development
- Healthful Living
- Information and Technology
- School Counseling
- Science
- Social Studies
- World Languages

The New Essential Standards are written using the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (RBT) under the guidance of one of the authors of the revision, Dr. Lorin Anderson. North Carolina has chosen RBT to help move to the complex thinking expected from 21st century graduates. The RBT was chosen because it has well-defined verbs and is built on modern cognitive research.

More information on the Essential Standards is available to the public and is accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/new-standards/.

On August 24, 2010, North Carolina became a recipient of the federal Race to the Top (RttT) grant. The plan, describes how adopting new standards along with aligned assessments and professional development would improve student outcomes building their capacity to be college- and career-ready. Major components of the North Carolina plan further support the importance of transforming standards, assessments, and accountability to ensure the students of North Carolina are college- and career-ready. **Supplemental Attachment C** demonstrates the alignment of the ACRE work streams and pillars of the Race to the Top grant.

As part of a coherent plan for statewide impact, these standards will integrate into our ongoing ACRE work with its three-fold focus on improved standards, a comprehensive balanced assessment system, and a next generation state accountability model. The CCSS in ELA and mathematics along with the NC Essential Standards were implemented during the 2012-13 school year in K-12 schools with the exception of the English Language Development Standards, which were implemented in 2008, and Information and Technology Essential Standards, which were implemented in 2011-12. More information about CCSS and the North Carolina Essential Standards are available to the public and are accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/.

Each school district in North Carolina has the autonomy to develop its own student report card. All student report cards provide letter grades or numbers for each content area. Letter grades, however, do not provide parents with specific information as to how the student is performing, which skills are mastered, and if the student is performing at grade level. With new standards implementation in 2012, the SEA has been forward thinking in guiding districts in developing standards-based report cards. These standards-based report cards would identify concrete knowledge and skills which will give parents and students more insight on the student's proficiency levels and whether advancement is occurring.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
To ensure that all students are college- and career-ready, NCDPI promotes the use of *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)* as a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone--not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs. Three primary principles, which are based on neuroscience research, guide UDL and provide the underlying framework for the Guidelines:

> **Principle I: Provide Multiple Means of Representation** (the "what" of learning). Learners differ in ways that they perceive and comprehend information that is presented to them. For example, those with sensory disabilities (e.g., blindness of deafness); learning disabilities *(e.g., dyslexia); language or cultural differences; and so forth may all require different ways of approaching content. Others may simply grasp information quicker or more efficiently through visual or auditory means rather than printed text. Also learning, and transfer of learning, occurs when multiple representations are used, because it allows students to make connections within, as well as between, concepts. In short, there is not

one means of representation that will be optimal for all learners; *providing options for representation is essential.*

Principle II: Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression (the "how" of learning). Learners differ in the ways that they can navigate a learning environment and express what they know. For example, individuals with significant movement impairments (e.g., cerebral palsy), those who struggle with strategic and organizational abilities (executive function disorders), those who have language barriers, and so forth approach learning tasks very differently. Some may be able to express themselves well in written text but not speech, and vice versa. It should also be recognized that action and expression require a great deal of strategy, practice, and organization, and this is another area in which learners can differ. In reality, there is not one means of action and expression that will be optimal for all learners; *providing options for action and expression is essential.*

Principle III: Provide Multiple Means of Engagement (the "why" of learning). Affect represents a crucial element to learning, and learners differ markedly in the ways in which they can be engaged or motivated to learn. There are a variety of sources that can influence individual variation in affect including neurology, culture, personal relevance, subjectivity, and background knowledge, along with a variety of other factors presented in these guidelines. Some learners are highly engaged by spontaneity and novelty while other are disengaged, even frightened, by those aspects, preferring strict routine. Some learners might like to work alone, while others prefer to work with their peers. In reality, there is not one means of engagement that will be optimal for all learners in all contexts; providing multiple options for engagement is essential.

*Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)*To ensure that all low-achieving students gain access to and learn content aligned with college- and career-ready standards, NCDPI promotes a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). MTSS is a school improvement model that employs a systems approach using data-drive problem-solving to maximize growth for all students and preparation for college and career readiness. NCDPI defines it as a multi-tiered framework, which promotes school improvement through engaging, research-based academic and behavioral practices.

Structured problem-solving occurs within the school and district setting at various tiers, and with increasingly complexity, as the resources needed to resolve a problem increases. The intent of the problem-solving process is to resolve the problem using the necessary resources, as early as possible for groups and individual students. One element of MTSS involves using a student's response to scientific research-based instruction and interventions to make eligibility decisions for students suspected of having a Specific Learning Disability. This involves the use of valid and reliable assessments in order to collect progress monitoring data over a period of time. Evidence-based practices and/or programs are implemented to assist with addressing student needs identified through the problem-solving process. Progress-monitoring data, as well as other collected data, assist teams in determining if a student has adequately responded to instructions and interventions. This information can be used as a part of a comprehensive evaluation for a Specific Learning Disability.

Data are collected from multiple sources and carefully analyzed in order to understand the most effective efficient means of helping a student or group of students. Analysis of curriculum and instructional practices used to support teaching the standards is the critical first step of the problem-solving process for all students, including students who are English Learners (ELs) and students with disabilities (SWD). This information is used to determine student needs and effective academic and behavioral curricular materials and instructional practices. Student progress is measured frequently to determine the most effective instructional approach for students. Decisions regarding instructional practices and curriculum selection are made based on student progress through the frequent data collection process. This is an integrated conceptual model of assessment and services incorporating general and special education efforts. The system of supports is comprised of three tiers of increasingly more intense instruction and intervention

Tier 1 involves using academic and behavioral data to problem-solve for all students. The goal of problem-solving at Tier 1 is to ensure the large majority of students in all subgroups are responsive to the curricular materials and instructional practices used at all grade levels and subject areas. The core activity in Tier 1 includes districts and schools determining the effectiveness of the selected instructional practices, curriculum choices, and environment (such as scheduling) in responding to all students' academic and behavioral needs. The goal is to have at least 80% of students successful with differentiated Tier 1 instruction for academics and behavior. Tier 2, with the expectation of adult implementation of evidence-based practices, is designed to support groups of students offers additional supports beyond those offered in Tier 1. Tier 2 supports are considered supplemental to Tier 1; therefore students receiving Tier 2 supports also receive Tier 1 instruction. Tier 3 supports are in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports. Students needing Tier 3 support receive an intense level of instructional supports to ensure success in closing the gap between their performance and that of their peers. Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports are provided to students as soon as a student need is identified. This early intervention model is aimed at addressing performance deficits early in a student's career. Monitoring of students' progress increases in proportion to the intensity of the support they are receiving. Parents should be involved throughout the problem-solving process in order to provide a comprehensive perspective of the student.

NCDPI began implementing Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI) in 2004 in response to the reauthorization of IDEA. However, starting in 2010 NCDPI revisited its original vision and mission for its RtI initiative. During this time, a committee with broad agency representation conducted focus groups across the state to gather stakeholder input and develop recommendations for a revised definition and critical components for North Carolina's RtI initiative. The committee also made a recommendation, based on stakeholder input and information from other states, to transition from a four-tier to a three-tier RtI model in order to focus on school improvement. Beginning in the spring of 2012, professional development and technical assistance were provided to LEAs to support transition to the new model.

Starting in the Fall of 2013, NCDPI began exploring transitioning from RtI to a MTSS to create a responsive system for both academic and behavioral needs. In order for this to occur, the MTSS Leadership and Policy Team was formed. This team, comprised of Division Directors, is actively problem-solving and building common language to support full implementation of MTSS. In North Carolina, this transition involves merging the initiatives of RtI and Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) to create a seamless system of data-based decision-making for

academics and behavior. Currently NCDPI is building implementation materials, providing technical assistance and ongoing consultation to LEAs across the state in order to move toward full implementation of MTSS.

North Carolina is confident that the CCSS for math and ELA, as well as the North Carolina Essential Standards establishes a high bar defining the most important student outcomes and will produce high school students who are ready for college and careers. Recognizing the importance of students having the opportunity to learn with rigorous standards that prepare them for career and college readiness, North Carolina set the same high standards and expectations of learning for all students including students who are English Learners (ELs) and students with disabilities (SWD).

NCDPI Senior Leadership Staff Development Training

State Implementation and Scaling up Evidence-based Practices (SISEP)
While it is important for NCDPI to ensure that LEAs and charter schools receive quality professional development training on new content standards, assessments, the accountability model and teacher and principal evaluation systems, it is also important that agency staff receive training as well in ways to help students and educators meet the goals of ESEA. Therefore, in July of 2011, NCDPI entered into a partnership with the State Implementation and Scaling up Evidence-based Practices Center. The SISEP Center is a program of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of NC at Chapel Hill and the National Implementation Research Network and is funded by the USED's Office of Special Education Programs. At that time, senior NCDPI leadership identified two staff members to serve as State Transformation Specialists to work closely with Dr. Dean Fixsen and the SISEP Center staff to begin installing structures at the SEA to support the scaling-up of evidence-based practices in North Carolina public (including charter) schools. The senior leadership also identified Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI) as the first evidence-based practice to scale-up statewide.

Starting in October 2011, Dr. Fixsen began meeting with State Superintendent June Atkinson and her Superintendent's Leadership Council (SLC) to provide information and guidance on the application of Implementation Science in the work of the agency, schools districts, and schools. The SLC reviewed *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature* on three separate occasions with Dr. Fixsen and made the commitment to include the topic of implementation as an agenda item on a periodic basis. During that time the SLC received updates from the State Transformation Specialists to help support scaling up and infrastructure development activities based on data reported directly from the field. In December 2011, North Carolina became an active scaling state working with SISEP along with Minnesota and Oregon.

In addition, the State Transformation Specialists completed several measures using the State Capacity Assessment (SCA)to establish baseline data informing an action plan for the remainder of the 2012 calendar year. A State Scaling-up Workgroup (SWG) comprised of cross-agency staff and external stakeholders was established and will begin meeting in March 2012. The purpose of the SWG was to create and support Regional Implementation Teams to focus on the statewide scaling-up of Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI) as a school improvement model. The vision was for the Regional Implementation Teams to be housed within the Regional Roundtable structure that currently exists as part NCDPI's Statewide System of Support.

More information on the Statewide System of Support may be found in section 2.A beginning on 47, in section 2.F beginning on page 108, and in section 2.G beginning on page 112.

Changes in personnel roles required the identification of two new staff to serve as State Implementation Specialists (SIS). In June of 2013, a new SIS was named from the K-12 Curriculum and Instruction Division and in February of 2014 the second new SIS was named from the Exceptional Children Division. Additional measures have been conducted using the SCA which show an increase in state capacity to install evidence based practices in NC. Regional Implementation Teams have begun work in several LEAs to assist with scaling up of RtI. Both of the SIS meet with a newly established Leadership and Policy Team (composed of division directors) whose goal it is to problem-solve NCDPI initiatives, implementation structures, and build common language and practices across the agency.

Moving forward, NCDPI will continue to build and refine the infrastructure necessary to support the successful statewide implementation and scaling-up of evidence-based practices, with ongoing support from the SISEP Center. The State Implementation Team, facilitated by the SIS, will serve as the reporting body for agency initiatives and first line of problem-solving for identified barriers and challenges. The SIS will continue to provide the Leadership and Policy Team with meaningful staff development to strengthen their knowledge of Implementation Science. Additionally the team will be regularly updated and will guide decision-making around challenges involving multiple divisions, policy issues, etc. The SLC will be provided status updates biannually and upon request.

College- and Career-Ready Standards: English Language Proficiency Standards

NCDPI staff continues to collaborate with internationally renowned researchers, Dr. Wayne Thomas and Dr. Virginia Collier to conduct a multi-year study of the performance of English Learners (ELs) in our schools. Their five-stage analysis begins with a needs assessment of academic achievement gaps between ELs and native English-speaking students. This "Thomas-Collier Test of Equal Educational Opportunity" examines the impact of local programs on all student groups, including the extent to which achievement gaps are closed over time. As this study continues, and Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) services are clearly implemented with fidelity, educators and policy-makers will be better informed to make decisions about instructional programs. Dual language programs in North Carolina adhere to an established framework and are implemented with integrity, thereby providing one LIEP service to begin the evaluation.

Findings from cross-sectional descriptive analyses of all students in the six school districts confirm achievement gaps between ELs (and Language Minority students who are not or no longer LEP) and non-ELs persist throughout all grades. Disaggregated comparisons of all students in the participating districts suggest dual language instruction is favored across all groups and situations. The effect sizes are consistent with other large-scale research studies. Overall, Reading and Math scores of students in two-way dual language education are higher for <u>all</u> students regardless of race/ethnicity, socioeconomic, LEP or special education status. In most

cases, by middle school, two-way dual language students, regardless of subgroup, are scoring as high in Reading and Math achievement as non-dual language students at least a grade ahead of them. Dual language programs appear to raise test scores, particularly for ELs and black students.

Prior research has already shown that ELs, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and African-American native-English speakers receive especially large benefits from participating in dual language programs. If the above findings are confirmed by further analyses of additional years of student data, then students with exceptionalities would join the above groups of students who especially benefit from dual language education. Preliminary analyses are already underway for exceptional students who were administered the North Carolina alternate assessments, with initial results similar to those shown here for the North Carolina End of Grade (EOG) assessments.

Finally, findings also suggested that there are qualities to North Carolina's two-way dual language programs that confer greater educational gains in reading and math compared to non-dual language education. Two-way dual language education may be an effective way to improve the Reading and Math scores of all North Carolina students.

Out of the total population of students, there are higher percentages of Hispanics and Whites participating in North Carolina's two-way dual language programs compared to African-Americans. Given the large number of African-Americans in North Carolina's student population, the lower Reading and Math scores of African-American students overall and the advantage two-way dual language education provides African-American students, it may be of benefit to increase African-American enrollment in dual language programs.

In addition, the NC State Board of Education (SBE) appointed a Task Force on Global Education from its membership to evaluate where NC public schools stand in meeting the SBE mission of graduating students globally competitive for careers and post-secondary education. The Task Force began the work in October 2011 with four discover and learn meetings. Stakeholders representing other state government agencies, the business community, private and public universities, the community college system, school partners, LEAs and national and international experts made presentations. Information from the Thomas and Collier study was shared with the Task Force and members heard from the school practitioners on the effectiveness of dual language programming in closing the achievement gap in their student populations. The Task Force has noted the effectiveness of dual language programming as all students in these programs receive college and career ready standards instruction, develop globally competitive language and cultural skills in two languages, and participate in all state achievement testing and accountability requirements. Proceedings from the SBE Task Force on Global Education are located at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/stateboard/task-force/.

North Carolina's Title III/ESL team has participated in many RttT professional development opportunities (face-to-face, webinars, and online module development) offered by the NCDPI to ensure the ELs are included in these activities/initiatives.
During the annual Title III monitoring visits, ELD standards implementation and professional development with fidelity for all stakeholders have been emphasized. All Title III subgrantees are required to submit their multi-year research-based professional development plans to the Title III/ESL office.

World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)
North Carolina has been a member of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium since 2008. WIDA is a non-profit cooperative group whose purpose is to develop standards and assessments that meet and exceed the goals of ESEA and promote educational equity for ELs. As a consortium member, NC adopted English Language Development (ELD) Standards and an aligned annual assessment used for ESEA reporting purposes.
WIDA released the 2012 Amplification of the English Language Development Standards focusing on advancing academic language development and academic achievement for English Learners while making an explicit connection to state content standards. The connection displays the content standard referenced in the example topic or example context for language use. The components of the WIDA standards framework support the instruction and assessment of ELs and exemplify many of the language features represented by college and career readiness standards, including the Common Core State Standards. The examples would be:

- A focus on oral language development
- Literacy across the content areas
- Attention to genre, text type, register and language forms and conventions
- Use of instruction supports

The Common Core State Standards call for teachers to simultaneously provide academically rigorous content instruction while promoting English language development. In order to support NC content and English Language Learners educators in this endeavor, the NCDPI Title III/ESL staff has formed the Common Core and ELL Collaborative Task Force.

WIDA's standards framework shows examples of how language is processed or produced within a particular context through Model Performance Indicators (MPIs). MPIs are meant to be examples and not fixed guidelines of the language with which students may engage during instruction and assessment.

This team has worked over the course of the last year to create and write transformed MPIs based on ELA Common Core Standards (Reading for Literature and Reading for Informational Text) and WIDA Standards (Grades 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9-10, and 11-12). These transformed MPIs are thematically connected through common example topics or genres from the Common Core English Language Arts standards, scaffolded from one language proficiency level to the next, developmentally appropriate for ELLs at a specified grade level, and academically rigorous.

North Carolina is the first WIDA consortium state that has created these kinds of curriculum resources to assist both content area and EL teachers to meet the unique linguistic needs while meeting the same challenging state content standards. These resources have been shared with WIDA for sharing and posted in the NC DPI LEP Coordinator Handbook LiveBinder under 'Transformed MPIs/ELAs'. See
http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=1089921&backurl=/shelf/my

The *"Understanding Language" (UL)* project, initiated by Stanford University, endeavors to amplify the critical role language plays in the new College and Career Readiness Standards. The goal of this initiative is to increase recognition that learning the language of each academic discipline is essential to learning content - especially in the era of challenging content standards such as Common Core and Next Generation Science standards. The NCDPI is planning to pilot the UL units statewide (English Language Arts and Mathematics) for selected English Language Arts and ESL teachers as well as administrators. The primary short-term objective is for the participants to deeply understand the qualities of the UL exemplar units, and to acquire the tools to implement local piloting of ELA and Math units by the participating districts. The primary long-term objective is for the participating schools and districts to have the capacity to develop additional units based on the principles of UL, and to participate in a broader regional and statewide learning community that supports strong disciplinary uses of language for ELLs and all other students who can benefit from language-rich instruction.

College- and Career-Ready Standards: Students with Disabilities

The educational needs of students with disabilities (SWD) are included in all NCDPI initiatives, including the development of essential college- and career-ready standards in all academic areas. NCDPI's Exceptional Children Division affirms that all SWD can benefit from and achieve in the college- and career-ready standards and is incorporating these standards into the Division's daily work. Below is a description of some of the major Division activities which support this effort.

NC State improvement Project (NCSIP)
The Division, through a State Personnel Development Grant from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the U.S. Department of Education, has established the *North Carolina State Improvement Project* (NCSIP). The purpose of NCSIP is to improve the quality of instruction for SWD through research supported personnel development and on-site technical assistance for the public schools and college/university teacher education programs in North Carolina. The five NCSIP goals are designed to support and promote college- and career-readiness in reading and mathematics for these students. Two (*) of the five goals below are associated with student specific outcomes which directly align with ESEA Indicators.

The NCSIP goals are:

1. Improve basic skills performance of students with disabilities;*
2. Increase the percentage of qualified teachers of students with disabilities;
3. Increase graduation rates and decrease dropout rates of students with disabilities;*
4. Improve parent satisfaction and involvement with, and support of, school services for students with disabilities; and
5. Improve the quality of teachers' instructional competencies.

In addition to supporting SWD accessing the Common Core State Standards, extensive work has been conducted to address the college- and career-readiness standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The *North Carolina Extended Common Core and Essential Standards* were developed to be consistent with the general content standards for the purpose of ensuring that the education of all students, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, is uniform with content standards and clarifying objectives as established by the North Carolina State

Board of Education (NC SBE). Furthermore, North Carolina is required to develop an alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in regular state and district assessments, even with accommodations. In keeping with this requirement, the extended content standards serve as the basis for the development of the North Carolina Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards (NCEXTEND1).

The Exceptional Children Division has conducted professional development to support teachers in their understanding of college- and career-ready, Common Core State Standards and extended content standards. In addition, literacy and mathematics modules (i.e., the ACT Project) have been developed to support teachers in their understanding of curriculum development and instruction addressing the following goals:

1. To help professionals recognize literacy and mathematical development in typically developing students and students with significant cognitive disabilities.
2. To address the components of the North Carolina Extended Content Standards as they relate to literacy and mathematical learning for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
3. To introduce theoretical models and processes of literacy and mathematics and their relationship to students with significant cognitive disabilities.
4. To help professionals collect and use data to organize, plan, and set goals, and use a variety of assessment data throughout the year to evaluate progress.
5. To familiarize participants with a range of technologies, and a variety of materials and classroom modifications, that support literacy and mathematics learning and use by students with significant cognitive disabilities.
6. To share a range of resources and strategies for continuing self-education as well as parent and professional support.

Future Ready Occupational Course of Study (FR-OCS)

Another statewide initiative, specifically addressing some SWD is the *Future Ready Occupational Course of Study* (FR-OCS). This course of study aligns with the college- and career-ready literacy and mathematics standards. In addition, there is a specific requirement for work experience to support career development.

OCS/FR-OCS Historical Information		
Original OCS	**Current FR-OCS**	**Additional Information**
The original OCS curriculum was approved by the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) in May 2000.	Major revisions were made to the OCS curriculum in 2009 and 2010 to provide alignment to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and the Common Core State Standards adopted by the North Carolina SBE.	FR-OCS is designed for SWD who require modifications to access the NC Standard Course of study and utilize alternate assessments (2% population).
In 2008-09, OCS did not meet approval through the USED peer review process because of different academic	The FR-OCS is one of two courses of study a student with disabilities may complete to graduate with a regular	FR-OCS is *not* intended for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who require an

content standards than the general curriculum for the assessments used for adequate yearly progress (AYP) purposes. As a result, OCS students could no longer count as participants for determining AYP at the high school level.	high school diploma in North Carolina.	alternate assessment (1% population). The students with the most significant cognitive disabilities access curriculum through the NC Extended Content Standards and do not receive a regular high school diploma.
Original OCS	**Current FR-OCS**	**Additional Information**
In 2008-09 and 2009-10, OCS students continued being taught the OCS curriculum, taking the OCS ***NCEXTEND2*** assessments. **NOTE**: For AYP determinations, OCS students taking ***NCEXTEND2*** assessments were counted as non-participants in 2008-09 and 2009-10.	The FR-OCS is a standard course of study consisting of fifteen courses in English, mathematics, science, occupational preparation and social studies.	The IEP Team, which includes parents and the student, makes recommendations as to the appropriateness of the FR-OCS for a particular student based on his/her post-school transition needs and goals. Final selection of the OCS is by student and parent choice.
During 2008-09 and 2009-10, work began to transition the OCS curriculum to align with the NC Standard Course of Study, through workgroups comprised of DPI Curriculum staff, EC Division staff and stakeholders, including EC teachers and LEA curriculum specialists.		Students in the FR-OCS, upon successful completion of all graduation requirements, will receive a regular high school diploma.

The FR-OCS is intended to meet the needs of a small group of students with disabilities. While the standards align with the Common Core State Standards, the instruction focuses on post-school employment. The vast majority of students with disabilities will complete the Future-Ready Core Course of Study with the use of accommodations, modifications, supplemental aids, and services as needed.

English I, English II, Math I, and Biology in the FR-OCS currently demonstrate content alignment with college-and career ready standards. Due to the enhanced delivery through the

North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS), these courses are available to all students in the FR-OCS. English III and English IV are currently being developed through the NCVPS. Links to resources for unpacking the Common Core are available at:

http://dpi.state.nc.us/acre/standards/common-core-tools/#unela

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/acre/standards/support-tools/unpacking/occupational/algebra1.pdf

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/acre/standards/support-tools/crosswalks/ocs/biology.pdf

Students in the FR-OCS also are required to complete career/technical education, healthful living, and elective courses, as needed to meet graduation requirements. These general education courses are available for students with disabilities and may include the use of accommodations, modifications, supplemental aids, and services as needed. A complete listing of courses included in the FR-OCS may be found in the "*Revised* Supplemental Attachment B, High School Graduation Requirements." This document on high school graduation requirements can be found on the NCDPI website at www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/graduation.

Students in the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) transitioned to the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English language arts and aligned assessments in 2012-13, the same implementation timeline as the general student population. Currently OCS students participate in the general assessments with or without accommodations. The NCDPI developed modified assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English language arts for implementation in 2012-13 and 2013-14; however, the OCS students participate in classes with general students and receive instruction on the same content standards. There will be *no* modified assessments administered beginning with the 2014-15 school year.

Annually, the Exceptional Children Division collects and analyzes data on outcomes for SWD (e.g., performance, growth, etc.) and reports the information to OSEP in the Annual Performance Report (APR). The APR Indicators 1, 2, 3, 13, and 14 directly support the goals of college- and career-readiness. The analysis informs the Division's activities to assist LEAs on their development of Continuous Improvement Performance Plans and efforts to improve instruction and outcomes for SWD.

College- and Career-Ready Standards: Outreach, Dissemination of Information, and Professional Development for Teachers

As new demands are placed upon students, new demands are placed upon teachers. NCDPI understands that student success depends heavily upon educator capacity. As a service agency, NCDPI strives to build collaborative partnerships with all stakeholders that impact the education of our students. From the institutes of higher education (IHEs) to local district and school staff, NCDPI professional development efforts build on already-strong regional and statewide professional development programs and resources to provide a comprehensive,

targeted, seamless, and flexible system for all educators. The core strategy in the professional development plan is for NCDPI to guide and support capacity-building in LEAs and charter schools to ensure that local educators can provide high-quality, localized professional development.

In order to ensure that all students are college- and career ready, professional development is critical for all school stakeholders:

- Professional development for Teachers provides every teacher with a thorough understanding of how to implement standards to improve student outcomes.
- Professional development for Administrators provides training to principals and instructional leads focusing on management and coaching of teachers under new standards.
- Professional development for District Leadership Teams provides capacity building for sustaining continuous improvements under new standards.
- Professional development for Colleges and Universities builds collaboration and understanding of the new standards to impact Schools of Education teacher preparation programs.

To meet the needs of diverse stakeholders, NCDPI developed a blended professional development model. The blended professional development approach is defined as a combination of virtual and face-to-face learning that includes various technologies, pedagogies, and contexts (Graham, 2006; Stacey & Gerbic, 2001; and Garrison and Vaughn, 2008). This blended approach to professional development consists of face-to-face sessions, online modules, webinars, professional learning communities, 21st century technology, and essential instructional tools. The goal of the statewide professional development initiative is to support the transition from the current North Carolina Standard Courses of Study to the new CCSS and North Carolina Essential Standards by increasing educator knowledge and skills and enhancing instructional delivery. Integrated throughout the professional development delivery is a strong focus on increasing student engagement by infusing 21st century technology skills in all curriculum areas and grade levels. Ultimately the expected outcome is to fundamentally change the way teaching and learning occur to ensure all students in North Carolina are ready and competitive for college, career, and life.

Leadership Institutes

As of July 2012, the Professional Development Initiative (PDI) team successfully conducted six (6) Summer Institute trainings across the state of North Carolina to provide opportunities for local professional development leaders to expand learning about the Common Core and Essential Standards. Eighteen-member LEA and Charter School teams, including key leaders from each local district and charter school, registered in all eight regions; a total of 2,833 educators attended these summer trainings. These sessions were conducted in collaboration with local school districts and facilitated by multiple NCDPI division leaders. Content for the sessions was developed by a cross-functional NCDPI team that included staff from Educator Recruitment and Development, Curriculum and Instruction, Information and Technology, Accountability Services and Exceptional Children. This year's sessions focused on how to facilitate learning for all students. Based upon feedback from last summer's Institutes, we included more facilitated team time, allowing individual teams to plan together. "Leaders with Leaders," Listening Lunch, and a Resource Expo were other new features added to this year's

Institutes that provided opportunities for increased collaboration and exposure to resources that are available across the state.

Summer Institute 2013 (SI2013) built on the knowledge and skills learned from previous Institutes with a focus on building district-and school-level leadership capacity to change teacher practice and student outcomes. To accomplish this, NCDPI provided ten, hands-on, highly-engaging, two-day professional development experiences that supported the transition to the new NC Standard Course of Study, the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES), and the State Accountability System, with an emphasis on Data Literacy. NCDPI also featured an introduction to Home Base, NC's statewide instructional improvement system (IIS) and student information system (SIS) for teachers, students, parents, and administrators. The guiding questions for the Summer Institutes were, "How does 'your content/topic' help a teacher improve their practice?" and "How do teachers know the students learned it?"
SI2013 had three goals: 1) to facilitate collaboration and district planning between LEAs/Charter Schools to ensure statewide success in implementation of RttT initiatives, 2) to build interdependence among the LEAs and schools within a region and across the state, and 3) to help LEAs understand connections between RttT initiatives. Based on the feedback from Summer Institutes 2012 (SI2012) and the spring 2013 fidelity support sessions, NCDPI made several changes to the program. First, NCDPI held the events at conference centers instead of school centers. Second, NCDPI offered session choice with participants having thirty different sessions to choose from based on their district needs and professional roles served. Also, NCDPI designed topical sessions to integrate multiple strands (Home Base, Universal Design of Learning, Professional Teaching Standards, etc.) with less time spent on direct training, and Facilitated Team Time (FTT) was replicated from SI2012. SI2013 served 2,962 participants representing leadership teams from all 115 LEAs and 50 charter schools.

NCDPI has initiated planning for Summer Institutes 2014. This initiative will build on all previous Institutes by assisting the LEAs and charters to be purveyors in their own learning, hence the theme, Sustaining Success…Building on Achievement. LEA and charter leadership teams will create approximately 90% of all professional development offerings. Survey data from SI2013, presentation ideas generated during Fall Fidelity Support session, and the expansion of Facilitated Team Time will influence the content strands for the SI2014 schedule.

To continue the work initiated in the Leadership Institutes, NCDPI partnered with the state's Regional Educational Service Alliance (RESA), to provide equal access to quality professional development across the state. In order to continue to update the North Carolina educational workforce, the PDI team is working to deliver its most ambitious calendar of face-to-face offerings to date. The 2013-2014 calendar presents over 325 offerings, as compared to the 2012-2013 calendar with 250 offerings and the 2011-2012 school year with approximately 125 offerings. These PD topics build on trainings from previous years and offer more in-depth examination of the NC Educator Evaluation System (NCEES), Standard Course of Study, and data literacy. NCDPI continues to maintain an online calendar of these offerings (available at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/prodev/calendar/), though the calendar has become more user-friendly to enable stakeholders to easily find offerings that best support the needs of their LEA or charter.

In addition, there are a series of live webinars and chats available to districts and schools throughout the year on topics such as the Educator Evaluation System and the new standards. These sessions are customized trainings specific to each region. Because formative support is targeted and individualized, these sessions are not represented on the master calendar; rather on the regional wikis and the RESA's websites for educators to register. Professional Development Leaders delivered face-to-face and virtual trainings to LEAs as requested to help them move forward with state initiatives. From July 2013 to December 2013, Professional Development Leaders delivered 138 sessions in addition to the 325 face-to-face PD sessions on the PDI calendar described above. The trainings covered topics such as "Literacy in the Content Areas" and "21st Century Skills," though the most requested session focused on NCEES and Home Base.

NCDPI has continued to expand the availability of instructional support tools and materials to help teachers implement the new standards and assessments. While initial documents and resources focused on how the new standards linked to previous standards, NCDPI shifted focus toward providing teachers with resources, such as model lesson plans and instructional scheduling guides that offer concrete examples of how to address the new standards in classrooms.
The Phase II Modules (8) were released in June 2012 and were designed as blended learning modules accompanied by an Implementation Guide that describes ways districts and schools can successfully utilize the modules in their local settings. Phase II Modules (10) were released June 2013, which increased the total to 26. The new titles include:

- Data Literacy in Action
- Universal Design For Learning (UDL)
- Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects: Part 2
- NC Teacher Evaluation Process
- Building and Sustaining Professional Development [Guskey]
- 21st Century Mentoring
- Responsibilities of the 21st Century Teacher (using the 21st Century Framework)
- NC Principal Evaluation Process
- Measures of Student Learning: Grade 9-12
- Measures of Student Learning: Elementary - Middle

Based on feedback from educators, NCDPI has created facilitated versions of two of the online modules; these revised modules will guide teachers through the activities as a part of a group instead of assuming teachers will complete the course independently. This facilitated model has proven popular with educators, so NCDPI has worked to expand the number of offerings of these two topics, The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and Connecting With Your 21st Century Learner.

In addition to the ten new online modules, PDI staff created their version of a MOOC called a MOOClet. This MOOClet entitled, Effective Digital Strategies in the K-12 Classroom, is a six week course that serves as a model for delivering learning content for a large number of participants. The MOOClet will be a facilitated course that explores using digital strategies to support the 4Cs of learning: communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.
Since August 2013, the PDI team has worked to move all modules to the Home Base Professional Development System which launched in April 2014. Eight of the transferred modules will be converted to facilitated courses due the popularity of this format. In August 2013, NCDPI added

two contractors to the PDI team in order to support this work. In addition to the transferring of completed modules, the PDI team has begun to work to convert some of the wikispaces components into online learning mini modules. The teams have identified six (6) potential wikispaces to convert to mini modules. This effort will preserve the work of the team after the RttT initiative ends.

In order to test the new PD system offered through Home Base, the PDI team converted one online module, Universal Design of Learning, into a four week facilitated course delivered through the new online platform. Two sections of the course with a maximum participation of 30 educators each were filled to capacity within two days of the weeklong registration period. The course concluded in December 2013 and NCDPI is in the process of reviewing feedback from the course.

The PDI team has started production on eight new modules to be released June 2014. Tentative topics include: Foundations of Reading, Classroom Management, Best Practices of Best Teachers, Instructional Design and Assessment, etc. Additional information on the online professional development modules can be found on the NCDPI website (https://www.rt3nc.org/).

Wikispaces has been a very successful tool the State has embraced. Due to the collaborative planning team efforts and training opportunities (NC Learning Technology Initiative-NCLTI) throughout the year, the organization and accessibility of materials for districts published by NCDPI is more uniform, current and comprehensive. The menu of NCDPI Wikispaces available can be found at http://wikicentral.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/.

To support and sustain the work of the blended professional development model, NCDPI provides a cadre of regional Professional Development Leads to serve as professional development resource developers, workshop leaders, and professional learning community coaches. Additionally, content specific experts from NCDPI are available to provide specific opportunities for participants to delve deeper into understanding the new CCSS and NC Essential Standards. As these standards are implemented in classrooms, professional development support staff will be provided for teachers, principals/administrators, LEA professional development leaders, and university and college staff in educator preparation programs. NCDPI believes the impact from this best practice will not only increase teacher understanding of the new standards, but will also truly improve how educators implement and deliver the new standards, thus assuring that students are college- and career-ready.

College- and Career-Ready Standards: Professional Development for Principals

Providing high-quality, accessible professional development to all teachers and principals is a critical component of the professional development plan funded by North Carolina's federal Race to the Top (RttT) grant. One key professional development program funded through RttT focuses on providing professional development for practicing principals. NCDPI has partnered with the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals' Association (NCPAPA) to provide a leadership development program for practicing school principals. This professional development model, entitled Distinguished Leadership in Practice (DLP), is

aligned to the performance evaluation standards adopted by the State Board of Education for North Carolina's school leaders (i.e., the North Carolina Standards for School Executives. This cohort that focuses exclusively on principals is in addition to the professional development calendar that provides support for principals in the areas of As previously described, NCDPI has a rigorous professional development calendar filled with trainings that are exclusively for principals on the implementation of CCSS and Essential Standards, by content area. Specifically for NC principals, NCDPI is providing provided a series of professional development trainings that scaffold their learning and understanding of the new standards as well as the new Educator Evaluation System, and the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS).

The DLP initiative employs a non-traditional professional development model. Participants examine the meaning and application of school leadership through a problem-based approach delivered via a series of face-to-face, regional, cohort-based sessions, which are followed by online activities. Throughout the year-long experience, practicing North Carolina principals are coached using a continuous improvement model. Participating principals are provided with models of exemplary school leadership, which allows them to study the behaviors, attitudes, and competencies that define a distinguished school leader. The DLP experience is built around six components:

- Component One: Strategic Leadership for High-Performing Schools
- Component Two: Maximizing Human Resources for Goal Accomplishment
- Component Three: Building a Collaborative Culture through Distributive Leadership
- Component Four: Improving Teaching and Learning for High Performance
- Component Five: Creating a Strong Internal and External Stakeholder Focus
- Component Six: Leading Change to Drive Continuous Improvement

Sessions for principals and assistant principals are facilitated by 14 highly-qualified individuals who are former or current principals. Overall, principals receive a total of 250 hours of professional development (approximately 60 hours of face-to-face work and 190 hours of online work). The fourth cohort of principals began in April 2013 with 174 principals. 92 Assistant Principals had participated in the program by the end of the 2012-2013 cycle and received 60 hours of face-to-face.

As previously mentioned, to address the need for leadership development for superintendents following the implementation of the NC Superintendents evaluation, the NC Superintendents Academy has begun with 34 superintendents currently participating. The kickoff occurred in June 2013. The overall purpose of the program is to support the growth, expansion, and enhancement of superintendents based on North Carolina standards for superintendents. The program is designed to guide superintendents as they reflect on and improve their effectiveness as district leaders; focus the personal leadership goals of the superintendents and link personal goals with district and state goals; guide and facilitate the professional development of superintendents toward advanced levels of executive leadership as defined by the North Carolina Standards for Superintendents. To date, DLP has served over 900 principals and assistant principals, and 33 superintendents in the state of North Carolina (March 2014).

The other need the state previously mentioned was to support the digital transformation of teaching and learning within their schools. NCDPI has partnered with the NC Association of

School Administrators to develop this online, two-year, face-to-face program. These principals are leaders ready to apply their leadership knowledge and skills to the critical task of creating the next generation of schools to prepare our students for their lives in the global information age. The inaugural cohort began on January 7th, 2014. They currently have 54 members in the cohort.

Because building capacity is an integral part of NC's plan for sustainability, district leaders will be provided this intensive, blended professional development opportunity to build on the trainings and resources utilized throughout the year. At this time, the State believes the implementation of the PDI is strong and effective. The latest survey feedback indicates teams believe the PD sessions are purposeful, address the needs of LEAs and are applicable for their LEA implementation. The State continues to receive positive feedback from LEAs and Charter Schools and data are continuously collected and analyzed for improvements and adjustments.

College- and Career-Ready Standards: Instructional Materials

With new expectations for students come new expectations for educators. With the implementation of the new CCSS and North Carolina Essential Standards in the 2012-13 school year, the success of the new standards rests upon educators' ability to build their knowledge and understanding as well as their ability to change instructional delivery to address the diverse needs of students. To help propel educators with this new shift, professional development opportunities are supported with strong multiple instructional tools, resources, and developed by the SEA during 2011 and beyond.

The instructional tools are intended to build and reinforce educator and stakeholder support of the new standards and to ensure educators master the news standards and provide them with the necessary tools to translate that knowledge into student outcomes. Instructional tools are to be developed and implemented in phases.

Phase I resources included:

- Content *Crosswalks and Unpacking* documents that guide educators in understanding key differences between the current Standard Course of Study and the new standards and provide a deeper and clearer understanding of the standards
- Phase I modules **(Supplemental Attachment E)**
- Facilitators' Guide for Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards
- Professional Development Presentations, Sample Agendas, and Speaker Notes to be used in LEA training sessions
- Text Exemplar Documents

Phase II documents included:

- Graphic Organizers/Learning Progressions
- Terminologies/Content Glossaries
- Assessment Examples

- High School Sequencing Documents
- Phase II modules **(Supplemental Attachment E)**
- Resource Documents by Content Area

Effective professional development requires the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative measures. NCDPI has and will continue to collect these measures in a variety of ways. Participants attending the summer leadership institutes completed an online evaluation, which provided immediate feedback on the impact of the summer sessions. As part of RttT, NCDPI has an evaluation team consisting of staff from the UNC-Chapel Hill Institute for Public Policy, the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at NC State University, and the SERVE Center at UNC-Greensboro. Evaluators from these groups attended the summer leadership institutes to observe and conduct informal interviews with participants in order to collect information on the impression and impact of these institutes. These evaluators have also selected diverse districts and schools across the state in which they will conduct, over the next few years, ongoing evaluation with central office staff, school administrators, and teachers. Additionally, over the next few years, NCDPI's staff will use *Guskey's Critical Levels of Professional Development Evaluation* (2000) to conduct fidelity checks, to collect district team feedback, and to measure the success of ongoing professional developments offered by NCDPI.

To provide ongoing support and sustainability of effort, NCDPI has set up an informal yet deliberate evaluation method that will serve to help improve teaching and learning as districts transition to and implement new standards in 2012-13 and beyond. Web 3.0 tools such as content-specific WikiSpaces, blogs, and webinar "live chats" will provide district teams and content teachers the informal venue often needed to receive answers to questions, to share new best practices, and to introduce new instructional strategies.

District needs vary in many ways, with some requiring more assistance and support than others. Although a deliberate and strategic approach to address these needs was taken into consideration during the planning and delivery of the *Common Core and Essential Standards Leadership Institutes*, NCDPI must continue to find a differentiated approach to the design and delivery of professional development. Additional key communication strategies include:

- Race to the Top (RttT) Weekly Update (see http://www.ncpublicschools.org/rttt/updates/)
- Development and maintenance of the ACRE website, which addresses the resources and on-line tools
- E-Calendar, which provides key dates of interest for teachers, superintendents, and principals
- FYI@DPI, which is a newsletter for NCDPI internal staff
- Media Toolkits for LEA Public Information Officers
- Go To Webinars sponsored by the Communication Department

The READY Campaign

The State Board of Education, State Superintendent June Atkinson and NCDPI fully support the success of educators and the success of North Carolina's students. We are passionate about our students' futures and are responsible for providing the direction to help them succeed. Knowing

the competitive environment that young people will face upon graduation, NCDPI is detailing an ambitious alignment of our educational standards, assessments and accountability methods, launched in the 2012-13 school year, to meet future expectations. These efforts are further fueled by the federal RttT funds, which enabled the State to speed the integration of new methodologies and relevant technologies in the classroom.

In order for principals and teachers to fully understand what these changes were and how the changes would affect their work, NCDPI launched the READY Campaign in the spring of 2012. READY is the new identity brand for North Carolina's new *Standard Course of Study* (Essential Standards and Common Core), new accountability model, and all the technology and professional development support being developed and provided to local educators.

Beginning February 28, 2012 and throughout most of March, NCDPI leaders traveled to all eight regions of our state to meet with principals and a teacher representative from each school. The purpose was to share with them our effort to remodel NC's system of public schools. The last time we held meetings of similar scope prior to 2012 was during the early years of the ABCs of Public Education. The Communications Division organized these meetings, but many other staff members from across the agency participated in some way to make these a success. The focus of our meetings was around illustrating how all these components fit together to support educators as they work to promote academic achievement for all public school students.

The purpose of the READY Regional Outreach Meetings was to provide principals, teachers, and district leadership with information and tools to communicate and describe the following changes under way in North Carolina public schools:

- new Essential Standards and Common Core State Standards;
- a new state accountability model;
- additional professional development support for educators and schools;
- new uses of technology to support learning; and
- an enhanced teacher and principal development model.

To increase access to the information and tools, session dates and locations in 2012 were scheduled in each region of the state as follows:

February 28	Region 5 – Greensboro	Greensboro Marriott
March 7	Region 1 – Elizabeth City	Elizabeth City State University
March 8	Region 2 – Wilmington	UNC-W The Burney Center
March 9	Region 4 – Fayetteville	Fayetteville State University -Shaw Auditorium
March 12	Region 3 – Raleigh	McKimmon Center
March 15	Region 7 – Hickory	Crowne Plaza
March 22	Region 6 – Concord	Charlotte Motor Speedway
March 23	Region 8 – Asheville	Crowne Plaza

Participants were provided with communication tools to help the district's students, employees, parents and community understand how all the moving parts of the READY initiative worked together to support student learning.

In order to provide fair and equitable communication about the significant changes that came to the state in the fall of 2012, numerous webinars were conducted in April 2012. Additionally a face-to-face session was videotaped and posted online for continued access. Information on the READY Campaign is available to the public and accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/ready/.

College- and Career-Ready Standards: Expanded Access to Post-Secondary Education: ***Career & College Promise (CCP)***

In today's global economy, successful careers could require a two-or four-year degree, a diploma or a nationally recognized job credential. *Career & College Promise (CCP)* offers North Carolina high school students a clear path to success in college or in a career. The program is free to all students who maintain a "B" average and meet other eligibility requirements. *Career & College Promise* was former Gov. Bev Perdue's commitment to helping every qualified student gain access to an affordable college education. This commitment has received continued support by the current Governor Pat McCrory. Through a partnership of the Department of Public Instruction, the N.C. Community College System, the University of North Carolina system and many independent colleges and universities, North Carolina is helping eligible high school students to begin earning college credit at a community college campus at no cost to them or their families. Three pathways offer students the opportunity to earn:

- College credit completely transferrable to all UNC System Institutions and many of North Carolina's Independent Colleges and Universities.
- A credential, certificate or diploma in a technical career.
- A high school diploma and two years of college credit in four to five years through innovative cooperative high schools (limited availability).

Career & College Promise provides three pathways to help advance eligible students' post-high school success: Earn tuition-free course credits toward a four-year degree through North Carolina's community colleges; earn tuition-free course credits at an NC Community College toward an entry-level job credential, certificate or diploma in a technical career; begin earning tuition-free college credits as a high-school freshman by attending a Cooperative Innovative High School.

Innovation Zones
The Innovative Education Initiatives Act and the Cooperative Innovative High School Programs statute were passed by the General Assembly in 2003 and revised in 2005. These statutes encourage high schools to be innovative and participate in reform activities. LEAs are encouraged to partner with their local postsecondary educational institution(s) to establish a high school program that would target students who are at risk of dropping out of high school before attaining a high school diploma or a program that would offer accelerated learning opportunities.

The CCP program expanded access to college-level courses to students statewide. In addition to providing access for high school juniors and seniors, the program operating guidelines ensure that students in the program are working toward tangible outcomes such as college credit transferable to a 4-year institution and/or a certification in one of the sixteen Career and Technical Education (CTE) career clusters. This is an improvement over

the previous dual-enrollment options in North Carolina as they allowed students broad access without necessarily moving the students toward a career or college outcome (students could take a random assortment of courses that were technically college credit, but were not always applicable to a degree or certification, especially in combination with other courses the students have taken).

Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG)
Finally, in North Carolina, state legislation mandates that public schools identify and serve academically or intellectually gifted (AIG) K-12 students as another avenue for accelerating students. Each LEA determines how to identify and serve its own AIG student population. This honors local context and supports each LEA to do what is best for its own AIG student population. LEAs must adhere to state legislation, which guides LEAs and defines academically or intellectually gifted students, and will also use the NC AIG Program Standards, adopted July 2009, as a guide in the future development of local AIG programs. The newly approved NC AIG Program Standards provides a statewide framework for quality programming, while honoring local context. An LEA's policies and practices regarding its local AIG program are developed through the writing of a local AIG plan. This AIG plan is approved by the local board of education and submitted to State Board of Education/DPI for comment. DPI assists LEAs with their local AIG program and plan but does not approve local plans. Per state legislation, AIG plans must be revised every three years by the LEA. In 2009-10, LEAs revised their local AIG plans and programs with the guidance of DPI.

Implementing new standards that are rigorous and aligned to college readiness alone is not enough. North Carolina is providing a variety of opportunities for students to have access to courses and programs that will accelerate their learning in order to equip them for the demands of postsecondary learning. North Carolina has indictors to identify students who take advantage of the following opportunities:

- Honors and AP courses at the high school level for college-bearing credits
- Providing middle school students access to high school courses
- Virtual public school online courses
- Career and College Promise for high school juniors and seniors
- Cooperative Innovative High schools
- Early College high schools
- CTE Credentialing for high school students

North Carolina is proud to be a partner with the Southern Region Education Board (SREB) to develop high school transition courses designed to assist students who did not demonstrate proficiency at the junior level on the state required assessment (ACT). The transition courses, aligned with the Common Core State Standards for ELA and Math, and Literacy in Science and History/Social Studies, will be modular, will employ hybrid in-class and online approaches, and will serve the purpose of helping significantly more students become college ready and prepared to succeed in postsecondary pursuits.

College- and Career-Ready Standards: Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs

In order to ensure that new teachers and principals can support the new standards, NCDPI and the SBE work closely with IHEs on program approval and program review. All teacher and leader (principal) education licensure areas must have SBE approved programs which are aligned to the NC Professional Teaching Standards and the NC School Executive Standards (Masters of School Administration programs). Both sets of standards (teachers and school leaders) explicitly have diversity standards and practices which speak to teachers' ability to differentiate for all learners, including those typically under-served. Teacher and leader candidate programs use these standards to develop and implement their program of studies. In addition, the state reviews the IHE programs using candidate's developed artifacts. These artifacts demonstrate a candidate's proficiencies in all the standards, including teaching diverse learners including ELs, SWDs, and low-achieving students.

As North Carolina rolled out the CCSS and North Carolina Essential Standards, IHEs were included in the design and implementation of professional development. In 2011, NCDPI trained over 200 IHE faculty members from across the state. In the summer of 2012, IHEs continued their training by working with their LEA (school system) partners. The implementation of the plan improved the preparation of teachers and principals.

College- and Career-Ready Standards: Rigorous Assessments Aligned to the Standards

With new standards for all content areas implemented in the 2012-13 school year, new assessments also were developed and administered. The assessments for math, science, and ELA were field tested in the 2011-12 school year to determine item statistics for making decisions about final test forms.

The *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (* is one of two multistate consortia awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop an assessment system based on the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). To achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, Smarter Balanced is committed to ensuring that assessment and instruction embody the CCSS and that all students, regardless of disability, language, or subgroup status, have the opportunity to learn this valued content and show what they know and can do. The assessment system will be field tested in the 2013-14 school year and administered live for the first time during the 2014-15 school year.

The state of North Carolina is a Governing State in Smarter Balanced. As defined in the Governance Document, each state is required to take an active role in supporting the work of the Consortium, thus North Carolina's participation includes membership in three work groups. With strong support from member states, institutions of higher education, and industry, Smarter Balanced will develop a balanced set of measures and tools, each designed to serve specific purposes. Together, these components will provide student data throughout the academic year that will inform instruction, guide interventions, help target professional development, and ensure an accurate measure of each student's progress toward career- and college-readiness.

NCDPI, Smarter Balanced and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) worked together to launch a Technology Readiness Tool to support states in the transition to next-generation, online assessments. The tool allows districts and schools to capture readiness indicators, including: number and types of computers, network and bandwidth infrastructure, local staff resources, and other information related to the digital delivery of assessments. For more information about the announcement from Smarter Balanced and PARCC, go to the official press release at http://www.smarterbalanced.org/news/smarter-balanced-and-parcc-to-launch-new-technology-readiness-tool-to-support-transition-to-online-assessments/ . Please see the next section for more recent action by the State Board of Education as it relates to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.	

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.

Option A	**Option B**	**Option C**
☐ The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition. i. Attach the State's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. (Attachment 6)	☐ The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs. i. Provide the SEA's plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.	☒ The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs. 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)

See **Attachment 6** for a copy of the state's original MOU with the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. However, at its February 2014 meeting, the State Board of Education (SBE) voted to delay the administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments until at least the 2016-17 school year and to continue using the state-developed assessments based on the CCSS with achievement level descriptors and performance standards that designate college- and career-readiness. Those assessments were first administered in the 2012-13 school year.

At its March 2014 meeting, the SBE revised its achievement level descriptors and performance standards to move from four (4) achievement levels to five (5) achievement levels. This change designates the new achievement level 3 as grade level proficient (but not a college- and career-readiness standard) and the new achievement levels 4 (solid) and 5 (superior) as the college- and career-readiness standard. The insertion of the new achieve level 3 assists schools in the delivery of differentiated instruction that best meets the needs of the individual student. More information about the new achievement levels can be found at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/policyoperations/assessbriefs/assessbrief5levels14.pdf .

In addition, the SBE announced that it will convene a Task Force of stakeholders from across the state to study the issues of standards and assessments and report back to the SBE on recommendations for the future.

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.

OVERVIEW

North Carolina was a pioneer in school accountability in the mid-1990s when the state's education and political leaders developed the ABCs of Public Education, the former school accountability model. At that time, few states were able to measure student academic growth from year to year and use this information to evaluate school performance. Since then, North Carolina educators and leaders have learned a great deal about what is effective in improving schools and performance. New technologies have changed how student assessments can be completed and allowed for more complex analysis of student assessment data. Ultimately the goal of NC's differentiated accountability, recognition and support system is to ensure that our students graduate prepared for college and the workplace and that achievement gaps between groups are eliminated.

North Carolina has been engaged in transforming its content standards, assessments, and accountability system for the past four years. However, as this work has evolved, the Race to the Top (RttT) grant, and now the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Flexibility Waiver, has more definitively set the path to preparing students to be successful beyond their K-12 education. This commitment to college- and career-readiness standards has permeated all of the state's efforts: professional development, teacher and principal evaluation systems, coordination of higher education program outcomes, participation in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, and of course, content standards, assessments, and accountability.

When North Carolina submitted its initial Flexibility Request, it was in the final phase of the design of a new accountability model, which would be implemented in the 2012-13 school year. Also, in 2012-13, new assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics and the Essential Standards in science were operational.

The timing of the initial Flexibility Request with the delivery of new content standards, new assessments, and a new accountability model was optimal for North Carolina to coordinate its efforts to ensure every student graduates college- and career-ready. It also was a key factor in achieving the overarching goal of having an accountability system that is clear, concise, and transparent to all stakeholders.

The initial Flexibility Request gave North Carolina the opportunity to reset Annual Measureable Objectives (AMOs) with the goal of reducing the percentage of non-proficient students by half within six years. This, coupled with setting AMO targets by subgroup, as opposed to having the same target for all subgroups, emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement for all.

> Please note that North Carolina did *not* use an index model in its new accountability model, and it did *not* assign a status to each school based on the accountability model in the 2012-13 school year. It provided data on the current year (Status) and change across years (Progress). This information, with EVAAS for school growth, provided stakeholders with comprehensive information to evaluate the successes and needed improvements in a school. Critical to this is the disaggregation of the data, which will identifies subgroup differences. Also note that the EVAAS data mentioned is *not* conditioned on the use of demographic variables.

Theory of Change

In May 2007, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability presented a report to the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) that recommended improvements in the current system of accountability and steps toward a next generation of standards and assessments for North Carolina's schools. As a follow-up to the Commission's findings, in June 2008 the SBE approved the *Framework for Change: The Next Generation of Assessments and Accountability,* which identified action items for implementation of new content standards, new assessments, and a new accountability model. To deliver this work, in July 2008 the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) initiated the Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort (ACRE), which organized cross-agency teams to develop new content standards (Essential Standards), to design new assessments, and to design a new accountability model.

In the midst of this work, in June 2010 the SBE adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. This action required a shift from developing assessments aligned to the Essential Standards (English language arts and mathematics) to developing assessments aligned to the CCSS. Science assessments are still being aligned to the Essential Standards as adopted by the SBE in February 2010. The 2012-13 school year was targeted as the delivery date for all of the new assessments: English language arts, mathematics, and science.

In August 2010, North Carolina was awarded a Race to the Top (RttT) grant. With funds to increase resources and support for professional development, which is critical to the implementation of the CCSS and the Essential Standards, the Educator Recruitment and Development Division, in collaboration with the Curriculum and Instruction Division, delivered focused training for teachers across the state on the new content standards in the summer of 2011. This effort was the beginning of professional development centered on preparing educators, particularly teachers and principals, for the transition to college and career ready standards and a new accountability model. As the trainings continued in the fall of 2011, the Accountability Services Division was included in the

workshops to provide information on accountability and its role in ensuring schools are identified for assistance and intervention.

In September 2011, the USED offered states the opportunity to request flexibility from some of the ESEA requirements. With the new accountability model in the final design stages, North Carolina reviewed the model in consideration of the possibility of resetting the AMOs. With discussion on the impact of the Flexibility Request and continuous input from stakeholders, North Carolina modified the proposed accountability, bringing it into focus and aligning it with the Flexibility Request. The State Board of Education (SBE) approved the indicators for the accountability model at its January 2012 meetings.

North Carolina's accountability model has evolved from the vision of the Blue Ribbon Commission and the SBE to one that is clear and transparent to one that utilizes and optimizes the best of all of our initiatives: ACRE, *Career and College: Ready, Set, Go!,* and the Flexibility Request. The central message common to these initiatives is the adherence to high standards (college- and career-readiness) for all students and deliberate accountability that fosters focused improvement.

The following chronological chart details North Carolina's evolution to college- and career-ready standards, assessments, and accountability.

Date	Action	Outcome
May 2007	State Board of Education (SBE) commissioned a Blue Ribbon Panel on Testing and Accountability	Targeted change for Testing and Accountability
June 2008	Based on the Blue Ribbon Commission's recommendations, State Board of Education released *Framework for Change*	The *Framework* directed NCDPI to develop new content standards, to develop new assessments aligned to the new content standards, and to design a new accountability system, particularly for high schools, that was clear and transparent.
August 2008	Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort (ACRE)	Plan and timeline for the adoption of new content standards, the development of new assessments, and the design of a new accountability system
June 2010	North Carolina SBE Adopts Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics	ACRE timeline adjusted to deliver new assessments aligned to the new content standards in 2012-13.
August 2010	Race To The Top (RttT)	U.S. Department of Education (USED) awards RttT grant to North Carolina
September 2011	USED offered states opportunity to apply for waivers to NCLB sanctions	North Carolina incorporated waivers into its accountability model

State Accountability Model

In the *Framework for Change* (2008), the SBE specified a new accountability model for high schools; the elementary accountability model was not targeted for re-design. However, any changes to the accountability calculation or business rules would apply to the both the elementary model and the high school model, as appropriate. For example, student performance is reported as a performance composite of all assessments (number of proficient scores on all assessments for the school/number of students who have taken the assessments). If the student performance calculation was changed for the high schools, it would also be changed for the elementary model.

To clarify, there is one accountability model, but the high school model has additional indicators, primarily to address the college- and career-readiness of high school graduates. It is recognized that college- and career-readiness is not limited to the high school, but rather it is a framework that extends from kindergarten to grade 12. However, the potential for additional indicators for grades K-8 have been more difficult to identify within the parameter that the measures should not be impacted by the socio-economic status of a school. The NCDPI is continuing to consider possible indicators for the K-8.

The model, both at schools with K-8 grades and high schools, will ensure stakeholders can easily and quickly determine their school's student achievement for the current year (status) and over time (progress).

Grades K-8		**High Schools**	
Status	**Progress**	**Status**	**Progress**
Student Performance: Grades 3 through 8 assessments: English language arts, mathematics, and Grades 5 and 8 assessments: science	Student performance targets met in grades 3 through 8 assessments: English language arts, mathematics, and Grades 5 and 8 assessments: science	Student achievement on state assessments (Algebra I/Integrated Math I, English II, and Biology)	Student performance targets met on state assessments (Algebra I/Integrated Math I, English II, and Biology)
		Student performance on the ACT (Grade 11 students)	Change in Student performance on the ACT (Grade 11 students)
		Cohort graduation rates: 4-year and 5-year	Change in Cohort graduation rates: 4-year and 5-year
		Student performance on WorkKeys (Grade 12 students who meet criteria of a Career and Technical Education concentrator)	Change in Student performance on WorkKeys (Grade 12 students who meet criteria of a Career and Technical Education concentrator)

	Future Ready Core completer rate (Students who complete and pass Algebra II/Integrated Math III/Math III)	Change in Future Ready Core completer rate (Students who complete and pass Algebra II/Integrated Math III/Math III)
	Implementation of the Graduation Project (only in Status, not in Growth)	No change reported

The Status column will contain data on the percent of students meeting the established benchmarks, and the Progress column will contain data on whether or not the school met the target specified to demonstrate progress. The following table provides examples, both at the aggregate level and disaggregated:

Indicator	Students	Status	Progress
All Grade 3 Assessments	All Students	66.2 (% proficient)	Target: 65.3 Met Target: Yes
All Grade 3 Assessments	Hispanic Students	67.3 (% proficient)	Target: 66.4 Met Target: Yes
Grade 3 English Language Arts	All Students	76.2 (% proficient)	Target: 81.2 Met Target: No
Grade 3 English Language Arts	Students w/Disabilities	70.5 (% proficient)	Target 70.1 Met Target: Yes
Cohort Graduation Rate	All Students	77.8 (% graduated)	Target: 79.2 Met Target: Yes
Cohort Graduation Rate	English Language Learners	65.4 (% graduated)	Target: 67.2 Met Target: Yes

This accountability data will emphasize the performance of all students at the aggregate level and the following subgroups: white, black, Asian, native American, Hispanic, two or more races, students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students, and academically or intelligently gifted (AIG). All these subgroups are reported as part of ESEA with the exception of AIG.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) Accountability Data

To integrate the state accountability model and the new AMOs, the Progress column targets for the English language arts and mathematics assessments will be the AMO targets. Also included will be the non-federal indicators in the new state accountability model (ACT scores in High School, Future-Ready Core participation in High School and science results in Elementary, Middle and High School) will be set as well. This parallel structure allows for integration of the AMO targets into the overall state model. We believe that the additional indicators in our model are absolutely necessary

to making a claim that our model sets as a goal – and measures – key components of college- and career-readiness. The content domain of the ACT is larger and more ambitious than the Math and English Language Arts assessments currently used for annual measurable objectives under ESEA. The use of the ACT is an important bridge assessment allowing us to measure career- and college-ready expectations in our accountability model 2-years prior to the roll-out of the consortia assessments. Additionally, the ACT has the added benefit of actually being useful to students in college admissions.

Each school has a set of targets for all sub-groups across all indicators to ensure that schools are accountable for the college- and career-readiness of all. The example below of a sample READY Accountability report uses the high school indicators. Note that while the North Carolina Graduation Project is included in the accountability reporting, targets are not set for it because it is not a requirement.

Sample READY Accountability Report
2012-13 School Year (included in the initial Flexibility Request)

Example High School	All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Two or More Races	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Limited English Proficient	Students With Disabilities
Mathematics										
Target	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO
Result										
English Language Arts										
Target	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO
Result										
Science										
State Target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target
Result										
Graduation Rates										
Target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target
Result										
Future-Ready Core										
Target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target
Result										
ACT										
Target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target
Result										
WorkKeys										
Target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target	State target
Result										

The new AMOs will be used here.

Other progress targets will be set for the non-ESEA measures using a similar methodology (cut in half the percentage not meeting expectations in 6 years.)

Note on above table: The Graduation Project (from the table on page 51) will be reported as a yes or no based on whether a school requires it. For this reason, it will not be disaggregated.

Note that because our new model holds schools accountable for <u>all new college- and career-ready indicators</u> in 2012-13 (with the exception of the graduation project), we reset all targets (both AMOs and state targets) using 2012-13 as a new baseline year. We used a methodology that matches the balance of ambitiousness and feasibility that the suggested methodology of reducing the percentages

of students not-proficient in half by 6 years represents. We also ensured that the 2012-13 reset targets require subgroups farther behind to improve at a faster rate to close gaps in performance. We reported the percentage of targets met across all of the indicators which have sufficient data. In alignment with current practices for reporting against yearly targets and for high-stakes decision making, any subgroup result is noted as "ID" (insufficient data) on the targets page if the n-size does not meet or exceed 30 (this reduction in n-size from the original USED-approved n-size of 40 began with the reporting of the results from the 2012-13 school year). The reporting of results from the 2011-12 school year was the last year of the ABCs Accountability Model program. Additionally, the results from the 2012-13 school year of each indicator included in the reported accountability model noted as "ID" is viewable if the n-count is greater than or equal to 5 on a supplementary drill-down page. Based on the high school example above, the following table illustrates how subgroup results were projected to be reported.

During the 16 months following the initial Flexibility Request, the NCDPI reconfigured all of the accountability websites to accommodate the ending of the ABCs reporting and the beginning of the READY Accountability reporting. This included revisions to the State Report Card site as well.

The following table was an example in our initial Flexibility Request. The actual reporting for the 2012-13 school year can be found at http://www.ncaccountabilitymodel.org/ .

2012-13 School Year Example High School (graduation rates will also be reported)	**All Students**	**American Indian**	**Asian**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**Two or More Races**	**White**	**Economically Disadvantaged**	**Limited English Proficient**	**Students With Disabilities**	**Academically or Intellectually Gifted**
Mathematics											
State Proficiency Target	83.2	74.2	91.6	70.6	79.5	83.9	89.6	74.3	52.5	47.2	≥95
Actual Result	81.1	**ID**	**90**	**70**	**82**	**ID**	**88**	**75**	**54**	**56**	**≥95**
Met Target?	No	NA	No	No	Yes	NA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Participation Target	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0
Actual Result	99.4	ID	100	99.4	99.1	ID	99.8	99.1	99.5	99.4	100
Met Target?	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note on the above table: On this particular example, 72.2% of the targets were met.
ID = Insufficient Data, NA = Not Applicable

Accountability Model Outcome (Started with reporting from the 2012-13 school year.)

By presenting data on the status and the progress of all students and of subgroups, educators designing programs for improving student outcomes have more detailed data to identify students who need focused intervention. As is often noted, schools with high overall performance and high majority population performance may have subgroups that are not performing at the same level as the high majority population. This misalignment of educational outcomes requires identification if achievement gaps are to close and if all students are to be prepared for successful in college and career. Reporting on subgroup performance across all indicators was the first step in designing an

accountability model that will garner continuous improvement for all. The second step was determining indicators that function cohesively to ensure college- and-career ready graduates.

The six indicators interact to accomplish this goal:

1. Attending to student performance on state assessments will impact student performance on the ACT and WorkKeys.
2. Likewise, students who successfully complete Algebra II/Integrated III/Math III and the Graduation Project, which spans grades 9-12, will be better prepared for the ACT and WorkKeys.
3. Attention to all of these indicators will not only better prepare students for their post-secondary endeavors; high schools that focus programs on supporting these indicators will increase their graduation rates.
4. All of the indicators create a dynamic learning environment where students are successful and challenged, thus more likely to remain in school and graduate.

To provide a school-level growth metric, the NCDPI works with SAS Institute to generate Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) growth data. This is reported on the accountability web site for each school (see http://www.ncaccountabilitymodel.org/)and is used to identify schools that need differentiated support. This data also identify schools that are performing at a high-level.

State Accountability Model with ESEA Flexibility

In the ABCs of Public Education, the former statewide accountability model, schools were assigned a status based on students' performance and growth on the state assessments. There were seven potential statuses: Honor Schools of Excellence, Schools of Excellence, Schools of Distinction, Schools of Progress, No Recognition, Priority Schools, and Low-Performing Schools. Of these, only one, Honor Schools of Excellence, required the school to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). These seven school statuses are no longer used with the READY Accountability reporting starting in the 2012-13 school year.

The new accountability model under the ESEA Flexibility Request allows the integration of Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) in a meaningful way, as opposed to a separate stand-alone report. The new accountability model (see page 40) includes the Performance Composite Indicator (percent of proficient scores across all EOG and EOC assessments) for both the grade schools and the high schools. The performance composite is reported in the Status column of the performance of all students for the current year. In the Progress column, the AMO targets for English language arts and mathematics are reported as well as state AMOs for science. This column includes (1) whether or not a specific target was met and (2) an overall report of the total number of targets and the total number of targets met.

By reporting the AMOs in the Progress Column, all schools' are held accountable for meeting the AMOs based on the goal of reducing by one-half the number of non-proficient students within six years. This design merges state and federal accountability into one report, emphasizing the common goal of increasing student achievement and reducing the achievement gaps.

In alignment with the USED approved North Carolina Accountability Addendum, all schools must meet the required Other Academic Indicator (OAI), which is improvement in either graduation rate (for applicable schools) or attendance (schools without graduating students).

Assessment Participation

Recognizing the importance of ensuring all students participate in the assessment program, schools with less than 95 percent participation in mathematics, English language arts, or science are reported as "Not Met." Schools not meeting the 95 percent tested rule are identified and reported in the accountability results. Schools are subject to consequences if they fail to achieve 95% participation for any subgroup. The consequences escalate for schools that do not meet the participation rate standards over multiple years. The escalating consequences are as follows:

Year 1 of not meeting participation rate requirements for any subgroup

Consequence: Within 30 days after accountability results are approved by the SBE, the school must send **a letter** (text provided by the NCDPI) to all parents informing them of the inadequate participation rate. Each letter must also provide a plan of action for ensuring full participation for all subgroups specifically targeting those that did not have adequate participation.

Year 2 of not meeting participation rate requirements for any subgroup

Consequence: The school is labeled as a "consistently low-participating school" and will be required to create and implement an intensive intervention plan aligned with ensuring participation rates for all sub-groups reach 95%. At the state level, within the Statewide System of Support, these schools receive the most intensive support around the issue of participation rates.

Year 3 of not meeting participation rate requirements for any subgroup

Consequence: NCDPI **counts non-participating students as not proficient.** The number of additional students who are counted as not proficient is equal to the number of students that are needed to achieve a 95% participation rate in any subgroup. An additional letter (text provided by the NCDPI) must be sent home by the school indicating a third year of inadequate participation and provide a plan to ensure full participation for all subgroups.

These consequences were first implemented with the new accountability model in the 2012-13 school year. Additionally, schools cannot exit Priority School or Focus School status if the participation rate is less than 95 percent.

Inclusion of Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Subgroup

In addition to the former ten (10) subgroups previously used for making AYP decisions, North Carolina now reports the AIG subgroup beginning in 2012-13. This decision was predicated on the commitment to ensuring all subgroups, including the high achievers, demonstrate growth.

Future-Ready Occupational Course of Study (FR-OCS) Students

Currently, Future-Ready Occupational Course of Study (FR-OCS) students participate in the general assessments, with or without accommodations. North Carolina developed modified assessments aligned to grade level content standards for Algebra I/Integrated Math I/Math I, English II, and

Biology for implementation in the 2012-13 school year. The eligibility criteria for these assessments is not limited to the OCS students, but rather it includes students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who have demonstrated an inability to be proficient on the general state assessments. Effective with the 2014-15 school year, North Carolina will *no* longer administer modified assessments at any grade level. Additional information on the FR-OCS may be found on pages 30 of this document.

Differentiated Recognition

Quality public schools are among parents' top concerns, but others also have an important interest in ensuring that public schools are strong and provide a good value for the investment they represent. Public reporting of school information provides the State an opportunity to recognize the individual achievements of schools. In addition to the accountability reports which provide disaggregated data, the North Carolina's School Report Cards are designed to provide parents, taxpayers, employers and other stakeholders with key information about student achievement and attendance, class size, school safety, teacher quality, school technology and other information from the state's public schools (including charters).

The North Carolina School Report Cards site (http://www.ncreportcards.org/src/) is the state's one-stop-shop and best online resource for school information. The data reported are pulled directly from the authoritative sources for each area, and have been reviewed for accuracy before publication. The utility of the School Report Card will continue with the transition to the new accountability model.

Statewide System of Support/Differentiated Support

In the fall of 2007, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) initiated a program for Comprehensive Support for District and School Transformation, an ambitious plan to redefine and redesign the way the agency delivers assistance. The Comprehensive Support for District and School Transformation initiative has broadened into a major NCDPI focus on providing a statewide system of support for districts and schools sanctioned under NCLB, support for turnaround high schools and the middle schools that feed into them, and schools identified as low-performing under the ABCs of Public Education. To date, NCDPI completed an organizational realignment to ensure that committed leadership and the right decision-making structures are in place for the support system to be successful. The Academic Services and Instructional Support Area within NCDPI provides extensive school, district, and regional support to low-performing and low-capacity districts coordinated through inter-agency roundtables as part of the redefined statewide system of support. The cadre of support staff includes Needs Assessment Reviewers, Regional Leads, District Transformation Coaches, School Transformation Coaches, Instructional Coaches, and all Academic Services and Instructional Support staff to include Title I consultants. The support staff team, which includes distinguished teachers and principals brokers, partnerships with outside consultant groups, institutions of higher education, and regional comprehensive technical assistance centers.

Roundtables
North Carolina's statewide system of support is coordinated and monitored through three interlocking roundtables. The roundtable structure includes a Strategic Roundtable, an Agency Roundtable, and eight Regional Roundtables.

The *Strategic Roundtable* is comprised of NCDPI senior leadership and meets quarterly to manage the selection of districts and schools that will receive the most intensive support as well as monitoring progress toward the priority objectives.

Measurable goals and objectives for schools/districts receiving assistance:

- An increase in the percentage of targets met for the Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)
- An increase in the percentage of students achieving proficiency on State assessments
- Progress in making growth
- Progress in the number and percentage of students successfully graduating from high school

Other support objectives:

- Assisting the school in making data-driven decisions to improve student achievement
- Increasing the school's capacity to achieve student academic growth over time for all student subgroups
- Enhancing the staff's knowledge and delivery of best practices
- Building the skills of teachers and administrators

The *Agency Roundtable* is comprised of all NCDPI division directors and meets monthly to facilitate ongoing initiatives within the statewide system of support. The state's Title I Director serves on this roundtable. The Roundtable identifies current initiatives being provided to the region by the agency; reviews comprehensive needs assessment outcomes; identifies gaps and redundancies; targets available resources to identified needs; and routes continued services through NCDPI staff assigned to regions, districts, and schools.

The eight *Regional Roundtables* are comprised of regional NCDPI staff and representatives of the Regional Education Services Areas (RESAs). The Regional Roundtables meet monthly to identify current initiatives underway in each district in the region, to identify common needs across each region, and to coordinate technical assistance provided for the districts and schools identified as having the greatest need for support. Regional Roundtables are facilitated by NCDPI Regional Leads, one assigned to each of the eight regions across North Carolina. These Regional Leads attend the Agency Roundtable to ensure that communication regarding the needs of districts and schools, as well as initiatives addressing those needs, are continually reassessed and adjusted as appropriate. A Title I consultant serves on each Regional Roundtable in order to ensure that statutory requirements are understood by all parties and appropriate services and support are brokered for Title I schools. In order to ensure that all subgroup populations are represented, membership on the Regional Roundtables includes representatives from each Division in the Academic & Instructional Services area including students with disabilities (Exceptional Children Division), English learners (Curriculum and Instruction Division), and economically disadvantaged students (Compliance and Monitoring). The following illustration depicts the various divisions represented on each Regional Roundtable.

Support is customized to address specific needs of schools and districts and is organized within three levels of support:

1. Intensive Support and Intervention
2. Moderate Support and Intervention
3. Independent with General Support

See the information below which lists the levels of support, the type of schools involved, and the responsible party to see that the support is provided and some sample activities.

Level of Support	Schools	Responsible Party	Sample Activities
Intensive Support and Intervention	• SIG Schools • RttT Schools • New Priority Schools • Other schools determined to be low-performing	SEA	• External Assessment • Continuous Improvement Process with NC Online Planning Tool • Differentiated Support through on-site Technical Assistance and Guidance • Coaching
Moderate Support and Intervention	• Focus Schools • Title I Schools not meeting AMOs for 2 consecutive years	LEA with SEA support	• Self-assessment to identify needs • Address needs in school improvement plan

	• Other schools significantly contributing to the State's achievement gaps		• Differentiated Regional Support o Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) o Exceptional Children Literacy Specialists o Educator Recruitment and Development Professional Development o Common Core Professional Development o Universal Design for Learning
Independent with General Support	• Title I Reward Schools • Other schools that are determined to be high-performing or achieving high progress	LEA/School	• Access to SEA resources as requested • Participation in demonstration programs

Ultimately, the statewide system of support provides customized technical assistance designed to build the capacity of LEA and school staff to improve schools and sustain improvement efforts. Utilizing cross-agency experts, NC's support system includes interventions specifically focused on improving the performance of English learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students. The roundtables provide a forum for continuous communication and collaboration within the agency in order to most effectively customize the support.

The Identification Process

Districts and schools are screened through a multi-step process to determine the local education agencies (LEAs) that have the greatest need and least capacity for supporting schools. Criteria will include factors such as progress on AMOs, progress on indicators for achievement, progress in student proficiency, progress on student growth, progress on indicators of college- and career-readiness, and the resources available in the district. Once districts are identified, the State then maps the LEAs and schools according to the eight regions across the state. This information is critical to the ongoing coordination of support within the various divisions in the agency and is communicated to all staff within NCDPI through the three inter-agency roundtables.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) for Schools and Districts

For the most intensive support, comprehensive support for districts and schools begins as a partnership between LEAs and NCDPI. The LEAs identified as needing the most intensive level of support are contacted through the local Superintendent and School Board. NCDPI provides a District Transformation Coach to begin the design of services and support. A Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) is scheduled as early in the process as feasible. The purpose of the CNA

is to establish a clear vision of the strengths, areas for development, challenges and successes both for individual schools and the district as a whole.

Quality implementation of the CNA is vital since this rigorous process combines third party school evaluation with professional development to strengthen the capacity within districts and schools. Research supports that school districts that undergo a careful analysis of data and information, make better decisions about what to change and how to institutionalize systemic change. The framework of the CNA is designed to provide a model which enables local staff to conduct CNAs on their own.

The CNA begins with the district and its schools voluntarily completing a Self-Evaluation prior to the on-site review. The Self-Evaluation tool scaffolds the needs assessment focusing on outcomes in terms of school improvement and student achievement. NCDPI reviewers utilize completed Self-Evaluations along with other data available within the SEA to prepare for the on-site review. This instrument along with School and District Rubrics are used to facilitate a bottom to top approach in determining the priority of need for improvement.

During the on-site review, NCDPI staff uses a School and District Rubric to examine needs based on five overarching dimensions which include fourteen sub-dimensions that define quality education. Ratings are determined for each sub-dimension as Leading, Developing, Emerging, or Lacking. A Lead Reviewer facilitates a schedule for consistent feedback to be provided for local leadership at various points during the review. Upon completion of the CNA, a summary of the review is shared orally with a formal written report provided within 20-working days after the site visit. Reports are shared and discussed at the Agency Roundtables and Regional Roundtables to provide ongoing communication regarding district and school needs. The rigorous assessment process results in identified needs addressed by customized assistance.

Included in the CNA is a review of school and district efforts to consistently engage in strategies, policies, and procedures for partnering with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the schools. Partnerships to establish supplemental programming, such as 21st CCLC programs, are a critical element of effective community involvement contributing to the academic success of students.

As of April 2014, NCDPI has trained over 276 staff members representing all divisions within the Academic Services and Instructional Support area to conduct the CNAs. Due to turnover in the NCDPI, 205 staff members are still currently available to serve on CNA teams. This cadre of reviewers includes the ten consultants that serve Title I schools across the state. It is important that the terminology used is clearly articulated and understood by those providing support for districts and schools. The use of the CNA instrument coupled with the CNA cross-division training is yet another example of how NCDPI utilizes existing resources within the agency to provide a coordinated, collaborative state-wide system of support.

Information about CNAs is publically available and accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/schooltransformation/assessments/.

Service Delivery

LEAs and schools with the greatest need are identified for direct support through the District and School Transformation (DST) division. LEAs targeted for support typically have clusters of low-

performing schools. In addition to support provided at the school level, these LEAs need support at the central office level to develop district capacity for supporting their low-performing schools and nurturing academic growth throughout the district. Any individual school identified for DST support based on identification in the bottom 5% select a USED reform model for implementation and utilize the CNA process, onsite coaching, and SEA-provided professional development to design a plan for successfully implementing the selected reform model. LEAs and schools may utilize the Indistar® tool, which is a web-based system designed for use with district and/or school improvement teams to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. Implementation plans should clearly reflect strengths and areas identified for improvement in the needs assessment, as well as identifying transforming initiatives for district and individual schools. Improvement plans will provide a rationale for choices and a clear implementation map.

DST is designed to provide customized, on-site support, guidance and services to districts for a three-year commitment. This support must be differentiated to address the specific needs of the identified LEAs and schools, particularly in relation to the unique needs of urban and rural districts. The primary aims are to improve student academic performance and to build internal capacity in the central office and school's leadership for positive change and continuous growth. Services and assistance provided to districts by NCDPI will be extended and reinforced by (a) utilizing school, district, and regional coaches to develop school and district leadership by sharing best practices and providing knowledge of exemplary programs and strategies; and (b) brokering NCDPI staff and external partners as needed to provide professional development and technical assistance. The number of districts served and the extent of services depend on the availability of resources and will be provided to districts with the lowest performance and least capacity.
In addition to the identification of districts with clusters of low-achieving schools, there are also individual schools identified for support that may be in additional districts. In these situations, all school-level resources outlined above are provided. If the school has also been individually identified as a SIG or RttT school, it will have chosen and be implementing a reform model.

Additional technical assistance for all LEAs and charter schools is coordinated through the roundtables. Service delivery is provided internally through NCDPI agency and regional staff to include initiatives such as Response to Instruction (RtI) training by NCDPI RtI staff. Services are also brokered with various partnerships for support to include, NC RESAs, the New Schools Project, The Collaborative Project and the UNC Center for School Leadership and Development.

Objectives of support include:

- Assisting the central office to support schools more effectively, efficiently, and equitably so that all schools are on track to meet state and federal accountability goals;
- Assisting districts and schools in making data-driven decisions to improve student achievement; and
- Conducting a needs assessment and providing the support and guidance through regional roundtables assisting districts and schools in developing:

    1. Greater understanding of the significance of planning;
    2. Greater knowledge of leadership and the roles of central office staff and school leaders;
    3. Greater knowledge of the tools/processes used in monitoring instruction and increased ability to effectively monitor instruction;

4. Increased ability to use data strategically to establish district instructional priorities; and
5. Increased ability to align resources and activities to support priorities.

School improvement funds authorized under section 1003(a) and 1003(g) of Title I of the ESEA direct funds in significant amounts to the State's lowest-achieving schools in order to turn around those schools. Schools are provided with customized support to ensure the selected reform models or intervention strategies are implemented with fidelity. Efforts to support specific schools are coordinated through the Regional Roundtables and target areas including budgeting and resource allocation aligned to specific identified needs.

Along with other available funds, State administrative funds provided with 1003(a) ad 1003(g) are utilized for leveraging the statewide system of support. Examples of initiatives supported with these funds include:

- Developing a Framework for Action - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Center for School Leadership
- Common Core State Standards/Essential Standards - NCDPI staff
- Center on Innovations in Learning – Indistar School Improvement Grants online planning tool.
- District and School Transformation Coaches provided direct support to schools.

Continuous Coordination, Communication, and Collaboration

- With the support of North Carolina's Race to the Top grant, North Carolina has continued the work developed through the ACRE project under the former Governor Beverly Perdue's *Career & College: Ready, Set, Go!* initiative. School districts and charter schools receive support for implementing creative and meaningful programs and activities with the goal of more students:
- graduating from high school;
- being better prepared for college; and
- possessing skills necessary for careers in today's economy.

The *Career & College: Ready, Set, Go!* initiative supported the work of educators across North Carolina through professional development, technology and new standards and assessments. It focuses around four "pillars" of work aligned to the principles of ESEA Flexibility:

1. Great Teachers and Principals
2. Quality Standards and Assessments
3. Turnaround of Lowest-Achieving Schools
4. Data System to Improvement Student Instruction

1. Teachers and principals are at the heart of every school. They set the tone for learning, establish expectations and ensure an appropriate school environment for students and staff. The work of the Great Teachers and Principal pillar is to increase teacher and principal effectiveness, through:

- Performance incentives for lowest-achieving schools
- Research-supported university preparation programs
- Research- and data-based recruitment and licensure programs:

    - Teach for America expansion
    - NC Teacher Corps
    - Regional Leadership Academies
- Strategic staffing initiatives
- Expansion of virtual and blended teaching
- Statewide professional development system
- Successful innovations in identifying, developing, and supporting effective leaders
- Statewide teacher and principal evaluation systems

2. North Carolina has had a state standard Course of Study for many decades, and the state has decades of experience with student and school accountability. The Quality Standards and Assessments pillar aims to update North Carolina's statewide PK-12 Standard Course of Study and school accountability system to reflect internationally benchmarked standards and assessments and to capitalize on newer technology and 21st century expectations through:

- New curriculum standards and adoption of the Common Core for implementation by the 2012-13 school year;
- New student assessments – including formative assessments – for all subjects with a strong focus on graduation; and
- An updated accountability model for schools that focuses on student graduation and preparation for career and college.

3. Turnaround of lowest-achieving schools targets customized support to identified districts and schools, ensuring educational opportunities for all students. Turnaround activities will focus on the schools in the bottom 5 percent of performance; high schools with a graduation rate below 60 percent; and local districts with aggregate performance composites below 65 percent. Improved educational opportunities for students in identified districts and schools occur through:

- A focus on building local capacity
- Customized approaches to local setting and needs
- A school reform model, and may include redesigns such as:
    - Early college high schools
    - Redesigned schools
    - Charter schools
    - NC School of Science and Mathematics partnership
    - District-level magnet schools
    - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)-themed high schools

4. In schools as in businesses and homes, technology is an important tool that provides efficiency, timely communication and better access to information. The Data System to Improve Instruction pillar involves the establishment or increase of robust data systems that measure student success and inform teachers, principals and policymakers about how they can improve the delivery of educational services to students. Activities to accomplish this comprise:

- Technology to enhance all reform areas
- Building upon technology-enabled education initiatives
- Statewide longitudinal data system and student information system
- NC Education Cloud

- Next generation technology infrastructure
- Service delivery platform for content, services and applications

Providing all stakeholders with timely and relevant information and resources to accurately characterize individual student learning at different points in time and act on that knowledge to improve student outcomes is key to continuous school improvement. To ensure that students, teachers, parents, and school and district administrators have to access data and resources to inform decision-making related to instruction, assessment, and career and college goals, NCDPI has developed the Instructional Improvement System (IIS) through North Carolina's RttT grant award. This tool is available to all LEAs and charter schools.

Students can use the IIS to:

- Engage in interactive, rich educational resources that are tightly aligned to the Common Core State Standards
- Take local and statewide assessments with near-instant performance feedback
- Store exemplars of personal academic and/or artistic work
- Collaborate with other students on various projects

Teachers can use the IIS to:

- Supplement their teaching with individualized educational materials
- See a detailed diagnostic breakdown of each child's performance including knowledge and skill areas that require extra attention
- Engage in professional development modules according to personal interests, district goals, and state standards

Parents can use the IIS to:

- Track their child's performance according to instructional goals set by the teacher, district, and state
- Utilize at-home enrichment activities recommended by the teacher and/or system according to the student's performance and aptitude
- Communicate questions and feedback to teachers and/or administrators

Administrators can use the system to:

- View aggregate and individual student performance reports
- View aggregate and individual teacher effectiveness reports
- Make placement decisions based upon the historical interaction of student performance and teacher effectiveness

More information on the IIS is available to the public and accessible at
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/faq/iis
To date, NCDPI has provided an overview of the Statewide System of Support in various venues to include multiple stakeholders across the state. The agency continues to disseminate resources to ensure that all LEAs and schools will know about, and have access to, the system of support as well as understanding the services that are offered. As the structure is refined internally and approved by the SBE, information will be consistently communicated to all LEAs and schools that demonstrates support for all students being college- and career-ready.

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

Option A	**Option B**
☐ The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.	☒ If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must: a. provide the percentage of students in the "all students" group that performed at the proficient level on the State's most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and 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.

North Carolina includes science performance in its new state accountability model. The percentage of students in the "all students" subgroup scoring proficient for each of the state's science assessments (grade 5, grade 8, and biology) are provided in the table below. While these science assessments are used in the state's accountability model, the selection of Priority, Focus and Reward Schools only uses reading/language arts and mathematics; thereby not allowing the results from the science assessments to lessen the clear focus on reading and mathematics. The proficiency data for reading and mathematics are on pages 67 and 68.

Statewide Science Proficiency
2010-11 School Year

Assessment	**Percent Proficient**
Grade 5 Science	73.4%
Grade 8 Science	74.9%
Biology (Banked scores for grade 11 reporting)	83.5%

2.B SET AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

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

Option A	**Option B**	**Option C**
☒ 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.	☐ 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.	☐ 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 in reading/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)

Option A

North Carolina chose to set the AMOs to reduce by half the percentage of non-proficient students within six years. These targets were set for the "all students" group and for each subgroup. In choosing this option, North Carolina responded to stakeholders' reactions, recently and across many years, to the limitations of No Child Left Behind. Often citing the one size fits all approach, stakeholders were eager to reset the AMO targets with a more achievable end-date and a more reasonable methodology.

Responding to another criticism of NCLB, North Carolina requested the option to set targets by subgroups. This approach, particularly in view of our reporting system which is based on subgroups, allows not only for subgroups to progress on their own trajectory, it maintains the expectation that there is continual progress. At the February 2012 SBE meeting, information on the trajectories for different subgroups was presented and affirmed that while there are different starting points, the expectation is greater over the same period of time. Thus, rather than lowering expectations, the subgroups starting at a lower point have to work very hard to reach the end-goal of reducing their percentage of non-proficient students in the "all students" group and in each subgroup by half within six years.

North Carolina set AMO targets in reading and mathematics based on the 2010-11 assessment data for its initial ESEA Flexibility Request. The 2010-11 Grades 3-8 baselines were set on the end-of-grade tests in reading and mathematics. For the HS (high schools), the Algebra I and English I assessments were used. The SBE approved the targets at its February 2011 meeting for implementation in the 2011-12 school year.

	2010-2011 Baseline Reading		2011-2012 Targets Reading		2012-2013 Targets Reading		2013-2014 Targets Reading		2014-2015 Targets Reading		2015-2016 Targets Reading		2016-2017 Targets Reading	
Subgroup	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**
Total (All students)	70.5	86.0	73.0	87.2	75.4	88.3	77.9	89.5	80.3	90.7	82.8	91.8	85.2	93.0
Native American	58.3	73.3	61.8	75.5	65.2	77.8	68.7	80.0	72.2	82.2	75.7	84.4	79.2	86.7
Asian	79.1	87.3	80.8	88.4	82.6	89.4	84.3	90.5	86.1	91.5	87.8	92.6	89.5	93.7
Black	54.0	75.8	57.8	77.8	61.7	79.8	65.5	81.8	69.3	83.9	73.2	85.9	77.0	87.9
Hispanic	57.6	78.4	61.1	80.2	64.7	82.0	68.2	83.8	71.7	85.6	75.3	87.4	78.8	89.2
Two or More Races	73.3	88.6	75.5	89.5	77.8	90.5	80.0	91.4	82.2	92.4	84.4	93.3	86.7	94.3
White	81.7	92.4	83.2	93.0	84.8	93.7	86.3	94.3	87.8	94.9	89.3	95.6	90.8	96.2
Economically Disadvantaged	57.9	77.0	61.4	78.9	64.9	80.8	68.4	82.8	71.9	84.7	75.4	86.6	79.0	88.5
Limited English Proficient	37.2	36.7	42.4	42.0	47.7	47.2	52.9	52.5	58.1	57.8	63.4	63.1	68.6	68.3
Students With Disabilities	39.5	46.4	44.5	50.9	49.6	55.3	54.6	59.8	59.7	64.3	64.7	68.7	69.8	73.2

	2010-2011 Baseline Math		2011-2012 Targets Math		2012-2013 Targets Math		2013-2014 Targets Math		2014-2015 Targets Math		2015-2016 Targets Math		2016-2017 Targets Math	
Subgroup	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**	**3-8**	**HS**
Total (All students)	82.2	82.5	83.7	84.0	85.2	85.4	86.7	86.9	88.1	88.3	89.6	89.8	91.1	91.2
Native American	75.4	73.7	77.5	75.9	79.5	78.1	81.6	80.3	83.6	82.5	85.7	84.7	87.7	86.8
Asian	91.7	91.5	92.4	92.2	93.1	92.9	93.8	93.6	94.5	94.3	95.2	95.0	95.8	95.8
Black	68.8	69.5	71.4	72.0	74.0	74.6	76.6	77.1	79.2	79.7	81.8	82.2	84.4	84.8
Hispanic	78.4	79.1	80.2	80.8	82.0	82.6	83.8	84.3	85.6	86.1	87.4	87.8	89.2	89.5
Two or More Races	83.5	83.3	84.9	84.7	86.2	86.1	87.6	87.5	89.0	88.9	90.4	90.3	91.8	91.7
White	89.5	89.2	90.4	90.1	91.2	91.0	92.1	91.9	93.0	92.8	93.9	93.7	94.8	94.6
Economically Disadvantaged	74.0	73.5	76.2	75.7	78.3	77.9	80.5	80.1	82.7	82.3	84.8	84.5	87.0	86.8
Limited English Proficient	68.5	52.2	71.1	56.2	73.8	60.2	76.4	64.2	79.0	68.1	81.6	72.1	84.2	76.1
Students With Disabilities	56.3	46.6	59.9	51.1	63.6	55.5	67.2	60.0	70.9	64.4	74.5	68.8	78.2	73.3

As mentioned earlier in this revised ESEA Flexibility Request Renewal, North Carolina reset its targets after implementation of the new assessments, based on the CCSS, were administered in the 2012-13 school year and after the State Board of Education approved the new achievement level descriptors and performance standards. The new AMO targets are available at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/reporting/readytargettables13.pdf and in the revised Attachment 8.

To ensure North Carolina is emphasizing the importance of achieving proficiency for all students, the State will monitor the progress yearly and if necessary, re-evaluate the targets.

2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

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

Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, 120 Title I schools comprised the State's list of "reward schools." Eighty-one (81) schools were identified as highest-performing and thirty-nine (39) schools were identified as high-progress. For the 2013-14, a new list comprised of 174 schools was identified following the Reward School Methodology including data from 2011-12 and two years prior. Of those, 135 are identified as highest performing and thirty-nine (39) are identified as high-progress.

Reward School Methodology

Reward Schools are identified as Title I schools with a poverty rate at or above 50% for the previous year with an average gap for the past 3 years between the highest and lowest performing subgroups below the state average gap of 38.7% for the past 3 years between the highest and the lowest performing subgroups and:

Schools make AYP in the previous year, and all subgroups with performance data, including "all students," are performing above the specific subgroup state performance when averaging R/M performance composite in the previous and the two prior years; and at the high school level, all subgroups also have a graduation rate above the specific subgroup state graduation rate when averaging the graduation rate in the previous and the two prior years.

or

Schools with a performance composite for the previous year equal to or above 60% that are among the highest 10% of schools when measuring the progress on the R/M performance composite score of "all students" between the previous year and R/M performance composite from two years ago; and at the high school level, are also among the highest 10% of schools when measuring the progress on the graduation rate of "all students" between the previous year and the graduation rate from two years ago.

NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

A. Making AYP (in 2010-11)
In NC, when a school makes AYP it means that the school makes AYP in the "all students" subgroup and in all other subgroups as well.

Note that the list of Reward Schools included in this request is based on data available in the 2010-11 school year including a measure for AYP. With approved waivers, beginning with 2012-13, this section will be revised as follows:

Meeting All AMOs (beginning in 2012-13)
In NC, when a school meets "all AMOs" it means that the school meets Annual Measurable Objectives in the "all students" subgroup and in all other subgroups. All subgroups must meet the 95% participation rate rule.

B. Absolute Performance
NC defines absolute performance as the average proficiency score R/M on reading and math state tests. The average is calculated with the proficiency score R/M in the previous and at least one of the two prior years. For all subgroups, including the "all students" subgroup, the average proficiency score R/M must be higher than the state average proficiency score R/M for the specific subgroup.

C. Lowest Within School Gaps
Any time the definition calls for identifying Title I schools that have the lowest within school

gaps, NC selected Title I schools that have an average achievement gap between the highest-achieving subgroup and the lowest-achieving subgroup of less than the state average in the previous and at least one of the two prior years. The "all students" subgroup is not included in the gap analysis.

D. Progress in Improving Performance
NC determines the progress in performance by measuring the increase in proficiency scores R/M from three years ago to last year.

E. Progress in Increasing Graduation Rate
NC determines the progress in graduation rate by measuring the increase in graduation rate from three years ago to last year.

F. School Category by Grade (Note that "school category by grade" information is used only for descriptive purposes and does *not* contribute to the selection of schools.)

- Elementary school: School with the highest grade equal to or less than 06
- Middle school: School with the highest grade equal to 07 or 08
- High School: School graduating students or school with the highest grade equal to or greater than 09 (9-13).
- School graduating students is a school with 2011-12 Graduation Rate not empty and higher than 0.

G. Number of Years
When determining average performance/graduation rate and/or whether a school has gaps in proficiency score-R/M and/or graduation rate over a number of years, NC considers the last three years of data for a school. To be a candidate for a Reward School, schools must fall under the necessary criteria for the previous year, and one of the two prior years.

H. Proficiency Score – R/M
For the definition of Reward Schools, North Carolina creates a composite of English/language arts and mathematics assessments, to be known as the Proficiency Score – R/M.

I. Included All Schools
In the analysis to determine the Reward Schools, all active schools in North Carolina in 2012-13 were considered. This includes charter schools, alternative, and special schools. A school is considered active if its operational status is new or open in the Educational Directory and Demographical Information Exchange (EDDIE) system. There were 2,578 active schools in 2011-12.

J. Included Assessments
The assessments used to determine each school's Proficiency Score – R/M include the State's assessments in English/language arts and mathematics, and include the State's general assessments, alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, and alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards in those subjects. Specific assessments used include:

- End-of-Grade Reading, Grades 3-8

- End-of-Grade Math, Grades 3-8
- Grade 10 Math*
- Grade 10 English*

*For Grade 10 Math and English, banked student scores are used during the calculation. For mathematics, Algebra I scores of current 10th graders are used, including the scores of those 10th graders who have taken Algebra I prior to 10th grade (i.e., "banked" scores). For Grade 10 English, scores are based on students who are proficient in both English I and the Grade 10 writing assessment. NC used the English I scores of current 10th graders; including the "banked" English I scores of those 10th graders who have taken English I prior to 10th grade.

Note: In counting the total number of students who are proficient and the total number of students assessed, NC includes the number of proficient students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment (based on alternate academic achievement standards or modified academic achievement standards) and the total number of students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment. For this calculation, NC includes all schools, including alternative, charter and special schools.

K. Minimum Number of Students
For the proficiency score R/M to be considered, the "all students" subgroup must have a minimum of 10 assessments taken when adding reading and math denominators. All other subgroups must have a minimum of eighty (80) assessments taken when adding reading and math denominators. For the graduation rate to be considered, the "all students" subgroup must have a minimum of five (5) students in the graduation denominator. All other subgroups must have a minimum of forty (40) students in the graduation denominator.

L. Title I Schools
Any time the definition calls for identifying Title I schools, NC selects schools that are/were served with Title I funds in the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years.

STEPS FOR DETERMINING THE REWARD SCHOOLS IN NORTH CAROLINA

A. Calculate the Proficiency Score-R/M

Step 1: Calculate the total number of proficient students in the "all students" group in English/language arts by adding the number of proficient students in each grade tested in a school. Calculate the total number of proficient students in the "all students" group in mathematics by adding the number of proficient students in each grade tested in the school.

Step 2: Add the total number of proficient students in English/language arts and mathematics. **This is the Numerator.**

Step 3: Calculate the total number of students in the "all students" group in the school who have taken the State's English/language arts assessment and the total number of students in the "all students" group who have taken the State's mathematics assessment.

Step 4: Add the total number of students in the "all students" group in the school that have taken the State's English/language arts assessment and the total number of students in the "all students" group who have taken the State's mathematics assessment. **This is the Denominator.**

Step 5: Divide the numerator (step 2) by the denominator (step 4) and multiply by 100 to determine the percent proficient in English/language arts and mathematics in the school. This is called the proficiency score-R/M for a school. Calculate this for all schools.

Note: In counting the total number of students who are proficient and the total number of students assessed, include the number of proficient students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment (based on alternate academic achievement standards or modified academic achievement standards) and the total number of students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment. For this calculation, NC includes all schools, including alternative, charter and special schools.

B. Determine Title I Schools Eligible to be Considered a Reward School

Step 6: From the list of active schools mentioned in Note I, select all schools that are/were Title I schools in 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years and that have poverty percentage equal to or above 50%. (1,080 schools)

Step 7: Determine the average gap for the past three years between the highest and lowest performing subgroup for each school and for the state. Select schools from step 6 with an average gap below the 3-year state average gap of 38.6% to ensure that a school cannot be listed as a Reward School if significant achievement gaps exist. (903 schools)

C. Determine Highest Performing Schools

Step 8: Select schools from Step 7 that made all AMOs in Reading and Math in 2011-12. (316 schools)

Step 9: Determine the average performance for the past three year for each subgroup and for the state. Select schools from Step 8 with an average performance in each subgroup, including the "all students" subgroup, above the state average performance for each subgroup. (135 schools)

Step 10: Determine the average graduation rate for the past three year for each subgroup and for the state. Select high schools from step 8 with average graduation rate in each subgroup, including the "all students" subgroup, above the state average graduation rate for each subgroup. (5 schools)

Step 11: Create a list with elementary and middle schools from step 9 and high schools from both step 9 and step 10. These are the Highest Performing Schools. (135 schools)

D. Determine High Progress Schools

Step 12: From schools in step 7, remove any school with a performance composite below 60% in the most recent year for the "all students" subgroup. (Under the current North Carolina Accountability Model, a school is designated as a "priority school" if its performance composite is below 60% regardless of whether the school meets its growth expectation: If a school has a performance composite below 50% and it does not meet its growth expectation, it is labeled low-performing.) (777 schools)

Step 13: Determine the performance progress from three years ago to last year for each school for the "all student" subgroup. Using the schools selected in step 12, select all schools that make positive progress. Rank the schools from high to low performance progress. (462 schools)

Step 14: Select 10% from top to bottom of schools in step 13 based on performance progress. (48 (last five schools with same performance progress) schools. 37 Elementary, 2 Middle, 9 High)

Step 15: Determine the graduation progress from three years ago to last year for each school. Using the schools selected in step 12, select all schools that made positive progress. Rank the schools from high-to-low on graduation progress. (15 schools)

Step 16: Select 10% from top to bottom of schools in step 15 based on graduation progress. (2 schools)

Step 17: Create a list with elementary and middle schools from step 14 and high schools from both step 14 and step 16. These are the High Progress Schools. (39schools, no high schools)

E. Compile the List of Reward Schools

Step 18: Create an unduplicated list of schools from schools identified in steps 11 and 17. These are the **Reward Schools** in NC for 2013-14 based on 2011-12data. (135+39 = 174 – zero duplicates = 174 schools)

F. Compile the List of Reward Schools Eligible to Apply for Reward School Funds

Step 19: Select the top 10% of schools from the Highest Performing Schools' list from step 11 based on Average Performance for all students. (16 schools, last 3 schools with same average performance)

Step 20: Select 10% of schools from the High Progress Schools' list from step 17 based on performance progress. (4 schools)

Step 21: Create an unduplicated list of schools from schools identified in steps 19 and 20. These are the schools eligible to apply for **Reward School Funds** in NC for 2013-14 based on 2011-12 data. (20 schools, no duplicates)

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

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

Recognizing and Rewarding Schools

Beginning in the 2010-11 school year, NCDPI established the Title I Distinguished Schools Advisory Council (see Supplemental Attachment A) for the purpose of annually recognizing and rewarding Title I schools that are considered to have sustained the highest performance on student achievement over a number of years and schools that have made the most progress in improving student achievement over a number of years. The advisory council is comprised of diverse stakeholders including business and community leaders, family and child advocates, health and human services agencies, faith-based organizations, and school and district leadership representing schools that have been recognized as highest-achieving or highest-progress Title I schools. The goal of the council is to ensure that Reward Schools are sufficiently recognized so that other districts and schools may learn from evidence-based programs and practices contributing to high student achievement in the Reward Schools. NCDPI met with the Title I Distinguished Schools Advisory Council on December 15, 2011. Based on inputs from the Title I Distinguished Schools Advisory Council, the Title I Committee of Practitioners (COP), and other advisory groups, NCDPI developed the methodology and recognition for Reward Schools.

Schools are selected based on data analysis for the most current year and two previous years and are identified for each category in rank order on a statewide basis. The highest-achieving and highest-progress schools in the state are recognized in the following ways:

- Announcement letter of distinction/selection from the State Superintendent's Office;
- School information and replicable practices disseminated publicly in the Title I Distinguished Schools magazine (http://www.ncpublicschools.org/program-monitoring/distinguished/)
- Public recognition posted on the NCDPI website and disseminated through multiple listservs (e.g., Superintendents, principals, teachers, afterschool network partnership, etc.);
- Banners provided for each school for local public display;
- Media clip and photographs provided for use in each district;
- Recognition luncheon at the State Title I Conference in the fall of each year; and
- Priority provided to any selected schools to present at the State's annual Collaborative Conference for Student Achievement.

The top ten percent of Reward schools are invited to submit portfolios to identify the best practices contributing to the school's success. Portfolios are peer reviewed by members of the Title I Distinguished Schools Advisory Council and the COP and on-site visits conducted to determine one school for each category that will represent the State as Highest-Performing and Highest-Progress Title I Schools. The two schools selected through the peer review process also receive additional recognition and rewards:

- Presentation of $10,000 award at the State Title I Conference;
- Financial support for school teams to attend the National Title I Conference;

- Spotlight session to present best practices contributing to school success at the State's annual Collaborative Conference for Student Achievement; and
- Participation in the Title I Distinguished Schools Advisory Council for two years serving in chair positions during the second year.

In order to reduce the need for additional paperwork, schools identified as the top ten percent of all Reward Schools will include plans for mini-grants in the portfolio to receive funds reserved under section 1117(b). The mini-grants will support school efforts to expand and strengthen existing instructional practices and to develop demonstration classrooms in order to spotlight best practices for other teachers across the state. Demonstration classrooms in Reward Schools will provide teachers across the state with an opportunity to visit classrooms implementing appropriate, evidence-based instructional practices.

Mini-grant funds available to these Reward Schools can be utilized to support:

- High quality instruction
- Training and ongoing technical assistance to teachers, special service providers, and administrators to prepare them to implement evidence based practices
- On site guided observations, which include:
    - A pre-observation meeting to determine observer needs
    - A guided observation of research-based teaching practices and;
    - A meeting with observers following the observation to discuss what they have seen and how they might implement observed practices in their own settings.
- Linkages with Institutes of Higher Education as partners to maintain current knowledge of research and application of research.
- Family and school partnerships to promote shared decision making, two-way communications, and family participation in planning for the student's overall development and learning.

The list of Reward Schools will be developed on an annual basis. With funds reserved under section 1117(b), NC anticipates making approximately $350,000 available for the mini-grant program each year for the top 10% of the Reward Schools. Due to the sequester of Title I funds in 2013-14, no funds were available for Reward School mini-grants.

2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

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

Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, seventy-seven (77) schools will comprise the State's list of "priority schools." In addition to forty (40) schools implementing a school intervention model under the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, North Carolina has identified thirty-seven (37) schools as being among the lowest-performing schools in the State according to the

following Priority School Methodology. Note that all of the following definitions are aligned to federally approved definitions for consistently lowest achieving schools.

Priority School Methodology
Title I schools with "proficiency score-R/M" below 50% in the previous year and one of the two prior years
+
Title I participating or eligible (non-participating) high schools with graduation rate below 60% in previous year and one of the two prior years
+
SIG Schools

NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

A. Lack of Progress
NC is defining lack of progress as a school that 1) had a proficiency score-R/M below 50% in the previous year, AND who 2) had a proficiency score-R/M below 50% in one of the two prior years for the "all students" subgroup. (e.g., less than 50% in 2010-11 and less than 50% in either 2009-10 or 2008-09).

B. Graduation Rate Lower Than 60% Over A Number Of Years
A school that 1) had a graduation rate of less than 60% in the previous year AND who had a graduation rate less than 60% in one of the prior two years for the "all students" subgroup. (e.g., less than 60% in 2010-11 and less than 60% in either 2009-10 or 2008-09).

C. High Schools
A high school is any school that:

- graduates students, or
- has any of the following grades: 9-13

D. Number of Years
When determining whether a school has made progress or increased its proficiency score-R/M and/or graduation rate over a number of years, NC considers the last three years of data for a school. To be identified as making lack of progress, schools must fall under the necessary criteria for the previous year, and one of the two prior years.

E. Proficiency Score – R/M
For the definition of Priority Schools, North Carolina created a composite of English/language arts and mathematics assessments, to be known as the Proficiency Score – R/M.

F. Included All Active Schools
In the analysis to determine the Priority Schools, all active schools in North Carolina in 2011-12 were considered. This includes charter schools, alternative, and special schools. A school is considered active if its operational status is new or open in the Educational Directory and Demographical Information Exchange (EDDIE) system. There were 2,578 active schools in the 2011-12 school year.

G. Included Assessments
The assessments used in determining each school's Proficiency Score – R/M include the State's assessments in English/language arts and mathematics, and they include the State's general assessments, alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, and alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards in those subjects.

Specific assessments used include:

- End-of-Grade Reading, Grades 3-8
- End-of-Grade Math, Grades 3-8
- Grade 10 Math*
- Grade 10 English*

*For Grade 10 Math and English, banked student scores are used during the calculation. For mathematics, Algebra I scores of current 10th graders are used, including the scores of those 10th graders who have taken Algebra I prior to 10th grade (i.e., "banked" scores). For Grade 10 English, scores are based on students who are proficient in both English I and the Grade 10 Writing Assessment. NC used the English I scores of current 10th graders; including the "banked" English I scores of those 10th graders who have taken English I prior to 10th grade.

Note: In counting the total number of students who are proficient and the total number of students assessed, include the number of proficient students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment (based on alternate academic achievement standards or modified academic achievement standards) and the total number of students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment. For this calculation, NC included all schools, including alternative, charter and special schools.

H. Minimum Number of Students
For the proficiency score-R/M to be considered the subgroup must have a minimum of 80 assessments taken when adding reading and math denominators. For the graduation rate to be considered the subgroup must have a minimum of 40 students in the graduation denominator.

I. Among the Lowest 5%
Any time the definition calls for identifying Title I schools among the lowest 5% of all Title I schools, NC selected Title I schools among the lowest 5% of all Title I schools in the 2010-11 school year, which was a total of 1,296. 5% is 65 schools.

J. Title I Schools
Any time the definition calls for identifying Title I schools, NC selected schools that were served with Title I funds in the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years. Any time the definition calls for identifying Title I eligible but not served schools, NC selected schools that were eligible but not served in 2010-11, regardless of the Title I status in 2011-12.

STEPS FOR DETERMINING THE PRIORITY SCHOOLS IN NORTH CAROLINA

A. Calculate the Proficiency Score-R/M

Step 1: Calculate the total number of proficient students in the "all students" group in English/language arts by adding the number of proficient students in each grade tested in a school. Calculate the total number of proficient students in the "all students" group in

mathematics by adding the number of proficient students in each grade tested in the school.

Step 2: Add the total number of proficient students in English/language arts and mathematics. **This is the Numerator.**

Step 3: Calculate the total number of students in the "all students" group in the school who have taken the State's English/language arts assessment and the total number of students in the "all students" group who have taken the State's mathematics assessment.

Step 4: Add the total number of students in the "all students" group in the school who have taken the State's English/language arts assessment and the total number of students in the "all students" group who have taken the State's mathematics assessment. **This is the Denominator.**

Step 5: Divide the numerator (step 2) by the denominator (step 4) and multiply by 100 to determine the percent proficient in English/language arts and mathematics in the school. This is called the proficiency score-R/M for a school. Calculate this for all schools.

B. Determine Title I Schools Among the Lowest 5% of all Title I Schools

Step 6: From the list of active schools mentioned in Note F, select all schools that are Title I schools in 2010-11 and 2011-12. (1230 schools)

Step 7: Select the schools from Step 6 who have demonstrated a "lack of progress" in performance (i.e., those that have a proficiency score-R/M of less than 50% for the previous year and at least one of the two prior years). (35 schools)

Step 8: Rank the list of schools from Step 7 from lowest to highest using the proficiency score-R/M for the most recent year. (35 schools)

Step 9: From the schools selected in Step 8, choose the top 65 schools where 65 is the 5% of the number of Title I schools in 2010-11 mentioned in Note I. (35 schools)

C. Determine the Title I Served High Schools with Graduation Rates Less than 60%

Step 10: Using the schools selected in Step 6, identify all Title I high schools with a graduation rate less than 60% for the most recent year, and less than 60% at least one of the two previous years. (For example, in 2010-11 X school had a graduation rate of 50%. In 2009-10, the graduation rate was 65%, and in 2008-09, the graduation rate was 59%). (9 schools)

D. Determine the High Schools Eligible for but Not Receiving Title I Funds with Graduation Rates Less than 60%

Step 11: From the list of active schools mentioned in Note F identify all high schools that are eligible for but do not receive Title I funds. (366 schools)

Step 12: Using the schools selected in Step 11, identify all high schools with a graduation rate less

than 60% for the most recent year, and less than 60% at least one of the two previous years. (For example, in 2010-11 X school had a graduation rate of 50%. In 2009-10, the graduation rate was 65%, and in 2008-09, the graduation rate was 59%). (14 schools)

E. Determine the Schools Implementing a SIG Model for 2010-11 and 2011-12.

Step 13: Identify the schools implementing a SIG model for 2010-11 and 2011-12 (41 schools. 40 active in 2011-12)

F. Compile the List of Priority Schools

Step 14: Create an unduplicated list of the schools identified in steps 9, 10, 12, and 13. These are the **Priority Schools** in NC for 2012-13 based on 2010-11 data. (77 schools)

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

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

Interventions for Priority Schools

Priority Schools must choose one of two options: 1) to implement one of the four SIG models; or 2) to implement meaningful interventions that align to all turnaround principles and are selected with teacher, family and community involvement. Local education agencies (LEAs) that choose to implement a SIG model must adhere to SIG final requirements. LEAs that choose to implement interventions aligned to all turnaround principles must describe how the district will:

- Provide strong leadership by: (1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the SEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget;
- Ensure that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by: (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs;
- Redesign the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;
- Strengthen the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards;
- Use data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;
- Establish a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addresses

other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs; and

- Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

To assist LEAs and schools with selection of intervention s that are aligned with turnaround principles, all LEAs with Priority Schools will employ the use of data within the NC Indistar® Tool in order to demonstrate that interventions are aligned to all turnaround principles, inform professional development decisions, and address the specific needs of each Priority School. Indistar® is a web-based system implemented by a state education agency, district, or charter school organization for use with district and/or school improvement teams to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. The system was created by the Center on Innovation and Improvement (CII), a national content center supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. In collaboration with CII, NC customized Indistar® to create the NC Indistar® Tool.

The NC Indistar® Tool will guide district and school staff through an assessment of the school's status on specific indicators for implementing interventions that align to each turnaround principle. Additionally, engagement in this process will require the team to analyze four measures of data – student achievement data, process data, perception data, and demographic data. The data analysis must include a trend analysis over a number of years and will be used to inform decisions made at the local/school level regarding professional development, classroom instruction, and efforts toward the provision of additional time for collaboration among teachers. All professional development must be aligned with the school's comprehensive instructional program and designed with school staff to ensure that they are equipped to facilitate effective teaching and learning and have the capacity to successfully implement school reform strategies. The district plan, which should involve input from the school improvement team (SIT), the professional learning community (PLC) or some other group of teacher leaders, must address how interventions will be aligned to all turnaround principles.

Each LEA with an identified Priority School must establish a School Implementation Team with a designated coordinator for each Priority School. If the LEA chooses to utilize an external provider, the LEA must also develop transparent selection criteria for providers. The implementation team will utilize the NC Indistar® Tool to facilitate the continuous improvement process through initial needs assessment related to specific indicators of effective practice; the creation of implementation plans to fully implement indicators of effective practice; and the self-monitoring of progress toward full implementation of the SIG model or interventions fully aligned to turnaround principles.

NCDPI will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the interventions for each of these schools through the use of the NC Indistar® Tool. In addition to utilizing the online tool, NCDPI will conduct on-site reviews for gathering qualitative data through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations.

Implementation of SIG intervention models as well as interventions aligned to turnaround principles will be implemented over a three-year period. Interventions aligned to turnaround principles are provided in **Supplemental Attachment F** through use of the Indistar® Tool.

In order to receive Title I funds from the State, LEAs and public charter schools must complete an application for funding on NC's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP), a web-based grants management system. Beginning in 2012-13, CCIP will include a component for schools identified as Priority Schools. SEA staff will review plans for Priority Schools submitted on CCIP to ensure that interventions are aligned to identified needs in the needs assessment of the school and that proposed interventions are designed to meet all turnaround principles. Additionally the LEA must include a description of how those needs will be met in a timely and effective manner.

As described in 2.F on page 110, if a Priority School is not meeting AMOs for students with disabilities, English learners, as well as other under-performing student subgroups, information is shared at the Regional Roundtables with NCDPI staff that advocate on behalf of these special student populations. This information, paired with data gathered through progress monitoring that occurs throughout the year, is utilized to monitor the progress of individual schools. For schools not making adequate progress, NCDPI will provide additional oversight relative to interventions implements, use of funds, and coordination of programs. Additionally, NCDPI will consider reallocation of SEA resources as needed. This cross-divisional communication about Priority Schools (1) provides feedback on the outcomes of SEA initiatives and LEA interventions that have been implemented targeting a specific at-risk student population; and (2) ensures that appropriate resources are targeted to meet the needs of specific subgroups within each district and school in the state.

SIG Schools

LEAs with SIG schools must continue to fully implement the intervention model approved in the LEA SIG application – turnaround, transformation, restart, or closure. NC monitors and evaluates the implementation of the selected intervention model for each school through the use of the NC Indistar® Tool. In addition to utilizing the online tool, NCDPI will continue to include on-site reviews for gathering qualitative data through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations.

RttT Schools

Schools identified as among the state's lowest-performing schools under Race to the Top (RttT) must continue to fully implement the USED intervention model defined in the district's Detailed Scope of Work. The school must also participate in a Comprehensive Needs Assessment provided by NCDPI if one has not yet been conducted, and use data generated from that assessment to develop and refine its RttT implementation plan. The school must participate in professional development provided by NCDPI, and interact with coaches for customized support provided by NCDPI. For RttT schools, coach reports are submitted electronically in SharePoint on a weekly basis while longitudinal progress reports are to be updated in SharePoint on a quarterly basis at a minimum. SharePoint is a collaborative software product utilized by NCDPI to share information, manage documents, and publish reports.

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.

Timeline to Ensure Implementation of Interventions

LEAs with Priority Schools must implement meaningful interventions aligned with turnaround principles beginning in 2012-13 and continue to assess progress of systemic change in Priority schools by the end of the 2014-15 school year. To ensure that implementation of interventions begins in the first year, NCDPI will establish reporting dates for electronic updates of progress with its planned interventions through use of the online tools. These electronic progress reporting dates occur twice a year with an Annual/Final Report due in June. The initial assessment of Implementation Indicators by the LEA helps align the needs with the strategies and interventions in the plan and their intended outcomes.

When the Implementation Indicators Progress Report is submitted, the system will automatically generate a snapshot of the ongoing Comprehensive Plan and Summary Report. The Comprehensive Plan and Summary Report show the work of the School Implementation Team, including progress in assessing, planning, and implementing the interventions. NCDPI then reviews the submitted reports, and provides reviewer comments within the system, via email, or as a part of a follow-up monitoring and support visit on-site.

Reporting dates for all three years of implementation for Priority Schools are:

- November 1, 2012 – Implementation Indicators Progress Report
- March 1, 2013 - Implementation Indicators Progress Report
- June 7, 2013 – Interventions Annual Report
- November 1, 2013 - Implementation Indicators Progress Report
- March 3, 2014 - Implementation Indicators Progress Report
- June 6, 2014 – Interventions Annual Report
- November 3, 2014 - Implementation Indicators Progress Report
- March 2, 2015 - Implementation Indicators Progress Report
- June 5, 2015 – Interventions Annual Report

As described in section 2.G on page 112, all LEAs with Priority Schools will be monitored through on-site and desk reviews a minimum of once per year beginning with the 2012-13 school year. SEA monitoring and support staff will meet quarterly to discuss individual school progress on leading indicators and locally identified goals and objectives. Schools are rated on the progress toward the indicators and goals and provided with additional on-site reviews and intensive support as needed. The goal of monitoring and technical assistance will be to build local capacity to ensure that reform efforts will continue to be sustained in the absence of direct SEA support.

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.

Exiting Priority School Status

In addition to meetings conducted with the Title I Committee of Practitioners (COP), NCDPI

met with its SIG Advisory Council on January 11, 2012. The council consists of local SIG coordinators, school principals, and central office staff. Based on inputs from the SIG Advisory Council, the COP, and other advisory groups, it was determined that NCDPI will maintain the list of Priority Schools for a three-year period. Maintaining Priority status for the full three-year period will ensure 1) sufficient time for the LEA to fully implement interventions aligned to turnaround principles; 2) sufficient SEA support for sustaining efforts of SIG models when SIG funds are no longer available; and 3) sufficient time for the State to monitor and support the implementation of interventions to increase the likelihood that interventions result in sustained student achievement for all student subgroups. At the end of the three-year cycle, a new list of Priority Schools will be developed.

As the State transitions to new assessments, lack of progress will be defined as a minimum proficiency standard/graduation rate based on a review of statewide results.

In order to exit Priority status, Priority Schools must demonstrate sufficient progress based on the following criteria:

- Make progress toward meeting proficiency standards by meeting a minimum proficiency standard/graduation rate of 60%;
- Make progress toward meeting "all AMOs" defined as meeting at least 90% of the achievement Annual Measurable Objectives in the "all students" subgroup (including the other academic indicator) and the AMOs in all other subgroups; and
- Meet the 95% participation rate rule for all subgroups.

Priority Schools that do not demonstrate sufficient progress will remain on the Priority School list for another cycle.

After the State transitions to new assessments in the 2012-13 school year, the State will conduct analyses of the assessment scores in reading, English/language arts and science in order to establish a minimum threshold that links/equates to the current expectation of a minimum standard of 60% proficiency. The expectation is that the new assessments will have more rigorous performance standards than the current assessments.

Priority Schools also will be subject to the same escalating consequences described on page 55 if they fail to achieve 95% participation for any subgroup. These consequences will be implemented with the new accountability model starting in the 2012-13 school year.

For schools that do not demonstrate progress and continue to be identified as Priority Schools according to the applied methodology, NCDPI may provide school improvement services directly or arrange for their provision through other entities such as school support teams or educational service agencies. This option may be particularly useful if an LEA lacks the capacity to implement the required turnaround principles. Additionally, LEA funds may be coordinated with oversight from the SEA to ensure that the implementation of the required turnaround principles occurs in a manner that encourages rapid student achievement. SEA efforts toward both monitoring and support will be increased to provide monthly guidance to the LEA/Priority School.

2.E FOCUS SCHOOLS

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

Focus School Methodology

Title I schools with in-school gaps in achievement that are above 3-year state average (38.7%) when averaging gaps in the previous year and at least one of the two prior years between the highest-achieving subgroup and lowest-achieving subgroup.
+
Title I schools with "proficiency score-R/M" with a subgroup with a proficiency score below 50% in the previous year and one of the two prior years.

The number of Focus Schools will be equal to 10% of the number of schools in Title I School Improvement in 2010-11, i.e., 130 schools.

If the number of schools from the gap analysis is higher than 130, the list will include the top 130 schools ranking from high to low the proficiency gap in the previous year. Otherwise, the list will include all schools from the gap analysis plus as many as needed to reach 130 from the proficiency analysis ranking from low to high the lowest proficiency subgroup in the previous year.

NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

A. Contributing to Achievement Gaps in the State
NC is defining contributing to the achievement gap in the State as a school that has an in-school achievement gap between its highest-achieving subgroup and its lowest-achieving subgroup that is above the 3-year state average (e.g., above 38.7% for 2010-11, 2009-10 and 2008-09). The "all students" subgroup is not included in the gap analysis.

B. Subgroup Lack of Progress
NC is defining "lack of progress" as a school that has a subgroup or subgroups that 1) had a proficiency score-R/M below 50% in the previous year, AND who 2) had a proficiency score-R/M below 50% in one of the two prior years (e.g., less than 50% in 2010-11 and less than 50% in either 2009-10 or 2008-09). The "all students" subgroup is not included in the lack of progress analysis. The subgroup or subgroups can be different across years.

C. High Schools
A high school is any school that:

- graduates students, or
- has any of the following grades: 9-13

D. Number of Years
When determining whether a school has gaps in proficiency score-R/M and/or graduation rate over a number of years, NC considers the last three years of data for a school. For example, schools identified as having a lack of progress must fall under the necessary criteria for the previous year, and at least one of the two prior years.

E. Proficiency Score – R/M
For the definition of Focus Schools, North Carolina created a composite of English/language arts and mathematics assessments, to be known as the Proficiency Score – R/M.

F. Included All Schools
In the analysis to determine the Focus Schools, all active schools in North Carolina in 2011-12 were considered. This includes charter schools, alternative, and special schools. A school is considered active if its operational status is new or open in the Educational Directory and Demographical Information Exchange (EDDIE) system. There were 2,578 active schools in 2011-12.

G. Included Assessments
The assessments used in determining each school's Proficiency Score – R/M include the State's assessments in English/language arts and mathematics, and they include the State's general assessments, alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, and alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards in those subjects. Specific assessments used include:

- End-of-Grade Reading, Grades 3-8
- End-of-Grade Math, Grades 3-8
- Grade 10 Math*
- Grade 10 English*

*For Grade 10 Math and English, banked student scores are used during the calculation. For mathematics, Algebra I scores of current 10th graders are used, including the scores of those 10th graders who have taken Algebra I prior to 10th grade (i.e., "banked" scores). For Grade 10 English, scores are based on students who are proficient in both English I and the Grade 10 Writing Assessment. NC used the English I scores of current 10th graders; including the "banked" English I scores of those 10th graders who have taken English I prior to 10th grade. Note: In counting the total number of students who are proficient and the total number of students assessed, include the number of proficient students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment (based on alternate academic achievement standards or modified academic achievement standards) and the total number of students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment. For this calculation, NC included all schools, including alternative, charter and special schools.

H. Minimum Number of Students
For the proficiency score R/M to be considered, the subgroup must have a minimum of 80 assessments taken when adding reading and math denominators. For the graduation rate to be considered, the subgroup must have a minimum of 40 students in the graduation denominator. Additionally, if the graduation numerator is zero for "all students," the graduation rate is set to null for all subgroups, including the "all students" subgroup, regardless of the value of the graduation denominator.

I. Largest Within School Gaps
Any time the definition calls for identifying Title I schools that have the largest within school gaps, NC selected Title I schools that had an average achievement gap between the highest-achieving subgroup and the lowest-achieving subgroup of more than the 3-year state average in the previous and at least one of the two prior years.

J. Total Number of Focus Schools
Any time the definition calls for identifying a total number of Focus Schools in a State, NC selected a number of Title I schools equal to at least 10 percent of all Title I schools in 2010-11, which was a total of 1,296. 10% is 130 schools.

K. Title I Schools
Any time the definition calls for identifying Title I schools, NC selected schools that were served with Title I funds in 2010-11 and 2011-12.

STEPS FOR DETERMINING THE FOCUS SCHOOLS IN NORTH CAROLINA

A. Calculate the Proficiency Score-R/M

Step 1: Calculate the total number of proficient students in the "all students" group in English/language arts by adding the number of proficient students in each grade tested in a school. Calculate the total number of proficient students in the "all students" group in mathematics by adding the number of proficient students in each grade tested in the school.

Step 2: Add the total number of proficient students in English/language arts and mathematics. **This is the Numerator.**

Step 3: Calculate the total number of students in the "all students" group in the school who have taken the State's English/language arts assessment and the total number of students in the "all students" group who have taken the State's mathematics assessment.

Step 4: Add the total number of students in the "all students" group in the school who have taken the State's English/language arts assessment and the total number of students in the "all students" group who have taken the State's mathematics assessment. **This is the Denominator.**

Step 5: Divide the numerator (step 2) by the denominator (step 4) and multiply by 100 to determine the percent proficient in English/language arts and mathematics in the school. This is called the proficiency score-R/M for a school. Calculate this for all schools.

Note: In counting the total number of students who are proficient and the total number of students assessed, include the number of proficient students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment (based on alternate academic achievement standards or modified academic achievement standards) and the total number of students with disabilities who have taken an alternate assessment. For this calculation, NC included all schools, including alternative, charter and special schools.

B. Determine Title I Schools with Average Achievement Gap above the 3-year State Average Gap

Step 6: From the list of active schools mentioned in Note F, select all schools that are Title I schools. (1,230 schools)

Step 7: Using the schools selected in step 6, calculate the average achievement gap for the past three years for those schools with achievement gap data in the previous and at least one of the two prior years. (1,114 schools)

Step 8: Select schools from step 7 with an average achievement gap above the 3-year state average for the previous year (38.7% for 2010-11). (110 schools)

Step 9: From schools identified in step 8, remove schools previously identified as Priority Schools. (109 schools)

C. Determine Title I Schools with Subgroups with Proficiency less than 50%

Step 10: Select schools from step 6 who have demonstrated a subgroup "lack of progress" in performance (i.e. those that have any subgroup with proficiency score-R/M of less than 50% for the previous year and at least one of the two prior years). (245 schools)

Step 11: From schools identified in step 10, remove schools previously identified as Priority Schools. (217 schools)

Step 12: From the list of schools from step 11, remove schools previously identified in step 9. (131 schools)

Step 13: Rank the list of schools from step 12, from lowest to highest using the subgroup with lowest proficiency score- R/M for the most recent year. (131 schools)

Step 14: From the list of schools from step 13, select from top to bottom as many schools as needed to reach 10% of Title I Schools, i.e., 10% minus the # of schools from step 9. (21 schools)

D. Compile the List of Focus Schools

Step 15: Create an unduplicated list of the schools identified in steps 9 and 14. This is the list of **Focus Schools**. (109+21=130 schools)

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

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.

Process and Timeline for Implementation of Interventions for Focus Schools

Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, LEAs with one or more schools identified as the State's focus schools revised the Title I school plan to describe the interventions that would be implemented to improve the performance of student subgroups who are furthest behind. These interventions must be based on the academic and non-academic needs of the student subgroups. Rather than focusing on implementing a "program," districts must ensure that schools implement interventions that reflect evidence-based best practices aligned to overall school improvement efforts within the Title I school program. The Title I school plan must describe the results of the school needs assessment. The comprehensive school plan must also identify how the following will be addressed:

- Interventions are aligned to the school needs assessment that demonstrate the most likelihood for increasing the academic performance for under-performing student subgroups;
- Interventions are supported through school processes such as increased learning time and time for teacher planning;
- Interventions are supported through effective teacher instruction;
- Interventions are supported with high-quality job-embedded professional development for instructional staff;
- Interventions are monitored through the use of academic assessments with teacher input; and
- Interventions are planned to ensure family and community engagement and support.

Districts may choose to implement school choice options or before- and after-school tutoring services as well as other interventions in its focus schools. Example interventions may include:

- Expand learning time in coordination with community and business partnerships (e.g., 21st Century Community Learning Center programs, Supplemental Educational Services (SES) providers, etc.);
- Replace all or most of the school staff, which may include the principal, who are relevant to the school's inability to make progress;
- Provide, for all relevant staff, appropriate, scientifically research-based professional development that is likely to improve academic achievement of low-performing students;
- Extend the length of the school year or school day;
- Appoint one or more outside experts to advise the school (1) how to revise and strengthen planning processes; and (2) how to address the specific issues underlying the school's continued inability to make progress;
- Enter into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company, with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the school as a public school;
- Change the governance structure of the school in a significant manner that either diminishes school-based management and decision making or increases control, monitoring, and oversight of the school's operations and educational program by the LEA;
- Close the school and reopen it as a focus or theme school with new staff or staff skilled in

the focus area (e.g., math and science, dual language, communication arts);

- Reconstitute the school into smaller autonomous learning communities (e.g., school-within-a-school model, learning academies, etc.);
- Dissolve the school and assign students to other schools in the district;
- Pair the school in restructuring with a higher performing school so that K-3 grades from both schools are together and the 4-5 grades from both schools are together; or
- Expand or narrow the grades served, for example, narrowing a K-8 school to a K-5 elementary school.

Although the administration of SES under provisions of Section 1116 of ESEA will no longer be required, LEAs and charter schools may choose to offer tutoring services with State-approved SES providers. Through a renewal process, the SEA continues to maintain the current list of State-approved SES providers through 2014-15. Additionally, NC will monitor and evaluate State-approved SES providers as outlined in its State Board Policy.

Interventions selected for each Focus School must be clearly addressed in revised school improvement plans and aligned to the identified needs of the school. Interventions must include strategies to address the needs of all children particularly the lowest achieving and how those needs will be met in a timely and effective manner. School plans must be revised and approved by the LEA prior to November 1, 2012, so that schools begin implementing some of the interventions during the 2012-13 school year.

As described in section 2.D.iii on page 81, in order to receive Title I funds from the State, LEAs and public charter schools must complete an application for funding on NC's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP), a web-based grants management system. In CCIP, LEAs and charter schools must describe the results of a comprehensive needs assessment and identify goals and strategies that are most likely to increase the academic performance of all student subgroups and close achievement gaps. Beginning in 2012-13, CCIP incorporated a component for schools identified as Focus Schools. SEA staff will review plans for Focus Schools submitted on CCIP to ensure that under-performing subgroups are addressed in the needs assessment and that proposed interventions are designed to meet the needs of all subgroups.

As described in section 2.F on page 111, SEA staff will continue to monitor the implementation of interventions in Focus Schools by conducting on-site Program Quality Reviews. As described in section 2.G, districts with identified Focus Schools will also be given priority for additional on-site monitoring as part of the SEA four-year cross-program monitoring plan. Annually the SEA monitors the progress of each Focus School in terms of meeting AMOs for subgroups identified as low-achieving. As described in 2.F, if a Focus School is not meeting AMOs for students with disabilities or English learners, information is shared at Regional Roundtables with NCDPI staff that advocate on behalf of these student populations. This cross-divisional communication about Focus Schools (1) provides feedback on the outcomes of SEA initiatives and LEA interventions that have been implemented targeting a specific at-risk student population; and (2) ensures that appropriate resources are targeted to meet the needs of specific subgroups within each district and school in the state. The goal of monitoring and technical assistance is to build local capacity to ensure that reform efforts will continue to be sustained in the absence of direct SEA support.

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.

Exiting Focus School Status

Based on inputs from various stakeholder consultations including the State's COP, NCDPI will continue to maintain the list of Focus Schools for a three-year period. Maintaining focus status for the full three-year period will ensure 1) sufficient time for the LEA to fully implement interventions, and 2) sufficient time for the State to monitor and support the implementation of interventions to increase the likelihood that interventions result in sustained student achievement for all student subgroups. Schools will exit focus status when, three years from initial identification, a new list of Focus Schools is developed and the applied methodology no longer results in the school's designation as a Focus School.

In order to exit Focus School status, Focus Schools must demonstrate sufficient progress based on the following criteria:

- Meet a minimum proficiency standard/graduation rate of 60%;
- Make progress on closing significant achievement gaps between subgroups by demonstrating no subgroup gaps greater than the state three-year average;
- Make progress toward meeting "all AMOs" defined as meeting at least 90% of the achievement Annual Measurable Objectives in the "all students" subgroup (including the other academic indicator) and the AMOs in all other subgroups; and
- Meet the 95% participation rate rule for all subgroups.

As described in section 2.D.v on page 83, after the State transitions to new assessments in the 2012-13 school year, the State will conduct analyses of the assessment scores in reading, English/language arts and science in order to establish a minimum threshold that links/equates to the current expectation of a minimum standard of 60% proficiency. The expectation is that the new assessments will have more rigorous performance standards than the current assessments.

Focus Schools will also be subject to the same escalating consequences described on page 55 if they fail to achieve 95% participation for any subgroup. These consequences will be implemented with the new accountability model starting in the 2012-13 school year.

LEAs with identified schools that do not exit this status must establish a School Implementation Team with a designated coordinator for each Focus School. If the LEA chooses to utilize an external provider, the LEA must also develop transparent selection criteria for providers. The implementation team will utilize the NC Indistar® Tool to facilitate the continuous improvement process through initial needs assessment related to specific indicators of effective practice; the creation of implementation plans to fully implement indicators of effective practice; and the self-monitoring of progress toward full implementation of interventions designed to support the low-performing subgroup(s).

NCDPI will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the interventions for each of these schools through the use of the NC Indistar® Tool. In addition to utilizing the online tool, NCDPI will conduct on-site reviews for gathering qualitative data through surveys, interviews,

focus groups, and classroom observations. LEA funds may be coordinated with oversight from the NCDPI to ensure that the implementation of interventions occurs in a manner that encourages rapid student achievement.

TABLES 2.A AND 2.B: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

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

TABLE 2.A: REWARD SCHOOLS

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Reward School
Alexander County Schools	Ellendale Elementary	370009000032	A
Alleghany County Schools	Piney Creek Elementary	370012000039	A
Ashe County Schools	Mountain View Elementary	370021002284	A
Beaufort County Schools	Chocowinity Primary	370033002106	A
Brunswick County Schools	Town Creek Elementary	370042003134	A
Brunswick County Schools	Union Elementary	370042000130	A
Brunswick County Schools	Waccamaw	370042000131	A
Buncombe County Schools	North Buncombe Elementary	370045002259	A
Buncombe County Schools	Weaverville Elementary	370045000167	A
Buncombe County Schools	Woodfin Elementary	370045000170	A
Asheville City Schools	Vance Elementary	370027000080	A
Burke County Schools	Forest Hill Elementary	370048000175	A
Burke County Schools	Glen Alpine Elementary	370048000179	A
Burke County Schools	Hildebran Elementary	370048000182	A
Burke County Schools	Icard Elementary	370048000184	A
Burke County Schools	Oak Hill Elementary	370048000188	A
Burke County Schools	Rutherford College Elem	370048000190	A
Burke County Schools	Valdese Elementary	370048000193	A
Cabarrus County Schools	Coltrane-Webb Elementary	370053000376	B
Caldwell County Schools	Baton Elementary	370058000221	A
Caldwell County Schools	Collettsville School	370058000222	A

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Reward School
Caldwell County Schools	Davenport A+ School	370058000223	A
Caldwell County Schools	Happy Valley Elementary	370058000230	A
Caldwell County Schools	William Lenoir Middle	370058000244	A
Caldwell County Schools	Whitnel Elementary	370058000243	B
Carteret County Public Schools	Bogue Sound Elementary	370063002368	A
Carteret County Public Schools	Beaufort Elementary	370063000250	A
Carteret County Public Schools	Harkers Island Elementary	370063000254	A
Carteret County Public Schools	Morehead City Primary	370063001044	A
Caswell County Schools	South Elementary	370066000128	A
Caswell County Schools	Stoney Creek Elementary	370066000271	B
Hickory City Schools	Viewmont Elementary	370219000950	A
Newton Conover City Schools	Shuford Elementary	370336001403	A
Cleveland County Schools	East Elementary	370090002709	A
Cleveland County Schools	Shelby Intermediate	370090000343	A
Cleveland County Schools	Marion Elementary	370090002717	A
Cleveland County Schools	North Elementary	370090002718	A
Cleveland County Schools	Union Elementary	370090002289	A
Columbus County Schools	Evergreen Elementary	370096000363	A
Craven County Schools	Ben D Quinn Elementary	370331002310	A
Craven County Schools	Vanceboro-Farm Life Elementary	370331002173	A
Craven County Schools	Graham A Barden Elementary	370331000382	A
Craven County Schools	Havelock Elementary	370331002175	A
Craven County Schools	Arthur W Edwards Elementary	370331002181	A
Cumberland County Schools	College Lakes Elementary	370001100408	B
Cumberland County Schools	Cumberland Mills Elementary	370001100410	B
Cumberland County Schools	Ferguson-Easley Elementary	370001102125	B
Cumberland County Schools	Bill Hefner Elementary	370001101377	A
Cumberland County Schools	William H Owen Elementary	370001100447	B

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Reward School
Cumberland County Schools	Walker Spivey Elementary	370001102131	A
Cumberland County Schools	J W Seabrook Elementary	370001100431	B
Cumberland County Schools	Stedman Elementary	370001101848	A
Cumberland County Schools	Sunnyside Elementary	370001100440	A
Cumberland County Schools	Alger B Wilkins Elementary	370001100446	B
Currituck County Schools	Jarvisburg Elementary	370108003039	B
Currituck County Schools	W T Griggs Elementary	370108000450	A
Dare County Schools	Nags Head Elementary	370111002758	A
Lexington City Schools	Pickett Elementary School	370264001103	A
Davie County Schools	Cornatzer Elementary	370117002516	A
Davie County Schools	Mocksville Elementary	370117000487	A
Duplin County Schools	North Duplin Elementary	370120000501	A
Duplin County Schools	Wallace Elementary	370120000504	A
Durham Public Schools	Bethesda Elementary	370126000528	B
Durham Public Schools	Burton Elementary	370126000308	B
Durham Public Schools	Hillandale Elementary	370126000535	A
Durham Public Schools	Fayetteville Street Elementary	370126000480	B
Durham Public Schools	Spring Valley Elementary	370126003115	B
Edgecombe County Public Schools	Stocks Elementary	370132001767	B
Quality Education Academy	Quality Education Academy	370002502096	A
Gaston County Schools	Pleasant Ridge Elementary	370162000705	B
Gaston County Schools	Woodhill Elementary	370162000717	B
Gates County Schools	Buckland Elementary	370168000718	A
Gates County Schools	Gatesville Elementary	370168000721	B
Gates County Schools	T S Cooper Elementary	370168000723	A
Guilford County Schools	Montlieu Academy	370192000960	B
Guilford County Schools	Oak Hill Elementary	370192000963	B
Guilford County Schools	Wiley Elementary	370192000803	B

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Reward School
Haywood County Schools	Bethel Elementary	370204000579	A
Haywood County Schools	Central Elementary	370204000898	A
Haywood County Schools	Hazelwood Elementary	370204000902	A
Haywood County Schools	Jonathan Valley Elementary	370204002159	A
Haywood County Schools	Meadowbrook Elementary	370204002160	A
Henderson County Schools	Bruce Drysdale Elementary	370210000927	B
Henderson County Schools	Clear Creek Elementary	370210002631	A
Henderson County Schools	Dana Elementary	370210000913	A
Henderson County Schools	Etowah Elementary	370210000918	A
Henderson County Schools	Sugarloaf Elementary	370210002996	B
Hoke County Schools	East Hoke Middle	370225000974	A
Mooresville City Schools	South Elementary	370312001336	A
Jackson County Schools	Blue Ridge School	370234001001	A
Johnston County Schools	Benson Elementary	370237001009	A
Johnston County Schools	Corinth-Holders Elementary	370237001015	A
Johnston County Schools	Glendale-Kenly Elementary	370237001018	A
Jones County Schools	Trenton Elementary	370240001038	A
Lenoir County Public Schools	Moss Hill Elementary	370261001090	A
Macon County Schools	Cartoogechaye Elementary	370276001134	A
Martin County Schools	Edna Andrews Elementary	370288001161	A
Martin County Schools	Jamesville Elementary	370288000812	A
McDowell County Schools	Glenwood Elementary	370294001177	A
McDowell County Schools	Marion Elementary	370294001178	A
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Idlewild Elementary	370297001228	A
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Pinewood Elementary	370297001261	B
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Windsor Park Elementary	370297001290	A
Montgomery County Schools	Page Street Elementary	370306002532	B
Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	Cedar Grove Elementary	370327001344	A

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Reward School
Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	Nashville Elementary	370327001349	A
New Hanover County Schools	Bradley Creek Elementary	370333001367	A
New Hanover County Schools	College Park Elementary	370333001369	A
New Hanover County Schools	Pine Valley Elementary	370333001387	A
Gaston College Preparatory	Gaston College Preparatory	370012302597	A
Onslow County Schools	Bell Fork Elementary	370345001417	A
Onslow County Schools	Blue Creek Elementary	370345001418	A
Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools	P W Moore Elementary	370354002275	B
Person County Schools	Stories Creek Elementary	370363002539	A
Pitt County Schools	Creekside Elementary	370001202789	B
Pitt County Schools	Northwest Elementary	370001202604	B
Polk County Schools	Tryon Elementary	370372002230	A
Polk County Schools	Polk Central	370372000780	A
Polk County Schools	Sunny View Elementary	370372001513	A
Asheboro City Schools	Lindley Park Elementary	370024000068	A
Richmond County Schools	L J Bell Elementary	370387001553	A
Richmond County Schools	Mineral Springs Elementary	370387001555	B
Public Schools of Robeson County	Fairgrove Middle	370393001570	B
Public Schools of Robeson County	Rowland Middle	370393002183	A
Public Schools of Robeson County	Union Chapel Elementary	370393001589	A
Rowan-Salisbury Schools	Cleveland Elementary	370405001614	A
Sampson County Schools	Clement Elementary	370414001667	A
Sampson County Schools	Hargrove Elementary	370414001671	A
Sampson County Schools	Hobbton Elementary	370414001673	A
Sampson County Schools	Midway Elementary	370414001675	A
Sampson County Schools	Plain View Elementary	370414001678	A
Clinton City Schools	Butler Avenue Elementary	370093000352	A
Clinton City Schools	Sunset Avenue Elementary	370093003029	A

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Reward School
Scotland County Schools	Covington Street Elementary	370420001686	A
Scotland County Schools	Laurel Hill Elementary	370420001689	A
Scotland County Schools	Spring Hill Middle	370420002546	A
Scotland County Schools	South Scotland Elementary	370420001694	A
Scotland County Schools	Washington Park Elementary	370420001696	A
Stanly County Schools	Norwood Elementary	370432001714	A
Surry County Schools	Cedar Ridge Elementary	370441001663	A
Surry County Schools	Dobson Elementary	370441001747	A
Surry County Schools	Pilot Mountain Elementary	370441003216	A
Surry County Schools	Rockford Elementary	370441003221	A
Transylvania County Schools	Brevard Elementary	370453001777	A
Transylvania County Schools	Pisgah Forest Elementary	370453000796	A
Transylvania County Schools	T C Henderson Elementary	370453001785	A
Union County Public Schools	Rocky River Elementary	370462002828	B
Union County Public Schools	Rock Rest Elementary	370462002862	B
Union County Public Schools	Sardis Elementary	370462002352	A
Union County Public Schools	Wingate Elementary	370462001811	A
Vance County Schools	Pinkston Street Elementary	370465001821	B
Henderson Collegiate	Henderson Collegiate	370031903193	A
Wake County Schools	River Bend Elementary	370472002861	A
Wake County Schools	Barwell Road Elementary	370472002854	B
Wake County Schools	Carver Elementary	370472002187	A
Wake County Schools	Dillard Drive Elementary	370472002487	A
Wake County Schools	Forestville Road Elementary	370472002742	A
Wake County Schools	Kingswood Elementary	370472001869	A
Wake County Schools	Lockhart Elementary	370472001874	A
Wake County Schools	Reedy Creek Elementary	370472002491	A
Wake County Schools	Zebulon Elementary	370472001912	A

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Reward School
PreEminent Charter School	PreEminent Charter	370011302553	B
Washington County Schools	Pines Elementary	370480002190	B
Wayne County Public Schools	Fremont STARS Elementary	370488001953	B
Wilkes County Schools	Mount Pleasant Elementary	370495001978	A
Wilkes County Schools	Wilkesboro Elementary	370495001990	A
Wilson County Schools	Elm City Elementary	370502001995	B
Wilson County Schools	Gardners Elementary	370502001999	A
Wilson County Schools	Lucama Elementary	370502002002	A
Wilson County Schools	Vick Elementary	370502002564	B
Yadkin County Schools	Courtney Elementary	370504002014	A
Yancey County Schools	Cane River Middle	370507002026	A
Yancey County Schools	East Yancey Middle	370507002028	A
Yancey County Schools	Micaville Elementary	370507002029	A

2011-12 Total # of Title I schools in the State: 1266
2011-12 Total # of Title I-participating high schools in the State with graduation rates less than 60%: 9

Key	
Reward School Criteria: **A.** Highest-performing school **B.** High-progress school **Priority School Criteria:** **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 **D-1.** Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years **D-2.** Title I-eligible high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years **E.** Tier I or Tier II SIG school implementing a school intervention model	**Focus School Criteria:** **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 **G.** Has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate **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

TABLE 2.B: PRIORITY AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Priority School	Focus School
Alamance-Burlington Schools	Broadview Middle	370003000196		G
Alamance-Burlington Schools	Graham Middle	370003000010		F
Alamance-Burlington Schools	Turrentine Middle	370003000206		F
Anson County Schools	Anson Academy	370018002367	D-2	
Anson County Schools	Anson High School	370018002054	E	
Anson County Schools	Morven Elementary	370018000046	E	
Anson County Schools	Wadesboro Elementary	370018000050		G
Crossnore Academy	Crossnore Academy	370007702427	D-1	
Beaufort County Schools	John Small Elementary	370033001924		F
Bertie County Schools	Bertie Middle	370036002818		F
Bladen County Schools	Elizabethtown Middle	370039002618		G
Brunswick County Schools	Brunswick County Academy	370042000980	E	
Brunswick County Schools	South Brunswick Middle	370042002152		F
Buncombe County Schools	Community High School	370045002203	E	
Buncombe County Schools	Avery's Creek Elementary	370045001781		F
Buncombe County Schools	Estes Elementary	370045002063		F
Buncombe County Schools	West Buncombe Elementary	370045000169		F
Asheville City Schools	Claxton Elementary	370027000072		F
Asheville City Schools	Ira B Jones Elementary	370027000076		F
Burke County Schools	Hallyburton Academy	370048001005	E	
Cabarrus County Schools	Weddington Hills Elementary	370053001818		F

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Priority School	Focus School
Cabarrus County Schools	Winecoff Elementary	370053000219		F
Cabarrus County Schools	Wolf Meadow Elementary	370053000220		F
Hickory City Schools	Northview Middle	370219000940		F
Hickory City Schools	Hickory Career & Arts Magnet HS	370219002108	D-1	
Chatham County Schools	SAGE Academy	370075002079	D-2	
Chatham County Schools	Chatham Middle	370075000307		F
Cherokee County Schools	Mountain Youth School	370078002082	D-2	
Edenton-Chowan Schools	D F Walker Elementary	370084000328		F
Cleveland County Schools	Marion Elementary	370090002717		F
Columbus County Schools	Boys and Girls Homes	370096000359	C	
Whiteville City Schools	Central Middle	370492001967		F
Whiteville City Schools	Edgewood Elementary	370492001968		F
Whiteville City Schools	North Whiteville Academy	370492002510	D-1	
Craven County Schools	James W Smith Elementary	370331002211		F
Cumberland County Schools	Elizabeth M Cashwell Elem	370001100403		F
Cumberland County Schools	Walker-Spivey	370001102136	E	
Cumberland County Schools	Westover High	370001100445	E	
Dare County Schools	Dare County Alternative	370111002093	D-2	
Davidson County Schools	Davidson County Ext Day	370114000462	D-2	
Durham Public Schools	Chewning Middle	370126000531	C	
Durham Public Schools	Eno Valley Elementary	370126000532		G
Durham Public Schools	Club Boulevard Elementary	370126000334		F
Durham Public Schools	Creekside Elementary	370126002727		F
Durham Public Schools	Glenn Elementary	370126000534	C	
Durham Public Schools	Durham's Performance Learning Center	370126003085	D-2	
Durham Public Schools	Hillside High	370126000385	E	
Durham Public Schools	Hope Valley Elementary	370126002442		F
Durham Public Schools	Forest View Elementary	370126000537		F

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Priority School	Focus School
Durham Public Schools	Merrick-Moore Elementary	370126000543		G
Durham Public Schools	Neal Middle	370126000544		G
Durham Public Schools	Parkwood Elementary	370126000547		F
Durham Public Schools	Southwest Elementary	370126002218		F
Durham Public Schools	Y E Smith Elementary	370126000573	C	
Edgecombe County Public Schools	G W Bulluck Elementary	370132000551		F
Edgecombe County Public Schools	Coker-Wimberly Elementary	370132000553	E	
Edgecombe County Public Schools	W A Pattillo A+ Elementary Sch	370132001768		F
Forsyth County Schools	Ashley Elementary	370150002446		G
Forsyth County Schools	Cook Elementary	370150002448	C	
Forsyth County Schools	Forest Park Elementary	370150000603	E	
Forsyth County Schools	Gibson Elementary	370150002578		F
Forsyth County Schools	Hill Middle	370150000609	C	
Forsyth County Schools	Mineral Springs Middle	370150000621		G
Forsyth County Schools	J. F. Kennedy High School	370150002194	C	
Forsyth County Schools	Petree Elementary	370150002451	E	
Forsyth County Schools	Wiley Middle	370150000649		F
Forsyth Academy	Forsyth Academy	370008302452		F
Gaston County Schools	Bessemer City Central Elem	370162000667		F
Gaston County Schools	Warlick Academy	370162002263	E	
Gaston County Schools	Woodhill Elementary	370162000717	C	
Greene County Schools	Greene Central High	370183000750	E	
Greene County Schools	West Greene Elementary	370183000755		F
Guilford County Schools	T Wingate Andrews High	370192000967	E	
Guilford County Schools	Aycock Middle	370192000759		F
Guilford County Schools	Brightwood Elementary	370192000818		G
Guilford County Schools	Dudley High	370192000768		G
Guilford County Schools	Ferndale Middle	370192000955		F

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Priority School	Focus School
Guilford County Schools	Doris Henderson Newcomers School	370192002988	C	
Guilford County Schools	Irving Park Elementary	370192000777		F
Guilford County Schools	Oak Hill Elementary	370192000963	E	
Guilford County Schools	Parkview Village Elementary	370192000965	C	
Guilford County Schools	Welborn Academy of Sci & Tech	370192000961		F
Guilford County Schools	Wiley Elementary	370192000803	E	
Halifax County Schools	Dawson Elementary	370195000859	C	
Halifax County Schools	Enfield Middle	370195000861	C	
Halifax County Schools	Everetts Elementary	370195000862	C	
Halifax County Schools	Inborden Elementary	370195000864	C	
Halifax County Schools	Southeast Halifax High	370195002157	C	
Halifax County Schools	William R Davie Middle	370195000872	C	
Roanoke Rapids City Schools	William L Manning Elementary	370390001565		F
Harnett County Schools	Angier Elementary	370201000875		F
Harnett County Schools	Benhaven Elementary	370201000876		F
Harnett County Schools	Boone Trail Elementary	370201000877		G
Harnett County Schools	Coats Elementary	370201000879		F
Harnett County Schools	Erwin Elementary	370201000881		F
Harnett County Schools	Harnett Primary	370201000883		G
Harnett County Schools	Highland Elementary	370201002630		F
Harnett County Schools	LaFayette Elementary	370201000886		F
Harnett County Schools	Wayne Avenue Elem	370201000893		F
Henderson County Schools	Balfour Education Center	370210001568	D-2	
Hertford County Schools	Ahoskie Elementary	370216000931		F
Hertford County Schools	Hertford County Middle	370216002207		F
Hoke County Schools	West Hoke Middle	370225000970		F
Hoke County Schools	East Hoke Middle	370225000974		F
Iredell-Statesville Schools	Cloverleaf Elementary	370231003081		F

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Priority School	Focus School
Iredell-Statesville Schools	East Iredell Elementary	370231000985		F
Iredell-Statesville Schools	Monticello School	370231002118	D-1	
Iredell-Statesville Schools	Troutman Elementary	370231000995		F
Johnston County Schools	Glendale-Kenly Elementary	370237001018		F
Johnston County Schools	South Campus Community High	370237001580	D-2	
Johnston County Schools	West Smithfield Elementary	370237001026		F
Lenoir County Public Schools	Banks Elementary	370261001086		F
Lenoir County Public Schools	Contentnea-Savannah School	370261001087		F
Lenoir County Public Schools	E B Frink Middle	370261001088		F
Lenoir County Public Schools	Sampson School	370261001586	C	
Lenoir County Public Schools	Rochelle Middle	370261000589		G
Lenoir County Public Schools	Woodington Middle	370261001096		F
Martin County Schools	Williamston Middle	370288001170		F
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Albemarle Road Middle	370297001187		F
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Billingsville Elementary	370297001201	C	
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Cochrane Collegiate Academy	370297001203		G
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Druid Hills Academy	370297001213	C	
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Hawthorne High	370297002228	C	
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Hornets Nest Elementary	370297002309		G
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Huntingtowne Farms Elementary	370297001227		G
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Turning Point Academy	370297000871	C	
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Morgan School	370297002169	C	
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Nathaniel Alexander Elementary	370297001886		F
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	J H Gunn Elementary	370297001231		F
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Northridge Middle	370297001889		F
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Piney Grove Elementary	370297001262		F
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Ranson Middle	370297001267		G
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Sedgefield Middle	370297001269		G

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Priority School	Focus School
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Walter G Byers School	370297002660	C	
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	West Charlotte High	370297001285	D-2	
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	West Mecklenburg High	370297001286	E	
Kennedy Charter	Kennedy Charter	370006302398	C	
Crossroads Charter High	Crossroads Charter High	370012202591	C	
Mitchell County Schools	Harris Middle	370300001296		F
Montgomery County Schools	Page Street Elementary	370306002532		F
Moore County Schools	Pinckney Academy	370309001929	D-2	
Moore County Schools	Southern Pines Elementary	370309001327		F
Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	Benvenue Elementary	370327001342		F
Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	D S Johnson Elementary	370327000725	C	
Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	Englewood Elementary	370327000726		F
Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	W L Greene Alternative	370327001218	C	
New Hanover County Schools	Edwin A Alderman Elementary	370333001371		F
New Hanover County Schools	Forest Hills Elementary	370333001374		F
New Hanover County Schools	A H Snipes Academy of Arts/Des	370333001392	C	
New Hanover County Schools	Williston Middle	370333001394		F
Onslow County Schools	Jacksonville Commons Elem	370345001931		G
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	Carrboro Elementary	370072000294		F
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	Frank Porter Graham Elem	370072000299		F
Pender County Schools	Cape Fear Elementary	370357002601		G
Pender County Schools	Penderlea Elementary	370357001467		F
Perquimans County Schools	Hertford Grammar	370360001474		F
Pitt County Schools	Creekside Elementary	370001202789		F
Pitt County Schools	Farmville Central High	370001201497	E	
Pitt County Schools	Grifton	370001201500		F
Pitt County Schools	North Pitt High	370001201502	E	
Pitt County Schools	Northwest Elementary	370001202604	C	

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Priority School	Focus School
Pitt County Schools	Pactolus	370001201503		F
Pitt County Schools	W H Robinson Elementary	370001201506		F
Pitt County Schools	Sam D Bundy Elementary	370001201504		F
Pitt County Schools	South Central High	370001202616	E	
Pitt County Schools	Wahl Coates Elementary	370001202147		F
Richmond County Schools	Leak Street High	370387000788	C	
Richmond County Schools	Richmond Co Transitional	370387003148	C	
Public Schools of Robeson County	Fairgrove Middle	370393001570	C	
Public Schools of Robeson County	Fairmont High	370393002232	E	
Public Schools of Robeson County	Littlefield Middle	370393001572		F
Public Schools of Robeson County	Lumberton Junior High	370393002236		F
Public Schools of Robeson County	Lumberton Senior High	370393002237	E	
Public Schools of Robeson County	Pembroke Middle	370393001579		G
Public Schools of Robeson County	Saint Pauls Elementary	370393002243		F
Rowan-Salisbury Schools	Henderson High	370405002409	D-2	
Rowan-Salisbury Schools	Hurley Elementary	370405001620		F
Rutherford County Schools	Rutherford Opportunity Center	370408002607	D-2	
Sampson County Schools	Midway Middle	370414002481		F
Stokes County Schools	Meadowbrook Academy	370438002411	C	
Transylvania County Schools	Davidson River School	370453002351	D-2	
Wake County Schools	Longview	370472002254	D-2	
Wake County Schools	Banks Rd Elementary	370472003132		F
Wake County Schools	Conn Elementary	370472001847		F
Wake County Schools	Douglas Elementary	370472001851		F
Wake County Schools	Durant Road Elementary	370472000075		F
Wake County Schools	Fuquay-Varina Elementary	370472001859		F
Wake County Schools	Hunter Elementary	370472001866		F
Wake County Schools	Lynn Road Elementary	370472001876		F

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Priority School	Focus School
Wake County Schools	Millbrook Elementary	370472001878		F
Wake County Schools	North Ridge Elementary	370472001883		F
Wake County Schools	Poe Elementary	370472001887		F
Wake County Schools	Stough Elementary	370472001895		F
Wake County Schools	Timber Drive Elementary	370472002356		F
Wake County Schools	Wakefield Elementary	370472002492		F
Wake County Schools	Wendell Elementary	370472001904		F
Wake County Schools	Yates Mill Elementary	370472002561		F
Warren County Schools	Warren County High	370474002189	E	
Warren County Schools	Warren County Middle	370474000329		F
Washington County Schools	Pines Elementary	370480002190	C	
Washington County Schools	Washington County Union	370480001933		F
Wayne County Public Schools	Carver Elementary	370488001947		F
Wayne County Public Schools	Goldsboro High	370488000502	E	
Wayne County Public Schools	Spring Creek Elementary	370488002498		F
Dillard Academy	Dillard Academy	370007402420	C	
Sallie B Howard School	Sallie B Howard School	370004902365		F
Yadkin County Schools	Yadkinville Elementary	370504002022		F

2010-11 Total # of Title I schools in the State: 1,296
2010-11 Total # of Title I-participating high schools in the State with graduation rates less than 60%: 9

Key	
Reward School Criteria: **A.** Highest-performing school **B.** High-progress school **Priority School Criteria:** **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 **D-1.** Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years **D-2.** Title I-eligible high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years **E.** Tier I or Tier II SIG school implementing a school intervention model	**Focus School Criteria:** **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 **G.** Has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate **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

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.

Incentives

A key criticism of the current law is that under the "all or nothing" metrics of Adequate Yearly Progress, schools are perceived as failing if all targets are not met each year. Schools are sanctioned the same regardless of whether one target was missed or many targets were missed with no explicit consideration for the number of targets a school was required to meet or the number of targets actually met. Given little opportunity to acknowledge where their schools were making progress, overall morale of school staff across the state has declined over time. Removing the current labels that require "one size fits all" sanctions inherently incentivizes school staff to address areas of improvement without being made to feel their schools are failing, despite the dedicated and intentional work that teachers and other school staff engage in every day.

As decision-making on the use of resources is more appropriately moved closer to the staff responsible for student success, educators are empowered to select and implement interventions tailored to the needs of their schools. Providing a comprehensive view of school information affords the SEA with an opportunity to acknowledge areas where schools are making progress and to identify the interventions that work in successful Title I schools within each region of the state. A key example is described in section 2.C.i., in that the comprehensive information provided for schools recognized as Reward Schools will serve as model programs for continuous improvement in all Title I schools.

Statewide System of Support/Results of Turnaround Efforts

During the 2006-2010 period, the NCDPI and its partner organizations worked with 66 low achieving high schools, 37 middle schools, and 25 elementary schools. These schools were targeted for intervention primarily because their Performance Composites fell below 60% for two or more years. The Turnaround Schools program of intervention included (1) a requirement that the schools submit plans consistent with a Framework for Action designed to focus the schools on changing practices thought to affect student achievement, (2) a series of professional development sessions designed to build the schools' capacity to carry out the plans, and (3) follow-up coaching and school-specific professional development, which continued for as long as the school's performance composite remained below 60%. A subset of 13 high schools were also divided into separate, smaller academies.

An evaluation of the Turnaround effort found that in the improved schools, the process included:

(1) the commitment, climate, and culture affecting student learning;

(2) the knowledge and skills that school leaders, teachers, and other staff bring to their jobs;

(3) the structures and processes that support instruction within the school; and
(4) the strength of linkages between the school and both the district central office and the community served by the school.

The NCDPI's Turnaround Schools program succeeded in providing high-quality assistance to most of the low-achieving schools targeted by the program. When this external assistance was matched by energetic and sustained local leadership, schools succeeded in breaking out of the doldrums of low performance and made significant, measurable progress over a three- or four-year period.

A move toward identifying schools under the new categories of Reward, Focus, and Priority allows the SEA to support the need for continuous improvement of all Title I schools. Utilizing multiple metrics provides a basis for customizing support within North Carolina's statewide system of support.

As described in section 2.A, beginning on page 47, NC's support for districts and schools is coordinated and monitored through three interlocking roundtables. The roundtable structure includes a Strategic Roundtable, an Agency Roundtable, and eight Regional Roundtables (one for each State Board designated region).

The Strategic Roundtable is comprised of NCDPI senior leadership and meets quarterly to prioritize support for districts and schools as well as monitoring progress toward the priority objectives.

Measurable goals and objectives for schools/districts receiving assistance:

- An increase in the percentage of AMOs met
- Progress in making growth
- An increase in the percentage of students scoring proficient on the State's academic achievement standards

Other support objectives:

- Assisting the school in making data-driven decisions to improve student achievement
- Increasing the school's capacity to achieve student academic growth over time for all student subgroups
- Enhancing the staff's knowledge and delivery of best practices
- Building the skills of teachers and administrators

The Agency Roundtable is comprised of all NCDPI division directors and meets monthly to facilitate ongoing initiatives within the statewide system of support. The Title I Director serves on this roundtable. The Roundtable identifies current initiatives being provided to the region by the agency; reviews comprehensive needs assessment outcomes; identifies gaps and redundancies; targets available resources to identified needs; and routes continued services through NCDPI staff assigned to regions, districts, and schools.

The eight (8) Regional Roundtables, corresponding to the NC State Board of Education regions, are comprised of NCDPI personnel and representatives of the Regional Education Services Areas (RESAs), who serve regionally and function as the articulation component of the Statewide System of Support in the field by serving districts across the state and ensuring the priority of the State Board initiatives and cross-divisional communication.. The Roundtables meet monthly to identify

current initiatives underway in each district in the region, to identify common needs across each region, and to coordinate technical assistance provided for the districts and schools identified as having the greatest need for support. Roundtables are facilitated by NCDPI Regional Leads, one assigned to each of the eight regions across North Carolina. In order to ensure that all subgroup populations are represented, membership on the Regional Roundtables includes representatives from each Division in the Academic & Instructional Services area including students with disabilities (Exceptional Children Division), English learners (Curriculum and Instruction Division), and economically disadvantaged students (Compliance and Monitoring). More information about the Statewide System of Support may be found in Section 2.A, beginning on page 47.

A Title I consultant serves on each Regional Roundtable in order to ensure that statutory requirements are understood by all parties and appropriate services and support are brokered for Title I schools. Beginning in 2012-13, all Title I schools will be reviewed to determine schools not making sufficient progress on AMOs defined as two consecutive years of not meeting targets for a specific subgroup. Title I schools not making sufficient progress on AMO's will receive priority for SEA support.

In monthly Regional Roundtable meetings, both quantitative and qualitative data generated by the work of NCDPI employees serving the region are analyzed and synthesized to coordinate and align services for all subgroups. For example, Title I consultants annually review AMOs of LEA and school subgroups as part of the monitoring risk assessment. If a Title I school is not meeting AMOs for students with disabilities or English learners, information is shared at Regional Roundtables with NCDPI staff that advocate on behalf of these student populations. This cross-divisional communication (1) provides feedback on the outcomes of SEA initiatives and LEA interventions that have been implemented targeting a specific at-risk student population; and (2) ensures that appropriate resources are targeted to meet the needs of specific subgroups within each district and school in the state.

Ongoing support for all Title I schools is provided by Title I consultants throughout the year. A Title I consultant is assigned to each of the eight regions of the state to work with local Title I directors and Title I school staff to ensure federal compliance leads to enhance program quality. Annual support is scheduled and offered through the following process below:

Title I Support	Sessions	Intended Participants
Title I Conference	1 (3-day) per year	• Title I Directors • Teachers • Principals • Central Office Staff
Regional Meetings	12 regional per year	• Title I Directors • Finance Officers • Parent Involvement Coordinators • Title I Preschool Coordinators
New Directors	4 per year	• New Title I Directors (1-2 years)

Title I Support	Sessions	Intended Participants
Schoolwide Institutes (Note: Beginning in 2012-13, Schoolwide Institutes will utilize indicators of effective practice identified through the use of the Indistar® tool.)	1 (2-3 day) per year On-site as requested	• Title I Directors • School leadership teams
Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Planning (funding application) Training	4 regional per year 8-10 Raleigh-based (open enrollment)	• Title I Directors • Finance Officers • Central Office Staff
Program Quality Reviews	4-8 per region per year (based on risk assessment and requests)	• Title I Directors • School leadership • Parents • Preschool staff • Private school staff

Beginning in 2010-11, Title I consultants began conducting Program Quality Reviews (PQRs). PQRs utilize protocols and procedures that allow a review of specific components of the Title I program and offer commendations and recommendations for improvement. PQRs provide an opportunity for Title I consultants to discuss with local staff how to move beyond federal program compliance to effective program implementation. Although PQRs serve both monitoring and support functions, the ultimate goal of PQRs is to ensure that every component of the Title I program will lead to improved student achievement and school performance, closure of achievement gaps, and increased quality of instruction for students. Information on PQRs is available to the public and accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/program-monitoring/monitoring/.

Historically, Schoolwide Institutes have focused on the ten required components of developing effective School Improvement Plans. Beginning in 2012-13, the focus of these institutes will broaden from simply addressing the required components in a written plan to developing plans through indicators of effective practice driven by the leadership of a strategic implementation team. Implementation teams are essential for ensuring that stakeholders choose improvement strategies wisely, evaluate the readiness of the school to implement the strategies, and monitor the fidelity of implementing the strategies selected as defined by the program developers, researchers, or experts (Fixsen, 2010). Realignment of the institutes to current cross-agency initiatives, will establish implementation teams at both the district and school levels to provide an infrastructure for continuous improvement (Pearlman & Redding, 2011).

Ultimately, the statewide system of support provides customized technical assistance designed to build the capacity of LEA and school staff to improve schools and sustain improvement efforts. Although specific Title I consultants provide support for Title I schools, the roundtables provide a forum for continuous communication and collaboration within the agency in order to most effectively customize the support. Incentives for continuous improvement and support for building district and school capacity will ensure that all students, especially those attending high poverty schools, are well prepared for success beyond high school.

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

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

i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;
ii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources); and
iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools.

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

Monitoring and Technical Assistance

Federal program consultants monitor federal grant sub-recipients on an annual basis. All data for Title I schools is reviewed to determine where on-site reviews are prioritized within a four-year monitoring cycle. For LEAs with Priority and Focus Schools, federal program staff will conduct on-site and desk reviews to determine the quality of interventions being implemented in each Priority School. For other Title I schools that are not meeting AMOs, the SEA will provide additional monitoring and support through Program Quality Reviews. As previously described in section 2.F, the PQR process provides opportunities for SEA staff to meet with local improvement teams to determine how the outcomes of school needs assessments are supported with differentiated interventions in Title I schoolwide and targeted assistance programs. The goal of monitoring and technical assistance will be to build local capacity to ensure that reform efforts will continue to be sustained in the absence of direct SEA support.

During on-site visits, DPI conducts documentation review, observation of interventions, and interviews with appropriate staff. Desk reviews will include monitoring of expenditures as described below and virtual interviews (e.g., phone conferences, webinars, etc.) as appropriate. Desk reviews utilize data collected through the SEAPowerSchool Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP), and the Budget and Amendment Approval System (BAAS) for Priority Schools. NCDPI utilizes the NC Indistar® Tool to monitor the ongoing planning, implementation, and evaluation of interventions aligned to the schools needs assessment outcomes. Local district and school staff will be provided with initial training and ongoing support for use of the planning tool to ensure the fidelity of the local planning and implementation of interventions aligned to turnaround principles or SIG intervention models.

All LEAs with Priority schools will be monitored through on-site and desk reviews a minimum of

once per year beginning with the 2012-13 school year. SEA monitoring and support staff will meet quarterly to discuss individual school progress on leading indicators and locally identified goals and objectives. Schools are rated on the progress toward the indicators and goals and provided with additional on-site reviews and intensive support as needed.

Districts with identified Focus Schools are monitored as part of the SEA four-year cross-program monitoring plan. Districts are selected on an annual basis in consideration of risk assessment factors such as progress toward AMOs, schools identified as Focus and Priority, and previous compliance or program quality reviews. Districts with Focus Schools will be given priority for on-site monitoring during the risk assessment. As described in section 2.G, Title I consultants also will conduct Program Quality Reviews (PQRs) for Focus Schools. PQRs utilize protocols and procedures that allow a review of specific components of the Title I program and offer commendations and recommendations for improvement. PQRs provide an opportunity for Title I consultants to discuss with local staff how to move beyond federal program compliance to effective program implementation. Site visits include a review of each Focus School within the district.

Support for Implementation/Statewide System of Support

Support for implementation is coordinated through the NC Statewide System of Support and in conjunction with its Race to the Top grant plan. Some LEAs identified as having the least capacity and lowest performing schools, are encouraged to enter into a three-year agreement with DPI to provide intense resources and support. DPI staff members are assigned to assist the LEA on-site throughout each of three (3) years with ongoing need assessments, budget analysis, resource allocation, plan implementation, and program evaluation. For these LEAs, DPI coordinates monitoring and support efforts through a three-prong roundtable structure that provides for cross-agency collaboration and coordination of both monitoring and support.

Regional Roundtables representing eight regions of the state consist of cross-agency DPI and Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) staff including staff working with Title I districts and schools. Regional Roundtables meet on a monthly basis to coordinate monitoring and support for all districts and schools with specific consideration for Priority and Focus Schools. All School Improvement Grants (SIG) authorized under 1003(g) are currently committed to schools implementing one of four rigorous intervention models as outlined in SIG final requirements. 1003(g) funds are committed through the 2013-14 school year and are contingent upon continuation of SIG funding. If at any time in subsequent years there are sufficient funds to hold an additional SIG competition, NCDPI will allocate funds as proposed in the State's 2010-11 approved SIG application.

School Improvement grant funds authorized under 1003(a) will be allotted to districts to serve Priority Schools that do not receive 1003(g) funds. 1003(a) funds will be allocated on a formula basis in consideration of the total number of Priority Schools within an LEA and the average daily membership of any Priority School. LEA Applications will be reviewed and approved through the State's Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) tool to ensure that resources are effectively coordinated to support individual school needs. CCIP is a web-based tool used for comprehensive planning and funding applications for entitlement and competitive grants without the need for paper copies or additional data entry already collected in the agency.

Under NCLB, many LEAs were required to reserve 20 percent of the districts' Title I allotments to implement choice and/or Supplemental Educational Services (SES). With approved waivers, funds that the LEA previously reserved to meet requirements of ESEA section 1116(b)(10) may be used to support the implementation of interventions in an LEA's Focus Schools or Priority Schools in accordance with allowable use of Title I funds. Once the LEA demonstrates that sufficient resources are available to support interventions in its Priority and Focus schools, funds may be used to support instructional programs at the district-level or by providing Title I funds in school allocations under ESEA section 1113(c). An LEA may also reserve funds to support the implementation of interventions in an LEA's Focus Schools or Priority Schools in accordance with allowable use of Title I funds. Although, the SEA does not require LEAs to use the funds in a specific way, all decisions must be made based on an LEA's careful analysis of local capacity and based on a comprehensive needs assessment. The LEA must demonstrate in its Title I Application that resources have been allocated to its Priority and Focus schools sufficient to support the interventions described. As described in section 2.G.i (beginning on page 105), the SEA will monitor the LEAs use of funds and other resources to ensure that interventions are aligned to the identified needs of student subgroups.

In coordination with the North Carolina Statewide System of Support, DPI will provide direct services to LEAs for which the following apply:

- The SEA has determined the LEA does not have sufficient capacity for implementing the interventions identified for its schools; and
- The LEA enters into an agreement with DPI to allow the SEA to provide direct services.

While the SEA does not assume responsibility for implementing the intervention models or other interventions aligned to turnaround principles, SEA services provides support for the implementation of the models including data analysis, budget review, identifying resources for sustainability, and facilitation of professional development needs for staff such as the Teacher Leader model initiated for SIG schools. In collaboration with State partners, DPI also conducts an annual forum for teachers, principals, and district administration to provide technical assistance and support for implementing interventions aligned to turnaround principles. DPI routinely partners with cross-sector agencies such as the NC Center for Afterschool Programs, the NC Parent Teacher Association, and the NC Association of Educators to build district capacity as needed.

NCDPI will continue to maintain the initial list of both Priority and Focus Schools for a three-year period through the end of the 2014-15 school year. Maintaining priority and focus status for the full three-year period ensures 1) sufficient time for the LEA to fully implement appropriate interventions, and 2) sufficient time for the State to monitor and support the implementation of interventions to increase the likelihood that interventions result in sustained student achievement for all student subgroups. Schools will exit priority and focus status when, three years from initial identification, a new list of Priority and Focus Schools are developed and the applied methodology no longer results in the school's designation as a Priority School. However, if the Priority or Focus School has not shown progress over the three years of intervention, it will remain on the Priority or Focus School list.

District Accountability

Since the 1990s, the Department of Public Instruction had been leading change in holding districts accountable for student achievement. The former accountability model, the ABCs of Public Education, allowed the State to measure student academic growth from year to year and to use this information to evaluate district and school performance. Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, DPI implemented a new accountability model to ensure that schools are responsible for achieving challenging yet attainable goals for their students and that parents and the public have a clear, comparable understanding of the performance of students within North Carolina's public schools. The goal is to institute an accountability model that improves student achievement, increases graduation rates, and closes achievement gaps for all schools including Title I schools.

Central to holding LEAs accountable for the achievement of students in its schools is transparency in reporting. Just as student report cards provide parents with information on their child's performance, the NC School Report Cards offer a snapshot of some of the important information about individual schools. With the goal of providing key information to drive improvements in our schools, School Report Cards will continue to be provided for all public, charter, and alternative schools on an annual basis. Information included will address the following:

- District/school profiles
- School status as Reward, Priority, and Focus
- Progress on the SEA's new AMOs
- High student performance
- Progress on ACT
- Safe, orderly & caring schools
- Teacher and principle effectiveness

In most instances, data in the School Report Cards are reported at the school, district and state levels. School data are based on information from all grades within the school. However, for several indicators, including School Size, School Performance, School Safety, Attendance, and all information in the Quality Teachers' section, data from all schools in the same grade range category are averaged to produce district and state comparison results.

As part of the statewide system of support, DPI annually reviews each district's capacity to support its schools. Capacity is measured by a combined index of the Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding (DSSF) index and the low wealth percentage. (Note: Capacity should not be equated to funding levels.)

DSSF index combines weighted "community" variables that are correlated to low student performance. It provides information on the student population.

- Percentage of public school students living in a single parent household;
- Percentage of students eligible for federal ESEA Title I; and
- Percentage of public school students who have at least one parent with less than a high

school diploma.

Low Wealth index combines weighted financial variables that are a reflection of the LEAs ability to generate their own funds as compared with the State average. LEAs that fall below the State average are eligible for supplemental state funds.

- Anticipated total county revenue
- Tax base per square mile (density)
- Per capita income

Although the initial screening process as described above determines general capacity, the SEA realizes that specific conditions often exist within an LEA that may result in the LEAs lack of capacity to sufficiently support its Focus and Priority Schools. Therefore, as described in section 2.D.iii, DPI will require districts with Priority Schools to use an online planning tool and will provide additional monitoring and support. If on-site monitoring of Focus Schools reflects a districts lack of capacity to improve its schools, Focus Schools will be required to utilize the online planning tool in coordination with a district implementation team.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

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

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

Option A	**Option B**
☐ If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide: 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; ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and 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).	☒ If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide: 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; ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.

OVERVIEW

As evidence that North Carolina has developed and adopted educator evaluation guidelines consistent with Principle 3, the State submits revised copies of the following policies (see **Attachment 10**):

- TCP-C-004
- TCP-C-005
- TCP-C-006
- TCP-C-022

The policies are copied directly from the SBE Policy Manual and therefore document the details about their adoption, for example, the current policy date and historical information. For confirmation that these policies have been adopted, the SBE Policy Manual can be accessed online at http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us/.

All of these policies are found within the Twenty-First Century Professionals (TCP) section of the SBE Policy Manual. Within the TCP section, subsection C contains all policies related to educator evaluation.

TCP-C-004 establishes a statewide teacher evaluation system and set of steps that comprise the teacher evaluation process.

TCP-C-005 establishes a statewide administrator evaluation system and set of steps that comprise the principal and assistant principal evaluation process.

TCP-C-006 contains the evaluation standards for teachers and administrators.

TCP-C-022 requires annual evaluation for all teachers. The abovementioned policies already provided for annual evaluation for principals and assistant principals, but allowed for less frequent evaluation of career-status teachers.

Theory of Change

NC is deeply committed to implementing a rigorous, transparent and fair statewide evaluation system for teachers and principals that combines measures of student growth with other research-based indicators. The goal is to ensure that every student has effective teachers and that every school has an effective leader. Several years ago, NC brought together stakeholders to design new statewide evaluation instruments and processes for teachers and school administrators. More recently, the State has moved this system to an online platform to provide quicker feedback for educators, easier process completion for evaluators, and enhanced data collection and analysis capabilities for educators and the State.

> Note that North Carolina is *not* a union state and therefore, does *not* have to engage in collective bargaining. Regardless, North Carolina has a long history of collaboration with various organizations representing teachers, principals, superintendents, etc.

In Race to the Top (RttT), NC committed to the explicit inclusion of student growth as part of the teacher and school leader evaluation instruments. In July 2011, the State Board of Education (SBE) added a sixth standard to the instrument: "teachers contribute to the academic success of students." The SBE also added an eighth standard on "academic achievement leadership" to the school administrator instrument. During the 2011-12 school year, the SBE established definitions of effective and highly effective teachers and leaders. The State's definitions will then be infused into new policies on career status (tenure), licensure, teacher retention and dismissal, incentives and policies for equitable teacher and leader distribution, and evaluation of teacher and leader preparation programs.

While "effective" teaching and school leadership will become a part of the policies mentioned above, the actual force of those policies hinges on the rigorous implementation of an evaluation system that identifies effective teachers and leaders. Teaching and learning will be most improved when the teacher evaluation system is used honestly, with fidelity, and in a way that demands excellence from educators.

Consistent with North Carolina's approved ESEA flexibility request, teachers and principals will receive evaluation ratings consistent with the requirements of ESEA flexibility in the fall of 2015. By the 2015-16 school year, all NC school districts will use the NC Educator Evaluation System to identify the most effective educators. By the 2016-17 school year, all NC school districts will use the NC Educator Evaluation System to inform individual plans for continous improvement and drive staffing and other human capital decisions.

The following describes the current context and achievements to date and outlines the key tasks over the next several years that will enable full implementation of this plan.

NC GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER EVALUATION

All teachers in NC must receive an annual evaluation. For beginning teachers (teachers who have been in the classroom three years or less) or career status (tenured) teachers renewing their licenses, school administrators must complete a full evaluation as outlined in Table 3. For career-status teachers not renewing their licenses, administrators may select to complete an abbreviated evaluation as outlined in Table 4.

Table 3: Full Evaluation for Teachers

1. A teacher completes a self-assessment of her performance on the six teacher evaluation standards:
    a. Teachers demonstrate leadership.
    b. Teachers establish a respectful environment.
    c. Teachers know the content they teach.
    d. Teachers facilitate learning for their students.
    e. Teachers reflect on their practice.
    f. Teachers contribute to the academic success of students.
2. A teacher completes a professional development plan for how he/she will improve her craft. Any standard on which a teacher was rated below proficient during the following year automatically populates on the professional development plan. The teacher must outline professional development that he/she will complete specifically on the standard.
3. The administrator meets with the teacher prior to a formal observation.
4. The administrator completes at least three observations of the teacher and rates him/her on the first five standards. After a formal observation, the administrator meets with the teacher to debrief the lesson.
5. At the end of the year, the administrator and teacher meet to discuss all observations, any artifacts the teacher wants to submit, and the principal's ratings on standards one through five. Possible ratings are not demonstrated (the lowest), developing, proficient, accomplished, and distinguished (the highest).
6. After summative student growth information is available, the teacher receives a sixth standard rating.

Table 4: Abbreviated Evaluation for Teachers

1. A teacher completes a self-assessment of her performance on the six teacher evaluation standards:

a. Teachers demonstrate leadership.
b. Teachers establish a respectful environment.
c. Teachers know the content they teach.
d. Teachers facilitate learning for their students.
e. Teachers reflect on their practice.
f. Teachers contribute to the academic success of students.

2. A teacher completes a professional development plan for how he/she will improve her craft. Any standard on which a teacher was rated below proficient during the following year automatically populates on the professional development plan. The teacher must outline professional development that he/she will complete specifically on the standard.
3. The administrator completes at least two observations of the teacher and rates him/her on standards one and four.
4. At the end of the year, the administrator and teacher meet to discuss all observations, any artifacts the teacher wants to submit, and the principal's ratings on standards one and four. Possible ratings are the same as above.
5. After summative student growth information is available, the teacher receives a sixth standard rating.

While there are six standards for teacher evaluation, each standard is a muti-faceted statement of what constitutes effective teaching.

Standard I: Teachers Demonstrate Leadership

Teachers lead in their classrooms.
Teachers demonstrate leadership by taking responsibility for the progress of all students to ensure that they graduate from high school, are globally competitive for work and postsecondary education, and are prepared for life in the 21st Century. Teachers communicate this vision to their students. Using a variety of data sources, they organize, plan, and set goals that meet the needs of the individual student and the class. Teachers use various types of assessment data during the school year to evaluate student progress and to make adjustments to the teaching and learning process. They establish a safe, orderly environment, and create a culture that empowers students to collaborate and become lifelong learners. Effective teachers will:

- Take responsibility for all students;
- Communicate vision to students;
- Use data to organize, plan, and set goals;
- Use a variety of assessment data throughout the year to evaluate progress;
- Establish a safe and orderly environment; and
- Empower students.

Teachers demonstrate leadership in the school.
Teachers work collaboratively with school personnel to create a professional learning community. They analyze and use local, state, and national data to develop goals and strategies in the school improvement plan that enhances student learning and teacher working conditions. Teachers provide input in determining the school budget and in the selection of professional development that meets the needs of students and their own professional growth. They participate in the hiring process and collaborate with their colleagues to mentor and support teachers to improve the

effectiveness of their departments or grade levels. Effective teachers will:

- Work collaboratively with all staff to create a professional learning community;
- Analyze data;
- Develop goals and strategies through the school improvement plan;
- Assist in determining school budget and professional development;
- Participate in hiring process; and
- Collaborate with colleagues to mentor and support teachers to improve effectiveness.

Teachers lead the teaching profession.
Teachers strive to improve the teaching profession. They contribute to the establishment of positive working conditions in their school, district, and across the state. They actively participate in and advocate for decision-making structures in education and government that take advantage of the expertise of teachers. Teachers promote professional growth for all educators and collaborate with their colleagues to improve the profession. Effective teachers will:

- Strive to improve the profession;
- Contribute to the establishment of good working conditions;
- Participate in decision-making structures; and
- Promote professional growth.

Teachers advocate for schools and students.
Teachers advocate for positive change in policies and practices affecting student learning. They participate in the implementation of initiatives to improve the education of students. Effective teachers will:

- Advocate for positive change in policies and practices affecting student learning; and
- Participate in the implementation of initiatives to improve education.

Teachers demonstrate high ethical standards.
Teachers demonstrate ethical principles including honesty, integrity, fair treatment, and respect for others. Teachers uphold the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators (effective June 1, 1997) and the Standards for Professional Conduct adopted April 1, 1998. Effective teachers will:

- Demonstrate ethical principles; and
- Uphold the Code of Ethics and Standards for the Professional Conduct.

Standard II: Teachers Establish A Respectful Environment For A Diverse Population Of Students

Teachers provide an environment in which each child has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults.
Teachers encourage an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive, and flexible. Effective teachers will:

- Encourage an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive, and flexible.

Teachers embrace diversity in the school community and in the world.
Teachers demonstrate their knowledge of the history of diverse cultures and their role in shaping global issues. They actively select materials and develop lessons that counteract stereotypes and incorporate histories and contributions of all cultures.

Teachers recognize the influence of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and other aspects of culture on a child's development and personality.
Teachers strive to understand how a student's culture and background may influence his or her school performance. Teachers consider and incorporate different points of view in their instruction. Effective teachers will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures;
- Select materials and develop lessons that counteract stereotypes and incorporate contributions;
- Recognize the influences on a child's development, personality, and performance; and
- Consider and incorporate different points of view.

Teachers treat students as individuals.
Teachers maintain high expectations, including graduation from high school, for children of all backgrounds. Teachers appreciate the differences and value the contributions of each student in the learning environment by building positive, appropriate relationships. Effective teachers will:

- Maintain high expectations for all students; and
- Appreciate differences and value contributions by building positive, appropriate relationships.

Teachers adapt their teaching for the benefit of students with special needs.
Teachers collaborate with the range of support specialists to help meet the special needs of all students. Through inclusion and other models of effective practice, teachers engage students to ensure that their needs are met. Effective teachers will:

- Collaborate with specialists; and
- Engage students and ensure they meet the needs of their students through inclusion and other models of effective practice.

Teachers work collaboratively with the families and significant adults in the lives of their students.
Teachers recognize that educating children is a shared responsibility involving the school, parents/guardians, and the community. Teachers improve communication and collaboration between the school and the home and community in order to promote trust and understanding and build partnerships with all segments of the school community. Teachers seek solutions to overcome cultural and economic obstacles that may stand in the way of effective family and community involvement in the education of their children. Effective teachers will:

- Improve communication and collaboration between the school and the home and community;
- Promote trust and understanding and build partnership with school community; and
- Seek solutions to overcome obstacles that prevent parental/community involvement.

Standard III: Teachers Know The Content They Teach

Teachers align their instruction with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
In order to enhance the NC Standard Course of Study, teachers investigate the content standards developed by professional organizations in their specialty area. They develop and apply strategies to make the curriculum rigorous and relevant for all students and provide a balanced curriculum

which enhances literacy skills. Elementary teachers have explicit and thorough preparation in literacy instruction. Middle and high school teachers incorporate literacy instruction within the content area/discipline. Effective teachers will:

- Teach the NC Standard Course of Study;
- Develop and apply strategies to make the curriculum rigorous and relevant; and
- Develop literacy skills appropriate to specialty area.

Teachers know the content appropriate to their teaching specialty.
Teachers bring a richness and depth of understanding to their classrooms by knowing their subjects beyond the content they are expected to teach and by directing students' natural curiosity into an interest in learning. Elementary teachers have a broad knowledge across disciplines. Middle school and high school teachers have depth in one or more specific content areas/disciplines. Effective teachers will:

- Know subject beyond the content they teach; and
- Direct students' curiosity in subject.

Teachers recognize the interconnectedness of content areas/disciplines.
Teachers know the links and vertical alignment of the grade or subject they teach and the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Teachers understand how the content they teach relates to other disciplines in order to deepen understanding and connect learning for students. Teachers promote global awareness and its relevance to the subjects they teach. Effective teachers will:

- Know links between grade/subject and the Standard Course of Study;
- Relate content to other disciplines; and
- Promote global awareness and its relevance.

Teachers make instruction relevant to students.
Teachers incorporate 21st Century life skills into their teaching deliberately, strategically, and broadly. These skills include leadership, ethics, accountability, adaptability, personal productivity, personal responsibility, people skills, self direction, and social responsibility. Teachers help their students understand the relationship between the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and 21st Century content which includes global awareness, financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy, and health awareness. Effective teachers will:

- Incorporate life skills which include leadership, ethics, accountability, adaptability, personal productivity, personal responsibility, people skills, self direction, and social responsibility; and
- Demonstrate the interconnectedness between the core content and 21st Century content that includes global awareness, financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy, and health and wellness awareness.

Standard IV: Teachers Facilitate Learning For Their Students

Teachers know the ways in which learning takes place, and they know the appropriate levels of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of their students.
Teachers know how students think and learn. Teachers understand the influences that affect individual student learning (development, culture, language proficiency, etc.) and differentiate

their instruction. Teachers keep abreast of evolving research about student learning. They adapt resources to address the strengths and weaknesses of their students. Effective teachers will:

- Know how students think and learn;
- Keep abreast of evolving research and understand the influences on student learning; and
- Adapt resources to address the strengths and weaknesses of students.

Teachers plan instruction appropriate for their students.
Teachers collaborate with their colleagues and use a variety of data sources for short and long range planning based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. These plans reflect an understanding of how students learn. They engage students in the learning process. Teachers understand that instructional plans must be constantly monitored and modified to enhance learning. Teachers make the curriculum responsive to cultural diversity and to individual learning needs. Effective teachers will:

- Collaborate with other teachers;
- Use data for short and long range planning;
- Engage students in the learning process;
- Monitor and modify plans to enhance student learning; and
- Respond to cultural diversity and learning needs of students.

Teachers use a variety of instructional methods.
Teachers choose the methods and techniques that are most effective in meeting the needs of their students as they strive to eliminate achievement gaps. Teachers employ a wide range of techniques including information and communication technology, learning styles, and differentiated instruction. Effective teachers will:

- Choose methods and materials as they strive to eliminate achievement gaps; and
- Employ a wide range of techniques using information and communication technology, learning styles, and differentiated instruction.

Teachers integrate and utilize technology in their instruction.
Teachers know when and how to use technology to maximize student learning. Teachers help students use technology to learn content, think critically, solve problems, discern reliability, use information, communicate, innovate, and collaborate. Effective teachers will:

- Know appropriate use; and
- Assist students in use of technology to learn content, think critically, solve problems, discern reliability, use information, communicate, innovate, and collaborate.

Teachers help students develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.
Teachers encourage students to use inquiry-based investigations, think creatively, develop and test innovative ideas, synthesize knowledge and draw conclusions. They help students exercise and communicate sound reasoning, understand connections, make complex choices, and frame, analyze and solve problems. Effective teachers will:

- Encourage students to ask questions, think creatively, innovate and test ideas, synthesize knowledge and draw conclusions; and
- Help students exercise and communicate sound reasoning, understand connections, make complex choices, and frame, analyze and solve problems.

Teachers help students work in teams and develop leadership qualities.
Teachers teach the importance of cooperation and collaboration. They organize learning teams in order to help students define roles, strengthen social ties, improve communication and collaborative skills, interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds, and develop leadership qualities. Effective teachers will:

- Teach the importance of cooperation and collaboration ; and
- Organize learning teams in classroom in order to help students define roles, strengthen social ties, improve communication and collaborative skills, interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds, and develop leadership qualities.

Teachers communicate effectively.
Teachers communicate in ways that are clearly understood by their students. They are perceptive listeners and are able to communicate with students in a variety of ways even when language is a barrier. Teachers help students to articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively. Effective teachers will:

- Communicate clearly with students in a variety of ways; and
- Assist students in articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively.

Teachers use a variety of methods to assess what each student has learned.
Teachers use multiple indicators, including formative and summative assessments, to evaluate student progress and growth as they strive to eliminate achievement gaps. Teachers provide opportunities, methods, feedback, and tools for students to assess themselves and each other. Teachers use 21st Century assessment systems to inform instruction and demonstrate evidence of 21st Century knowledge, skills, performance, and dispositions. Effective teachers will:

- Use multiple indicators, both formative and summative, to evaluate students progress;
- Provide opportunities for self-assessment; and
- Use 21st Century knowledge, skills, performance and dispositions.

Standard V: Teachers Reflect On Their Practice

Teachers analyze student learning.
Teachers think systematically and critically about student learning in their classrooms and schools: why learning happens and what can be done to improve achievement. Teachers collect and analyze student performance data to improve school and classroom effectiveness. They adapt their practice based on research and data to best meet the needs of students. Effective teachers will:

- Think systematically about learning in their classroom: why learning happens and what can be done to improve student achievement; and
- Collect and analyze student performance data to improve effectiveness.

Teachers link professional growth to their professional goals.
Teachers participate in continued, high quality professional development that reflects a global view of educational practices; includes 21st Century skills and knowledge; aligns with the State Board of Education priorities; and meets the needs of students and their own professional growth. Effective teachers will:

- Participate in continued, high quality professional development .

Teachers function effectively in a complex, dynamic environment.
Understanding that change is constant, teachers actively investigate and consider new ideas that improve teaching and learning. They adapt their practice based on research and data to best meet the needs of their students. Effective teachers will:

- Actively investigate and consider new ideas that improve teaching and learning; and
- Adapt practice based on data.

Standard VI: Teachers Contribute To The Academic Success Of Students

The work of the teacher results in acceptable, measurable progress for students based on established performance expectations using appropriate data to demonstrate growth.

A teacher's rating on the sixth standard is determined by a student growth value as calculated by the statewide growth model for educator effectiveness. The End-of-Course assessments, End-of-Grade assessments, Career and Technical Education Post-Assessments, and the NC Final Exams provide the student data used to calculate the growth value.

The student growth value places a teacher into one of three rating categories:

Does Not Meet Expected Growth: the student growth value for the teacher is lower than what was expected per the statewide growth model.

Meets Expected Growth: the student growth value for the teacher is what was expected per the statewide growth model.

Exceeds Expected Growth: the student growth value for the teacher exceeds what was expected per the statewide growth model.

For the 2011 – 2012 school year, the student growth value is a weighted measure of the following:
70% based on the student growth value for the individual students taught by the educator
30% based on the student growth value for the entire school

For the 2012-13 school year, a teacher's student growth value is based only on the student growth values for the individual students taught by that teacher (i.e., this comprises 100% of the sixth standard rating for the teacher).

For the 2012-13 school year, if an educator does not have a growth value for his or her individual students, the growth value will be based on the data for the entire school.

All local school boards shall use student growth values generated through a method approved by the State Board of Education.

EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHERS

Per federal requirements, the State must adopt definitions of effective and highly effective teachers.

A highly effective teacher is one who receives a rating of at least "accomplished" on each of the Teacher Evaluation Standards 1 – 5 and receives a rating of "Exceeds Expected Growth" on Standard 6 of the Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The End-of-Course assessments, End-of-Grade assessments, Career and Technical Education Post-Assessments, and the NC Final Exams provide the student data used to calculate the growth value.

An effective teacher is one who receives a rating of at least "proficient" on each of the Teacher Evaluation Standards 1 – 5 and receives a rating of at least "Meets Expected Growth" on Standard 6 of the Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

A teacher in need of improvement is one who fails to receive a rating of at least "proficient" on each of the Teacher Evaluation Standards 1 – 5 or receives a rating of "Does Not Meet Expected growth" on Standard 6 of the Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

A three-year rolling average of student growth values generates the sixth standard rating used to determine teacher effectiveness.

NC GUIDELINES FOR PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL EVALUATION

All principals and assistant principals in NC must receive an annual evaluation. The evaluation process for school leaders is outlined below in Table 5.

Table 5: Evaluation for School Leaders

1. A principal or assistant principal completes a self-assessment of her performance on the eight school leader evaluation standards:
    a. Strategic Leadership
    b. Instructional Leadership
    c. Cultural Leadership
    d. Human Resource Leadership
    e. Managerial Leadership
    f. External Development Leadership
    g. Micropolitical Leadership
    h. Academic Achievement Leadership
2. A school leader completes a preliminary goals form to outline areas of focus and improvement for the school year.
3. The leader meets with the superintendent or superintendent's designee to review the preliminary goals form and self-assessment. All reviewers agree on the data and artifacts that the leader will collect to inform evaluation on the standards.
4. During the school year, the school administrator collects the agreed-upon data and artifacts. The superintendent or designee visits the school to conduct observations of the school leader.
5. The school leader and evaluator hold a mid-year meeting to review data and artifacts and adjust plans as needed to ensure that goals are met.
6. The school leader prepares a consolidated performance assessment with data and artifacts that align with the evaluation standards.

7. At the end of the year, the school leader meets with her evaluator to discuss all observations, the consolidated performance assessment, and the evaluator's ratings on standards one through seven. Possible ratings are not demonstrated (the lowest), developing, proficient, accomplished, and distinguished (the highest).
8. After summative student growth information is available, the principal or assistant principal receives an eighth standard rating.

Similarly, the standards for school executives outline expectations for those who lead school buildings.

A New Vision of School Leadership

Public education's changed mission dictates the need for a new type of school leader -- an executive instead of an administrator. No longer are school leaders just maintaining the status quo by managing complex operations but just like their colleagues in business, they must be able to create schools as organizations that can learn and change quickly if they are to improve performance. Schools need executives who are adept at creating systems for change and at building relationships with and across staff that not only tap into the collective knowledge and insight they possess but powerful relationships that also stir their passions for their work with children. Out of these relationships the executive must create among staff a common shared understanding for the purpose of the work of the school, its values that direct its action, and commitment and ownership of a set of beliefs and goals that focus everyone's decision making. The staff's common understanding of the school's identity empowers them to seek and build powerful alliances and partnerships with students, parents and community stakeholders in order to enhance their ability to produce increased student achievement. The successful work of the new executive will only be realized in the creation of a culture in which leadership is distributed and encouraged with teachers, which consists of open, honest communication, which is focused on the use of data, teamwork, research-based best practices, and which uses modern tools to drive ethical and principled, goal-oriented action. This culture of disciplined thought and action is rooted in the ability of the relationships among all stakeholders to build a trusting, transparent environment that reduces all stakeholders' sense of vulnerability as they address the challenges of transformational change.

Philosophical Foundation for the School Executive Standards

The following points underlie this work:

- Today, schools must have proactive school executives who possess a great sense of urgency.
- The goal of school leadership is to transform schools so that large-scale, sustainable, continuous improvement becomes built in to their mode of operation.
- The moral purpose of school leadership is to create schools in which all students learn, the gap between high and low performance is greatly diminished and what students learn will prepare them for success in their futures, not ours.
- Leadership is not a position or a person. It is a practice that must be embedded in all job roles at all levels of the school district.
- The work of leadership is about working with, for and through people. It is a social

act. Whether we are discussing instructional leadership, change leadership or leadership as learning, people are always the medium for the leader.

- Leadership is not about doing everything oneself but it is always about creating processes and systems that will cause everything to happen.
- Leadership is about the executive's ability to select and develop a strong executive staff whose complementary strengths promote excellence in all seven functions of leadership identified in this document.
- The concept of leadership is extremely complex and systemic in nature. Isolating the parts of leadership completely misses the power of the whole. It is not just knowing what to do, but why to do it, how to do it and when to do it.
- Within a school district there are nested leadership systems (local boards of education, central office, school, and classroom). For the organization to be successful these systems must be aligned and supportive, and function as a team.
- Leadership is about setting direction, aligning and motivating people to implement positive sustained improvement.
- Leaders bring their "person" to the practice of leadership. Matching the context of leadership to the "person" of the individual is important to the success of the leader.

Intended Purposes of the Standards

The North Carolina School Executive Standards have been developed as a guide for principals and assistant principals as they continually reflect upon and improve their effectiveness as leaders throughout all of the stages of their careers. Although there are many influences on a school executive's development, these standards will serve as an important tool for principals and assistant principals as they consider their growth and development as executives leading schools in the 21st century. Taken as a whole these standards, practices and competencies are overwhelming. One might ask, "How can one person possess all of these?" The answer is they cannot. It is, therefore, imperative that a school executive understands the importance of building an executive team that has complementary skills. The more diversity that exists on the team the more likely the team will be to demonstrate high performance in all critical function areas. The main responsibility of the school executive is to create aligned systems of leadership throughout the school and its community.

In addition, these standards will serve other audiences and purposes. These standards will:

- Inform higher education programs in developing the content and requirements of school executive degree programs;
- Focus the goals and objectives of districts as they support, monitor and evaluate their school executives;
- Guide professional development for school executives; and
- Serve as a tool in developing coaching and mentoring programs for school executives.

Organization of the Standards

Each standard is formatted as follows:

- Standard: The standard is the broad category of the executive's knowledge and skills.

- Summary: The summary more fully describes the content and rationale of each Standard.
- Practices: The practices are statements of what one would see an effective executive doing in each Standard.
- Artifacts: The artifacts are evidence of the quality of the executive's work or places where evidence can be found in each Standard. Collectively they could be the components of a performance portfolio. The lists of artifacts are not meant to be exhaustive.

- Competencies: Although not articulated there are many obvious competencies inherent in the practices of each critical leadership function. This document concludes with a list of those competencies which may not be obvious but that support practice in multiple leadership functions.

The Eight Standards of Executive Leadership and Their Connection

The eight critical standards used as the framework for the North Carolina School Executive Standards are borrowed from a Wallace Foundation study, *Making Sense of Leading Schools: A Study of the School Principalship* (2003). Unlike many current efforts that look at all of the things principals "might" or "should" do, this study examined what principals actually do. As such, it is grounded in practice, exploits story and narrative, and supports the distribution of leadership rather than the "hero leader."

North Carolina's Standards for School Executives are interrelated and connect in executives' practice. They are not intended to isolate competencies or practices. Executives' abilities in each standard will impact their ability to perform effectively in other standard areas. For example, the ability of an executive to evaluate and develop staff will directly impact the school's ability to reach its goals and will also impact the cultural norms of the school. Ultimately, school executives are responsible for ensuring that leadership occurs in all seven critical areas, regardless of whether it is provided by the executive or by others in the school.

The eight standards and their practices are:

Standard 1: Strategic Leadership

Summary: School executives will create conditions that result in strategically re-imaging the school's vision, mission, and goals in the 21st century. Understanding that schools ideally prepare students for an unseen but not altogether unpredictable future, the leader creates a climate of inquiry that challenges the school community to continually re-purpose itself by building on its core values and beliefs about its preferred future and then developing a pathway to reach it.

The school executive practices effective strategic leadership when he or she:

- Is able to share a vision of the changing world in the 21st century that schools are preparing children to enter;
- Systematically challenges the status quo by leading change with potentially beneficial outcomes;
- Systematically considers new ways of accomplishing tasks and is comfortable with major changes in how processes are implemented;

- Utilizes data from the NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey in developing the framework for continual improvement in the School Improvement Plan;
- Is a driving force behind major initiatives that help students acquire 21st century skills;
- Creates with all stakeholders a vision for the school that captures peoples' attention and imagination;
- Creates processes that provide for the periodic review and revision of the school's vision, mission, and strategic goals by all school stakeholders;
- Creates processes to ensure the school's identity (vision, mission, values, beliefs and goals) actually drive decisions and inform the culture of the school;
- Adheres to statutory requirements regarding the School Improvement Plan;
- Facilitates the collaborative development of annual school improvement plans to realize strategic goals and objectives;
- Facilitates the successful execution of the school improvement plan aligned to the mission and goals set by the State Board of Education;
- Facilitates the implementation of state education policy inside the school's classrooms;
- Facilitates the setting of high, concrete goals and the expectations that all students meet them;
- Communicates strong professional beliefs about schools, teaching, and learning that reflect latest research and best practice in preparing students for success in college or in work; and
- Creates processes to distribute leadership throughout the school.

Artifacts:

- Degree to which school improvement plan strategies are implemented, assessed and modified
- Evidence of an effectively functioning, elected School Improvement Team
- NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey
- School improvement plan, its alignment with district and state strategic priorities, and a plan for growth on items of concern as evidenced in the NC TWC Survey
- The degree to which staff can articulate the school's direction and focus
- Student testing data

Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

Summary: School executives will set high standards for the professional practice of 21st century instruction and assessment that result in a no nonsense accountable environment. The school executive must be knowledgeable of best instructional and school practices and must use this knowledge to cause the creation of collaborative structures within the school for the design of highly engaging schoolwork for students, the on-going peer review of this work and the sharing of this work throughout the professional community.

The school executive practices effective instructional leadership when he or she:

- Focuses his or her own and others' attention persistently and publicly on learning and teaching by initiating and guiding conversations about instruction and student learning

that are oriented towards high expectations and concrete goals;

- Creates an environment of practiced distributive leadership and teacher empowerment;
- Demonstrates knowledge of 21st century curriculum, instruction, and assessment by leading or participating in meetings with teachers and parents where these topics are discussed, and/or holding frequent formal or informal conversations with students, staff and parents around these topics;
- Ensures that there is an appropriate and logical alignment between the curriculum of the school and the state's accountability program;
- Creates processes and schedules that facilitate the collaborative (team) design, sharing, evaluation, and archiving of rigorous, relevant, and engaging instructional lessons that ensure students acquire essential knowledge;
- Challenges staff to reflect deeply on and define what knowledge, skills and concepts are essential to the complete educational development of students;
- Creates processes for collecting and using student test data and other formative data from other sources for the improvement of instruction;
- Creates processes for identifying, benchmarking and providing students access to a variety of 21st century instructional tools (e.g., technology) and best practices for meeting diverse student needs;
- Creates processes that ensure the strategic allocation and use of resources to meet instructional goals and support teacher needs;
- Creates processes to provide formal feedback to teachers concerning the effectiveness of their classroom instruction;
- Creates processes that protect teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their instructional time; and
- Systematically and frequently observes in classrooms and engages in conversation with students about their learning.

Artifacts:

- School improvement plan
- NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey
- Student achievement data
- Dropout data
- Teacher retention data
- Documented use of formative assessment instruments to impact instruction
- Development and communication of goal-oriented personalized education plans for identified students (e.g., ELs, SWDs, Level I and Level II children)
- Evidence of the team development and evaluation of classroom lessons

Standard 3: Cultural Leadership

Summary: School executives will understand and act on the understanding of the important role a school's culture contributes to the exemplary performance of the school. School executives must support and value the traditions, artifacts, symbols and positive values and norms of the school and community that result in a sense of identity and pride upon which to build a positive future. A school executive must be able to "re-culture" the school if needed to align with school's

goals of improving student and adult learning and to infuse the work of the adults and students with passion, meaning and purpose. Cultural leadership implies understanding the school as the people in it each day, how they came to their current state, and how to connect with their traditions in order to move them forward to support the school's efforts to achieve individual and collective goals.

The school executive practices effective cultural leadership when he or she:

- Creates a collaborative work environment predicated on site-based management that supports the "team" as the basic unit of learning and decision-making within the school and promotes cohesion and cooperation among staff;
- Communicates strong ideals and beliefs about schooling, teaching, and professional learning communities with teachers, staff, parents, and students and then operates from those beliefs;
- Influences the evolution of the culture to support the continuous improvement of the school as outlined in the school improvement plan;
- Systematically develops and uses shared values, beliefs and a shared vision to establish a school identity that emphasizes a sense of community and cooperation to guide the disciplined thought and action of all staff and students;
- Systematically and fairly acknowledges failures and celebrates accomplishments of the school and staff;
- Visibly supports the positive, culturally-responsive traditions of the school community;
- Promotes a sense of well-being among staff, students and parents;
- Builds a sense of efficacy and empowerment among staff that result in a "can do" attitude when faced with challenges; and
- Empowers staff to recommend creative 21st century concepts for school improvement.

Artifacts:

- Work of Professional Learning Communities within and tangential to the school
- Documented use of the School Improvement Team (SIT) in decision-making throughout the year
- NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey
- School improvement plan
- Teacher retention data
- Student achievement data
- Awards structure developed by school

Standard 4: Human Resource Leadership

Summary: School executives will ensure that the school is a professional learning community. School executives will ensure that processes and systems are in place that results in the recruitment, induction, support, evaluation, development and retention of a high performing staff. The school executive must engage and empower accomplished teachers in a distributive leadership manner, including support of teachers in day-to-day decisions such as discipline, communication with parents, and protecting teachers from duties that interfere with teaching, and must practice fair and consistent evaluation of teachers. The school executive must engage

teachers and other professional staff in conversations to plan their career paths and support district succession planning.

The school executive practices effective human resource leadership when he or she:

- Provides structures for the development of effective professional learning communities aligned with the school improvement plan, focused on results, and characterized by collective responsibility for instructional planning and for 21st century student learning;
- Models the importance of continued adult learning by engaging in activities to develop personal knowledge and skill along with expanded self-awareness;
- Communicates a positive attitude about the ability of staff to accomplish substantial outcomes to improve their efficacy;
- Creates processes for teachers to assume leadership and decision making roles within the school that foster their career development;
- Creates and monitors processes for hiring, inducting and mentoring new teachers and other staff to the school;
- Uses the results of the Teacher Working Conditions Survey to create and maintain a positive work environment for teachers and other staff;
- Evaluates teachers and other staff in a fair and equitable manner and utilizes the results of evaluations to improve performance;
- Provides for results-oriented professional development that is aligned with identified 21st century curricular, instructional, and assessment needs, is connected to school improvement goals and is differentiated based on staff needs;
- Continuously searches for the best placement and utilization of staff to fully benefit from their strengths; and
- Is systematically and personally involved in the school's professional activities.

Artifacts:

- School improvement plan
- NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey – with special emphasis on the leadership and empowerment domains
- Copy of master school schedule documenting the time provided for individual and collaborative planning for every teacher
- Number of National Board Certified teachers
- Teacher retention data
- Number of teachers pursuing school executive credentials, National Board Certification, or advanced licensure in their teaching areas
- Records of school visits for the purpose of adult learning
- Record of professional development provided staff and an assessment of the impact of professional development on student learning
- Mentor records, beginning teacher feedback, and documentation of correlation of assignment of mentor to mentee
- Copies of professional growth plans
- Student achievement data

Standard 5: Managerial Leadership

Summary: School executives will ensure that the school has processes and systems in place for budgeting, staffing, problem solving, communicating expectations and scheduling that result in organizing the work routines in the building. The school executive must be responsible for the monitoring of the school budget and the inclusion of all teachers in the budget decisions so as to meet the 21st century needs of every classroom. Effectively and efficiently managing the complexity of everyday life is critical for staff to be able to focus its energy on improvement.

The school executive practices effective managerial leadership when he or she:

- Creates processes to provide for a balanced operational budget for school programs and activities;
- Creates processes to recruit and retain a high-quality workforce in the school that meets the diverse needs of students;
- Creates processes to identify and solve, resolve, dissolve or absolve school-based problems/conflicts in a fair, democratic way;
- Designs a system of communication that provides for the timely, responsible sharing of information to, from, and with school and district staff;
- Designs scheduling processes and protocols that maximize staff input and addresses diverse student learning needs;
- Develops a master schedule for the school to maximize student learning by providing for individual and on-going collaborative planning for every teacher; and
- Collaboratively develops and enforces clear expectations, structures, rules and procedures for students and staff.

Artifacts:

- NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey
- School Improvement Plan
- External reviews, such as budget
- Copies of master schedules/procedures
- Communication of safety procedures and behavioral expectations throughout the school community

Standard 6: External Development Leadership

Summary: A school executive will design structures and processes that result in community engagement, support, and ownership. Acknowledging that schools no longer reflect but in fact build community, the leader proactively creates with staff opportunities for parents, community and business representatives to participate as "stockholders" in the school such that continued investments of resources and good will are not left to chance.

The school executive practices effective external development leadership when he or she

- Implements processes that empower parents and other stakeholders to make significant decisions;
- Creates systems that engage all community stakeholders in a shared responsibility for

student and school success;

- Designs protocols and processes that ensures compliance with state and district mandates;
- Creates opportunities to advocate for the school in the community and with parents;
- Communicates the school's accomplishments to the district office and public media in accordance with LEA policies;
- Garners fiscal, intellectual and human resources from the community that support the 21st century learning agenda of the school; and
- Builds relationships with individuals and groups to support specific aspects of the learning improvement agenda and also as a source of general good will.

Artifacts:

- Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) participation
- PTSA meeting agendas, bulletins, etc.
- Parent attendance at school improvement team meetings
- Survey results from parents
- Evidence of visible support from community
- Booster club participation
- Number of school volunteers
- Plan for shaping the school's image throughout the community
- PTSA membership
- Evidence of business partnerships and projects involving business partners

Standard 7: Micropolitical Leadership

Summary: The school executive will build systems and relationships that utilize the staff's diversity, encourage constructive ideological conflict in order to leverage staff expertise, power and influence to realize the school's vision for success. The executive will also creatively employ an awareness of staff's professional needs, issues, and interests to build social cohesion and to facilitate distributed governance and shared decision-making.

The school executive practices effective micropolitical leadership when he or she:

- Uses the School Improvement Team to make decisions and provides opportunities for staff to be involved in developing school policies;
- Creates an environment and mechanisms to ensure all internal stakeholder voices are heard and respected;
- Creates processes and protocols to buffer and mediate staff interests;
- Is easily accessible to teachers and staff;
- Designs transparent systems to equitably manage human and financial resources;
- Demonstrates sensitivity to personal needs of staff;
- Demonstrates awareness of informal groups and relationships among school staff and utilizes these as a positive resource;
- Demonstrates awareness of hidden and potentially discordant issues in the school;
- Encourages people to express opinions contrary to those of authority;
- Demonstrates ability to predict what could go wrong from day to day;
- Uses performance as the primary criterion for reward and advancement;

- Maintains high visibility throughout the school; and
- Maintains open, vertical and horizontal communications throughout the school community.

Artifacts:

- NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey
- Teacher retention data
- Dissemination of clear norms and ground rules
- Evidence of ability to confront ideological conflict and then reach consensus
- Evidence of shared decision-making
- Evidence of use of a decision matrix
- Evidence of a school that operates through teams
- Evidence of distributed leadership

Standard 8: Academic Achievement Leadership

Summary: School executives will contribute to the academic success of students. The work of the school executive will result in acceptable, measurable progress for students based on established performance expectations using appropriate data to demonstrate growth.

An executive's rating on the eighth standard is determined by a school-wide student growth value as calculated by the statewide growth model for educator effectiveness. For the purposes of determining the eighth standard rating, the school-wide growth value includes data from End-of-Course assessments, End-of-Grade assessments, Career and Technical Education Post-Assessments, and the NC Final Exams.

The student growth value places an executive into one of three rating categories:

Does Not Meet Expected Growth: the school-wide student growth value for is lower than what was expected per the statewide growth model.

Meets Expected Growth: the school-wide student growth value is what was expected per the statewide growth model.

Exceeds Expected Growth: the school-wide student growth value exceeds what was expected per the statewide growth model.

All local school boards shall use student growth values generated through a method approved by the State Board of Education.

EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL EXECUTIVES

Per federal requirements, the State must adopt definitions of effective and highly effective school executives.

A highly effective administrator is one who receives a rating of at least "accomplished" on each of the Principal Evaluation Standards 1 – 7 and receives a rating of "Exceeds Expected Growth" on

Standard 8 of the Principal Evaluation Instrument.

An effective administrator is one who receives a rating of at least "proficient" on each of the Principal Evaluation Standards 1 – 7 and receives a rating of at least "Meets Expected Growth" on Standard 8 of the Principal Evaluation Instrument.

An administrator in need of improvement is one who fails to receive a rating of at least "proficient" on each of the Principal Evaluation Standards 1 – 7 or receives a rating of "Does Not Meet Expected Growth" on Standard 8 of the Principal Evaluation.

INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

The standards and processes described above are the result of intense collaboration with stakeholders. The NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission designed the original five teacher evaluation standards and the full evaluation process. The Commission's members included teachers, school administrators, and district-level leaders, as well as representatives from the NC Association of Educators (NCAE) and the NC Principals and Assistant Principals Association (NCPAPA). In addition, teachers and leaders in the field used the instruments and processes during pilot and field tests for the NC Educator Evaluation System. The Department of Public Instruction then revised processes based on feedback gathered during the pilot and field tests.

While the NC General Assembly recently eliminated the Commission, an Educator Effectiveness Work Group created under RttT has stepped into the policy void. The Work Group brings together teachers, administrators, district office staff members, superintendents, parents, research scholars, leaders from the university system, representatives of various professional organizations, and policy analysts from not-for-profit organizations. No matter what the name of the collaborative group, NC has experienced much success in bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders to collaborate on teacher evaluation.

In addition, NCDPI held twenty-four regional focus groups on educator effectiveness prior to its submission of the initial Flexibility Request. At the first round of meetings in September and October of 2011, staff members presented information about educator effectiveness policies enacted by the SBE, and elicited feedback about policies yet to be presented to the SBE, for example, the rating categories for the sixth and eighth standards. The teacher audiences at these focus groups engaged in dynamic conversation with staff, and their feedback was been a key topic of conversation at meetings of the Educator Effectiveness Work Group.

The Educator Effectiveness Work Group made recommendations to the SBE on an annual evaluation requirement, the addition of the sixth and eighth standards, rating categories for the sixth and eigth standards, and the creation of an abbreviated evaluation option. The work group also recommended the use of the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) for sixth and eighth standard ratings. EVAAS is a customized software system available to all NC school districts. EVAAS provides diagnostic reports quickly to district and school staff. The system basically answers the question of how effective a schooling experience is for students.

Because all school districts in NC use the statewide evaluation instrument, and all have committed

to full implementation of RttT policies, policies recommended by the Work Group and enacted by the SBE reach all schools and teachers in NC.

ADOPTION OF THE GUIDELINES: SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATOR EVALUATION SYSTEM THROUGH POLICY CHANGES

The true potential for change in educator evaluation is not through projects funded by RttT, but rather through policy changes that will be enacted under its reform agenda. These changes are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6: Educator Evaluation-Related Policy Reforms Under Race to the Top

- Policy Changes to the Educator Evaluation System and Process
  The SBE added a sixth standard on student growth to the instrument and mandated that all local school boards require that all teachers be evaluated annually, either with a full evaluation or the abbreviated evaluation option. The SBE added an eighth standard on student growth to the instrument for administrators (July 2010).

- New Policy Definitions on Educator Effectiveness Status
  An effective teacher is one whose student growth meets expectations and whose ratings on Standards One through Five are all at least proficient. A highly effective educator is one whose student growth significantly exceeds expectations and whose ratings on Standards One through Five are all at least accomplished. An effective administrator is one whose school's student growth meets expectations and whose ratings on Standards One through Seven are all at least proficient. A highly effective administrator is one whose school's student growth significantly exceeds expectations and whose ratings on Standards One through Seven are all at least accomplished. The SBE considered the definitions for educator effectiveness statuses outlined in Table 6 at its February 2012 meeting. The Board at its March 2012 meeting endorsed the status language of highly effective, effective and in need of mprovement. For tested subject areas, every teacher and administrator with three years of student growth data will receive an effectiveness status by the fall of 2015.

- Policy Changes to Teacher Licensure
  To convert from a Standard Professional I License to a Standard Professional II License (after three years of teaching), a teacher must be effective (planned policy change by SBE).

- Policy Changes to Teacher Improvement
  Administrators must place a teacher with a Standard Professional II License on a monitored growth plan for one year if she is not effective. If he/she does not improve by the end of the one year, she is placed on a directed plan for one more year. If he/she still fails to improve, she is dismissed (planned policy change by SBE).

- Policy Changes to Performance Review for Institutions of Higher Education
  The State uses the effectiveness of teachers as a critical part of the performance review process for in-state schools of education and teacher preparation programs (2013-14).

- Changes to Licensure and Educator Improvement
  The SBE will consider additional changes to policies on licensure and mandatory steps for improvement.

The State's Teacher Effectiveness Work Group will also consider other areas in which teacher evaluation can play a role, for example, in the compensation of teachers. In NC, there are three school districts that have received support from the federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF): the Wake County Public School System, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, and Guilford County Schools. In addition, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is a partner in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Measuring Effective Teaching (MET) Project. These four school systems are using support from TIF and MET to explore merit-based pay, and the State is working closely with them to track the results of implementation and learn how it might be scaled up to the state-level.

Multiple Valid Measures in Determining Performance Levels

As previously mentioned, the SBE has already added the sixth and eighth standards to the teacher and school leader evaluation instruments. At its February 2012 meeting, the SBE considered a three-category rating scale for the new standards; the Board voted on these rating categories at its March 2012 meeting. The rating scale will be: does not meet expected growth (the lowest), meets expected growth, or exceeds expected growth (the highest).

Weighting of the Sixth and Eighth Standards

The State has adopted a conjunctive educator effectiveness model in which teachers and administrators must meet expectations on each of their standards in order to be effective. Utilizing this model eliminates the compensation for poor performance on one standard with strong performance on another. A teacher rated as distinguished on each of the standards 1 through 5 is considered "in need of improvement" if the rating on the sixth standard is "does not meet expected growth." Likewise, a teacher who is rated as "meets expected growth" on the sixth standard is considered "in need of improvement" if he or she is rated lower than proficient on any one or more of the original five standards. This conjunctive system applies to principals and assistant principals as well as teachers.

For school leaders, the rating on the eighth standard will be based on the schoolwide growth value. For teachers, the SBE considered three options:

- Option One: 90 percent of sixth standard rating based on individual growth value; 10 percent of sixth standard rating based on schoolwide growth value.

- Option Two: 80 percent of sixth standard rating based on individual growth value; 20 percent of sixth standard rating based on schoolwide growth value.
- Option Three: 70 percent of sixth standard rating based on individual growth value; 30 percent of sixth standard rating based on schoolwide growth value.

In March, 2012, the SBE selected Option Three as the weighting for the sixth standard for the 2011-12 school year. In the spring of 2012, the NCDPI determined that educators in select grades/subjects and courses would complete a roster verification process during the 2012-13 school year. During this process, teachers were able to indicate cases in which they share instructional responsibility for specific students, which eliminates the need to calculate a separate team growth value.

In spring of 2012, 41 school districts completed a pilot administration of the Tripod Project's student surveys offered by Cambridge Education. The SBE received a final report from the pilot administration in December, 2012. The NCDPI and SBE are exploring options for statewide administration of a student survey in the spring of 2014. The SBE will further consider if, and how, the results from the student surveys are integrated into educator evaluation.

In the spring of 2013, the SBE revised the weighting for the sixth standard for the 2012-13 school year. Based on feedback from various stakeholders, the SBE approved the use of one component in the sixth standard rating: the teacher's individual student growth value. The SBE also approved a change to the list of assessments used to determine the schoolwide growth value that informs a school leader's eight standard. Results from the End-of-Course assessments, End-of-Grade assessments, Career and Technical Education Post-Assessments, and NC Final Exams are used to calculate the schoolwide growth value.

Student Growth Values (Spring 2012)
At its February 2012 meeting, the SBE voted to use the SAS Institute's EVAAS model to generate student growth values used for educator evaluation where the appropriate test data exist. The SBE based its decision on two reports: a technical comparison of eight value-added models by the University of North Carolina, and a policy analysis report completed by WestEd. The first report identified three value-added models as technically strong enough to be used for high-stakes accountability for teachers; the EVAAS model was one of the three. WestEd then recommended the use of EVAAS after the consideration of a number of other criteria, for example, the ease of statewide implementation.

Effectiveness Statuses (Spring 2012)
The SBE considered the definitions for educator effectiveness statuses outlined in Table 6 at its February 2012 meeting and approved the status definitions at the March 2012 meeting.

Changes to Licensure and Educator Improvement (Late Spring 2012)
The SBE will consider changes to policies on licensure and mandatory steps for improvement, as outlined in Table 6.

Adoption of the Guidelines: Supporting Implementation of the Educator Evaluation System through Program Initiatives

Development of Measures of Student Learning (Spring 2012)
With the inclusion of the sixth standard for teachers, there is a need for statewide standardized measures of student growth for all areas of the curriculum. NC already administers End-of-Grade and End-of-Course exams in grades 3 through 8 in English Language Arts, one year of high school English Language Arts, grades 3 through 8 in mathematics, one year of high school mathematics, grades 5 and 8 in science, and high school biology. In addition, the Career and

Technical Education (CTE) program administers summative CTE Post Assessments for all of its courses.

Based on data from 2010-11, the above assessments cover about approximately 40 percent of NC's teacher workforce. For the remaining 60 percent of teachers, the State embarked on the design of Measures of Student Learning, which are statewide assessments and assessment processes for any currently non-tested areas of the Common Core State Standards, NC Essential Standards, and Occupational Course of Study and Extended Content Standards for Exceptional Children. NC initially created fifty-two teacher design groups with over 800 teachers representing 105 of the State's 115 districts, as well as charter schools, higher education, the NC Virtual Public School, and the schools in the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Per the original RttT plan, each district in the state was to design its own set of assessments to be used to measure student growth. Many of the state's LEAs expressed reasonable concern about capacity, particularly a lack of staff members skilled in assessment design and psychometrics. While some larger LEAs were prepared to embark on this work, smaller systems advocated for a larger state role in the process.

The USED approved an amendment to NC's RttT plan that allowed the state to use school-wide growth to populate the sixth standard rating for teachers in currently non-tested grades and subjects for the 2011-12 school year. Under the amendment, NC used the 2011-12 school year as a development year for statewide, common Measures of Student Learning (MSL).

NC Final Exams

For grades/subjects and courses in grades 4 – 12 English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics without End-of-Grade assessments or End-of-Course assessments, the State is implementing common summative assessments in all school districts. Districts administered these assessments during the 2012-13 school year.

This design process contained three phases. During the first phase, NCDPI brought together the 800 teachers for a beginning work session. The teachers received training on the Common Core and Essential Standards, as well as assessment design. They then completed three feedback protocols in which they analyzed each standard in terms of how to best assess it. For this process, NCDPI divided all non-tested areas of the curriculum into fifty-four (54) content-specific work groups. On each group, there was at least one teacher with experience teaching English learners, one teacher with experience teaching gifted students, and one Exceptional Children's teacher. NCDPI's psychometricians then combined the feedback from the teachers to generate blueprints for all of the NC Final Exams.

The NCDPI is partnering with the Center for Urban Affairs Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) at North Carolina State University on this design work. During the second development phase, content and assessment experts at TOPS designed assessment items based on the blueprints. The NCDPI has worked with TOPS on the design of its state assessments for over 20 years and, therefore, already has established protocols and procedures in place for this kind of work. When the items were completed, the teachers returned for the third phase: vetting of items that have been generated.

NCDPI and TOPS staff then took the items and assembled into forms for administration.

Current plans include one form for each school year. A new form will be available each school year. This process of item-writing, item review, and form assembly will continue to generate the new form for each school year.

While NCDPI provided a detailed guide on best practices in assessment, the districts were ultimately responsible for the administration and scoring of the MSLs. NCDPI has been a facilitator of this critical work, but these new NC Final Exams are not additions to the NC Testing Program and are not used in school accountability. Instead, they function more like the State's Career and Technical Education post-assessments in which the exams are administered statewide under guidance from the state.

NCDPI and the SBE clearly recognize the need for training on administration practices that will result in fair and valid results to be used in the sixth standard rating for teachers. While the introduction of performance-based items does increase the risk for bias in grading, the use of these types of items will better assess the extent to which students are exhibiting the higher-order thinking called for in the new content standards. The NC Technical Advisors have provided feedback on the plan for the design and administration of the NC Final Exams, and NCDPI is incorporating their suggestions into the plans.

At the request of stakeholders, the SBE considered policy changes to administration and use of the NC Final Exams. The level of initial implementation flexibility extended to school districts resulted in differences across districts, and stakeholders have now recognized the need for more uniformity. The SBE on November 7, 2013, voted to require that results from the NC Final Exams will count as 20% of a student's final grade in the course. (See SBE Policy GCS-A-016)

K-3 Checkpoints

During the spring of 2013, the State partnered with Amplify (formerly Wireless Generation) to pilot the use of the State's existing early literacy assessment program as a Measure of Student Learning for teachers in grades K-2. The growth of students' reading skills, as measured by the difference between a text reading and comprehension assessment administered at the beginning of the school year and one administered at the end of the school year, will inform the teacher's sixth standard rating. In the pilot, the NCDPI tested various administration methods and the use of new texts to determine the most fair, reliable, and valid way to implement the Measure of Student Learning. The SBE received a report on K-3 Checkpoints at its April 2, 2014 meeting.

At the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, grade 3 teachers administered a Beginning-of-Year reading assessment that is a form of grade 3 End-of-Grade assessment. After the third grade students take the grade 3 End-of-Grade assessment in the spring, the State will be able to use the difference in student scores to inform the sixth standard rating for the teachers.

Analysis of Student Work

Analysis of Student Work (ASW) is a process to collect data to populate the sixth standard for educators teaching Arts Education, Healthful Living, and World Languages. It involves the collection of student work to document student growth. The NCDPI partnered with educators to hold an initial ASW pilot involving the areas of Arts Education, Healthful Living, and World Languages in Spring 2013.

Feedback from the pilot program led the NCDPI to hold a larger, more extensive pilot of the process during the 2013-14 school year, and was expanded to include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate courses, selected Social Studies and Exceptional Education courses.

Measures of Student Learning: State Guidance

ESL, EC, and AIG teachers may serve as the teachers of record for grades/subjects or courses with End-of-Grade assessments, End-of-Course assessments, CTE Post Assessments, or one of the Measures of Student Learning. In those cases, the sixth standard rating is determined through growth measure on state assessments. Other ESL, EC, and AIG teachers may share instructional responsibility for students who take End-of-Grade assessments, End-of-Course assessments, CTE Post Assessments, or one of the Measures of Student Learning. These teachers participate in the roster verification process to indicate their level of responsibility and receive a sixth standard rating.

For teachers in some grades/subjects and courses, a statewide assessment system is challenging. For example, some ESL, EC, and AIG teachers provide consultative support to students that is not specific to one set of content standards. For these teachers, and select elementary and middle school Arts, Healthful Living, and World Languages teachers, the NCDPI will provide guidance on how LEAs can fairly determine sixth standard ratings.
Local Options for Measuring Growth

The USED's definition of student growth in non-tested subjects and courses specifically mentions that measures must be "rigorous and comparable across schools within an LEA." In alignment with this definition, NC is allowing school districts to determine a local option plan as specified in the excerpt from State Board of Education policy TCP-C-006 below:

Determining Standard 6 with Local Option Plan
Districts may use other assessments to measure student learning and determine the sixth standard rating if the State Board of Education approves those assessments. Districts may also use school-wide growth values to determine the sixth standard rating. The End-of-Grade assessments and End-of-Course assessments must be used for determining student growth values for teachers who administer those assessments.

To determine Standard 6 with local methods, a district must submit either:
· A statement that school-wide growth values will be used to determine the Standard 6 ratings for educators in specific grades/subjects and courses.
· A proposal for the use of other assessments to determine the Standard 6 ratings for educators in specific grades/subjects and courses.

Either submission must be signed by the superintendent, chair of the local board of education, and a teacher representing the district's faculty.

If a district does elect to develop its own assessments for measuring growth in a specific grade or course, it also must submit a detailed proposal to the State Board of Education for approval. The

NCDPI will provide a proposal template that will ask districts to provide information about their assessment plan, including:

- Purpose of the assessment
- Rationale for its use
- Design process for assessment, including creation of assessment blueprints, item development, item review, and, if field-testing is done, using the results of the field test to revise the assessment
- Assessment's alignment to content standards
- Assessment's rigor (as analyzed with Webb's Depth of Knowledge or Revised Bloom's Taxomony)
- Assessment's content standards coverage
- Plan for administration of assessment, including provision of materials and assessment security
- Quality assurance plan for ensuring the results of the assessment are fair, valid, and comparable (if field-testing was not done)
- Sustainability plan for maintainng the assessment, including development of new items and funding source used to sustain development and administration; and;
- Process for using assessment to measure student growth and not simply achievement at one point in time.

The State also will provide a rubric that will be used to determine whether or not to recommend the assessment for approval by the State Board of Education. In order to complete an objective review of the assessments, the State plans to contract with an external vendor to review the assessments with the rubric and make recommendations to the State Board of Education. Districts must submit their assessment plans for approval during SY 2013-14, which will allow the State Board of Education to approve or reject plans during early summer 2014. Districts opting to design their own assessments must administer the statewide NC Final Exams during SY 2013-14 as they develop and submit their local plans for assessment.

Licenses for Use of the Online Evaluation System

As a Race to the Top recipient, NC is using Race to the Top funding to continue its reform efforts in the area of teacher evaluation. Race to the Top funds provide school districts with unlimited licenses to access the online educator evaluation tool. Additional funding was used to support the programming needed to include the sixth and eighth standards and the abbreviated evaluation option in the online tool.

Targeted Professional Development

The NCDPI's Professional Team has released an online module that teachers across the State can access. This module guides educators through the evaluation process, and provides detailed information on each of the evaluation standards and its constituent elements and indicators. The State has also released a similar module on the school administrator process and instrument.

Currently, teachers can access online professional development opportunities aligned to the evaluation standards from the Professional Development Repository. As the Instructional Improvement System launches in the coming years, it will also include a Professional

Development Learner Management System that will automatically suggest customized professional development (virtual and in-person) depending on observation and evaluation results. Principals will have access to an interface that allows them to track the professional development being pursued by staff. This robust online professional development system will launch in the spring of 2014.

Training for School Administrators

NC is home to three innovative training programs for school administrators. Three programs target areas of the state where recruitment of high-quality administrators often proves challenging: the Sandhills Leadership Academy, the Piedmont-Triad Leadership Academy, and the Northeast Leadership Academy. These three academies all target effective teachers (with the evaluation instrument as one identification tool) and provide them with training and internship experiences that prepare them to assume leadership of a low-performing school in that region. The training specifically focuses on, and aligns learning experiences, with the school leader evaluation standards. In addition, the principal interns receive training on the use of the teacher evaluation instrument and collaborate to ensure inter-rater reliability in the use of the rubric.

For principals and assistant principals already serving in schools, the NC Principal and Assistant Principal Association provides intensive professional development through the Distinguished Leadership in Practice program. This program not only emphasizes the school leader evaluation standards, but also brings leaders together in communities of practice to discuss how they evaluate their teachers. School leaders can also seek professional development from the Department's eighteen Professional Development Leads, all of whom have received extensive training on the process and use of the observation rubric.

Lastly, the Department of Public Instruction has hired a permanent, full-time staff member to work on additional administrator training for the evaluation process for teachers. This individual conducts in-person trainings on the use of the tool, and expands her reach through webinars and online training opportunities. Another key goal for this new staff member is the development of an online database of classroom videos that can be used for "norming" ratings on the rubric. The State will release a Request for Proposals for such a database in the next month, Lastly, NC will design a certification process that school leaders can complete to demonstrate that they have been trained on the use of the process and rubric, and complete observations and ratings with a high-level of fidelity to the instrument.

Accountability System for Institutions of Higher Education

During the 2012-13 school year, the NCDPI began publishing "report cards" for all in-state public and private schools of education. The report cards include information on the programs themselves, such as number of faculty and programs offered, as well as outcomes for graduates, including measures of how quickly graduates find employment and the percentage of graduates that pass required PRAXIS exams. An important element of the report card is a section on the effectiveness of the program graduates; this section will provide data for the last three years of graduates, including ratings on the evaluation standards and graduates' impact on student learning. Please see **Supplemental Attachment G** for a draft of a teacher preparation program report card submitted in the initial ESEA Flexibility Request. A copy of the actual Report Card issued based on data from the 2012-13 school year can be found at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/ihe/reports/2012-13/full/performance.pdf

Increasing Supply of Effective Teachers in High-Needs Areas

The State is supporting a number of programs intended to increase the number of effective teachers in low-performing schools that often struggle to staff classrooms with high-quality educators. Teach For America is using financial support from Race to the Top to expand the number of teachers it places in the rural northeastern region of the State. The State is also using the Teach For America training model to launch a NC Teacher Corps, which provides science, math, and special education teachers to struggling school districts not currently served by Teach For America. Through a contract with a vendor, each of the low-performing school districts has developed a customized recruitment and retention plan that highlights the communities' individual strengths and focuses on bringing high-quality educators (as measured through the NC Educator Evaluation System) to the districts, as well as retaining effective educators already working in the local education agencies.

There are also two financial incentive programs to encourage effective experienced educators to move to low-performing schools and districts. Any teacher with a Standard Professional II license who has been rated as "proficient" on all standards of the evaluation instrument is eligible for a $5,300 yearly voucher to be used for housing, repayment of student loans, or tuition for an advanced degree. Additionally, during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years, all certified staff members at low-performing schools that make high growth are eligible for a $1,500 bonus. In the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years, the bonus increases to $2,000 and shifts to the classroom-level; individual classroom teachers whose students Exceed Expected Growth will receive the $2,000 bonuses.

Support for Beginning Teachers – Induction Program

Per NC State Board of Education policy, all beginning teachers participate in a three-year induction program. During the three years, they have a formal orientation, mentor support, more frequent formative observations, and yearly summative evaluations. Additional information about the beginning teacher support program is available to the public and accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/recruitment/beginning/.

With Race to the Top support, beginning teachers in the State's low-achieving school districts and schools are receiving more intensive support through a New Teacher Support Program run by the University of North Carolina General Administration. Teachers in this program attend a week-long intensive orientation together, receive coaching and mentoring during the school year, and attend six day-long professional development sessions on Saturdays. The goal of the New Teacher Support Program is to increase the effectiveness of these teachers as demonstrated by their ratings on the NC Educator Evaluation System and their contribution to student learning.

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.

North Carolina has already completed what can be the most challenging part of implementing an educator evaluation system, the creation and launch. After the adoption of the NC Professional Teaching Standards, NCDPI moved on to the design of an evaluation rubric and the development of a web-based system built on those standards.

In December of 2009, the SBE adopted the NC Educator Evaluation System (NCEES). NCEES is a statewide evaluation system that includes assessment instruments for completing the principal, assistant principal, and teacher evaluations. Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, all LEAs and charter schools were required to implement the NCEES instruments.

In September of 2010, NCDPI launched the NCEES Online Evaluation System, a web-based version of NCEES developed in collaboration with the Mid-continent Research for Evaluation and Learning (McREL). The system allows teachers to complete their own self-assessments, and principals to access the information from any location. The tool also allows principals and central office staff to view the status of each teacher's evaluation, aggregate data and customize reports, track teacher performance longitudinally, and complete and submit reports to the district or state. Use of this electronic system will provide the state and researchers with access to teacher and principal evaluation information which can be linked to a variety of other variables, including student outcomes and teacher preparation programs.

The system was piloted intensively, revised based on feedback, and then utilized as part of a more expansive field test. The first stage of the pilot took place during the 2008-09 school year, with thirteen (13) districts participating. In the 2009-10 school year, an additional thirty-nine (39) systems joined, with sixty-three (63) joining in 2010-11. NCDPI monitored district progress on the use of the NCEES Online Evaluation System throughout the pilot and in the 2011-12 school year, all districts and charter schools are required to complete all parts of the process in the online system.

To ensure that districts and charter schools implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA's adopted guidelines, the State must continually monitor the implementation of the NCEES. For beginning teachers, monitoring is completed by the State's Regional Education Facilitators who complete desk and on-site reviews to ensure district compliance with beginning teacher support programs including the evaluation of teacher effectiveness.

As specified in SBE Policy TCP-A-004, each LEA/charter school must develop a plan and provide a comprehensive program for initially licensed teachers. The plan must be approved by

the local board of education or governing board. In compliance with the Excellent Schools Act and subsequently General Statute (GS) 115C-333, each beginning teacher shall be observed at least three times annually by a qualified school administrator or a designee and at least once annually by a teacher, and shall be evaluated at least once annually by a qualified school administrator. Each observation must last for at least one continuous period of instructional time and must be followed by a post-conference. All persons who observe teachers must be appropriately trained. The required observations must be appropriately spaced throughout the school year. The Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan must specify the role of the beginning teacher's assigned mentor in the observations.

Information on Beginning Teacher Support Monitoring Materials is available to the public and accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/recruitment/materials/.

To monitor the fidelity of implementation of the evaluation process for all educators, NCDPI utilizes a number of reports generated within the NCEES Online Evaluation System. District-level staff persons can also review school-level data to review use of the system and tools. For each report, results are monitored at the State, district, and school level. Reports are generated 1) in aggregate (e.g., statewide, district-wide, etc.); and 2) by each individual standard. A sample list of reports are as follows:

- Report of Teacher Evaluation Ratings
- Report of Probationary Teacher Self-Assessments, Observations & Professional Development Plans
- Report of Probationary Teacher Evaluation Ratings
- Report of Principal/Assistant Principal Self-Assessments & Goal Setting
- Report of Principal/Assistant Principal Evaluation Ratings

The data accessed through these reports allow the State to monitor the use of the NCEES as well as identify trends in ratings that can be used to design necessary professional development, including how to use the tool and complete the rubric with fidelity. Based on periodic reviews conducted during 2011-12, NCDPI established a quarterly review schedule for 2012-13.

Additional information on NCEES is available to the public and accessible at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/profdev/training/online-evaluation/.